THE

HOLY BIBLE,

CONTAINING THE

Old and New Testaments,

WITH

ORIGINAL NOTES,

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS, AND COPIOUS MARGINAL REFERENCES.

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THE FIRST BOOK OF THE

KINGS,

COMMONLY CALLED

THE THIRD BOOK OF THE KINGS.

THE two following books contain, as their name imports, the history of Judah and Israel, under the government of kings, from the close of David's reign to the Babylonish captivity, during about four hundred and twenty-seven years. They seem originally to have formed but one book, and to have been called Yah-melech David, *from the first words; but they were afterwards divided into two, and called "The first and second books of the Kings;" and in some versions, "The third and fourth books of the Kings." It is evident, that they contain an abstract of the history, compiled from much more copious records, which seem to have been collected and preserved by contemporary prophets:* (xi. 41. xiv. 29. xv. 31. xxii. 39. 45. 2 Chr. ix. 29. xii. 15. xiii. 22. xx. 34. xxvi. 22.:) *and indeed a considerable part of the transactions of their own times is related in connexion with the prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. It is, however, uncertain by whom this compilation was made: but if Ezra, as it is generally and probably supposed, compiled the books of Chronicles; it is not likely, that according to the opinion of some learned men, he compiled these also: as they form a distinct history of the same narrative. If, therefore, they were arranged in the present manner principally by one sacred writer, they who ascribe them to Jeremiah seem to have adopted the more probable opinion. Indeed, the second book of the Kings, and his prophecy, end with the narrative of the same events; though, perhaps, both were added after his death by another hand; and it is not unlikely that some other trivial alterations were made in the days of Ezra, to render the narrative more perspicuous to the Jews after the captivity.—They have, however, been constantly received, both by Jews and Christians, as a part of the sacred canon, the holy Scriptures: and the events recorded are frequently referred to in the New Testament.* (Matt. i. 7—12. vi. 29. xii. 42. Luke iv. 25—27. Acts ii. 29. vii. 47—50. Jam. v. 17, 18.) *It is observable also, that our Lord and his apostle James, not only speak of them as authentic records, and a part of the sacred oracles as received by the Jews; but especially attest some of the most wonderful miracles recorded in them; and thus affix a direct sanction to them, as given by inspiration of God.—They also contain many prophecies; especially that of Josiah, who was foretold by name three hundred years before his birth; but none of these, in their most evident literal meaning, refer to events later than the Babylonish captivity.—After the death of David, the sacred historian records the principal transactions of Solomon's long and peaceful reign; which, however, was covered with a dark cloud, towards the close: and under his successor, the nation was divided into the two distinct kingdoms of Judah and Israel. The descendants of Solomon reigned over that of Judah till the captivity, for about three hundred and eighty-seven years. So that from the accession of David, during a course of four hundred and sixty-seven years, the throne was filled by his descendants, in lineal descent, except as the sons of Josiah succeeded one another. During this long term of years there was not a single revolution, or civil war; and but one short interruption, by Athaliah's usurpation. Perhaps it would be difficult to find, in universal history, any thing equal to this permanent internal order and tranquillity. Let the reader recollect how many revolutions, civil wars, murders of reigning kings by rivals and successors, and changes in the succession, are found in the English history, during the same number of years.—Above half the kings of Judah supported true religion, and many of them were eminently pious men: and it is remarkable that their reigns were much longer than those of the wicked princes; so that they comprise much above three hundred years of this period; and the greatest part of this time was evidently passed either in profound peace or in remarkable prosperity. Let this state of things be compared with the history of Greece or Rome; and the situation of Judah must be allowed to have been vastly more desirable than that of these celebrated heathen nations. The kingdom of Israel continued under nineteen kings, about two hundred and fifty-four years, till the Assyrian captivity. These were all idolaters, and most of them monsters of iniquity: yet the Lord by his prophets, especially by Elijah and Elisha, preserved a considerable degree of true religion in the land, till the measure of their national wickedness was full; and then they were finally dispersed among the*

Gentiles; except as a remnant of them was incorporated among the Jews.—In these books the history of the two kingdoms is carried on together: and the whole forms an admirable comment on the prophecies delivered to the nation by Moses and Joshua: (Lev. xxvi. Deut. iv. xxviii. xxix. xxx. xxxi. xxxii. Josh. xxiii. 15, 16:) *and a striking illustration of the proverb, "Righteousness exalteth a nation; but "sin is the reproach of any people." This first book contains the history of about a hundred and twenty years. Connected with the peace and prosperity of Solomon's reign, and the fame of his wisdom; a full account is given of the temple having been built by him. God had commanded Israel to offer all their sacrifices at one place; Shiloh had for some time been that place; and the ark had been removed to Zion, by David, in order that a temple might there be built, which Solomon his son accomplished. Now a large proportion of the subsequent parts of the Old Testament relate to this temple; to the sins of the people in sacrificing elsewhere; to their profanation of the temple; to the judgments of God upon them for these crimes; especially to the destruction of the temple by the Chaldeans; and to the rebuilding of it by Zerubbabel. These things so run through all the subsequent history and prophecies, that if Solomon did not build the temple by the express command of God, it must follow, that God punished the nation with tremendous judgments for violating merely human appointments.—When the Samaritans preferred Mount Gerizim, our Lord told the woman of Samaria, that they "knew not "what they worshipped, for salvation was of the Jews:" and this declaration, with his own constant attendance at the ordinances there administered, sufficiently attest the divine inspiration of those records, in which alone it is expressly declared, that Solomon built the temple by the direction and appointment of God himself.—Solomon's fall into idolatry seems evidently implied in the book of Ecclesiastes: and the history of Rehoboam's imprudence, the division of his kingdom, Jeroboam's idolatry, and the subsequent events to the end of the book, are assumed as undoubted facts in the writings of all the prophets. So entirely does the whole canon of Scripture coincide; while each part confirms and receives confirmation from all the rest.*

B. C. 1015.

CHAP. I.

Abishag is procured to cherish David, in his old age and sickness, 1—4. *Adonijah gains Joab and Abiathar, and aspires to the throne,* 5—10. *Nathan counsels Bath-sheba, who speaks to David, and is seconded by Nathan,* 11—27. *David assures Bath-sheba, by an oath, that Solomon shall succeed him; and gives orders that he should, that day, be anointed and proclaimed king,* 28—37. *Zadok and Nathan execute these orders, and the people rejoice,* 38—40. *Jonathan informs Adonijah and his company; and they hastily disperse,* 41—49. *Adonijah flees to the horns of the altar, and obtains from Solomon a conditional pardon,* 50—53.

B. C. 1019.

NOW king David was [a] old *and* * stricken in years; and they covered him with clothes, but he gat no heat.

2 Wherefore his [b] servants said unto him, † Let there be sought for my lord the king ‡ a young virgin: and let her [c] stand before the king, and let her § cherish him, and let her [d] lie in thy bosom, that my lord the king may [e] get heat.

3 So [f] they sought for a fair damsel throughout all the coasts of Israel, and found [g] Abishag a [h] Shunammite, and brought her to the king.

4 And the damsel *was* very fair, and

a 2 Sam. v. 4. Ps xc 10.
* Heb. *entered into days.* Gen. xviii. 11. Josh. xxiii. 1, 2. Luke i. 7.
b Gen. xl. 20. xli. 37, 38.
† Heb. *Let them seek.*
‡ Heb. *a damsel, a virgin.*
c Deut. x. 8. 1 Sam. xvi. 21, 22.
§ Heb. *be a cherisher unto him.*
d Gen. xvi. 5. Deut. xiii. 6. 2 Sam. xii. 3. Mic. vii. 5.
e Ec. iv. 11.
f Esth. ii. 2—4.
g ñ 17—25.
h Josh. xix. 18. 1 Sam. xxviii 4. 2 Kings iv. 8. 25.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1—4. David was seventy years old when he died, and these events occurred not long before. He seems to have been a healthy man: yet his constitution was entirely worn out: perhaps in some measure through his great exertions in his various wars.—The counsel of his courtiers, or physicians, (if so they may be called,) to excite in him a due degree of animal heat, (especially when we advert to the pains bestowed to find out a very fair damsel for the purpose,) deserves censure: though similar advice has often been given in other ages and countries. We may suppose, that David acceded to it merely in compliance with their wishes, and in deference to their judgment; but the appearance was not at all becoming his character and circumstances.

V. 5, 6. Adonijah could not be ignorant, that Solomon had been appointed by God himself to succeed David in the kingdom; and his whole conduct shows, that he considered him alone as his rival. After the death of Absalom, he was David's eldest son: and no doubt he considered the

cherished the king, and ministered to him: but the king [i] knew her not.

5 ¶ Then [k] Adonijah the son of Haggith [l] exalted himself, saying, I will * be king: and [m] he prepared him chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him.

6 And his father [n] had not displeased him † at any time in saying, Why hast thou done so? and he also *was a* [o] very goodly *man;* and *his mother* [p] bare him after Absalom.

7 And ‡ he [q] conferred with [r] Joab the son of Zeruiah, and with [s] Abiathar the priest: and they § following Adonijah helped *him.*

8 But [t] Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and [u] Nathan the prophet, and [x] Shimei, and Rei, and [y] the mighty men which *belonged* to David, were not with Adonijah.

i Matt. i. 25.
k 2 Sam. iii. 4. 1 Chr. iii. 2.
l Ex. ix. 17. Pro. xvi. 18. xviii. 12. Luke xiv. 11. xviii. 14.
* Heb. *reign.* Deut. xvii. 15. Judg. ix. 2. 1 Chr. xxii. 5—11. xxviii. 5. xxix. 1.
m Deut. xvii. 16. 2 Sam. xv. 1
n 1 Sam. iii. 13. Prov. xxiii. 13, 14. xxix. 15. Heb. xii. 5, 6.
† Heb. *from his days.*
o 1 Sam. ix. 2. x. 23. 2 Sam. xiv. 25.
p 2 Sam. iii. 3, 4. 1 Chr. iii. 2.
‡ Heb. *His words were with.*
q 2 Sam. xv. 12. Ps. ii. 2.
r ii. 5, 6. 2 Sam. viii. 16.
s 1 Sam. xxii. 20—23. 2 Sam. xv. 24—29. 35. xx. 25.
§ Heb. *helped after Adonijah.* ii. 22. 26—35.
t 2 Sam. viii. 17, 18.
u 2 Sam. vii. 2—4. xii. 1—15.
x iv. 18. xvi. 5
y 2 Sam. xxiii. 8—39. 1 Chr. xi. 10—47.

9 And Adonijah [z] slew sheep and oxen and fat cattle by the stone of Zoheleth, which *is* by ‖ En-rogel, and [a] called all his brethren the king's sons, and all the men of Judah the king's servants:

10 But Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah, and the mighty men, and [b] Solomon his brother, he called not.

11 ¶ Wherefore Nathan [c] spake unto Bath-sheba the mother of Solomon, saying, Hast thou not heard that Adonijah the son of [d] Haggith doth reign, and David our Lord knoweth *it* not?

12 Now therefore come, [e] let me, I pray thee, give thee counsel, that thou mayest [f] save thine own life, and [g] the life of thy son Solomon.

13 Go, and get thee in unto king David, and say unto him, Didst not thou, my lord, O king, swear unto thine handmaid, saying, [h] Assuredly Solomon thy

z 2 Sam. xv. 12. Prov. xv. 8.
‖ Or, *the well Rogel.* 2 Sam. xvii. 17.
a 2 Sam. xiii. 23. 27. xv. 11.
b 19.
c 2 Sam. vii. 12—15. 1 Chr. xxii. 9, 10.
d 2 Sam. iii. 4.
e Prov. xi. 14.
f 21. Gen. xix. 17. Acts xxvii. 31.
g Judg. ix. 5. 2 Kings xi. 1. Matt. xxi. 38.
h 2 Sam. xii. 24, 25. 1 Chr. xxii. 9, 10. xxviii. 5, 6.

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kingdom as his birth-right, and confided in the support of the people to seize upon it; without any regard to his father or to the word of God by his prophet.—It is remarkable how frequently the first-born were set aside by the express appointment of God. In the ordinary course of things it is expedient that the primogeniture should have the precedency; and the *judicial* law of Moses, (as well as the civil laws of most nations) was formed accordingly. But the examples of Jacob, Judah, the sons of Joseph, David, Solomon, and others, prove that this is not grounded upon moral obligation, is not divine, or unalterable, or to be put in competition with the welfare of whole nations, and the liberty and rights of all the rest of mankind; according to the sentiments of some authors, who most *absurdly* ground their doctrine upon the word of God, though it is evidently contradictory to it!—Absalom had been displeased with his father, though unjustly, because of the disgrace he put him under for the murder of Amnon: but David had never given Adonijah the least cause of displeasure, except that, in obedience to God, he intended his son Solomon to be his successor. It is probable, that Adonijah was of an imperious disposition; and David very imprudently indulged him, and never restrained or reproved him in any matter. This was David's fault: for he ought to have exerted his authority, and kept him under: but at the same time it aggravated Adonijah's contempt and ingratitude.—He seems to have greatly resembled his elder brother Absalom: like him he was too much indulged and beloved on account of his exterior accomplishments; and he succeeded to his ambitious projects, though he concealed and deferred them, till his father was, as he supposed, finally incapacitated for business.

V. 7. It seems wonderful that Joab and Abiathar, who were persons of years, experience, and capacity; who had long attended on David, and were highly preferred under him, and who doubtless understood his intentions concerning Solomon; should at last concur in Adonijah's conspiracy! But perhaps Joab, though attached to David, was not favourable to Solomon, and preferred Adonijah as more congenial with his own disposition. Being destitute of true piety, he would disregard the divine appointment, and deem it more politic to place the eldest son upon the throne; and no injury to David, who, he might think, injured Adonijah in preferring his younger brother. Perhaps he was still afraid of being called to account for his murders; and hoped to secure himself, to continue his preferment, and to increase his influence, by helping Adonijah to the kingdom: and it may be supposed, that he secretly resented David's conduct in attempting to lay him aside, and to put Amasa in his place.—Abiathar, though high-priest, seems to have been less regarded by David than Zadok was: and perhaps he suspected that Solomon would set his family aside, in favour of the line of Eleazar to which Zadok belonged; but by attaching himself to Adonijah, he hastened that event, and showed, that David had good reasons for preferring Zadok, who probably was a man of more serious religion.

V. 8—10. Adonijah knew that it would be in vain and dangerous to tamper with Zadok, Nathan, and Benaiah, who were firmly attached to the cause of Solomon, as well as to that of David.—It is not certain, whether Shimei was the same person who cursed David, or he whom Solomon afterwards preferred. (iv. 18.) The latter opinion is most probable; for Shimei the Benjamite would be regarded by neither party.—We know nothing further of Rei: but no doubt he was a person of consequence.—The mighty men were the chieftains before enumerated. (*Marg. Ref.*) It is most likely that Adonijah made a solemn sacrifice, as well as a magnificent feast on the occasion; and thus he concealed his designs, till ripe for execution.—En-rogel was in the vicinity of Jerusalem.

son shall reign after me, and he shall [i] sit upon my throne? why then doth Adonijah reign?

14 Behold, while thou yet talkest there with the king, I will also come in after thee, and * confirm thy words.

15 ¶ And Bath-sheba went in unto the king into the chamber: and the king was [k] very old; and Abishag the Shunammite ministered unto the king.

16 And Bath-sheba [l] bowed and did obeisance unto the king. And the king said, † What wouldest thou?

17 And she said unto him, [m] My lord, [n] thou swarest by the LORD thy God unto thine handmaid, *saying*, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne;

18 And now behold, [o] Adonijah reigneth; and now, my lord the king, [p] thou knowest *it* not.

19 And [q] he hath slain oxen, and fat cattle, and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the sons of the king, and Abiathar the priest, and Joab the captain of the host: but Solomon thy servant hath he not called.

20 And thou, my lord, O king, the eyes of all Israel *are* upon thee, that [r] thou shouldest tell them who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him.

21 Otherwise it shall come to pass, when my lord the king shall [s] sleep with his fathers, that I and my son Solomon shall be counted ‡ offenders.

22 ¶ And lo, while she yet talked with the king, Nathan the prophet also came in.

23 And they told the king, saying, Behold, Nathan the prophet. And when he was come in before the king, [t] he bowed himself before the king with his face to the ground.

24 And Nathan said, My lord, O king, [u] hast thou said, Adonijah shall [x] reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne?

25 For he is gone down this day, and hath [y] slain oxen, and fat cattle, and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the king's sons, and the captains of the host, and Abiathar the priest; and behold, they eat and drink before him, and say, § God save king Adonijah.

26 But me, *even* [z] me thy servant, and Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and thy servant Solomon, hath he not called.

27 Is this thing done by my lord the king, and thou hast not shewed *it* unto thy servant, who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?

28 ¶ Then king David answered and

i Deut xvii. 18. 1 Chr. xxix. 23. Is. ix. 7. Jer. xxxi. 21. Luke i. 32, 33.

* Heb. *fill up.* 17—27. 2 Cor. xiii. 1.

k 2—4.

l 23. 1 Sam. xx. 41. xxiv. 8. xxv. 23.

† Heb. *What to thee?*

m Gen. xviii. 12. 1 Pet iii. 6.

n 13. 30.

o 25. 2 Sam. xv. 10.

p 24. 27. Acts iii. 17.

q 7—10. 25.

r 2 Sam. xxiii. 2. 1 Chr xxii. 8—10. xxviii. 5, 6. 10. xxix. 1.

s ii. 10. Gen. xv. 15. Deut. xxxi. 16.

‡ Heb. *sinners.* ii. 22—24.

t 16.

u 14. 13.

x 13. 17.

y 1 Sam. xi. 14. 15. 1 Chr. xxix. 21—23.

§ Heb. *let king Adonijah live.* 34. 1 Sam. x. 24. 2 Sam. xvi. 16. Matt. xxi. 9. Mark xi 9, 10. Luke xix. 38.

z 8. 19. 2 Sam. vii. 2. 12—17. xii. 25.

V. 11—14. Solomon could not be ignorant of Adonijah's intentions, of which he made no secret: but he remained quiet, and left his cause with God. His life and succession were secured by promise; yet it was proper that Nathan and Bath-sheba should use prudent means for his preservation, and the maintenance of his right. Had Adonijah succeeded, he would probably have put Solomon and Bath-sheba to death: for the history of the world demonstrates, that when men are aspiring after dominion, they are easily tempted to the most enormous crimes which seem necessary for their purpose, even when most contrary to their apparent natural disposition.

V. 15—18. It is not recorded, on what occasion David swore to Bath-sheba, that Solomon should succeed him: but it is supposed with probability, that it took place after Absalom's rebellion; and as God himself had settled the succession, he might very properly give her this satisfaction.—David was aware that Adonijah had taken great state upon him: but he did not know that he had actually advanced a claim to the kingdom: this both enhanced Adonijah's crime, and pleaded David's excuse.

V. 20. The people knew, "that the Spirit of the "Lord spake by David, and his word was in his tongue:" and they had great confidence in his wisdom, piety, and affection. They therefore waited to know the will of God from him. David, though anointed to the kingdom, did not assume regal authority at first, without the concurrence of the elders of Judah and Israel: and after Absalom's rebellion, he did not return to the exercise of it without their approbation. He would not therefore claim a right to dispose of the kingdom by will, as if it had been his own private property; but he might very properly inform the people of the Lord's appointment in that behalf: and so far from eagerly joining Adonijah as they had done Absalom, they remained in suspense, till his determination was notified.

V. 23. *He bowed*, &c. The exterior indications of civil honour to persons in authority, was generally rendered by the most eminent servants and prophets of God. The refusal of it *may* arise from an erroneous conscience: but it has the appearance of pride and affected moroseness.

V. 27. As the business was so public, and such eminent persons were concerned, it had the appearance of being countenanced by the king: but after all that had passed, the prophet could not believe, that David would have taken such a step without informing him. (*Marg. Ref.*)

said, Call me Bath-sheba. And she came * into the king's presence, and stood before the king.

29 And the king sware, and said, [a] *As* the LORD liveth that [b] hath redeemed my soul out of all distress,

30 Even [c] as I sware unto thee by the LORD God of Israel, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead; even so will I certainly do this day.

31 Then Bath-sheba bowed with *her* face to the earth, and did reverence to the king, and said, [d] Let my lord king David live for ever.

32 And king David said, call me [e] Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada. And they came before the king.

33 The king also said unto them, Take with you the servants of your lord, and cause Solomon my son to ride † upon mine own mule, and bring him down to [f] Gihon.

34 And let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet [g] anoint him there king over Israel: and [h] blow ye with the trumpet, and say, [i] God save king Solomon.

35 Then ye shall come up after him, that he may come and [k] sit upon my throne; for he shall be king in my stead: and [l] I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and over Judah.

36 And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king, and said, [m] Amen: [n] the LORD God of my lord the king say so *too*.

37 [o] As the LORD hath been with my lord the king, even so be he with Solomon, [p] and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord king David.

38 So [q] Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites went down, and caused Solomon to ride upon [r] king David's mule, and brought him to Gihon.

39 And Zadok the priest took [s] an horn of oil [t] out of the tabernacle, and [u] anointed Solomon. And they blew the trumpet; and [x] all the people said, God save king Solomon.

40 And all the people came up after him; and the people piped with ‡ pipes, and [y] rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth rent with the sound of them.

41 ¶ And Adonijah and all the guests that *were* with him heard *it* [z] as they had made an end of eating. And when Joab heard the sound of the trumpet, he said, [a] Wherefore *is* this noise of [b] the city being in an uproar?

42 And while he yet spake, behold, [c] Jonathan the son of Abiathar the priest came; and Adonijah said unto him, Come in; for thou *art* [d] a valiant man, and bringest good tidings.

43 And Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah, [e] Verily our lord king David hath made Solomon king.

44 And the king hath sent with him Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, and they have caused him to ride upon the king's mule.

* Heb. *before the king.*

a xvii. 1. Judg. viii. 19. 2 Sam. xii. 5.
b Gen. xlviii. 16. 2 Sam. iv. 9. Ps. xxxiv. 19—22. lxxii. 14. cxxxviii. 7.
c 13. 17.
d Neh. ii. 3. Dan. ii. 4. iii. 9. v. 10. vi. 6. 21.
e 4. 26. 38.
† Heb. *mule which belongeth to me.* Gen. xli. 43. Esth. vi. 6—11.
f 2 Chr. xxxii. 30.
g xix. 16. 1 Sam. x. 1. xvi. 3. 12, 13. 2 Sam. ii. 4. v. 3. 2 Kings ix. 3. 6. xi. 12. 2 Chr. xxiii. 11. Ps. xlv. 7. Acts x. 38.
h 2 Sam. xv. 10. 2 Kings ix. 13. xi. 14. Ps. xcviii. 5, 6, 7.
i 25. 2 Kings xi. 12.
k 13. 17. ii. 12.
l ii. 15. 1 Chr. xxiii. 1. xxviii. 4, 5. Ps. ii. 6. lxxii. *Title.* 1, 2.
m Deu. xxvii. 15—26. Ps. lxxii. 19. Jer. xi. 5. xxviii. 6. Mat. vi. 13. 1 Cor. xiv. 16.
n 1 Sam. xxv. 29. Ps. xviii. 2. lxiii. 1. lxxxix. 20. 26.
o Ex. iii. 12. Josh. i. 5. 17. 1 Sam. xx. 13. Ps. xlvi. 7. Is. viii. 10. Mat. i. 23. Rom. viii. 31.
p 47. 2 Sam. xxiv. 3. 2 Kings ii. 9. Ps. lxxii. 3. 17—19. Dan. vii. 14.
q 8. 25. 2 Sam. xv. 18. xx. 23.
r 33.
s 1 Sam. xvi. 3.
t Ex. xxx. 23—33. Ps. lxxxix. 20.
u 1 Chr. xxix. 22.
x 1 Sam. x. 24. 2 Kings xi. 12. 2 Chr. xxiii. 11. 13.
‡ Or, *flutes.*
y 1 Sam. xi. 15. 2 Kings xi. 14. 20. 1 Chr. xii. 38—40. Ps. xcvii. 1. Zech. ix. 9. Luke xix. 37. Rev. xi. 15—18.
z Job xx. 5. Pro. xiv. 13. Luke xvii. 26—29.
a Job xv. 21, 22. Ps. lxxiii. 18—26.
b Mat. xxi. 9—11. 15.
c 2 Sam. xv. 36. xvii. 17.
d xxii. 18. 2 Sam. xviii. 27. 2 Kings ix. 22. Is. lvii. 21. 1 Thes. v. 2, 3.
e 32—40.

V. 31. *Live for ever.* This common expression of loyalty and affection to princes, in this application of it, implied, that Bath-sheba cordially desired the continuance of David's life, in preference to her son's succession to the throne.

V. 36, 37. The language of Benaiah, on this occasion, not only expressed the most loyal attachment to Solomon, but also fervent piety; and an earnest desire for the prosperity of Israel, under the government God had placed over them.—This instance serves to explain the original use and emphasis of the word Amen.

V. 38. *Gihon.* A fountain near Jerusalem.

V. 39. *An horn,* &c. Neither Absalom nor Adonijah regarded this expressive ceremony: (perhaps presuming on the right of primogeniture, for we do not find that kings who thus succeeded were anointed.) The anointing denoted both their appointment expressly from God, and the qualifications with which he would endow them; and their being types of Christ, the anointed of the Father. The oil, with which Solomon was anointed, was taken out of the tabernacle, being, as it is probable, the same holy oil with which the priests were anointed.

V. 41. Adonijah and his guests seem to have wasted much time upon this magnificent feast, when more important concerns waited their attention, and ruin hung over their heads.

V. 42. It is probable that Jonathan was not invited to the feast, nor concerned in the conspiracy; but he went to warn his father of the danger: though some think he was left in the city to learn what should occur, and to bring an account of it to Adonijah.

45 And Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet have anointed him king in Gihon: and they are come up from thence rejoicing, so that the city rang again. [g] This *is* the noise that ye have heard.

46 And also Solomon [h] sitteth on the throne of the kingdom.

47 And moreover the king's servants came to [i] bless our lord king David, saying, [k] God make the name of Solomon better than thy name, and make his throne greater than thy throne. And the king [l] bowed himself upon the bed.

48 And also thus said the king, [m] Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, [n] which hath given *one* to sit on my throne this day, [o] mine eyes even seeing *it*.

49 And [p] all the guests that *were* with Adonijah were afraid, and rose up, and went every man his way.

50 And Adonijah feared because of Solomon, and arose, and went and [q] caught hold on the horns of the altar.

51 And it was told Solomon, saying, Behold, Adonijah feareth king Solomon, for lo he hath caught hold on the horns of the altar, saying, Let king Solomon swear unto me to-day, that he will not slay his servant with the sword.

52 And Solomon said, If he will shew himself a worthy man, [r] there shall not an hair of him fall to the earth; but if [s] wickedness shall be found in him, he shall die.

53 So king Solomon sent, and they brought him down from the altar. And he came and [t] bowed himself to king Solomon: and Solomon said unto him, [u] Go to thine house.

g 1 Sam. xxviii. 19. Dan. v. 26—28.
h 13. 1 Chr. xxix. 23. Ps. cxxxii. 11.
i Ex. xii. 32. 2 Sam. viii. 10. xxi. 3. Ezra vi. 10. Ps. xx. 1—4.
k 37. Luke xix. 38.
l Gen. xxiv. 26. xlvii. 31. Heb. xi. 21.
m 1 Chr. xxix. 10. 20. Ps. xxxiv. 1. lxxii. 17—19. ciii. 1, 2 cxlv. 2. Luke i. 46, 47. 68, 69. Eph. i. 3. 1 Pet. i. 3.
n iii. 6. 1 Chr. xvii. 11—14. 17. Ps. cxxxii. 11, 12. Prov. xvii. 6.
o 2 Sam. xxiv. 3.
p Prov. xxviii. 1. Is. xxi. 4, 5. Dan. v. 4—6.
q ii. 28. Ex. xxi. 14. xxxviii. 2. Ps. cxviii. 27.
r 1 Sam. xiv. 45. 2 Sam. xiv. 11. Luke xxi. 18. Acts xxvii. 34.
s ii. 21—23.
t 16. 31. 2 Sam. i. 2.
u ii. 36. 2 Sam. xiv. 24. 28. Pro. xxiv. 21.

V. 49—53. Adonijah expected the assistance of the people; but finding himself mistaken, and being deserted by his friends, he gave up all for lost. *The murderer* was to be taken from the altar and slain; (*Ex.* xxi. 14:) but in other crimes it was a customary refuge, at least till a pardon could be supplicated; as representing the method of obtaining forgiveness from God, through the great sacrifice for sin. Solomon granted Adonijah a conditional pardon, but gave him fair warning that he was put upon his good behaviour. He also required him to go to his house and live a retired private life, not affecting the splendour and state, which he had before done.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

The most vigorous constitutions must soon wear out, and our lives hasten to a close: and though proper means of restoring health and prolonging our days should be used; yet a wise man ought not to yield to such expedients as have the appearance of evil, or may become temptations to him. But carnal men counsel others according to their own inclinations, and often enforce their advice under specious pretexts; by which they impose upon such as mean no evil, but are induced to actions inconsistent with their character and profession. *Indulgent* parents are commonly chastised with *disobedient* children, who ungratefully despise their infirmities, and are impatient to get possession of their estates. Every depraved propensity gathers strength by being gratified: and when ambition comes within the reach of its object, it urges a man to violate all obligations, to break through all obstructions, to despise all dangers, and to disregard the examples of those who have before been ruined by similar attempts. So long as carnal self-love reigns in the heart, no worldly wisdom and experience, no maturity of age, no rank or station in the community or in the Church, no previous fidelity or attachment to princes or patrons, can secure men's continuance in their former course or connexions: for innumerable circumstances may occur, that may prompt them to some new method of gratifying their reigning inclinations. So that disgust, fear, conscious guilt, or the hope of greater authority, influence, or wealth, may speedily induce them to measures which stand in opposition to all their former lives. We ought therefore to depend on the Lord to preserve us from the deceitfulness of our own hearts, and from the fickleness and treachery of men.—Political wisdom frequently contradicts the word of God, and proves in the event the greatest folly: and crafty seducers can discern who are, and who are not, fit for their purpose; and will shun determined honest characters as their enemies and rivals.

V. 11—27.

In every age men form designs, which their own consciences condemn as contrary to the will of God; and yet they hope for success from the favour and assistance of man. But they, who are vain of their own accomplishments, often flatter themselves with the imagined attachment of numbers, that have no real esteem or affection for them.—A feast, and a sacrifice, are proper baits to draw in the sensual or the unsuspecting: and aspiring men, according to the taste of the times, have always employed one or both of these expedients to subserve their own ambitious purposes; by which numbers have been inadvertently betrayed to concur in base measures, contrary to their judgments, consciences, characters, and interests.—In these days, when kingdoms are disposed of by common providence, the ministers of God have little to do with disputed successions; and are best at a distance from the cabals, intrigues, and parties which generally surround the courts of kings: yet the welfare of the state, as well as of the

CHAP. II.

David charges Solomon to serve God: and directs him how to act towards Joab, the sons of Barzillai and Shimei, 1—9. *His death, and the years of his reign,* 10, 11. *Solomon succeeds him,* 12. *Adonijah persuades Bath-sheba to ask for him Abishag to wife, and is put to death,* 13—25. *Abiathar's life is spared, but he is deprived of the high-priesthood,* 26, 27. *Joab, having fled to the altar, is there put to death,* 28—34. *Benaiah succeeds Joab, and Zadok Abiathar,* 35. *Shimei is confined to Jerusalem, but going thence, he is put to death,* 36—46.

NOW [a] the days of David drew nigh that he should die; and he [b] charged Solomon his son, saying,

2 [c] I go the way of all the earth: [d] be thou strong therefore, and [e] shew thyself a man.

3 And [f] keep the charge of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his [g] statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his [h] testimonies, [i] as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest * prosper in all that thou doest, and [k] whithersoever thou turnest thyself:

a Gen. xlvii. 29. Deut. xxxi. 14. xxxiii. 1. 2 Tim. iv. 6. 2 Pet. i. 13—15.
b Num xxvii. 19. Deut. iii. 28. Acts xx. 28—31. 1 Tim. i. 18. vi. 12. 2 Tim. iv. 1.
c Josh. xxiii. 14. Job xxx. 23. Heb. ix. 27.
d Deut. xxxi. 6. Josh. i. 6, 7. 1 Chr. xxviii. 20. Eph. vi 10. 2 Tim. ii. 1.
e iii. 7. 2 Sam. x. 12. 1 Cor. xvi. 13. 1 Tim. iv. 12.
f Deut. xxix. 9. Josh. i. 7. xxii. 5. 1 Chr. xxii. 12, 13. xxviii. 8, 9. xxix. 19.
g Deut. vi. 1, 2.
h Deut. iv. 45. Ps. cxix 3. 138.
i Deut. xvii. 18—20. Mal iv. 4.
* Or, *do wisely.* Prov. iii. 1—4. 1 Sam. xviii. 5. 14. 30. 2 Chr. xxxi. 20, 21. Ps. i. 2, 3. cxix. 98—100.
k 2 Sam. viii. 6. 14. 2 Kings xviii. 7.

Church, should lie near their hearts: and they ought to use all their influence, and embrace every opportunity, to remind the greatest men of the words of God, and to excite them to do their duty according to his revealed will. If a neighbour is in danger of being injured or murdered, without knowing it, or being able to avoid the snare; it must be the duty of any man, in any case, or at any hazard, to give him warning, or counsel, and to interpose for his preservation. When others are neglecting their duty, through inattention, or multiplied infirmities or engagements, they should be put in remembrance of it: when they are slack to do it, prudent contrivances, and quickening expostulations, may be successfully employed to incite them: and every means should be used to prevent manifest injustice, to exclude occasions of future discord, and to promote decisive measures for the glory of God, and the good of his people: for if the enemies of religion be combined, active, and daring; its friends should not be timid, supine, and disunited. The most respectful behaviour to our superiors is very consistent with plainness of speech in the great concerns of God; and, such language and behaviour will be very forcible with men of piety and integrity.

V. 28—53.

The true believer loves to review his past experience: even the recollection of his distresses, from all which the Lord hath redeemed him, increases his comfort as well as his gratitude; and inspires him with hope, and animates him to his duty, though under the decays of nature and at the approach of death. In preparation for that event, we should arrange all our domestic or more public concerns, as may best secure peace and good to the survivors; and we should lose no time before we do so useful a work; even though it somewhat interrupt our religious exercises.—Those enterprises must end well, which are conducted with piety and integrity, in simple dependence on God, and cordial acquiescence in his will. We can see no one so wise, so good, or so happy in this world, but we may well desire that others may be more wise, holy, and happy than he; and every pious man must long that it may be thus with his beloved children, both for their sakes, and for the benefit of the community. They who are engaged in a bad cause, are exposed to continual terrors: and no *good man* can bring other than *evil tidings* to those who are rebelling against God and the king. Vain confidence and sensual pleasure are the usual forerunners of temporal and eternal destruction. Combinations formed upon iniquitous principles will speedily be dissolved, when self-preservation or self-interest calls another way. But clemency becomes those in power, especially towards such as have rather injured them than the public: yet, no government can pardon or tolerate a traitor, who perseveres in his treasonable machinations. But we see here, as in a glass, Jesus, the Son of David, and the Son of God, exalted to the throne of glory, notwithstanding all the conspiracies and opposition of his enemies; (*Ps.* ii.) His kingdom is far greater than that of his father David; and all the true people of God most cordially rejoice in his exaltation. The prosperity of his cause and the triumphing of his servants, are the vexation and terror of his enemies: and *no horns of the altar, no forms of godliness, no pretences to religion of any kind,* can profit those who will not submit to his authority and accept of his salvation. He spares and readily pardons those who have most desperately rebelled against him, when they repent and do works meet for repentance. But if wickedness be afterwards found in them, discovering the hypocrisy of their professed submission, they will at length die without mercy, and perish without remedy.

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 2. Solomon could not at this time be more than twenty years of age; and, it is probable, was not so much: an early period for him to enter upon so weighty a charge, as the government of God's people! But he was endowed with extraordinary wisdom; and David exhorted him to show all Israel, that though he was but a child in years, he was a man in capacity and attention to business.

V. 3. (*Note, Deut.* vi. 1.) *Testimonies,* in this connexion, may signify such laws, as preserved the remembrance of great events; as the sabbaths, the passover, and others.

4 [l] That the LORD may continue [m] his word which he spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their way to [n] walk before me in truth, [o] with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not * fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel.

5 Moreover thou knowest also what Joab the son of Zeruiah [p] did to me, *and* what he did to the two captains of the host of Israel, unto [q] Abner the son of Ner, and unto [r] Amasa the son of [s] Jether, whom he slew, and † shed the blood of war in peace, and [t] put the blood of war upon his girdle that *was* about his loins, and in his shoes that *were* on his feet.

6 Do therefore [u] according to thy wisdom, and [x] let not his hoar head go down to the grave [y] in peace.

7 But shew kindness unto the sons of [z] Barzillai the Gileadite, and let them be of those that [a] eat at thy table: for so they came to me when I fled because of Absalom thy brother.

8 And, behold, *thou hast* with thee [b] Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite of Bahurim, which cursed me with a ‡ grievous curse in the day when I went to Mahanaim: but [c] he came down to meet me at Jordan, and I sware to him by the LORD, saying, I will not put thee to death with the sword.

9 Now therefore [d] hold him not guiltless: for thou *art* [e] a wise man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him; but [f] his hoar head bring thou down to the grave [g] with blood.

10 So [h] David slept with his fathers, and was buried in [i] the city of David.

11 And the days that David [k] reigned over Israel *were* forty years: seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem.

12 ¶ Then [l] sat Solomon upon the throne of David his father; and [m] his kingdom was established greatly.

13 And [n] Adonijah the son of Haggith came to Bath-sheba the mother of Solomon. And she said, [o] Comest thou peaceably? and he said, Peaceably.

14 He said moreover, [p] I have somewhat to say unto thee. And she said, Say on.

15 And he said, [q] Thou knowest that the kingdom was mine, and *that* all Israel set their faces on me, that I should reign:

l Gen. xviii. 19. Deut. vii. 12. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. John xv. 9, 10. Jude 20, 21. 24.
m 2 Sam. vii 11—16. 25. 1 Chr. xvii. 11—15. xxii. 9—11. xxviii. 5—7. Ps. lxxxix. 29—37. cxxxii. 11, 12.
n iii. 3. 14. viii. 23. Gen. xvii. 1. Lev. xxvi. 3. 2 Kings xx. 3. xxiii. 3. 25. 2 Chr. xvii. 3. Luke i. 6.
o Deut. vi 5. x. 12.
* Heb. *be cut off from thee from the throne.* viii. 25.
p i. 7. 18, 19. 2 Sam. iii. 39. xviii. 5. 14. xix. 5—7.
q 2 Sam. iii. 27.
r 2 Sam. xx. 10.
s 2 Sam. xvii. 25. *Ithra.*
† Heb. *put.*
t Jer. ii 34. vi 15. Ez. xxiv. 7, 8.
u 9. Prov. xx. 26.
x 26—34. Gen. ix 6. Num. xxxv. 33. Ec. viii. 11. Is. lxv. 20.
y Is. lvii. 21.
z 2 Sam. xvii. 27—29. xix. 31—38. Prov. xxvii. 10.
a 2 Sam. ix. 10. xix. 28. Luke xii. 37. xxii. 28—30. Rev. iii. 20, 21.
b 36—46. 2 Sam. xvi. 5—8.
‡ Heb. *strong.*
c 2 Sam. xix. 16—23. Jer. iv. 2.
d Ex. xx. 7. xxii. 28. Job ix. 28.
e iii. 12, 28.
f 6. Gen. xlii. 38. xliv. 31.
g Num xxxii. 23.
h i. 21. 1 Chr. xxix. 28. Acts ii. 29. xiii. 36.
i 2 Sam. v 7.
k 2 Sam. v. 4. 1 Chr. xxix. 26, 27.
l i. 46. 1 Chr. xxix 23—25. 2 Chr. i. 1. Ps. cxxxii. 12.
m 2 Sam. vii. 12, 13. 29. Ps lxxxix. 36, 37.
n i. 5—10. 50—53.
o 1 Sam. xvi. 4, 5. 2 Kings ix. 18—22. 1 Chr. xii. 17, 18. Luke x. 5, 6.
p 2 Sam. xiv. 12. Luke vii. 40.
q i. 5. 25. 2 Sam. xv. 6. 13. xvi. 18.

V. 4. The continuance of the kingdom to David's posterity was sure, as it respected the Messiah and his spiritual reign: nor would every transgression forfeit the *temporal* kingdom entailed upon his descendants; for chastisements would be used to bring them to repentance: yet obstinate and aggravated disobedience would cut off the entail. Thus the Lord punished Solomon's idolatry by the defection of the ten tribes from his son: and at length, the family of David was deprived of all authority, until Christ came and set up his spiritual kingdom.

V. 5, 6. These dying counsels of David ought not to be imputed to personal resentment; but to a regard to justice, and a wise and pious concern for the security of Solomon's throne, which was the cause of God and of Israel. Joab had long deserved to die: and David's timidity had left blood-guiltiness upon his family and kingdom. His late conspiracy proved him to be a factious and dangerous person: and though his influence seems to have been weakened by it, yet his party was still so strong, that it was not probable Solomon would reign in peace whilst he lived.—He had not so much as attempted to conceal the base murders he had committed; but he avowed and vindicated them without shame or fear of punishment; and it was evident that he did not now repent, but would readily repeat them, to carry his purpose and secure his preferment. His murders were crimes *against David*, as committed upon two men who were in treaty with or commissioned by David, and because he favoured them: and yet they were so conducted, as to bring him into suspicion as if privy to them. David therefore reminded his successor to expiate the guilt of these murders, by Joab's blood, "that he and his king-"dom and family might be guiltless." (33.)—It is observable that David did not blame Joab for killing Absalom; being doubtless conscious that he deserved to die, and that his own desire to spare him was a weakness and a sin.

V. 8, 9. Shimei also deserved to die, though for an offence of a different kind from Joab's. Probably he retained his old enmity to the family of David, and partiality to the house of Saul. Solomon was not bound by the oath, that David had sworn not to put him to death: his punishment would indeed have been a salutary act of justice, yet David would not *then* consent to it; because unsuitable to his circumstances. But the case was different with Solomon; who might take occasion from some recent offence, to remember the old crimes, and to execute deserved vengeance on an irreconcileable enemy to him and the peace of his kingdom. David therefore counselled him, not to trust Shimei, but to watch him narrowly; and he would be sure to find just cause for punishing him.

V. 10. The remains of Saul and his sons were buried in the sepulchre of Kish his father: (2 *Sam.* xxi. 14:) but David was not buried in the sepulchre of Jesse at Bethlehem; but in that city which he had taken from the Jebusites, and made the capital of his kingdom, and the seat of his government, and that of his family.

howbeit the kingdom is turned about, and is become my brother's; for [r] it was his from the LORD.

16 And now I ask one petition of thee, † deny me not. And she said unto him, Say on.

17 And he said, Speak, I pray thee, unto Solomon the king, (for he will not say thee nay,) that he give me [s] Abishag the Shunammite to wife.

18 And Bath-sheba said, [t] Well; I will speak for thee unto the king.

19 Bath-sheba therefore went unto king Solomon to speak unto him for Adonijah. And the king [u] rose up to meet her, and bowed himself unto her, and sat down on his throne, and caused a seat to be set for the king's mother: and [x] she sat on his right hand.

20 Then she said, [y] I desire one small petition of thee; I *pray thee*, say me not nay. And the king said unto her, [z] Ask on, my mother: for I will not say thee nay.

21 And she said, [a] Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah thy brother to wife.

22 And king Solomon answered and said unto his mother, And [b] why dost thou ask Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? ask for him [c] the kingdom also; for he *is* mine elder brother; even for him, and for Abiathar [c] the priest, and for Joab the son of Zeruiah.

23 Then king Solomon sware by the LORD, saying, [d] God do so to me, and more also, if Adonijah have not spoken this word against his own life.

24 Now therefore, [e] *as* the LORD liveth, which hath [f] established me, and [g] set me on the throne of David my father, and who hath [h] made me an house, [i] as he promised, Adonijah shall be [k] put to death this day.

25 And king Solomon sent by the hand of Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; and [l] he fell upon him, that he died.

r 1 Chr. xxii. 9, 10 xxviii. 5—7. Prov. xxi. 30. Dan. ii. 21.

† Heb. *turn not away my face.* Ps. cxxxii. 10. Prov. xxx. 7.

s i. 2—4. 2 Sam. iii. 7. xii. 8.

Prov. xiv. 15.

t Ex. xx. 12.

u Ex. xx. 12.

x Ps. xlv. 9. cx. 1. Matt. xxv 33.

y Matt. xx. 20, 21. John ii. 3, 4.

z Matt. vii 7—11. xviii. 19. Mark x. 35, 36. xi. 21. Luke xi. 9, 10. John xiv. 13, 14. xv. 16.

a 2 Sam. xvi. 21.

b Matt. xx. 22. Mark x. 38. Jam. iv. 3.

c i. 6, 7. 34, 25.

d xx. 10. Ruth i. 17. 1 Sam. xiv 44. 2 Sam. iii. 9. 35. xix. 13. 2 Kings vi. 31.

e i. 29.

f 12.

g x. 9. 2 Chr. i. 8, 9.

h Ex. i. 21. 1 Sam. xxv. 28. 2 Sam. vii. 12, 13. 27. 1 Chr. xvii. 10. 17. 23. Ps. cxxvii. 1.

i 1 Chr. xxii. 10.

k Ec. viii. 11—13.

l 31. 34. 46. Judg. viii. 20, 21. 1 Sam. xv. 33. 2 Sam. i. 15. iv. 12.

V. 15—18. It is *evident* that Adonijah had by no means given up his pretensions to the throne: and *probable*, that neither he nor Joab, nor Abiathar, expected safety, unless in success; and that they were in concert forming new schemes against Solomon. With this in view, they seem to have thought, that if Adonijah married Abishag, it would increase the number of his adherents; both by the accession of her friends and relations, and from the general notions which prevailed, concerning the wives and concubines of deceased kings. (*Marg. Ref.*) But they could not get possession of Abishag, without Solomon's consent; which they had no hopes of obtaining, but by the interposition of Bathsheba.—In Adonijah's speech to her, he insinuated, that the kingdom was his, by the right of primogeniture: and that he had been in possession of it, by the consent of all Israel. This, however, was totally false: for the kingdom had never been his, except in his own idea, and that of a few who abetted his usurpation; and the people generally favoured Solomon.—But he meant to induce Bathsheba to compassionate his case: and to make a merit with her of peaceably receding from his claim: and that she might not suspect any ill design, he at length conceded, "that it had been Solomon's from the LORD." But though his language was not well calculated to inspire confidence; and his request was in itself improper and highly indecorous at least; yet according to his hopes, Bath-sheba suspected no ill, but considered him as entitled to compassion; and supposed his request to be the result of love, not ambition: and perhaps she thought this an easy way of satisfying Adonijah, and securing Solomon in the kingdom.—She did not look upon Abishag as the *wife of David*, and therefore did not consider her marriage with Adonijah as unlawful; and she readily consented to become his intercessor with Solomon.

V. 20. *For I, &c.* All such general promises imply the supposition, that the request is lawful and proper to be granted: for even the assurances of God's word, that whatever we ask of him, shall be given, admit of a similar limitation: *i. e.* if consistent with his glory, and for our real good.

V. 22. Solomon immediately saw through Adonijah's intentions, and that he was aiming to take the fortress by sap, (so to speak,) which he had failed of seizing by surprise. He perceived him still restless, aspiring, and scheming; and discerned that he considered this as one step to the throne, and that Joab and Abiathar were concerned in the project. To show the inefficacy therefore of every application in his favour; to convince Bath-sheba of the impropriety and impolicy of her request; and to declare the necessity of his death, in order to the preservation of public peace, and the establishment of his authority, he spoke with great earnestness and decision.

V. 23—25. Solomon has been censured as too severe and precipitate in this execution; but there is no intimation of this in the Scripture. Adonijah's previous pardon had been conditional; he affected to tread in the steps of Absalom; and doubtless he would have created as fatal disturbances to Solomon's government, as Absalom had to David's. Nor would sound policy admit of any delay; when persons of so great authority and extensive influence were joined in the conspiracy, and had far more specious reasons for opposing Solomon, than Absalom had for rebelling against David.

m i. 7. 25.
n Josh xxi. 18. Is. x. 30. Jer. i. 1.
‡ Heb. *a man of death.* 2 Sam. xii. 5
o 1 Sam. xxii. 20—23. xxiii. 6—9. 1 Chr. xv. 11, 12.
p 2 Sam. xv. 24—29. Matt. x. 42.

26 ¶ And unto [m] Abiathar the priest said the king, Get thee to [n] Anathoth, unto thine own fields; for thou *art* ‡ worthy of death: but I will not at this time put thee to death, [o] because thou barest the ark of the LORD God before David my father, and [p] because thou hast been afflicted in all wherein my father was afflicted.

q 1 Sam. ii. 31—36. iii. 12—14. Matt. xxvi. 56. John xii 38. xix. 24. 28. 36, 37.
r Josh. xviii. 1. Ps. lxxviii. 60. Jer. vii. 12—14.

27 So Solomon thrust out Abiathar from being priest unto the LORD; [q] that he might fulfil the word of the LORD, which he spake concerning the house of Eli in [r] Shiloh.

s i. 7. 2 Sam xviii. 2. 14, 15.
t i. 50.

28 ¶ Then tidings came to Joab; for [s] Joab had turned after Adonijah, though he turned not after Absalom. And Joab fled unto the tabernacle of the LORD, and [t] caught hold on the horns of the altar.

29 And it was told king Solomon that Joab was fled unto the tabernacle of the LORD; and behold, *he is* by the altar. Then Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, saying, [u] Go, fall upon him.

u 25. 46.

30 And Benaiah came to the tabernacle of the LORD, and said unto him, Thus saith the king, Come forth. And he said, Nay; but I will die here. And Benaiah brought the king word again, saying, Thus said Joab, and thus he answered me.

x Ex. xxi. 14.
y Gen. ix. 5, 6. Num. xxxv. 33. Deut. xix 12, 13. xxi. 8, 9. 2 Kings ix. 26. Prov. xxviii. 17. Acts xxviii. 4.
z 2 Sam. iii. 28.

31 And the king said unto him, [x] Do as he hath said, and fall upon him, and bury him; that thou [y] mayest take away the innocent blood which Joab shed, from me, and [z] from the house of my father.

a 44 Gen. iv. 11. Judg ix. 24. 57. Ps. vii. 16.
b 2 Sam. iii. 27. xx. 10.
c 1 Sam. xv. 28. 2 Sam. iv. 11. 2 Chr. xxi. 13. Esth i 19.
d 2 Sam. iii. 26. 37.

32 And the LORD shall [a] return his blood upon his own head, who fell upon [b] two men [c] more righteous and better than he, and slew them with the sword, [d] my father David not knowing *thereof, to wit,* Abner the son of Ner, captain of the host of Israel, and Amasa the son of [e] Jether, captain of the host of Judah.

e 5. 2 Sam. xvii. 25. *Ithra.*

33 Their blood shall therefore return [f] upon the head of Joab, and upon the head of his seed for ever: but [g] upon David, and upon his seed, and [h] upon his house, and upon his throne, shall there be peace for ever from the LORD.

f 2 Sam. iii. 29. 2 Kings v. 27. Ps. cix. 6—15. Matt. xxvii 25.
g 2 Sam. iii. 28. Prov. xxv. 5.
h Ps. lxxxix. 29. 36, 37. cxxxii. 12. Is. ix. 6, 7. xi. 1—9. Luke i. 31—34. ii. 14.

34 So [i] Benaiah the son of Jehoiada went up, and fell upon him, and slew him: and he was buried in his own house [k] in the wilderness.

i 25. 46.
k Josh. xv. 61 Matt. iii. 1.

35 And the king put Benaiah the son of Jehoiada in his room over the host: and [l] Zadok the priest did the king put in the room of Abiathar.

l 27. Num. xxv. 11—13. 1 Sam. ii. 35. 1 Chr. vi. 50—53. xxiv. 3 Ps. cix. 8. Acts i. 20.

36 ¶ And the king sent and called for [m] Shimei, and said unto him, [n] Build thee an house in Jerusalem, and dwell there, and go not forth thence any whither.

m 8, 9. 2 Sam. xvi. 5—9. Prov. xx. 8 26.
n i. 53. 2 Sam. xiv. 24. 28.

37 For it shall be, *that* on the day thou goest out and passest [o] over the brook Kidron, thou shalt know for certain that thou shalt surely die: [p] thy blood shall be upon thine own head.

o 2 Sam. xv. 23 2 Kings xxiii. 6 John xviii. 1.
p Lev xx. 9. Josh. ii. 19. 2 Sam. i. 16. Ez. xviii. 13.

38 And Shimei said unto the king, [q] The saying *is* good: as my lord the king hath said, so will thy servant do. And Shimei dwelt in Jerusalem many days.

q xx. 4. 2 Kings xx. 19.

39 And it came to pass at the end of three years, that two of the servants of Shimei ran away unto [r] Achish son of Maachah king of Gath. And they told Shimei, saying, Behold, thy servants *be* in Gath.

B. C. 1011.
r 1 Sam. xxi. 10. xxvii. 2, 3.

40 And Shimei [s] arose, and saddled his ass, and went to Gath to Achish to seek his servants; and Shimei went, and brought his servants from Gath.

s Prov. xv. 27. Luke xii. 15. 1 Tim. x. 6.

V. 26, 27. Solomon's language and Abiathar's silence imply that some recent conspiracies had been formed. Abiathar had suffered much with David, and had been faithful and useful to him; so that in remembrance of his services, as well as in respect to his sacred character, Solomon resolved to spare his life: and as he had not committed murder, this clemency might properly be exercised. In deposing Abiathar from the high-priesthood, Solomon purposely intended to fulfil the word of God to Eli. (*Marg. Ref.*) And in confining him to his own estate in the country, he only put him under a disgrace which he justly merited.

V. 28—34. In fleeing to the altar, Joab pleaded guilty of the treason charged upon him: and Solomon, in ordering him to be slain before the altar, not for that crime alone, but for his former murders also, evinced his knowledge of, and regard for, the law of God, and his superiority to vulgar prejudices. He also showed the people, that no place, however sacred, should secure a murderer from justice.—His language, on this occasion, proves, that he considered the guilt of innocent blood as resting on his family and kingdom, so long as Joab's murders remained unpunished.

V. 35. *Zadok.* The high-priesthood continued, from this time, in the line of Eleazar and Phinehas, at least till long after the Babylonish captivity. (*Marg. Ref.*)—Nothing is further said of Jonathan the son of Abiathar.

41 And it was told Solomon that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath, and was come again.

42 And the king sent and called for Shimei, and said unto him, [t] Did I not make thee to swear by the LORD, and protested unto thee, saying, Know for a certain, *that* on the day thou goest out, and walkest abroad any whither, that thou shalt surely die? and thou saidst unto me, The word *that* I have heard *is* good.

43 [u] Why then hast thou not kept the oath of the LORD, and [x] the commandment that I have charged thee with?

44 The king said moreover to Shimei, [y] Thou knowest all the wickedness which thine heart is privy to, that thou didst to David my father: therefore the LORD shall [z] return thy wickedness upon thine own head;

45 And king Solomon *shall be* [a] blessed, [b] and the throne of David shall be established before the LORD for ever.

46 So the king commanded Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; which went out and fell upon him, that he died. And [c] the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon.

t 36—38. Ps. xv. 4.
u 2 Sam. xxi. 2. Ez. xvii. 18, 19.
x Ec. viii. 2.
y 2 Sam xvi. 5—9. John viii. 9. Rom ii. 15. 1. John iii. 20.
z 33. Prov. v. 22.
a Prov. xxv. 5.
b Is. ix. 6, 7.
c 12. 2 Chr. i. 1. Prov. xxix. 4.

V. 36—46. No doubt Solomon suspected that Shimei's influence would be dangerous upon his own estate, and among his numerous dependents: and therefore he proposed to him, as the condition of his indemnity for former crimes, that he should live in Jerusalem under his eye, and by no means remove thence. These terms Shimei readily agreed to, and swore to observe them; and for three years he lived unmolested and in affluence. But growing secure, in contempt of Solomon's authority, and of the oath of God, upon an unnecessary business, he took a journey, which according to his own engagement forfeited his life. Thus the Lord left him to be infatuated, that due punishment might be inflicted upon him: in order that every ringleader of opposition to Solomon's kingdom might be crushed, and all others be intimidated by their examples; and that his throne might be established in peace, as the type of the Redeemer's kingdom of peace and righteousness.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

It is desirable to be habitually and calmly expecting the approach of death; for that is the way appointed for all men to pass from this world to another: a dark and gloomy road indeed it is for the workers of iniquity, to a still more dark and dreadful place; but rendered cheerful to the righteous, by the presence of the Lord, and by the hopes of complete felicity. Whilst they are supported by these lively hopes and strong consolations, how becoming is it for them to animate their survivors and successors, to fill up their stations in the church of God and in society in a proper manner! Young men, who are called to important services, should be cautioned by their seniors, to act with gravity and prudence, that they may prevent others "from "despising their youth." And they, who, in this evil world, would keep the commandments of God, and (as magistrates or ministers,) would induce others to do the same, need resolution and fortitude, as well as meekness, discretion, and zeal. "For they must keep the charge of the "LORD;" and the smiles and flatteries, the reproaches and opposition, the friendship and enmity of the world, will, in different ways, impede them in the performance of their duty. We cannot prosper in our undertakings further than we make the whole word of God our rule and our hope; nor can we finally come short of all desirable success, if we do this, however appearances may for a time be against us. —No length of time will obliterate the guilt of sin; and justice, though long delayed, will finally be executed on the impenitent. In human governments undue lenity is an evidence of imbecility, of want of wisdom, and disregard to justice. Can it then be supposed that the King of heaven will so indiscriminately exercise mercy, as not to magnify his law, and show decidedly his abhorrence of iniquity? No human authority has a right to pardon *wilful murder:* and the magistrate, who presumes to do so, is unfaithful to Him that hath commissioned him to execute vengeance upon evil doers; and not only exposes the peaceable subject, but brings guilt on his own soul, on his family, and on the land. They, therefore, who act "according to wisdom," will not let the murderer, though advanced in years, or exalted in rank, go down to the grave in peace. As private persons, we are not to avenge ourselves, but must return blessings and prayers for the bitterest curses and injuries of our enemies; but such offenders will not be held guiltless before God: and if their crimes be a violation of human laws, we may, out of regard to public justice, and for the sake of the peace and prosperity of the church or state, desire that they should be restrained and punished; and in our proper stations may promote the execution of the law upon them. Nay, in doing this, we "may serve our "generation according to the will of God," and prepare for death, no less than when we are recompensing our benefactors, and doing acts of kindness to the distressed.

V. 10—25.

It is very happy for a nation, when the death of one good king is followed by the peaceable succession of another, equally wise and righteous. But men are not duly thankful for these blessings: and therefore the Lord permits their course to be interrupted: that public calamities, experienced or dreaded, may promote humiliation for sin, fervency in prayer, and general reformation; and make way for more lively gratitude, when they are removed or prevented. On such great emergencies, wisdom is needful to direct Christians, that they may neither neglect their present duty, nor intermeddle out of their proper sphere. Ambitious men can never rest: they must continually be aim

CHAP. III.

Solomon marries Pharaoh's daughter, 1. *The people sacrifice in high places,* 2, 3. *Solomon offers a thousand burnt-offerings at Gibeon; God appears to him in a dream; and he asks and obtains from God wisdom, together with riches and honour,* 4—15. *His judgment between two harlots makes him celebrated for wisdom,* 16—28.

AND [a] Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her into [b] the city of David, until he had made an end of building [c] his own house, and [d] the house of the LORD, and [e] the wall of Jerusalem round about.

[a] vii 8. ix. 24.
[b] 2 Sam. v. 7. 1 Chr. xi. 7.
[c] vii. 1.
[d] vi. 37, 38.
[e] ix. 15—19.

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to disturb the settled order and public peace, that they may mount to superior authority; and when baffled with one weapon, they will make trial of another. Whatever goes beside them in providence, they deem taken from them; and if they may not domineer, they claim compassion as injured persons; under plausible pretences and soft insinuations, they conceal their aspiring purposes; and with apparent modesty and affection, address themselves to the passions of the unsuspecting, the undiscerning, and tender-hearted. These they would persuade into improper concessions, and engage to use their influence, that their moderate and equitable desires may be granted; and then they shall rest satisfied, and give nobody any further disturbance; whilst perhaps all this covers the most dangerous and subtle intentions. But they, who have the ear of princes, should be careful what requests they present to them. Compassion, generosity, or even gratitude, may induce them to ask for others, what cannot be granted consistently with the honour of the sovereign or the interest of the kingdom: and it were better to be upbraided with unkindness or ingratitude, than to make so ill a use of influence.—The duty of honouring parents is obligatory upon us in every station in life; and too much respect and gratitude cannot be shown them, provided they be not gratified by unlawful and improper compliances: but no relative affection, no engagement whatever, can bind us to do a thing that is evil, or of fatal tendency to the public. The machinations of crafty men generally entangle themselves, and involve them in mischiefs which simple upright men escape. No government can be secure, whilst they who aim to subvert it, remain unpunished: and such as have been convicted, and still persist in treasonable designs, are proper persons to be sacrificed for the public good, and for an example to others; for apparent severity to them may eventually be mercy to thousands.

V. 26—46.

They who have disgraced the sacred ministry by their crimes, are unworthy to officiate in holy things, and should be excluded from them; and wicked priests, though often spared here, will hereafter receive the deepest condemnation. Yet distinctions should be made in the punishment of the guilty; former services and sufferings in a good cause may plead for an alleviation of the sentence, where the law of God will admit of it; and in every event his word will one way or other be accomplished.—Many who slight the ordinances of God in their prosperity, flee to them in terror and affliction: but no expedients will avail to secure the impenitent from condign punishment; and the crimes, in which men long glory and prosper, will at length fall with heavier vengeance on their heads. Even murder admits of degrees of criminality. The character of the persons murdered, their rank, and usefulness to society; and the malice, treachery, and boldness with which the crime was perpetrated, enhance proportionably its malignity. Different offenders ought to be treated in diverse ways, and punishments so inflicted, as may appear most equitable.—The old malignity remains in the unconverted heart, and a watchful eye should be kept on those who have manifested their enmity, but have given an evidence of their repentance: yet, it is well to show them such impartiality, as shall cause them to allow 'that the saying is good.' But no engagements or dangers can restrain worldly men from their pursuits! they will go on, though they forfeit their lives and souls! and contempt of authority, and the obligation of an oath, when their own interests are concerned, evince them to be ripe for destruction. Thus, the kingdom of Christ is established by the ruin of its obstinate opposers, and the advancement of its cordial friends. They who injure his people will be called to account perhaps long after; and all who are kind to them shall be surely recompensed. Wisdom, justice, truth, and mercy, unite in his administration: his kingdom is from the Lord; his enemies will be condemned out of their own mouths; and the wickedness, that their own hearts are privy to, will silence all their pleas. Many have incurred his wrath by a forbidden pursuit of worldly objects, and in aiming to secure some needless possession have lost their immortal souls. May we be his faithful subjects! May the Lord more and more establish and extend his kingdom, by making his foes his footstool: and may the whole earth be filled with his glory, and with the acclamations of his willing people!

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1. As Rehoboam was born before the death of David, (xiv. 21;) it is plain that Solomon had before this married Naamah an Ammonitess: and at this time he married the daughter of the Egyptian king. It is supposed that both of them had embraced the religion of Israel: and as Solomon is not censured on this account, there might be special reasons inducing him to this conduct, of which we are not informed. It is also remarkable, that when Solomon's wives drew him into idolatry, the idols of Egypt are not mentioned: so that Pharaoh's daughter does not seem to have been one of his tempters. At first he brought her into the city of David: but after he had finished his other works, he built her a palace at some distance from the temple. (ix. 24. 2 *Chr.* viii. 11.)

2 [f] Only the people sacrificed in high places, because there [g] was no house built unto the name of the LORD until those days.

3 And Solomon [h] loved the LORD, [i] walking in the statutes of David his father: [k] only he sacrificed and burned incense in high places.

4 And the king went to [l] Gibeon to sacrifice there; for that *was* the great high place. [m] A thousand burnt-offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar.

5 In Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon [n] in a dream by night: and God said, [o] Ask what I shall give thee.

6 And Solomon said, Thou hast shewed unto [p] thy servant David my father great * mercy, [q] according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that [r] thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as *it is* this day.

7 And now, O LORD my God, [s] thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father; and I *am but* [t] a little child: I know not *how* [u] to go out or come in.

8 And thy servant *is* in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that [y] cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude.

9 [z] Give therefore thy servant an † understanding heart [a] to judge thy people, that I may [b] discern between good and bad; for [c] who is able to judge this thy so great a people?

10 And the speech [d] pleased the LORD, that Solomon had asked this thing.

11 And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and [e] hast not asked for thyself ‡ long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies, but hast asked for thyself understanding, to ∮ discern judgment;

12 Behold, [f] I have done according to thy words: lo, [g] I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither [h] after thee shall any arise like unto thee.

13 And [i] I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both [k] riches and honour; so that there ‖ shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days.

14 And [l] if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, [m] as thy father David did walk, then [n] I will lengthen thy days.

f xxii 43 Lev. xvii. 3—5 xxvi. 30. Deut. xii 2—5. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 17.
g v 3. 1 Chr. xvii. 4—6 xxviii. 3—6. Acts vii. 47—49.
h Deut. vi. 5. x. 12 xxx. 6. 16. 20. 2 Sam. xii. 24, 25 Ps xxxi. 23. Mark xii 29, 30. Rom. viii. 28. 1 Cor. viii. 3. Jam. i 12. ii. 5 i John iv. 19, 20. v 2 3.
i 6. 14 ii. 3, 4 xi. 34. 1 Chr. xxviii. 8, 9. 2 Chr xvii 3—9.
k xv. 14. xxii. 43. 2 Kings xii. 3. xiv. 4 xv. 4. 35. xviii. 4. 22.
l Josh. ix. 3. x. 2 1 Chr. xvi. 39. xxi 29 2 Chr i 3.
m viii. 63 2 Chr. i. 6. vii. 5 xxix. 32—35. xxx. 24. Is. xl. 16. Mic. vi. 6, 7
n Gen. xxviii 12, 13. Num. xii. 6. Job xxxiii. 14, 15. Matt. i. 20. ii. 13. 19.
o 2 Chr. i. 7—12. Matt vii 7, 8. Mark xi. 24. John xiv. 13, 14. xv. 16. xvi. 23, 24. Jam. i. 5, 6. 1 John v. 14, 15.
p Num. xii 7. 2 Sam. vii. 5.
* Heb. *bounty*
2 Sam. vii. 8—12. xii. 7, 8. xxii. 47—51. 1 Chr. xxix. 12—14. Ps. lxxviii. 70—72. lxxxix. 19—37.
q ii. 4. ix. 4. 2 Kings xx. 3. Ps. xv. 2. xviii. 20—24.
r i. 48.———s Dan. ii 21. iv. 25. 32. v 18. 21.———t 1 Chr. xxix. 1. Jeb xxxii. 6—8. Ec. x. 16. Jer. i. 6. Matt. xviii. 3, 4.———u Num. xxvii. 17. Deut. xxxi. 2. 1 Sam. xviii. 16. 2 Sam. v. 2. John x. 3, 4. 9.———x Ex. xix. 5, 6. Deut. vii. 6—8. 1 Sam. xii. 23 Ps. lxxviii. 71.

y Gen. xiii. 16. xv. 5. xxii. 17. 1 Chr. xxi. 2. 5, 6. xxvii. 23, 24.
z 2 Chr i. 10. Ps. cxix. 34. 73. 144. Prov. ii. 6. iii. 13—18 xvi. 16. Jam i. 5. iii. 17.
† Heb. *hearing*
a Ps. lxvii. 1, 2. Prov. xiv. 8. Ec. vii. 11. 19. ix. 15—18.
b Is. xi. 2—4. Eph. v. 17. Phil. i. 10. Heb. v. 14.
c 2 Cor. ii. 16. iii 5.
d Prov. xv. 8.
e Ps. iv. 6. Prov. xvi. 31. Jam. iv. 3.
‡ Heb. *many days.*
∮ Heb. *hear.*
f Ps. x. 17. Is. lxv. 24. Rom. viii. 26, 27. 1 John v. 14, 15.
g 28. ii. 6. 9. iv. 29—31. v. 12. x. 3—8. 2 Chr. i. 12. ii. 11, 12. ix. 5—7. Ec. i. 16. Luke. xxi. 15.
h Matt. xii. 42. Col. ii. 3.
i Ps. lxxxiv. 11, 12. Matt. vi. 33. Eph. iii. 28. Phil. ii. 9—11.
k iv 21—24 x. 23. 27. Prov. iii. 16.
‖ Or, *hath not been.*
l ii. 3, 4. 1 Chr. xxii. 12, 13. xxviii. 9. 2 Chr. vii. 17—19. Ps. cxxxii. 12. Zech. iii. 7.
m ix. 4, 5. xv. 5. 2 Chr. xvii. 3, 4 xxix. 2. xxxiv. 2 Acts xiii. 22.
n Deut. v. 16. Ps. xci. 16. Prov. iii. 2. 16. 1 Tim. iv. 8.

V. 2, 3. Until the temple was builded, the irregularity of sacrificing to the God of Israel in high places, and burning incense by the priests, was in some degree connived at: but the people proceeded further in it, than in the days of David, and Solomon was censurable for countenancing them by his example. Upon high hills, especially when covered with trees, as having peculiar solemnity and being favourable to retirement, they erected altars and offered sacrifices, after the manner of the nations around them, but contrary to the law of Moses. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 4. The tabernacle made under the direction of Moses, and the altar belonging to it, were at this time stationed at Gibeon: and this was on that account, the principal high place, where no doubt, the priests and Levites officiated according to the law. It is not said how long Solomon continued at Gibeon on this occasion; or what his burnt-offerings were: but he offered a thousand of one kind or other, which the constant and vehement fire on the altar entirely consumed.

V. 5—14. We must not judge of Solomon's dream by our ordinary dreams, in which almost every thing is incoherent and irrational, though they often savour of a man's waking thoughts, pursuits, and character.—Whilst Solomon's corporeal senses were locked up in sleep, the powers of his soul were supernaturally invigorated: and he was enabled to receive the divine vision, and to make a suitable choice in the case referred to him. His pleas were cogent, and his determination wise. His father had ruled over Israel in truth and righteousness, and had been greatly favoured and prospered; he was the first of the rulers of Israel, who had been succeeded by his son; Solomon had been preferred before his elder brethren by God's own appointment; all these circumstances concurred to raise men's expectations, or to excite their enmity and envy; and thus to increase the importance and arduousness of his station. The people were very numerous, they were the chosen of God, and among them he must both judge in equity, and promote true godliness. Yet he was very young, and inexperienced as a child. His single petition therefore was, that the LORD would give his servant an understanding heart; that is, that he would enlarge and strengthen his intellectual powers, give him a ready discernment in spiritual things and a correspondent disposition; and furnish him with the peculiar talents and capacities for government; that he might administer justice and judgment, with impartial rectitude and deep penetration, for the benefit of the people and the honour of God. Doubtless these sentiments were habitually in Solomon's mind, previously to this vision: and this consciousness of his own insufficiency had led him to depend upon the Lord to

o Gen. xli. 7. Jer. xxxi. 26.
p 2 Sam. vi. 17.
q viii. 65. 2 Sam. vi. 18, 19. 2 Chr. vii. 7—10. xxx. 22—26.
r Gen. xl. 20. Esth. i. 3 Dan. v. 1. Mark vi. 21.
s Deut. xxiii. 17. Josh. ii. 1.
t Ex. xviii. 13 26. Num. xxvii. 2.
u Gen. xliii. 10. Rom. xiii. 7.

15 And Solomon [o] awoke; and behold, *it was* a dream. And he came to Jerusalem, and stood [p] before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and offered up burnt-offerings, and offered [q] peace-offerings, and made [r] a feast to all his servants.

16 ¶ Then came there [s] two women, *that were* harlots, unto the king, and [t] stood before him.

17 And the one woman said, [u] O my lord, I and this woman dwell in one house, and I was delivered of a child with her in the house.

18 And it came to pass, the third day after that I was delivered, that this woman was delivered also: and we *were* together; *there was* no stranger with us in the house, save we two in the house.

19 And this woman's child died in the night; because she overlaid it.

x John iii. 20. 21.

20 And she arose at [x] midnight, and [y] took my son from beside me, while thine handmaid slept, and laid it in her bosom, and laid her dead child in my bosom.

z Gen. xxi. 7. 1 Sam. i. 23. Lam. iv. 3, 4.

21 And when I arose in the morning to [z] give my child suck, behold, it was dead; but when I had considered it in the morning, behold, it was not my son which I did bear.

22 And the other woman said, Nay; but the living *is* my son, and the dead *is* thy son. And this said, No; but the dead *is* thy son, and the living *is* my son. Thus they spake before the king.

23 Then said the king, the one saith, This *is* my son that liveth, and thy son *is* the dead: and the other saith, Nay; but thy son *is* the dead, and my son *is* the living.

24 And the king said, Bring me a sword. And they brought a sword before the king.

a Prov. xxv. 3.

25 And the king said, [a] Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other.

b Gen. xliii. 30. Is. xlix. 15. Jer. xxxi. 20. Hos. xi. 8. Phil. i. 8. ii. 1. 1 John iii. 17.
* Heb. *were hot.*
c Rom. i. 31. 2 Tim. iii. 3.

26 Then spake the woman, whose the living child *was*, unto the king, (for [b] her bowels * yearned upon her son,) and she said, O my lord, [c] give her the living child, and in no wise slay it. But the other said, Let it be neither mine nor thine, *but* divide it.

27 Then the king answered, and said, Give her the living child, and in no wise slay it: she *is* the mother thereof.

d 1 Sam. xii. 18. Prov. xxiv. 21.
e 9—12. Ezra vii. 25. Ec. vii. 19. Dan. v. 11. 1 Cor. i. 24. 30. Col. ii. 3.
† Heb. *in the midst of him.*

28 And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged, and they [d] feared the king; for they saw that [e] the wisdom of God *was* † in him to do judgment.

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qualify him for the due discharge of the duties of his important station.—Absalom and Adonijah seem not to have been troubled with anxiety on this account, though far inferior to Solomon in capacity for ruling: but they sought the *honour and power of the kingdom;* he *desired to discharge the duty of a king.* The disposition and judgment which dictated this petition, in preference to all those alluring distinctions which carnal minds pursue, and which especially attract young persons in superior stations, was well pleasing to the Lord; and he assured him, that "*he had* "*given* him a wise and an understanding heart;" and that he should receive a vast accession of wisdom: so that he should excel all the kings of Israel, who had preceded or should succeed him in all kinds of knowledge and discernment, and also in riches and honour, which he had not asked.—The promise of long life was conditionally added; and perhaps it was in part forfeited by the idolatry, and other sins, into which he was afterwards betrayed. (2 *Chr.* i. 1—16.)

V. 16—22. These women seem to have been harlots, who found means to evade the law.—They were alone when the child died, though probably not when the children were born. The first woman's account, though conjectural, seems to have been the truth. Perhaps the other woman feared some reproach, suspicion, or punishment, as if she had willingly or negligently occasioned the death of her child; or she hoped to make some gain by means of the living child; or perhaps she was induced by envy and malignity to claim it as her own: for her willingness to have it divided evinced that she had no true affection for it.

V. 23—28. As there was no witnesses in this transaction, and both parties were alike strenuous and positive, the cause became extremely difficult: and probably it was referred to the king's hearing, because it had puzzled the inferior judges. In many countries such cases have been decided *by lot;* and, which is much worse, *by duels;* or the parties have been tortured that they might be compelled to declare the truth. But Solomon adopted the only rational method, by making use of his acquaintance with the human heart, to discover which of them had the *feelings* of a mother for the living child. Yet when he called for the sword, and ordered the living child to be divided; as none of the auditors seem to have perceived his intentions, they doubtless would secretly condemn the proposal, as puerile, absurd, and inhuman. The woman, who consented to the division of the child, perhaps expected to obtain Solomon's favour by this acquiescense: but she betrayed her want of natural affection for the child, and her resentment against her competitor; whilst the other expressed all the feelings of a mother in an artless and inimitable manner.

CHAP. IV.

Solomon's princes, 1—6. *Twelve officers who provided for his household, each in his month,* 7—19. *The prosperity and grandeur of his kingdom* 20—25. *His horses and chariots,* 26—28. *His wisdom and reputation,* 29—34.

SO king Solomon was king [a] over all Israel.
2 And these *were* [b] the princes which

a xi. 13. 35, 36. xii. 19, 20. 2 Sam. v. 5.
q Ex. xviii. 21. 2 Sam. viii. 16—18. xx. 23—26. 1 Cor. xii. 28.

And when the people saw, that by this extraordinary measure Solomon had extorted the truth beyond all further doubt; they revered, and stood in awe of him, notwithstanding his youth; perceiving "that the wisdom of God "was in him to do judgment."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—15.

Whatever external or intellectual accomplishments any man may possess, "to love the LORD" is the grand distinction between one man and another: and thus the meanest believer is preferred before all the wise, learned, renowned, and prosperous unbelievers on earth, and is classed among apostles, prophets, and those princes who have served God. Indeed, admiration of his perfections, gratitude for his goodness, delight in his service, and zeal for his glory, form the perfection and felicity of angels; and to this character the grace of our Redeemer renews all those, who are interested in his salvation. Such as love the Lord should copy the examples, and follow the instructions, of those who have gone before them in the same path; especially of their pious parents: but they should be careful to avoid their errors and transgressions; for even good men find it difficult to act themselves *at all times* as they would counsel others: therefore defects will be found in the best characters, and in the best state of the church upon earth. We should indeed watch and pray against all evil in ourselves, and use our influence to prevent it in others: yet we should expect to see many things that we disapprove, and learn to make allowances for them. —That is never wasted which is prudently spent in God's service: and the munificence and liberality of the great should be proportioned to their affluence, that their example may edify their inferiors. To abound in the work of the Lord, *upon scriptural principles*, forms the proper method of waiting for the gracious communications of further knowledge, grace, and comfort. In effect, the Lord by his gospel makes this proposal to all who hear it, "Ask what I shall give thee." He does not indeed bind himself to gratify the desires of the ambitious, the covetous, the sensual, the envious, or the revengeful: but he is ever ready to answer the petitions of those, who ask of him heavenly wisdom and spiritual blessings, how vile soever they have hitherto been. We should therefore first request the Lord to teach us what to pray for, and how to pray aright: and if we from our hearts, in the Redeemer's name, have been taught to ask of the Lord, his favour, his image, his graces, and his comforts; with wisdom, ability, and a willing mind, to fill up our station in the church and in society, to his glory and the good of others; he hath already given us an understanding heart, and will make continual accessions to this gift. As long as we decidedly prefer these spiritual blessings to all carnal things, we may be sure that he will give us as much of outward comforts as he sees really subservient to our good. We should also honour the riches of his all-sufficiency and liberality, by multiplying and enlarging our requests, and grasping at more and more from him; for he will take it graciously, and deal with us accordingly. In every service, public and private, they are most qualified for their work, and acquit themselves the best in it, who are most sensible of its difficulty and of their own insufficiency. It bodes well, when they, whom others call *wise men*, deem themselves *children;* and as ill, when men *are singular* in a good opinion of their own abilities and attainments. Distinguishing favours require peculiar returns of gratitude: and a man's being evidently called to very important and arduous services, may dictate his prayers and encourage his expectations of proportionable assistance. Such as succeed eminently wise and good men, should ask a double portion of wisdom and grace, to answer the expectations of others from them: and they who, in deviation from ordinary rules, are employed in any public service, will be more narrowly watched, and more severely censured, if they act inconsistently. Let not this hint be overlooked or taken amiss, by those who preach the gospel without an express appointment from man, in any of those ways by which ministers are ordinarily sent forth. The continued blessing of God can only be expected in the way of persevering obedience: and negligence or wickedness will always ensure loss in our temporal or spiritual comforts.

V. 16—28.

Judges, magistrates, and all concerned in trying causes, need great discernment, as well as integrity, in order to sift out the truth, when so much pains and craft are employed to conceal it: they ought therefore, in all their studies and in all their decisions, to ask wisdom of God; and we should earnestly remember them in our prayers.—Where the Lord has given abilities, and a heart disposed to improve them, he will open a way for the profitable exercise of them in his due time: and an accurate acquaintance with the human heart will be found a most profitable kind of knowledge for all, but especially for magistrates and ministers. God hath made natural affection very strong, especially in mothers, as the great mean of preserving their infants in the midst of their dangers and infirmities, notwithstanding all the trouble and fatigue which they occasion: yet human depravity, habitual wickedness, or fear and shame, can extinguish it, and even mothers are capable of becoming the murderers of their own infants! Surely this harlot will rise up in judgment against such unnatural criminals, and condemn them; and perhaps still more their brutal seducers, who have deserted them when exposed to these awful temptations! But to accommodat-

he had; Azariah the son of Zadok the
* Or, *chief officer.* * priest;
3 Elihoreph and Ahiah, the sons of
c 2 Sam. xx. 25. *Shiva.* 1 Chr. xviii. 16. *Shavsha.* Shisha, † scribes; Jehoshaphat the son
of Ahilud, the ‡ recorder.
‡ Or, *secretaries.* ‡ Or, *remembrancer.*
4 And d Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada
d ii. 35. *was* over the host; and e Zadok and Abi-
e ii. 26, 27. 35. athar *were* the priests;
5 And Azariah the son of Nathan *was*
over the officers; and Zabud the son of
f i. 10, &c. 2 Sam. vii. 2. xii. 1—5. f Nathan *was* principal officer, *and* g the
g 2 Sam. xv. 37. xvi. 16. John xiii. 23. xv. 14. Jam. ii. 23. king's friend;
6 And Abishar *was* over the house-
h v. 14. xii. 18. 2 Sam. xx. 24. *Adoram.* hold: and h Adoniram the son of Abda
was over the § tribute.
§ Or, *levy.*
7 ¶ And Solomon had twelve officers
over all Israel, which provided victuals
i 1 Chr. xxvii. 1—15. for the king and his household: i each
man his month in a year made pro-
vision.
8 And these *are* their names: * The
* Or, *Ben hur.* k Judg. xvii. 1 xix. 1. son of Hur, in k mount Ephraim.
9 † The son of Dekar, in Makaz, and
† Or, *Ben-dekar.* l Josh. xix. 42. *Shaalabbin.* in l Shaalbim, and m Beth-shemesh, and
m 1 Sam. vi. 12 20. Elonbethhanan.
10 ‡ The son of Hesed in Aruboth;
‡ Or, *Ben-hesed.* n Josh. xv. 35. o Josh. xii. 17. xvii. 3. to him *pertained* n Sochoh, and all the
land of o Hepher.
11 § The son of Abinadab, in all
§ Or, *Ben-abinadab.* p Josh. xii. 23. xvii. 11. Judg. i. 27. the region of p Dor; which had Tap-
hath the daughter of Solomon to wife.
12 Baanah the son of Ahilud; *to him*
pertained q Taanach and r Megiddo, and
q Josh xvii. 11. Judg. v. 19. all s Beth-shean, which *is* by t Zartanah
r 2 Kings xxiii 29, 30. beneath u Jezreel, from Beth-shean to
s 1 Sam. xxxi. 10. 12. x Abel-meholah, *even* unto *the place that*
t vii 46. *Zarthan.* Josh. ii. 16. *is* beyond Jokneam.
u xviii. 46.
x xix. 16.
13 ‖ The son of Geber, in y Ramoth-
‖ Or, *Ben-geber.* y xxii. 3. 2 Kings ix. 1. 14. gilead; to him *pertained* z the towns of
z Num. xxxii. 41. Deut. iii. 4. Jair the son of Manasseh, which *are* in
Gilead: to him *also pertained* the region
a Ps. xxii. 12. lxviii. 15. of Argob, which *is* in a Bashan, three-
score great cities with walls and brazen
bars.
14 Ahinadab the son of Iddo *had*
* Or, *to Mahanaim.* Gen. xxxii. 2. 2 Sam. ii. 8. xvii 24. 27. * Mahanaim.
15 Ahimaaz *was* in b Naphtali; he
b Josh. xix. 32—39. c 11. 1 Sam xviii. 18. also took Basmath c the daughter of So-
lomon to wife:
16 Baanah the son of Hushai *was* in
d Josh xix. 24—31 d Asher and in Aloth.
17 Jehoshaphat the son of Paruah in
e Josh. xix. 17—23. e Issachar.
18 f Shimei the son of Elah, in g Ben-
f i. 8. g Josh. xviii. 21—28. jamin.
19 Geber the son of Uri *was* in the
country of Gilead, *in* h the country of
h Num. xxi. 21—35. Deut. ii. 26—37. iii. 1—17. Josh. xiii. 9—12. Sihon king of the Amorites, and of Og
king of Bashan; and *he was* the only
officer which *was* in the land.

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this transaction, may we not observe, that many professors, (like the pretended mother who consented to have the child divided,) would mutilate the sacred Scriptures, and leave out those parts that militate against their prejudices, pride, and lusts? yea, they would fain divide their hearts betwixt God and mammon. But the true believer loves the whole Scripture, and holds it fast, and values doctrines, precepts, warnings, promises, and every part, as necessary to the perfection of the inestimable whole: and this cordial affection proves the whole to be his own. He would yield his heart entirely to the Lord, and seek after his happiness from Him alone. Soon *our* Solomon will decide betwixt these two characters: "in him is the "wisdom of God to do judgment:" let us then see to it, that our cause and title be clear; for he cannot be imposed upon by any evasions or subterfuges; seeing he "searcheth the hearts of all the children of men," and "all "things are naked and open before him, with whom we "have to do."

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1. David had not at first reigned *over all Israel;* and none of Solomon's successors had this privilege continued to them.

V. 2—6. Most of these *princes*, or ministers of state, and chief officers, were either the same persons whom David had employed, or their sons. Abiathar, though deposed from the high-priesthood, and secluded from the sanctuary, retained under Zadok the title and emoluments of a priest, or one of the chief priests. Azariah the son, or grandson of Zadok, being the son of Ahimaaz; (1 *Chr.* vi. 8, 9;) might under his grandfather have the chief management of ecclesiastical matters. Two sons of Nathan *the prophet*, as it is supposed, were preferred by Solomon, and one was dignified as the king's friend.

V. 7—19. These officers were appointed to procure every kind of provision, where it was most plentiful and good: and we may suppose, that besides the monthly supply of such productions as were common to the whole land, they would purchase upon the spot those provisions which were peculiar to each district, and which could be preserved. This was a salutary and economical arrangement, and would prevent any part of the country from being improperly drained; it would also promote an equal consumption, and supply the requisite plenty upon the best terms. Two of these purveyors married daughters of Solomon. Perhaps he had more daughters, though but one son, by all his wives. But these marriages must have taken place many years after his accession, and this chapter is a general account of the state of the land in his reign. Geber seems to have had the chief management of the whole country beyond Jordan, and to have employed his son, and Abinadab, under him in that district. (13, 14. 19.)

20 Judah and Israel *were* many, [i] as the sand which *is* by the sea in multitude, [k] eating and drinking and making merry.

21 And [l] Solomon reigned over all kingdoms, from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they [m] brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life.

22 ¶ And Solomon's * provision for one day was thirty † measures of fine flour, and threescore measures of meal,

23 [n] Ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and an hundred sheep, beside harts, and roe-bucks, and fallow deer, and fatted fowl.

24 For he had dominion over all *the region* on this side the river, from Tiphsah even to [o] Azzah, over [p] all the kings on this side the river: and he [q] had peace on all sides round about him.

25 And Judah and Israel dwelt ‡ safely [r] every man under his vine, and under his fig-tree, [s] from Dan even to Beersheba all the days of Solomon.

26 And Solomon had [t] forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen.

27 And [u] those officers provided victuals for king Solomon, and for all that came unto king Solomon's table, every man in his month: they lacked nothing.

28 Barley also and straw for the horses and § dromedaries brought they unto the place where *the officers* were, every man according to his charge.

29 ¶ And [x] God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and [y] largeness of heart, even [z] as the sand that *is* on the sea shore.

30 And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of [a] the east country, and all [b] the wisdom of Egypt.

31 For he was [c] wiser than all men; than [d] Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahal: and [f] his fame was in all nations round about.

32 And [g] he spake three thousand proverbs: and his [h] songs were a thousand and five.

33 And he spake of trees, from [i] the cedar-tree that *is* in Lebanon, even unto [k] the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also [l] of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes.

34 And [m] there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.

i iii. 8. Gen. xiii. 16. xv. 5. xxii. 17. Pro. xiv. 28.
k 1 Sam. xxx. 16. 1 Chr. xii. 39. Job i. 13. Ps. lxxii. 3—7. Ec. ii. 24. Is. xxii. 13. Mic. iv. 4.
l Gen. xv. 18. Ex. xxiii. 31. Deut. xi. 24. Josh. i. 4. 2 Chr. ix. 26. Ps. lxxii. 8, 9.
m 2 Kings xvii. 3. 2 Chr. xvii. 5. xxxii. 23. Ps. lxviii. 29. lxxii. 10, 11.
* Heb. *bread.*
† Heb. *cors.*
n Neh. v. 17, 18.
o Gen. x. 19. Judg. xvi. 1.
p Ps. lxxii. 8, 11.
q 1 Chr. xxii. 9. Ps. lxxii. 3, 7. Is. ix. 7. Luke ii. 14.
‡ Heb. *confidently.* Is. lx. 18. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. xxxiii. 15, 16.
r 2 Kings xviii. 31. Mic. iv. 4. Zech. iii. 10.
s Judg. xx. 1. 2 Sam. xvii. 11.
t x. 25, 26. Deut. xvii. 16. 2 Sam. viii. 4. 2 Chr. i. 14. ix. 25. Ps. xx. 7.
u 7—19.
§ Or, *mules*, or *swift beasts.* Esth. viii. 10, 14. Mic. i. 13.
x iii. 12, 28. x. 23. 2 Chr. i. 10—12. Ps. cxix. 34. Pro. ii. 6. Ec. i. 16. ii. 26. Jam. i. 5, 17. iii. 17.
y Is. lx. 5.
z 20. Gen. xli. 49. Judg. vii. 12. Jer. xxxiii. 22. Hab. i. 9.
a Gen. xxv. 6. Job i. 3. Dan. i. 20. iv. 7. v. 11, 12. Matt. ii. 1.
b Is. xix. 11, 12. Acts vii. 22.
c iii. 12. Luke xi. 31. Col. ii. 3.
d 1 Chr. xv. 19. Ps. lxxxix. *title.*
e 1 Chr. ii. 6. vi. 33. xv. 17, 19. Ps. lxxxviii. *title.*
f v. 7. x. 1. 6. 2 Chr. ix. 23. Mat. iv. 24.
g Prov. i. 1. Ec. xii. 9. Mat. xii. 35.
h Cant. i. 1.
i Num. xxiv. 6. 2 Kings xix. 23. Ps. xcii. 12.
k Ex. xii. 22. Num. xix. 18. Ps. li. 7. Heb. ix. 19.
l Gen. i. 20—25.
m x. 1. 2 Chr. ix. 1. 23. Is. ii. 2.

V. 20. The people were not wasted in Solomon's reign by wars, invasions, or intestine contests; and therefore they grew exceedingly numerous and prosperous, and lived in great peace and plenty. But they seem to have been too much pleased and elated with their external blessings, and to have indulged themselves too freely in the use of them.

V. 21. David had subdued all the countries from the entrance of Egypt to the river Euphrates; and Solomon reaped the fruit of his victories, by reigning peaceably over these extensive territories, and increasing his own wealth, and that of his native subjects, by the presents and tributes of the inhabitants.

V. 22, 23. The provisions here mentioned would suffice for several thousands of people. Solomon's servants and officers, and those who flocked to his court from all parts of the land, and from distant nations, with their retinues, were entertained upon them.

V. 24. Tiphsah is supposed to have been a city, where was a bridge or ferry over the Euphrates; the name being derived from a word which signifies *to pass over. Azzah* is the same as *Gaza* of the Philistines.

V. 25. The land from one end to another was in such profound peace, and was so exempt from all oppression or terror, that the people disregarded the protection of the walled cities, and lived upon their lands, that they might enjoy their abundance upon the spot where it was produced.

V. 26. By comparing the passages referred to in the margin, it appears most probable, that Solomon had four thousand stalls, or stables, and forty thousand horses, employed in all sorts of carriages: and only fourteen hundred chariots for war, and for royal magnificence: yet he cannot be excused in thus multiplying chariots and horses.

V. 29. *Largeness of heart*, &c. This expression and comparison denote the unparalleled greatness of Solomon's intellectual powers; his most extensive knowledge comprising innumerable particulars; and his enlargement of heart in communicating instruction to all around him. 'A mind very comprehensive of all sorts of knowledge; 'and a heart to do a vast deal of good. As the sand encloses 'a vast body of waters; so his mind contained an ocean of 'knowledge, as Lord Bacon speaks.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 30—34. God not only gave Solomon heavenly wisdom and singular talents for government; but he superadded extraordinary capacities for the attainment of all kinds of knowledge: so that he excelled the wise men of Egypt and of Babylon, Arabia, or countries still more to the east, in astronomy, and other sciences for which they were renowned. In the knowledge of divinity he surpassed Ethan and Heman, who seem to have been men renowned

CHAP. V.

Hiram, king of Tyre, sends to congratulate Solomon; who informs him that he intended to build a temple, and desires him to furnish the timber, 1—6. *Hiram blesses God for Solomon's wisdom, and engages for the timber; requiring in return food for his household,* 7—9. *The mutual good offices between Hiram and Solomon,* 10—12. *The number of Solomon's workmen and labourers,* 13—18.

AND [a] Hiram king of Tyre [b] sent his servants unto Solomon: for he had heard that they had anointed him king in

a 10. 18. ix. 11—14. 2 Chr. ii. 3. *Huram.*
b 2 Sam. viii. 10. x. 1, 2. Ps. xlv. 12.

for extraordinary piety and wisdom at that time; and all others who were celebrated in Israel on the same account. (*Marg. Ref.*) He excelled also in morality, and economics; for he spake three thousand proverbs, of which such as were most suited for general utility have come down to us in the book of Proverbs. He likewise excelled in poetry, and wrote one thousand and five songs: but only one of these is preserved in Scripture. It may, however, be supposed, that many of the others were upon moral and religious subjects; as well as remarkable for the beauties of poetry. He was moreover deeply versed in all the branches of natural philosophy, and discoursed, in an admirable manner, upon the nature, properties, and uses of the several species of plants and animals. So that in every thing he possessed such an undisputed superiority over all men in that age, that his reputation for wisdom brought numbers from different kings and nations all around, to learn every kind of useful knowledge from him: and perhaps he possessed more accurate and extensive knowledge on a vast variety of subjects, than any mere man in any age or nation of the world besides ever did.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—28.

True wisdom will generally direct those who succeed prudent and prosperous men, in kingdoms or estates, to tread in their steps, to employ their servants, and to avail themselves of the good advice of their friends and counsellors: but folly and self-conceit delight in making many and great changes, though they commonly prove disadvantageous. (xii. 6—15.)—They who faithfully seek the good of our souls, though sometimes with sharp reproofs, are our best friends; and their memories are always entitled to grateful respect, and their children to kind regard; yet these are worthy of a wise man's confidence and friendship, only when they tread in the steps of their pious parents. The different ranks of men in society should be distinguished by a suitable attendance and provision: but "when "riches increase, they are increased that eat them," and the owners have much additional encumbrance, and but little accession of solid advantage. It is also extremely difficult to possess abundance, without covetousness, luxury, or ostentation; without abusing, wasting, or burying, the goods of our common Lord, to whom every one must give an account of his stewardship: yet, prudent management and frugality are excellent appendages to liberality, and serve to support the expenses of it. Wise and righteous princes are most valuable blessings to whole kingdoms, and should be sought in prayer from that God who hath all hearts in his hands: yet all outward prosperity is precarious and transient; and too often it proves unfavourable to religion, and increases pride, sloth, and sensual indulgence; thus rendering divine judgments necessary. Wealth without wisdom, and knowledge without humility and grace, are often destructive to the possessor, and to those with whom he is connected: yet both are the gifts of God, good in themselves, and only evil as abused by man's depravity. And heavenly wisdom teaches men to give God the glory in the use of these inferior blessings, and so renders them ornamental to the Christian profession, and conducive to promote designs of extensive usefulness.

V. 29—34.

A reputation for wisdom and piety is no further desirable, than as it consists with humility, and affords a man an opportunity of communicating more extensively that useful knowledge which the Lord hath imparted. Every information, which is needful in order to our glorifying God and obtaining his salvation, is preserved to us in the sacred Scriptures: and the light of heaven will more certainly and speedily instruct us in all useful knowledge, than all the regretted records of antiquity could do if we had them. Let us then rejoice that the Lord reigneth on a mercy-seat, and that his name is Emmanuel. His kingdom was faintly shadowed forth in that of Solomon, but is of a nobler and more heavenly nature. The blessings of it consists not "in "meat and drink, but in righteousness, peace, and joy in "the holy Ghost." In his days the righteous flourish; their numbers have already been immensely multiplied, and future ages shall witness a more rapid and vast increase, "when all kings shall bow down before him, and all "nations shall do him service:" (*Psalm* lxxii.) Then "shall they beat their swords into plough-shares, and war "shall be learned no more:" then shall "every man call "his neighbour under the vine, and under the fig-tree;" (*Zech.* iii. 10.) "In him are hid all the treasures of wis-"dom and knowledge;" his fame shall spread through all the earth, and all people shall come to him, learn of him, take upon them his easy yoke, and find rest for their souls. But whilst we look with joyful longing desires and fervent prayers for these glorious days: let us now sit at his feet, hear his word, ask of him wisdom, submit to his will, and seek his glory. Then, outward tribulation shall not break our inward peace; then we shall be satisfied with the plenteousness of his house; then we shall enjoy much liberty, and have many glimpses of his glory on earth, and shall speedily remove to yon brighter world above, where innumerable angels, and redeemed sinners, are happy in his presence, and rapturously celebrating his praises.

the room of his father; [c] for Hiram was ever a lover of David.

2 And [d] Solomon sent to Hiram, saying,

3 Thou knowest how that David my father [e] could not build an house unto the name of the LORD his God, [f] for the wars which were about him on every side, until the LORD [g] put them under the soles of his feet.

4 But now the LORD my God [h] hath given me rest on every side, *so that there is* neither adversary, nor evil occurrent.

5 And, [i] behold, I * purpose to build an house unto the name of the LORD my God, [k] as the LORD spake unto David my father, saying, Thy son, whom I will set upon thy throne in thy room, he shall build an house unto my name.

6 Now therefore command thou, that they hew me [l] cedar-trees out of Lebanon, and my servants shall be with thy servants; and unto thee [m] will I give hire for thy servants; according to all that thou shalt † appoint; for thou knowest [n] that *there is* not among us any that can skill to hew timber like unto the [o] Zidonians.

7 And it came to pass, when Hiram heard the words of Solomon, that he rejoiced greatly, and said, [p] Blessed *be* the LORD this day, [q] which hath given unto David [r] a wise son over this great people.

8 And Hiram sent to Solomon, saying, I have ‡ considered the things which thou sentest to me for: *and* I will do all thy desire, concerning timber of cedar, and concerning [s] timber of fir.

9 My servants shall bring *them* down from [t] Lebanon unto the sea; and [u] I will convey them by sea in floats unto the place that thou shalt § appoint me, and will cause them to be discharged there, and thou shalt receive *them:* and thou shalt accomplish my desire in [x] giving food for my household.

10 So Hiram gave Solomon cedar-trees, and fir-trees, *according to* all his desire.

11 And Solomon gave Hiram twenty thousand ‖ measures of wheat *for* food to his household, and twenty measures of pure oil: thus gave Solomon to Hiram year by year.

12 And the LORD gave Solomon wisdom, [y] as he promised him: and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon; and [z] they two made a league together.

13 ¶ And king Solomon raised a * levy out of all Israel; and the levy was [a] thirty thousand men.

14 And he sent them to Lebanon, ten thousand [b] a month by courses; a month they were in Lebanon, *and* two months at home: and [c] Adoniram *was* over the levy.

15 And Solomon had [d] threescore and ten thousand that bare burdens, and fourscore thousand hewers in the mountains:

16 Beside the chief of Solomon's officers, which *were* over the work, [e] three thousand and three hundred, which ruled over the people that wrought in the work.

17 And the king commanded, and they brought great stones, [f] costly stones, *and* hewed stones, to lay the foundation of the house.

18 And Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders did hew *them*, and † the stone-squarers: so they prepared timber and stones to build the house.

c 2 Sam. v. 11. 1 Chr. xiv. 1. Am. i. 9.
d 2 Chr. ii. 3.
e 2 Sam. vii. 5—11.
f 1 Chr. xxii. 8. xxviii. 3.
g Josh. x. 24. Ps. viii. 6. cx. 1 Mal iv. 3. 1 Cor. xv. 25. Eph. i. 22.
h iv. 24. 1 Chr. xxii. 9 Ps. lxxii. 7. Is. ix. 7. Acts ix. 31.
i 2 Chr. ii. 1. 4.
* Heb. *say.*
k 2 Sam. vii. 12, 13. 1 Chr. xvii. 12. xxii 10. xxviii. 6. 10.
l vi. 9, 10. 16. 20. 2 Chr. ii. 8. 10. Ps. xxix. 5.
m Rom. xii. 17 Phil. iv. 8.
† Heb. *say.*
n 1 Cor. xii. 14—21.
o Gen. x. 15. Ezra iii. 7.
p x. 9. 2 Chr. ii. 11, 12. ix. 7, 8. Ps. cxxii 6, 7.
q 1 48. Gen. xxxiii. 5 Is. viii. 18.
r iii. 9.
‡ Heb. *heard.*
s vi. 15. 34. 2 Sam. vi. 5. 2 Chr. iii. 5.
t Deut. iii. 25.
u 2 Chr. ii. 16.
§ Heb. *send.*
x Ezra iii 7 Ez. xxvii. 17. Acts xii 20.
B. C. 1012.
‖ Heb. *Cors.* 2 Chr. ii. 10.
y iii. 12. iv. 29. 2 Chr. i. 12.
z xv. 19. Gen. xxi. 32. Am. i. 9.
* Heb. *tribute of men.*
a ix. 15.
b iv. 7—19. 1 Chr xxvii. 1—15.
c iv. 6.
d ix. 20. 22. 2 Chr. ii. 2. 17, 18.
e ix. 23. 2 Chr ii. 2.
f vi. 7. vii. 9. 1 Chr. xxii. 2. Is. xxviii. 16. 1 Cor. iii. 11, 12. 1 Pet. ii. 6, 7. Rev xxi. 14—27.
† Or, *Giblites.* Josh. xiii. 5. Ps lxxxiii. 7. Ez. xxvii. 9.

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1. It is highly probable that Hiram was himself a worshipper of JEHOVAH, and loved David on account of his wisdom and piety; though his people in general seem to have continued idolaters. He sent to condole with Solomon on his father's death, and to congratulate him on his peaceful succession. Tyre and Zidon lay north of Canaan, and were not included in the grant to Israel; it was therefore lawful to form alliances with them.

V. 9. The Tyrians possessed a very small tract of land, and were employed and enriched by commerce and manufactures: and they had their provisions chiefly from the fruitful land of Canaan. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 11. Twenty thousand *baths* of oil are mentioned in Chronicles, which amounted at least to two thousand *cors.* (*Marg. Read.*) But as barley and wine are *there* spoken of, some think that the wheat, *here* mentioned, was intended for the use of Hiram's family, and the small quantity of very fine oil for his own use; whereas in Chronicles the provisions made for the workmen are intended.

V. 13—18. Only a small number of native Israelites were employed, in rotation, as it consisted with their conveniency, and probably in the easier services: but a great number of the remains of the ancient inhabitants of the land continually assisted the Tyrians, by removing the timber, conveying it to the sea, helping to navigate the

CHAP. VI.

The building of the temple began, 1. *The dimensions of the house, and its porch,* 2, 3. *The windows,* 4. *The chambers,* 5—10. *The promise of God concerning the temple,* 11—13. *Its walls, ceiling, floor, and ornaments,* 14—18. *The Oracle and Cherubim,* 19—30. *The doors of the Oracle and of the house,* 31—35. *The inner-court,* 36. *The time in which the whole was completed,* 37, 38.

a 2 Chr. iii. 1, 2.

AND[a] it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, [b] in the month Zif, which *is* the second month, that he * began to [c] build the house of the LORD.

b 37. Num. i. 1.

* Heb. *built.*

c Acts vii. 47. Zech vi. 12, 13. 15. John ii. 21. 1 Cor. vi. 19. 2 Cor. vi 16. Eph. ii. 20—22. Col. ii. 7. 1 Pet. ii. 5.

2 And the house which king Solomon built for the LORD, the length thereof *was* [d] threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof twenty *cubits,* and the height thereof thirty cubits.

d Ezra vi. 3, 4. Ez. xli. 1, &c. Rev. xxi. 16, 17.

3 And the [e] porch before the temple of the house, twenty cubits *was* the length thereof, according to the breadth of the house, *and* ten cubits *was* the breadth thereof before the house.

e Matt. iv. 5. John x. 23. Acts iii. 10, 11.

floats, and conveying it when landed to Jerusalem; and in preparing stones for the temple. (*Marg. Ref.*) These were superintended by three thousand and three hundred persons, perhaps of the same nations. Three thousand six hundred are mentioned in Chronicles: perhaps three hundred were officers over the rest; or they were supernumeraries, to supply for such as were sick and disabled from attendance. Thus the temple was chiefly built by the labour and riches of those who were originally Gentiles; which typified the calling of the Gentiles into the church: and the costly stones laid out of sight, as the foundation of the temple, typified Christ our tried and precious Foundation; and were an emblem of the hidden excellency of those who form a part of his spiritual temple.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The love of God causes men to love one another, and renders them superior to selfish jealousies and envyings: and it teaches them to rejoice in each other's prosperity, and to be glad to receive or afford mutual assistance. The most necessary and successful wars, not only produce much temporal evil, but obstruct or retard the execution of many useful designs for promoting godliness: we may then well pray, 'Send peace in our time, O Lord:' and when he "gives rest on every side, so that there is no adversary nor "evil occurrent," no time should be lost, but every one should be intent to devise, and execute, such useful undertakings as were before prevented. Different persons are qualified for different services; and whilst all harmoniously concur, in their proper places, and by improving their own talent, the common cause will prosper. It is admirable when the children rise up, and complete the wise and pious designs of their deceased parents; and all should rejoice, and bless the Lord, when they see such tokens of the prosperity of his church. God hath so constituted the earth, that every nation hath its peculiar productions, and its inhabitants their distinguished endowments: thus, their mutual intercourse is forwarded: and by an interchange of benefits, they are instructed to love one another as children of the same family. Happy would it be if commerce were generally conducted on such principles, and rendered subservient to the spread of true religion: but, alas! through man's depravity, it has often tended to diffuse wickedness and misery more rapidly through the nations of the earth! —All agreements should be made with consideration, that equity may be established, and contests precluded: and great punctuality should be observed in paying labourers their wages. Frequently, they are most ingenious in the liberal arts, who are strangers to true godliness: and many are employed *about* the church of God, who have no interest in its blessings. The meanest office in his service is honourable and profitable, if cordially performed: and millions of us poor Gentiles, who in ourselves were devoted to destruction, have been employed by Him. Our gracious Lord lays no intolerable burdens on any of his true people; but in every injunction consults their interest and comfort. Let us then serve him cheerfully, and mind our proper work: and after his example may we be humane and considerate in all our requisitions from our inferiors; that our service, like his, may be loved, and considered as a privilege by those employed in it.

NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1. (*Notes, Ex.* xxv. 8, 9.) The use and typical meaning of the temple, and those of the tabernacle, were the same: but the moveable tabernacle suited the estate of Israel when wandering in the wilderness, and a magnificent temple was more proper when they were settled in Canaan. A temple was not indeed essential to the religion of Israel; and therefore the building of it was deferred till four hundred and eighty years after that people was brought out of Egypt; or four hundred and forty years after they entered Canaan: and this temple was destroyed, in less than four hundred and twenty years after it was finished.—Solomon was more than three years in making the necessary preparations: and in the fourth year of his reign, he laid the foundation. The month *Zif* was the second of the *ecclesiastical* year. Some think that the names of the months here given, were not in use before the captivity.

V. 2, 3. The temple was a very magnificent building, and immense quantities of gold and silver were used about it: yet, apart from its courts, it was but a small structure, compared with many buildings in ancient and modern times. The temple was twice as large every way as the

4 And for the house he made * windows of narrow lights.

5 And † against the wall of the house he built ‡ chambers round about, *against* the walls of the house round about, *both* of the temple and of the [f] oracle: and he made ϕ chambers round about.

6 The nethermost chamber *was* five cubits broad, and the middle *was* six cubits broad, and the third *was* seven cubits broad: for without *in the wall* of the house he made ‖ narrowed rests round about, that *the beams* should not be fastened in the walls of the house.

7 And the house, when it was in building, was [g] built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was [h] neither hammer, nor axe, *nor* any tool of iron, heard in the house while it was in building.

8 The door for the middle chamber *was* in the right * side of the house: and they [i] went up with winding stairs into the middle *chamber*, and out of the middle into the third.

9 So [k] he built the house, and finished it; and covered the house with † beams and boards of cedar.

10 And *then* he built chambers against all the house five cubits high: and they rested on the house with timber of cedar.

11 ¶ And the word of the LORD came to Solomon, saying,

12 *Concerning* this house which thou art in building, [l] if thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute my judgments, and keep all my commandments to walk in them; [m] then will I perform my word with thee, which I spake unto David thy father:

13 And [n] I will dwell among the children of Israel, and [o] will not forsake my people Israel.

14 ¶ So [p] Solomon built the house, and finished it.

15 And he built the walls of the house within with boards of cedar, ‡ both the floor of the house, and the walls of the cieling: *and* he covered *them* on the inside with wood, and covered the floor of the house with planks of fir.

16 And he built twenty cubits on the sides of the house, both the floor and the walls, with boards of cedar: he even [q] built *them* for it within, *even* for the oracle, *even* for the most holy *place*.

17 And the house, that *is*, the temple before it, was forty cubits *long*.

18 And the cedar of the house within *was* carved with ϕ knops and ‖ open flowers: all *was* cedar: there was no stone seen.

19 ¶ And [r] the oracle he prepared in the house within, [s] to set there the ark of the covenant of the LORD.

20 And the oracle in the forepart *was*

* Or, *windows broad within, and narrow without; or, skewed and closed* Cant ii 9 Ez. xl. 16 xli. 26

† Or, *upon; or, joining to.*

He b. *floors.* 1 Chr xxviii. 11. Neh. x. 37 xii. 44. xiii. 5--9. Cant. i. 4. Jer. xxxv. 4. Ez. xl 44. xli. 5—11. xlii. 3—12.

f 16 19—21 31. Ex. xxv. 22. Lev. xvi. 2. Num. vii. 89. Ps. xxviii. 2.

ϕ Heb *ribs.*

‖ Or, *narrowings, or, rebatements.*

g v. 18. Pro. xxiv. 27. 2 Cor. v. 5. Col. i. 12. 1 Pet. ii. 5.

h Is. xlii. 2. Acts ix. 31. Jam. i. 20. iii. 17, 18.

* Heb. *shoulder.*

i Ez. xli. 6, 7.

k 14. 38.

† Or, *the vault-beams and the ceilings with cedar.*

l ii 3, 4. iii. 14 viii. 25. ix. 4, 5. 1 Sam. xii. 14, 15. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. 2 Chr. vii. 17, 18. Ps. cxxxii. 12.

m 2 Sam. vii. 13. 1 Chr. xxii. 10.

n viii. 27. Ex. xxv. 8. Lev. xxvi. 11. Ps. lxviii. 18. cxxxii. 12, 13. Is. lvii. 15. Ez. xxxvii. 24—28. 2 Cor. vi. 16. Rev. xxi. 3

o Deu. xxxi. 6 8. 1 Sam. xii. 22. 1 Chr xxviii. 10. 20

p 38

‡ Or, *from the floor of the house, unto the walls, &c.* 16.

q 5. 19, 20. viii. 6. Ex. xxv. 21, 22. xxvi. 33. Lev. xvi. 2. 2 Chr. iii. 8. Heb. ix. 3.

ϕ Or, *gourds.*

‖ Or, *openings of flowers.*

r 5. 2 Chr. iv. 20.

s viii. 6—10. Ex. xl. 20, 21. 2 Chr. v. 7. Heb. ix. 3, 4.

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tabernacle. It was about a hundred feet long, thirty-three feet wide, and fifty feet high: and it had a porch, on the east end, at the entrance, which formed an ornamental steeple of about two hundred feet high. (2 *Chr.* iii. 4.)

V. 4. *Windows*, &c. The tabernacle had no light from without, and the temple had not much. These windows, which are supposed to have been wider on the inside than without, were situated in the spaces betwixt the chambers afterwards mentioned; or, as some think, above them.

V. 5, 6. These chambers accommodated the priests, when they were upon duty at the temple: and in them they laid up their clothes, the sacred vessels not in immediate use, and the other treasures belonging to the temple. For the purpose of fixing these chambers, the wall of the temple was made two cubits thicker at the bottom than at the top: and where it was made a cubit less in thickness, a rest was formed on the outside, for the beams of the second story of chambers to lodge upon, and so for the third. By this contrivance the upper stories were larger than the lower; and the wall of the temple was not weakened, either by building or by repairing the chambers. It is supposed that there was also a gallery round about, by which the priests entered the chambers; and that there were none over the entrance of the temple.

V. 7. Every stone was squared, and fitted for its place, at the quarry; so that the temple was erected without noise, or the incumbrance of useless rubbish. Several of these circumstances may shadow forth spiritual things.

V. 8. There seems to have been a door, in each of the two upper stories, into a gallery, which communicated with all the chambers; and winding stairs from one story to another.

V. 10. The chambers were five cubits high, in each story; and thus they did not go up to the top of the temple.—The beams of cedar lay on the rests in the wall.

V. 11—13. This word of the Lord was both an encouragement to Solomon to proceed; and an intimation to him, and to Israel, that neither the service performed in building the temple, nor its presence with them, could secure to them the Lord's favour, if they were not obedient to his commandments: for both king and people stood upon the same terms with God, as they did before the temple was begun.

t 2, 3.

twenty cubits in length, and twenty cubits in breadth, and twenty cubits in the height thereof: and he overlaid it with * pure gold; and *so* covered [u] the altar *which was of* cedar.

* Heb. *shut up.*
u 22 vii. 48. Ex. xxx 1—3.

21 So Solomon [x] overlaid the house within with pure gold; and he made a partition [y] by the chains of gold before the oracle, and he overlaid it with gold.

x Ex. xxvi 29.32. xxxvi.34. 2 Chr. iii. 7—9.
y 5. Ex. xxvi 33. 2 Chr. iii 14—16.

22 And the whole house he overlaid with gold until he had finished all the house: [z] also the whole altar that *was* by the oracle he overlaid with gold.

z 20.

23 And within the oracle he made two cherubims *of* † olive-tree, *each* ten cubits high.

a Gen. iii. 24. Ex. xxv. 18—22 xxxvii. 7—9. 2 Chr. iii. 10—13. Ps. xviii 10. Ez. x. 2. &c. Heb. i. 14. 1 Pet. i. 12.
† Or, *oily.* Heb. *tress of oil.*

24 And five cubits *was* the one wing of the cherub, and five cubits the other wing of the cherub: from the uttermost part of the one wing unto the uttermost part of the other *were* ten cubits.

25 And the other cherub *was* ten cubits: both the cherubims *were* of one measure, and one size.

26 The height of the one cherub *was* ten cubits, and so *was it* of the other cherub.

27 And he set the cherubims within the inner house: [b] and they ‡ stretched forth the wings of the cherubims, so that the wing of the one touched the *one* wall, and the wing of the other cherub touched the other wall; and their wings touched one another in the midst of the house.

b Ex. xxv. 20. xxxvii. 9. 2 Chr. v. 8.
‡ Or, the *cherubims stretched forth their wings.* 2 Chr iii 11. Ps. lxxx. 1.

28 And he overlaid the cherubims with gold.

29 And he carved all the walls of the house round about with [c] carved figures of cherubims, and [d] palm-trees, and * open flowers, within and without.

c Ex. xxxvi. 8. 2 Chr. iii. 14. iv. 2 5 Ps. ciii. 20. cxlviii 2. Luke ii. 13, 14. Eph. iii. 10. Rev. v. 11—14
d Ps. xcii. 10—15.
* Heb. *openings of flowers.* 18. 32.

30 And [e] the floor of the house he overlaid with gold, within and without.

e Is. liv. 11,12. lx. 17. Rev. xxi. 18—21.

31 And for the entering of the oracle he made [f] doors *of* olive-tree: the lintel *and* side posts *were* † a fifth part *of the wall.*

f John x. 9. xiv. 6. Eph. ii. 18. Heb. x. 19, 20.
† Or, *five square.*

32 The ‡ two doors also *were of* olive-tree; and he carved upon them carvings of cherubims, and palm-trees, and ∮ open flowers, and overlaid *them* with gold, and spread gold upon the cherubims, and upon the palm-trees.

‡ Or, *leaves of the doors.*
∮ Heb. *openings of flowers.*

33 So also made he for the door of the temple posts of olive-tree, ‖ a fourth part *of the wall.*

‖ Or, *four square.*

34 And the two doors *were of* [g] fir-tree: the [h] two leaves of the one door *were* folding, and the two leaves of the other door *were* folding.

g v. 8.
h Ez. xli 23—24.

35 And he carved *thereon* cherubims, and palm-trees, and open flowers; and covered *them* with gold fitted upon the carved work.

36 And he built [i] the inner court with three rows of hewed stone, and a row of cedar beams.

i Ex. xxvii. 9—19. xxxviii. 9—20. 2 Chr. iv. 9. vii. Rev. xi. 2.

V. 15—22. The inside of the walls of the temple were throughout wainscotted with cedar, ornamented with exquisite workmanship; and it was floored with planks of fir, or, as some explain the word, of a very durable kind of cedar: yet both were covered with plates of solid gold. In the same manner and proportion, as the tabernacle had been, this building was divided into two parts: the *oracle*, or *the holy of holies*, from whence the Lord delivered his answers to the high-priest from above the mercy-seat, was twenty cubits square: it is also said to have been twenty cubits high, though the house was thirty: it was therefore either *built* or *ceiled* lower than the other part of the temple. The veil, which separated the holy of holies, was hung by golden chains on pillars erected for that purpose; (1 *Chron.* iii. 15, 16.)—"The altar, by the oracle," was the altar of incense without the veil, in the other division of the temple, which was twice as long as the most holy place.

V. 23—28. These cherubim were the emblems of the angels, as jointly worshipping God our Saviour; and as delighting to contemplate the mysteries of redemption.—They were distinct from, and much larger than, those which covered the mercy-seat, and indeed were inseparably united to it; (*Ex.* xxv. 18—24.) They stood erect with *their faces towards the wall;* (2 *Chron.* iii. 13;) and covered with their out-stretched wings the whole breadth of the most holy place. The others were of solid gold; but these of olive-tree covered with gold.

V. 31—35. It is probable, that besides the veil, there was another partition between the holy of holies, and the sanctuary. The veil covered the whole of this: but when that was drawn aside, folding doors, of olive-tree, plated with gold, and curiously engraved, took up a fifth of the partition, or about four cubits. The doors at the entrance of the sanctuary were rather larger.

V. 36. The inner court, at the entrance of the sanctuary, in which the altar of burnt-offering stood, was principally appropriated to the priests, Levites, and those who brought the sacrifices. It was separated from the other courts by a wall of hewn stone: but it is supposed that part was built of cedar-beams, to leave openings, through which the other worshippers might see the sacrifices offered, and join in the sacred services.

V. 37, 38. The whole time was seven years and a half; but only the number of whole years is mentioned. This is frequently the case.

k 1. 2 Chr. iii. 2.

37 ¶ In [k] the fourth year was the foundation of the house of the LORD laid in the month Zif:

38 And in the eleventh year, in the month Bul, which *is* the eighth month, was the house [l] finished throughout all the parts thereof, and * according to all the fashion of it. So was he seven years in building it.

l Ezra vi. 14, 15. Zech. iv. 9. vi. 13—15

* Or, *with all the appurtenances thereof, and with all the ordinances thereof.*

CHAP. VII.

Solomon builds himself a house, 1. *And the house of the forest of Lebanon,* 2—5. *The porch of pillars,* 6. *The porch of judgment,* 7. *The house of Pharaoh's daughter,* 8. *The costly materials of these structures, and of the great court,* 10—12. *Hiram, a skilful artificer, is fetched from Tyre,* 13, 14. *He casts two pillars of brass,* 15—22. *And the brazen sea; with ten bases, and ten lavers, and other vessels for the temple,* 23—47. *The furniture and sacred vessels of gold made for the temple,* 48—50. *The dedicated treasures brought into it,* 51.

BUT Solomon was building his own house [a] thirteen years, and he finished all his house.

a ix. 10. 2 Chr. viii. 1 Ec. ii. 4, 5, Matt. vi. 33.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—13.

Though God delights not in outward magnificence, but is present with and accepts the worship of poor believers, who assemble in the meanest place: yet he expects that the wealthy should devote their riches to his service. And whatever is liberally expended, out of zeal for his glory, and according to the rule of his word, shall be graciously accepted; though perhaps man may censure the expense, as needless or useless; (*John* xii. 3—8.)—Every good work should be done heartily and without procrastination: but it is not needless delay to consult prudent measures, to make requisite preparations, and to remove such obstructions, as might afterwards impede our progress, or divert our attention. Thus, young men, animated with a laudable design to seek the salvation of souls, and impatient to be employed in the work of the ministry, would do well to restrain their ardour, to wait for a proper opening in Providence, and to spend some time in previous study, meditation, and prayer; that they may acquire the wisdom, experience, humility, and steadiness, requisite for so important a work; and afterwards proceed in it without interruption, and to better effect: and a few years spent in this manner will no more be *lost time*, than those which were employed in preparations for the building of Solomon's temple.—Every thing in the church above is conducted in perfect harmony and regularity; every part of that spiritual temple being made ready for its place, before it is conveyed thither: and the more the church on earth resembles it the better.—The true church of God is most glorious within; and the true believer is chiefly employed in attending to the state of his heart.—In all religious matters conveniency must be preferred to splendour; but stability must not be sacrificed even to *apparent* conveniency. No pompous services will purchase a dispensation from obeying the least of God's commandments. All those things that men confide in, who allow themselves in sin, will be found as unavailing as the temple was to the wicked kings and people of Israel; for nothing but unreserved obedience to the precepts and statutes of God's word, can prove the sincerity of our faith, and our love to the Saviour. But, though numbers of professors apostatize, and whole nations forfeit their peculiar privileges; yet the Lord will dwell in the midst of his true people, and never forsake them; they will delight in his ordinances and commandments, and be encouraged by being told their duty, as it is a token of the Lord's favour to them.

V. 14—38.

What is begun in the fear and love of God, in dependence on him, and obedience to him, will in due time be accomplished to his glory.—God must be honoured with the best we have: but gold is only meet to be trodden under foot, in comparison with the beauty of holiness; which is the glory and ornament of his spiritual temple.—The human nature of the Redeemer, that true Temple in which God dwells with man, is immaculately holy: the Christian, as united unto Jesus, and "an habitation of God through the "Spirit," is sanctified in his measure: and the church above, where innumerable angels unite with redeemed sinners, in ceaseless worship of God our Saviour, is perfect in this beauty. Let not then the hypocrite, or formal professor of Christianity, who is a stranger to the sanctifying influences of God's Spirit, and who lives in secret or open sin, suppose himself a part of this living Temple.—Yet let sinners come to Jesus, as the living Foundation, that they may be built on him, a part of this spiritual house, consecrated in body and soul to the glory of God.—If we have good ground to conclude that we are a part of this living Temple; let us look to it, that our inward part, which is seen by God alone, may be preserved most pure: let us be careful also of our outward conduct, that our blameless conversation may be ornamental to our profession in the sight of man: let us look to Jesus for encouragement and assistance in every service, and as the great exemplar to which we are to be conformed: and let us by faith behold that glorious company whom we hope soon to join; that we may now emulate their praises, imitate their obedience, and thus anticipate their comforts even in this world of sin and sorrow!

NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 1. Solomon began the temple first, and was most earnest in expediting it; and therefore it was finished in far less time than his own palace. As he employed twenty years in these buildings; (ix. 10;) it seems

2 He built also [b] the house of the forest of Lebanon; the length thereof *was* an hundred cubits, and the breadth thereof fifty cubits, and the height thereof thirty cubits, upon four rows of cedar-pillars, with cedar-beams upon the pillars.

3 And *it was* covered with cedar above upon the * beams, that *lay* on forty-five pillars, fifteen *in* a row.

4 And *there were* [c] windows in three rows, and † light *was* against light *in* three ranks.

5 And all the ‡ doors and posts *were* square with the windows: and light *was* against light *in* three ranks.

6 And he made a porch of pillars; the length thereof *was* fifty cubits, and the breadth thereof thirty cubits: and the porch *was* § before them: and the *other* pillars and the thick beam *were* ‖ before them.

7 Then he made [d] a porch [e] for the throne, where he might judge, *even* the porch [f] of judgment: and *it was* covered with cedar * from one side of the floor to the other.

8 And his house where he dwelt *had* [g] another court within the porch, *which* was of the like work. Solomon made also an house for Pharaoh's daughter, [h] whom he had taken *to wife*, like unto this porch.

9 All these *were of* [i] costly stones, according to the measures of hewed stones, sawed with saws, within and without, even from the foundation unto the coping, and *so* on the outside toward the great court.

10 And [k] the foundation *was of* costly stones, *even* great stones; stones of ten cubits, and stones of eight cubits.

11 And above *were* costly stones, after the measures of hewed stones, and cedars.

12 And the great court round about *was* with [m] three rows of hewed stones, and a row of cedar beams, both for the inner court of the house of the LORD, and for [n] the porch of the house.

13 ¶ And king Solomon sent, and fetched [o] Hiram out of Tyre.

14 He *was* † a widow's son of the tribe of [p] Naphtali, and his father *was* a man of Tyre, a worker in brass; and [q] he was filled with wisdom and understanding, and cunning to work all works in brass. And he came to king Solomon, and wrought all his work.

15 For he ‡ cast [r] two pillars of brass, of eighteen cubits high a piece: and a

b ix. 19. x. 17. xiv. 26. Cant. vii. 4.
* Heb. *ribs.*
c vi. 4.
† Heb. *sight against sight.*
‡ Or, *spaces and pillars were square in prospect.*
§ Or, *according to them.*
‖ Or, *according to them.*
d vi. 3.
e x. 18—20. Ps. cxxii. 5. Is. ix. 7.
f iii. 9. 28. Prov. xx. 8.
* Heb. *from floor to floor.*
g 2 Kings xx. 4.
h iii. 1. ix. 24. 2 Chr viii. 11.
i v. 17.
k Is. xxviii 16. liv. 11. 1 Cor. iii. 10, 11. Rev. xxi. 19, 20.
l Eph. ii. 20—22. 1 Pet. ii. 5.
m vi. 36.
n John x. 23 Acts iii. 11. v 12.
o 40. 2 Chr. ii 13. iv. 11. *Huram.*
† Heb. *the son of a widow woman.*
p 2 Chr. ii. 14.
q Ex. xxxi. 3—6. xxxv. 35. xxxvi. 1. Is. xxviii. 26. Dan. i. 17.
‡ Heb. *fashioned*
r 2 Kings xxv. 16, 17. 2 Chr. iii. 15—17 iv. 12. Jer. lii. 21—33.

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he finished the temple before he began his own house; though his numerous workmen might have carried on both together.

V. 2. Some have thought that this palace was built for retirement, in a beautiful situation near Mount Lebanon: but it seems rather to have been erected not far from Jerusalem; and to have been thus called, either from its airy and lofty situation, or from the cedars of Lebanon, of which it was built.—Solomon put the shields of gold *in the house of the forest of Lebanon;* yet when Shishak came to *Jerusalem* he seized on them: and when Rehoboam made brazen ones in their stead, they were carried before him when he went to the house of the Lord, and brought back with him to the great chamber. (x. 17. 2 *Chron.* ix. 16. xii. 9—11.)

V. 6—12. *The porch of pillars* is supposed to have been a covered portico, in which Solomon's guards and attendants waited: and *the porch of Judgment*, another portico, in which he sat to decide causes. It is not certain, whether "the porch of pillars" belonged to "the house "of the forest of Lebanon," or to the palace in Jerusalem: but it is most probable that "the porch for the throne" was at Jerusalem.—The palace seems to have stood within two courts; one nearer to it than "the porch for the "throne," and the other further off.—The palace for Pharaoh's daughter was placed at some distance, "out of the "city of David:" (*Marg. Ref.*) but it was built with the same magnificence as the other palaces. The *costly stones* seem to have been large valuable blocks of marble, beautifully squared and polished, on every side: and the outer court was surrounded with a wall like that which separated the court of the temple; so that the people might look through the rows of the cedar-beams, which were placed at proper distances. These buildings, though magnificent, were intended for use, and not mere ostentation: and no doubt they were finished in the best style of the architecture of those days. The court round Solomon's own house was built in the same manner as the inner court of the house of the Lord.

V. 14. Hiram's mother is in Chronicles said to have been "of the daughters of Dan;" and some think that Dan was the proper name of her father: but perhaps she was originally of the tribe of Dan, and had first been married to a man of Naphtali; and being by him left a widow, had married a Tyrian, to whom she bare Hiram, or Huram, who was called by the name of the king of Tyre. This man, uniting as it were the Israelite and the Gentile in one person, and being the chief workman in making the furniture of the temple, aptly represented the union of the Jews and Gentiles in the Christian Church.

line of twelve cubits did compass either of them about.

s Ex. xxxvi. 38. xxxviii. 17. 19. 28.

16 And he made [s] two chapiters *of* molten brass, to set upon the tops of the pillars: the height of the one chapiter *was* five cubits, and the height of the other chapiter *was* five cubits:

t Ex. xxviii. 14. 22. 24.25. xxxix. 15–18.

17 *And* nets of checker-work, and [t] wreaths of chain-work, for the chapiters which *were* upon the top of the pillars; seven for the one chapiter, and seven for the other chapiter.

18 And he made the pillars, and two rows round about upon the one network, to cover the chapiters that *were* upon the top, with pomegranates: and so did he for the other chapiter.

u vi. 18. 12. 35.

19 And the chapiters that *were* upon the top of the pillars, *were* of [u] lily-work in the porch, four cubits.

20 And the chapiters upon the two pillars *had pomegranates* also above, over against the belly which *was* by the network: and the [x] pomegranates *were* two hundred, in rows round about upon the other chapiter.

x 2 Kings xxv. 17. 2 Chr. iii. 16. iv. 13. Jer. lii. 22, 23.

y 2 Chr. iii. 17. Gal. ii. 9. Rev. iii. 12.
z vi. 3. Ez. xl. 48, 49.

21 And [y] he set up the pillars in [z] the porch of the temple: and he set up the right pillar, and called the name thereof * Jachin; and he set up the left pillar, and called the name thereof † Boaz.

* *He shall establish.* 2 Sam. vii. 12. Is. ix. 7.
† *In it* is *strength.* Ruth iv. 21. Is. xlv. 24. Matt. xvi. 18.

22 And upon the top of the pillars *was* lily-work: so was the work of the pillars finished.

a Ex. xxx. 18–21. xxxviii. 8.
b 2 Kings xxv. 13. 2 Chr. iv. 2. Jer. lii 17. 20.
‡ Heb. *his brim to his brim.*

23 ¶ And [a] he made [b] a molten sea, ten cubits from ‡ the one brim to the other: *it was* round all about, and his height *was* five cubits; and a line of thirty cubits did compass it round about.

c vi. 18. Ex. xxv. 31–36 xxxvii. 17–22.
d 2 Chr. iv. 3.

24 And under the brim of it round about *there were* [c] knops compassing it, ten in a cubit, [d] compassing the sea round about: the knops *were* cast in two rows when it was cast.

e 2 Chr. iv. 4 Jer. lii. 20.

25 It stood upon [e] twelve oxen, three looking toward the north, and three looking toward the west, and three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east: and the sea *was set* above upon them, and all their hinder parts *were* inward.

f Jer. lii. 21.

26 And it *was* [f] an hand-breadth thick, and the brim thereof was wrought like the brim of a cup, [g] with flowers of lilies: it contained [h] two thousand baths.

g 19. vi. 18. 35.
h 2 Chr. iv. 5.

27 ¶ And he made ten bases of brass: four cubits *was* the length of one base, and four cubits the breadth thereof, and three cubits the height of it.

28 And the work of the bases *was* on this *manner:* they had borders, and the borders *were* between the ledges:

i vi. 27. Ez. i. 10. x. 14. xli. 18, 19. Rev. iv 6, 7.

29 And on the borders that *were* between the ledges *were* [i] lions, oxen, and cherubims: and upon the ledges *there was* a base above; and beneath the lions and oxen *were* certain additions made of thin work.

30 And every base had four brazen wheels, and plates of brass; and the four corners thereof had undersetters: under the laver *were* undersetters molten, at the side of every addition.

31 And the mouth of it, within the chapiter and above, *was* a cubit: but the mouth thereof *was* round, *after* the work of the base, a cubit and a half; and also upon the mouth of it *were* gravings with their borders, four square, not round.

32 And under the borders *were* four wheels: and the axletrees of the wheels *were* § *joined* to the base, and the height of a wheel *was* a cubit and half a cubit.

§ Heb. *in the base.*

k Ez. i. 16. 18.

33 And [k] the work of the wheels *was*

V. 15—22. (*Marg. Ref.*) Each of these pillars being eighteen cubits in height, the two together would measure thirty-six cubits in length: but one cubit is supposed to be allowed for the bases. The chapiters are, in one place, said to have been *three* cubits in height: but the upper part, covered with decorations, is thought to be there mentioned separately, and to be here included. There were four hundred pomegranates in all; two hundred on each chapiter, in two rows of an hundred each. Perhaps ninety-six of these might be counted on every side; being nearly one half of the whole number on each chapiter: but, as some think, there were ninety-six smaller pomegranates in each row, in four divisions, towards the four quarters of the sea; and four larger pomegranates were placed between these four divisions. A writer, who completely understood such subjects, would scarcely be able, *by words without plates*, to convey any adequate ideas of the ornamental workmanship described in this chapter. These pillars were intended for ornament and for significancy. *Jachin* signifies *he will establish: Boaz, in him is strength.* And thus the priests and worshippers were reminded to trust only in the Lord, and not in themselves, or in their forms.

like the work of a chariot-wheel; their axletrees, and their naves, and their felloes, and their spokes, *were* all molten.

34 And *there were* four undersetters to the four corners of one base: *and* the undersetters *were* of the very base itself.

35 And in the top of the base *was there* a round compass of half a cubit high: and on the top of the base, the ledges thereof, and the borders thereof, *were* of the same.

36 For on the plates of the ledges thereof, and on the borders thereof, he [l] graved cherubims, lions, and palm-trees, according to the * proportion of every one, and additions round about.

37 After this *manner* he made the ten bases: all of them had one casting, one measure, *and* one size.

38 Then made he [m] ten lavers of brass: one laver contained forty baths; *and* every laver was four cubits: *and* upon every one of the ten bases one laver.

39 And he put five bases on the right † side of the house, and five on the left side of the house; and [n] he set the sea on the right side of the house eastward, over against the south.

40 ¶ And ‡ Hiram made [o] the lavers, and the shovels, and the basons: [p] so Hiram made an end of doing all the work that he made king Solomon for the house of the LORD;

41 [q] The two pillars, and the *two* bowls of the chapiters that *were* on the top of the two pillars; and the [r] two net-works, to cover the two bowls of the chapiters which *were* upon the top of the pillars;

42 And four hundred pomegranates for the two net-works, *even* two rows of pomegranates for one net-work, to cover the two bowls of the chapiters that *were* upon § the pillars;

43 And the [s] ten bases, and ten lavers on the bases;

44 And [t] one sea, and twelve oxen under the sea;

45 And [u] the pots, and the shovels, and the basons: and all these vessels, which Hiram made to king Solomon for the house of the LORD, *were* of ‖ bright brass.

46 In [x] the plain of Jordan did the king cast them, in * the clay ground between [y] Succoth and [z] Zarthan.

47 And Solomon left all the vessels *unweighed*, † because they were exceeding many: neither was the weight of the brass ‡ found out.

48 ¶ And Solomon made all the vessels that *pertained* unto the house of the LORD: [a] the altar of gold, and [b] the table of gold, whereupon the shew-bread *was*.

49 And [c] the candlesticks of pure gold, five on the right *side*, and five on the left, [d] before the oracle, with the flowers, and the lamps, and [e] the tongs of gold,

50 And the bowls, and the snuffers, and the basons, and the [f] spoons, and the § censers *of* pure gold; and the hinges *of* gold, *both* for the doors of the inner house, the most holy *place*, *and* for the

l vi. 29. 32. 35. Ez. xl. 31 37. xli 18 20 25, 26.
* Heb. *nakedness*.
m Ex. xxx. 17–21. 28. xxxviii. 8. xl 11, 12. 2 Chr. iv. 6. Zech xiii 1. Heb. ix 10. x. 22. 1 John i. 7. Rev. vii. 14.
† Heb. *shoulder*.
n 2 Chr. iv. 6. 10.
‡ Heb. *Hirom*. 13.
o 2 Kings xxv. 14, 15. 2 Chr iv. 8 11—16. Jer. lii. 18, 19.
p Ex. xxxix. 32—43.
q 15—22. 2 Chr. iv. 12.
r 17, 18.
§ Heb. *the face of the pillars*.
s 27—39.
t 23—26.
u Ex. xxvii. 3. xxxviii. 3. Lev. viii 31. 1 Sam. ii. 13, 14. 2 Chr. iv. 16. Ez. xlvi. 20—24. Zech. xiv. 21.
‖ Heb. *made bright*, or, *scoured*.
x 2 Chr. iv. 17.
* Heb. *the thickness of the ground*.
y Gen xxxiii. 17.
z iv. 12. *Zartanah*. Josh. iii 16 *Zaretan*.
† Heb. *for the exceeding multitude*. 2 Chr iv. 18.
‡ Heb. *searched*. 1 Chr. xxii. 14. 16.
a Ex. xxx. 1—5. xxxvii. 25—28. xxxix. 38. xl. 26 2 Chr. iv. 19.
b Ex. xxv. 23—30. xxxvii. 10—16. xxxix. 36. xl 22, 23. Lev. xxiv. 5—9. 2 Chr. iv. 8. Mal. i 12.
c Ex. xxv. 31, &c. xxxvii. 17, &c. xxxix. 37. xl. 24, 25. 2 Chr. iv. 7 Rev. i. 20.
d vi 19.
e Ex. xxv. 38.
f Ex. xxv. 29. Num. vii. 86.
§ Heb. *ash-pans*. Lev. xvi. 12. 2 Chr. iv. 21, 22.

V. 23—39. In the tabernacle there had been one laver of brass, at which the priests were continually to wash themselves, and the sacrifices also. But now the numbers of the priests and Levites were multiplied, and the sacrifices were proportionably increased Therefore Solomon prepared this bazen sea; and ten lavers besides, at which the sacrifices were to be washed. These were continually supplied with water by the Nethinims, or the Gibeonites who were servants to the priests. The brazen sea was a vast reservoir, capable of holding three thousand baths, or about four hundred and fifty hogsheads: though no more than two thousand baths were generally put into it. The *knops* are supposed to have been in the form of an ox's head, (2 *Chr.* iv. 3:) and some think that the water flowed out at the mouths of them; or of some of them. The oxen on which it was placed, might be intended as a protest against the absurd idolatry of worshipping God under an image in that form: though some have supposed them typical of the twelve apostles, *laboriously bearing* the gospel of Christ, the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness, into all the divisions of the earth. The ten lavers, though generally placed in two rows, in the inner court of the temple, were fixed upon bases which ran on wheels, that they might be removed as conveniency required. The description given of these bases, is very difficult to be understood: many of the original words are but seldom used, if at all, elsewhere: and it would be impossible to give a satisfactory explanation of each particular, without labour and prolixity disproportioned to its importance to us. The likeness of lions, oxen, &c. we shall hereafter find to be undeniably emblematic of the boldness, patience, diligence, and heavenly-mindedness of the ministers of Christ; and perhaps it had some such meaning here.

doors of the house, *to wit*, of the temple.

51 [g] So was ended all the work that king Solomon made for the house of the LORD. And Solomon brought * in the things which David his father had dedicated; *even* the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, did he put among the treasures of the house of the LORD.

[g] Ex xl. 33. Ezra vi 15 Zech. iv. 9.
* Heb *holy things* of *David* 2 Sam viii. 7. 11 1 Chr. xviii. 7. 8. 10. 11. xxvi 26-28 xxviii. 11-18. xxix. 2-8. 2 Chr v. 1

CHAP. VIII.

Solomon assembles the elders and princes, and the priests carry the ark into the most holy place, 1—9. *The glory of the Lord fills the house,* 10, 11. *Solomon blesses Israel; and praises God for performing his word to David,* 12—21. *He prays, that God would answer the supplications of Israel, and of strangers, in all ages and in all cases, in which they should call upon him towards this his holy temple,* 22—53. *He again blesses God and the people,* 54—61. *He offers numerous sacrifices, keeps the feast fourteen days, and dismisses the people, who return home joyful and thankful,* 62—66.

THEN [a] Solomon [b] assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the * chief of the fathers of the

a 2 Chr. v. 2.
b Josh. xxiii. 2. xxiv. 1. 1 Chr xxviii. 2. 2 Chr xxx. 1. Ezra iii 1.
* Heb. *princes*.

V. 48—51. There were ten tables; but perhaps one was much larger than the rest, and the shew-bread was chiefly placed upon it. Every thing was made new for the temple, (even the altar for burnt-offering, though not here mentioned;) except the ark of the covenant, with the mercy-seat and cherubim; for this was the peculiar symbol of God's presence with his people, as reconciled in Jesus Christ, the one Mediator between God and man. Thus under the gospel dispensation, externals of worship are altogether changed, but the way of access and acceptance with God is the same. Most things were multiplied, or enlarged above what they were in the tabernacle; but there was but one altar of incense, as before. Thus the New Testament dispensation is suited to the spread of the gospel, through all nations: but the multiplication of intercessors is an antichristian departure from the faith. Solomon having plenty of materials, prepared great quantities of all requisite utensils for the service of the sanctuary, for the benefit of those who should come after him: and he deposited the remainder of the consecrated treasures in the house of the Lord, for the same purpose, in future times. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—13.

Princes and nobles may be allowed, without censure, to build their houses, and to lay out their estates, as it is suitable to their rank, conveniency, or inclinations; yet they should be reminded that they will find it all a mere vanity. They should also be cautioned, not to expend too much in that manner, lest they should be straitened in their ability of doing good to others and glorifying God; and not to suffer such cares and contrivances to take up their time, or to draw their thoughts and affections off from communion with God, and the care of their souls: for peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, and the lively hope of a heavenly inheritance, are the choicest comforts; the beauties of holiness are the most valuable ornaments; and distinguished usefulness is the most honourable and durable testimony to a man's character. When, however, men begin first with the service of God, and are not by other employments taken off from it, or rendered negligent in it, and still return to it for satisfaction; and when in all their undertakings they have an eye to the peculiar duties of their stations, as well as to general conveniency and utility: we may conclude, that the multiplicity of their engagements will not materially injure them.

V. 14—51.

It is well when great ingenuity unites with equal integrity; when entire confidence is proved to have been well placed; and when every one abounds in the work of the Lord, in proportion as his abilities are enlarged. Yet in and after all our services, we need washing from the guilt and pollution of sin, which defiles us and all we do. Let us therefore bless God for the fountain which he hath opened for sin and for uncleanness; and which, in the preached Gospel and written word, may be conveyed to every part of the earth. In him also is *strength*, and he will *establish* all who trust in him. They who depend on their own resolutions, wisdom, or works; they who trust in riches, honour, prosperity, or powerful friends; they who worship other gods, or depend on other intercessors; and they who presume upon their notions, creeds, or external forms, can never be established, but will at length sink and perish. But the power of Christ rests upon the humble believer; his arm upholds him; his grace establishes his heart in hope and love; he is his stability in every trial, and his sufficiency for every service: and is both able and willing "to keep him from falling, and to present him faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy." He indeed is both the Temple and the Builder; the Altar and the Sacrifice; the Light of our souls and the Bread of life; and is every way adequate to the largest and most numerous wants of the millions, who have applied, and shall apply, to him. External images cannot describe, words cannot express, the heart cannot conceive, his preciousness or his love. Let us come to him, and wash away our sins in his blood; let us seek for the purifying grace of his Spirit; let us walk in the light of his instructive word, and observe his kind directions; let us feed upon him daily in our hearts by faith with

children of Israel, unto king Solomon in Jerusalem, [c] that they might bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD [d] out of the city of David, which *is* Zion.

2 And all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto king Solomon at [e] the feast, in the month Ethanim, which *is* the seventh month.

3 And all the elders of Israel came, and [f] the priests took up the ark.

4 And they brought up the ark of the LORD, [g] and the [h] tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy vessels that *were* in the tabernacle, even those did the priests and the Levites bring up.

5 And king Solomon and all the congregation of Israel that were assembled unto him, *were* with him before the ark, [i] sacrificing sheep and oxen, that could not be told nor numbered for multitude.

6 And [k] the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD unto [l] his place, into the oracle of the house, to the most holy *place, even* [m] under the wings of the cherubims.

7 For the cherubims spread forth *their* two wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark, and the staves thereof, above.

8 And they [n] drew out the staves, that the * ends of the staves were seen out in the † holy *place* before the oracle, and they were not seen without: and there they are [o] unto this day.

9 *There was* [p] nothing [q] in the ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses [r] put there at Horeb, ‡ when the LORD made *a covenant* with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt.

10 ¶ And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy *place*, that [s] the cloud filled the house of the LORD,

11 So that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD.

12 [t] Then spake Solomon, [u] The LORD said that he would dwell in the thick darkness.

c 2 Sam. vi. 1, 2. 12. 1 Chr. xiii. 1—5. xv. 3. 25.
d iii. 15. 2 Sam. v. 7—9. vi. 12. 17. 1 Chr. xv. 29. xvi. 1.
e Lev. xxiii. 34. Num. xxix. 12, &c. Deut xvi. 13. 2 Chr. v. 3. vii. 8—10. Ezra iii. 4. Neh. viii. 14—18. Zech. xiv. 16—19. John vii, 2. 37, 38.
f Num. iv. 15. Deut. xxxi 9. Josh. iii. 3. 6. 14, 15. iv. 9. vi. 6. 1 Chr. xv. 2. 11—15.
g iii. 4. 2 Chr. i. 3.
h Ex. xl. 2—33.
i 62, 63. 2 Sam. vi. 13. 1 Chr. xvi. 1.
k 2 Chr v. 7.
l vi. 19. Ex. xxvi. 33, 34. xl. 20, 21.
m vi 27. Ex. xxv. 20—22. xxxvii. 9. Ez. i. 6. x. 5.
n Ex. xxv. 14, 15. xxxvii 4, 5. xl. 20.
* Heb. *heads.*
† Or, *ark.* 2 Chr. v. 9.
o Josh. iv. 9. Mat. xxviii. 15.
p Ex. xxv. 21. Deu. x 2. 2 Chr. v. 10.
q Ex. xvi. 33. Num xvii. 10. Heb. ix. 4.
r Ex. xl. 20. Deu. x. 5.
‡ Or, *where.* 21. Ex. xxiv. 8. xxxiv. 27, 28. Deut. iv. 13.
s Ex. xvi. 10 xxiv. 16—18. xl. 34, 35. Lev. xvi. 2. Num. ix. 15. 2 Chr. v. 13, 14. vii. 2. Ez. x. 4. 2 Cor. iii. 18. Rev. xv. 8.
t 2 Chr. vi. 1, 2.
u Lev. xvi. 2. Deut. iv. 11. Ps. xviii 9. 11. xcvii. 2.

'thanksgiving,' maintain communion with God the Father, through his intercession, and yield up ourselves and all we have to his service. Thus being "strong in the Lord, and "in the power of his might," we shall be accepted, useful, and happy; and shall be enabled to do our own work, in our proper places, with fidelity, in a manner consistent with our profession, and to the glory of his name.

NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1. The temple was in a peculiar manner the residence of JEHOVAH in the midst of Israel, when the ark of the covenant was placed in it: and the want of the ark, after the Babylonish captivity, in the temple then built, intimated that that dispensation was ready to vanish away. Solomon's undertaking therefore was incomplete, and the temple lacked its chief glory, (notwithstanding all its gold and exquisite workmanship,) until the ark was removed thither, and fixed in the most holy place. This therefore he took care to perform, according to the law, and in the most public and solemn manner.—Mount Moriah, on which the temple was built, lay near to the city of David, on mount Zion, where the ark was before placed, but was distinct from it. (1 *Chr.* xxi. 18—30. xxii. 1. 2 *Chr.* iii. 1.)

V. 2. This was about eleven months after the temple was completed. The intervening time was doubtless employed in getting every thing ready for the solemnity; and the time which was chosen coincided with the feast of tabernacles, which ensured the presence of multitudes of the most zealous and pious Israelites, along with the elders and chief persons.

V. 3. The Levites of Kohath's family were appointed to carry the ark; and the priests were of that family: on the most solemn occasions, therefore, the priests performed this service.

V. 4. It is probable, that both the ancient tabernacle which Moses had made, and that which David had formed at Jerusalem, were brought up to the temple, and, with all their vessels and furniture, deposited in its treasuries. Thus the Mosaic dispensation afterwards resigned up all its honours to the Christian: and thus the knowledge and grace of the church on earth, will be absorbed and lost in the vision and glory of heaven.

V. 5. The altar of burnt-offering, which Solomon had prepared, seems to have been covered with sacrifices, without any fire under them: and when Solomon had ended his prayer, the fire came down from heaven and consumed them; (*Note*, 2 *Chron.* vii. 1. *Lev.* ix. 24.) But there might also be other sacrifices on the former altar, and likewise temporary altars erected, with all suitable preparations for so extraordinary an occasion. (*Note*, 63—65.)

V. 7—9. The cherubim, here mentioned, do not mean those which had been made of solid gold in the days of Moses, shadowing the ark; but those especially which Solomon had just prepared in the most holy place. The ends of the staves might be seen in the holy of holies, but not in the outer sanctuary. The ark now came to its resting place, and it continued in the same situation when this history was written. Aaron's rod, the pot of manna, and the copy of the law, were *by*, but not *within*, the ark.

13 [x] I have surely built thee an house to dwell in, [y] a settled place for thee to abide in for ever.

14 And the king turned his face about, and [z] blessed all the congregation of Israel: and [a] all the congregation of Israel stood;

15 And he said, [b] Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, [c] which spake with his mouth unto David my father, and [d] hath with his hand fulfilled *it*, saying,

16 [e] Since the day that I brought forth my people Israel out of Egypt, [f] I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel to build an house, that [g] my name might be therein; but [h] I chose David to be over my people Israel.

17 And [i] it was in the heart of David my father to build an house for the name of the LORD God of Israel.

18 And the LORD said unto David my father, [k] Whereas it was in thine heart to build an house unto my name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart:

19 Nevertheless [l] thou shalt not build the house; but thy son, that shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house unto my name.

20 And the LORD [m] hath performed his word that he spake; and I am risen up in the room of David my father, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised, and have built an house for the name of the LORD God of Israel.

21 And [n] I have set there a place for the ark, wherein *is* [o] the covenant of the LORD, which he made with our fathers, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt.

22 ¶ And Solomon [p] stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and [q] spread forth his hands toward heaven;

23 And he said, [r] LORD God of Israel, *there is* [s] no god like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, [t] who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that [u] walk before thee with all their heart;

24 Who hast kept with thy servant David my father that thou promisedst him; [x] thou spakest also with thy mouth,

x 2 Sam. vii. 13. 1 Chr. xvii. 13. xxii. 10, 11. xxviii. 6. 11, 20. 2 Chr. vi. 2.
y Ps. cxxxii. 13, 14. John iv. 21—23. Acts vi. 14. Heb. viii. 5. 13. ix. 11, 12.
z 55, 56. Josh. xxii. 6. 2 Sam. vi. 18. 1 Chr. xvi. 2. 2 Chr. vi. 3. xxx. 18—20. Ps. cxviii. 26. Luke xxiv. 50, 51.
a Neh. viii. 7. Mat. xiii. 2.
b 1 Chr. xxix. 10. 20. 2 Chr. vi. 4. xx. 26. Ps. ciii. 1, 2. cxv. 18. cxvii. 1, 2. Luke i. 68. Eph. i. 3. 1 Pet. i. 3.
c 2 Sam. vii. 25. 28, 29. 1 Chr. xvii. 12. Is. i. 20. Luke i. 70.
d Josh. xxi. 45. xxiii. 15, 16. Ps. cxxxviii. 2. Mat. xxiv. 35. Luke i. 54, 55. 72.
e 2 Sam. vii. 6, 7. 2 Chr. vi. 5.
f 1 Chr. xvii. 5, 6. Ps. cxxxii. 13.
g 29. Ex. xx. 24. Dan. ix. 19.
h 1 Sam. xvi. 1. 2 Sam. vii. 8. 1 Chr. xxviii. 4. Ps. lxxviii. 70. lxxxix. 19, 20.
i 2 Sam. vii. 2, 3. 1 Chr. xvii. 1, 2. xxii. 7. xxviii. 2.
k 2 Chr. vi. 7, 8. 2 Cor. viii. 12.
l v. 3—5. 2 Sam. vii. 5. 12. 13. 1 Chr. xvii. 4. 11, 12. xxii. 8—10. xxviii. 6.
m 15.
n 5, 6.
o 9.
p 2 Kings xi. 14. xxiii. 3. 2 Chr. vi. 12, 13.
q Ex. ix. 29. 33. Ezra ix. 5. Job xi. 12. Ps. xxviii. 2. lxiii. 4. Is. i. 15. 1 Tim. ii. 8.
r Gen. xxxiii. 20. Ex. iii. 15.
s Ex. xv. 11. 2 Sam. vii. 22. Ps. xxxv. 10. lxxxvi. 8. lxxxix. 6—9. Is. xl. 18. 25. Jer. x. 6. 16.
t Deu. vii. 9. Neh. i. 5. Ps. lxxxix. 3—5. Dan. ix. 4. Mic. vii. 18—20. Luke i. 72.
u ii. 4. iii. 6. vi. 12. Gen. xvii. 1. 2 Kings xx. 3.
x 15. 2 Sam. vii. 12. 2 Chr. vi. 14, 15.

V. 10—14. All the priests and Levites attended the removal of the ark, and sang solemn praises upon the occasion, with the sound of trumpets and instruments of music. (2 *Chron.* v. 11—14.) But when the ark, as the symbol of God's presence, had taken possession of the temple, the cloud filled the whole of it, so that the priests could no longer continue in it. The *thick darkness* represented the comparative obscurity and terror of that dispensation; and the darkness which in this world rests upon all our inquiries into the things of God and of eternity. "God "indeed is *Light*, and with him is no darkness at all:" but we sinners cannot approach or endure that light, except as seen in the person of Jesus Christ. Yet this thick darkness, whilst it terrified others, assured Solomon of the divine favour, and that this temple would be the residence of the ark, and the centre of the worship of Israel, for generations to come: and with these assurances he encouraged the people, he congratulated them on this renewed token of the Lord's former favours to Israel: and he pronounced a solemn and affectionate blessing on them.—Similar evidences of the Lord's gracious presence, and of his awful glory, had been vouchsafed, when the tabernacle was erected: and it is not easy to distinguish with accuracy between the cloud, and the glory of God which filled the house. It may, however, be observed, that at the close of Solomon's prayer, the fire burst forth from the cloud and consumed the sacrifices on the altar. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 15—21. In this introductory address, while Solomon adored and blessed God, with lively gratitude, for performing his promises; he also reminded the people of several particulars, which were well suited to affect their hearts, and prepare them to unite with understanding in the solemn services of that interesting occasion. The Lord had by Moses declared his purpose of selecting one place for his sanctuary, where he might "record his name," and meet and bless his worshippers: but hitherto no temple had been built, and the tabernacle and ark had been removed from one place to another. David, his chosen, was indeed accepted in his design of erecting a temple: yet he was not allowed to accomplish his purpose. But at length, according to the promise of God to him, his son had completed the temple, and had brought the ark into the most holy place. The tables of the law are called the *covenant*, because the covenant with Israel at Sinai was grounded on them. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 22. A scaffold had been prepared in the court of the temple: and on this, Solomon *stood up* to bless and instruct the people, and then he *kneeled* down upon it, to offer the following most copious and comprehensive prayer. To this reverential posture he also added the spreading forth of his hands towards heaven, as expressive of the fervour of his heart, and the largeness of his expectations, in this act of worship. (*Marg. Ref.*) The king of Israel never looked more glorious than on this occasion! Doubtless his personal performance of this service gave it a peculiar solemnity, and greatly affected the people: but he was also a type of Christ, who is at once our King and our Intercessor. It seems most probable, that he prayed from a full heart, without any precomposed form of words; but not without having seriously and fully considered what to pray for,

and hast fulfilled *it* with thine hand, as *it is* this day.

25 Therefore now, LORD God of Israel, [y] keep with thy servant David my father that thou promisedst him, saying, * there shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Israel: † so that thy children take heed to their way, that they walk before me as thou hast walked before me.

26 And now, [z] O God of Israel, [a] let thy word, I pray thee, be verified, which thou spakest unto thy servant David my father.

27 But [b] will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold [c] the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?

28 Yet [d] have thou respect unto the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to [e] hearken unto the cry and to the prayer which thy servant prayeth before thee to-day:

y ii. 4. 2 Sam. vii. 27. 29. 1 Chr xvii. 23 — 27. Luke i. 68—70.
* Heb *There shall not be cut off unto thee a man. from my sight.*
† Heb. *only if.* ii. 4. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. 2 Chr. vi. 16, 17.
z Ex. xxiv. 10. 1 Sam. i. 17. Ps. xli. 13. Is. xli. 17. xlv. 3.
a 2 Sam vii. 25—29. 2 Chr. i. 9. Jer. xi. 5. Ez. xxxvi. 36, 37.
b 2 Chr. vi.18. Is lxvi. 1. Acts vii. 48, 49. xvii. 24.
c Deut. x. 14 2 Chr. ii. 6. Ps. cxiii. 4. Jer xxiii. 24. 2 Cor. xii. 2.
d 2 Chr. vi.19. Ps. cxli. 2. Dan. ix. 17 — 19. Luke xviii. 1. 7
e Ps iv. 1. v. 1. lxxxvi. 3. 6, 7. lxxxviii. 1, 2.

29 That [f] thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, *even* toward the place of which thou hast said, [g] My name shall be there; that thou mayest hearken unto the prayer which thy servant shall make ‡ toward this place.

30 And hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, [h] when they shall pray ∮ toward this place: and hear thou in heaven [i] thy dwelling place; and when thou hearest, [k] forgive.

31 ¶ If any man [l] trespass against his neighbour, and ‖ an oath be laid upon him to cause him to swear, and [m] the oath come before thine altar in this house:

32 Then [n] hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, [o] condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head; and [p] justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness.

f 2 Kings xix 16. 2 Chr. vi 20 40. xvi. 9 Neh. i 6. Ps. xxxiv 15. Dan. ix. 18.
g Ex. xx.24. Deu. xii 11. xvi. 2. 6. xxvi. 2. John xiv. 13, 14.
‡ Or, *in this place* Dan. vi. 10.
h 2 Chr. xx. 8, 9 Neh. i. 5, 6.
∮ Or, *in this place*, i 43. 2 Chr. vi. 21. Ps. cxxiii. 1. Ec. v. 2. Is lvii. 15. Mat. vi. 9.
k Ps. cxxx. 3, 4. Dan ix. 19. Mat. vi. 12.
l 2 Chr. vi. 22, 23.
‖ Heb. *he require an oath of him* Ex. xxii. 8—11. Lev. v. 1. Prov. xxx. 9.
m Num. v. 16—22
n 30. 43.
o Num. v. 27. Deu. xxv. 1. Prov. i. 31. Is. iii. 10, 11. Ez xviii. 13. 30. Rom. ii. 6—10.
p Ex. xxiii. 7. Prov. xvii. 15. Ez. xviii. 20.

V. 23, 24. Solomon, in opening his prayer, addressed the Lord, with reference to his essential perfections, and his general relations to his rational creatures; and, as the God of Israel, the sole object of their worship, the author of their peculiar mercies, a God in covenant with them, and the eternal Portion of his believing obedient people. Other nations had their imagined deities, whom they worshipped and confided in; but they were not like the God of Israel, who had evidently performed all his covenant-engagements to his servants, that walked before him with all their heart: especially in his recent dealings with David and his family.

V. 25, 26. As the Lord had thus far performed his promises to David, in placing his son on his throne, and in enabling him to build him a house; Solomon took occasion to plead for the accomplishment of those other promises, respecting the perpetuity of the succession in his posterity: but as this was conditional, his petition *implied* a prayer that they might be directed and inclined to walk before God, as David had done, in such a manner as might ensure that event.

V. 27. Solomon was deeply sensible, and he would have the people seriously consider, that the most magnificent temple was no meet habitation for the infinite God. The ark might abide in it, and the Lord might thence display his gracious presence with his worshippers, which, contrasting his majesty, purity, and justice, with their meanness, guilt, and pollution, was a condescension that could not be sufficiently admired: but "the heaven of heavens," the glorious mansion of angels and archangels, could not *contain* or *circumscribe*, his essential presence.

V. 28—30. Though the Lord was no more *essentially* present in the temple than elsewhere; and though the full displays of his glory were made in heaven, his throne and his dwelling-place: yet he had recorded his name in the temple; and it was a peculiar type of the human nature of Christ, in whom the divine perfections are revealed, as harmonizing in the salvation of believers, in whom, "God is "reconciling the world to himself," dwelling among men, and accepting the services and answering the prayers of all true believers. The sacrifices continually offered, the incense burnt, and the whole service performed at the temple, were typical of the Redeemer's offices, oblation, and intercession: the temple therefore must be continually adverted to in all their prayers. Accordingly the Israelites, when far distant from Jerusalem, were accustomed to turn their faces towards it, as expressive of their dependence on the services there performed by the priests, and of their communion with the worshippers of JEHOVAH: and when they were near it, they resorted thither to present their supplications. Thus Solomon besought God, that in answer to the prayer which he that day offered, he would in all future ages regard the temple with his peculiar favour, and hear the prayers of all who should present them *towards it*, wheresoever they were, or whatever were their distresses. Under one word "*forgive*," he comprised all that he could ask in behalf of his people: for as all misery springs from sin; forgiveness of sin must prepare the way for the removal of every evil, and the communication of every good; and without it, no deliverance can eventually prove a blessing.

V. 31, 32. In case a man were accused of defrauding or robbing his neighbour; and decisive evidence should be wanting to prove whether he were, or were not guilty; and an appeal was made by oath, at, or towards the temple, to the heart-searching God, that he was innocent; or in any

33 ¶ When thy people Israel be [q] smitten down before the enemy, [r] because they have sinned against thee, and shall [s] turn again to thee, and confess thy name, and [t] pray, and make supplication unto thee * in this house:

34 Then hear thou in heaven, and [u] forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them again unto the land [x] which thou gavest unto their fathers.

35 ¶ When [y] heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; [z] if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and [a] turn from their sin, when thou afflictest them:

36 Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, that [b] thou teach them [c] the good way wherein they should walk, and [d] give rain upon thy land which thou hast given to thy people for an inheritance.

37 ¶ If there be [e] in the land famine, if there be pestilence, blasting, mildew, locust, *or* if there be caterpillar; if their enemy besiege them in the land of their * cities, whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness *there be;*

38 What [f] prayer and supplication soever be *made* by any man, *or* by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man [g] the plague of his own heart, and [h] spread forth his hands toward this house:

39 Then [i] hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, and [k] give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for [l] thou, *even* thou only knowest the hearts of all the children of men;)

40 That they may [m] fear thee all the days that they live in the land which thou gavest unto our fathers.

41 Moreover, concerning [n] a stranger that *is* not of thy people Israel, but [o] cometh out of a far country for thy name's sake;

42 (For [p] they shall hear of thy [q] great

q Lev. xxvi. 17. 25. Deu. xxviii. 25. 48. Josh. vii. 8. 2 Chr. vi. 24, 25. Ps. xliv. 10.
r Josh. vii. 11, 12. Judg. vi. 1, 2. 2 Kings xvii. 7—18. xviii. 11, 12. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 14—17.
s Lev. xxvi. 40, 41. Neh. i. 9. Jon. iii. 10.
t Ezra ix. 5, &c. Neh. ix. 1—3, &c. Is. lxiii. 15—19. lxiv. &c. Dan. ix. 3, &c.
* Or, *toward.*
u Ezra i. 1—6. Ps. cvi. 47. Is. xlv. 1—4. Jer. xxxi. 4—9. 27. xxxii. 37. xxxiii. 10—13. Dan. ix. 2. 19. 25.
x Gen. xiii. 15. Ex. vi. 8. Josh. xxi. 43.
y xvii. 1. Lev. xxvi. 19. Deut. xi. 17. xxviii. 12. 23, 24. 2 Sam. xxiv. 13. Jer. xiv. 1—7. Ez. xiv. 13. Mal. iii. 10. Luke iv. 25. Rev. xi. 6.
z 29, 30. Joel i. 13—20. ii. 15—17.
a 33. Is. i. 15, 16. ix. 13. Ez. xviii. 30—32.
b Ps. xxv. 4, 5. 12. xxvii. 11. xxxii. 8. xciv. 12. cxix. 33. cxliii. 8. Is. xxxv. 8. Mic. iv. 2.
c 1 Sam. xii. 23. 2 Chr. vi. 26, 27. Is. xxx. 21. Jer. vi. 16. xlii. 3. Matt. xxii. 16.
d xviii. 1. 27—40. 45. Ps. lxviii. 9. Jer. xiv. 22. Jam. v. 17, 18.
e Lev. xxvi. 16. 25, 26. Deut. xxviii. 21, 22. 25. 38—42. 52—61. 2 Kings vi. 25—29. 1 Chr. xxi. 12. 2 Chr. vi. 28—31. xx. 9. Ps. cv. 34, 35. Jer. xxxii. 2. xxxix. 1—3. Ez. xiv. 21. Joel i. 4—7. ii. 25, 26.

* Or, *jurisdiction.*
f 2 Chr. xx. 5—13. Ps. l. 15. xci. 15. Is. xxxvii. 4. 15—21. Joel ii. 17. Amos. vii. 1—6.
g 2 Chr. vi. 29. Job vii. 11. Ps. xxxii. 3, 4. xlii. 6. 9. 11. lxxiii. 21, 22. cxlii. 3—5. Prov. xiv. 10. Rom. vii. 24. Phil. iv. 6.
h 22. Is. i. 15.
i 32.
k Ps. xviii. 20—26. xxviii. 4. Jer. xvii. 10. xxxii. 19. Ez. xviii. 30. Rev. xxii. 12.
l 1 Sam. xvi. 7. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. 2 Chr. vi. 30. Ps. xi. 4, 5. John ii. 25. xxi. 17. Acts i. 24. Heb. iv. 13. Rev. ii. 23.
m Gen. xxii. 12. Ex. xx. 20. Deu. vi. 2. 13. 1 Sam. xii. 24. Ps. cxxx. 4. Jer. xxxii. 39, 40. Hos. iii. 5. Heb. xii. 28, 29.
n x. 1, 2. Ruth i. 16. ii. 11. 2 Chr. vi. 32. Is. lvi. 3—6, 7. Matt. viii. 5. 10, 11. xv. 22—28. Luke xvii. 18. John xii. 20. Acts x. 1—4.
o Ex. xviii. 8. 12. 2 Kings v. 1. 7. 16, 17. Is. lx. 1—10. Matt. ii. 1. xii. 42.
p Ex. xv. 14, 15. Deut. iv. 6. Josh. ii. 10, 11. iii. 13—16. xxxiv. ix. 9, 10. 2 Chr. xxxii. 31. Dan. ii. 47. iii. 28. iv. 37.
q Ex. 5—7. Josh. vii. 9. Ps. lxxxvi. 8, 9. Ez. xx. 9.

other case in which this solemn appeal was made; Solomon prayed that the Lord would interpose, in some evident manner, to discover and punish the guilty, and to clear up the character, and recompense the integrity, of the innocent.

V. 33, 34. The Israelites would not be *smitten down*, or *taken prisoners*, by their enemies, except they sinned against God: and, notwithstanding their temple, altar, and sacrifices, they could not expect deliverance, or restoration from captivity or bondage, without repentance and turning to the Lord; without confessing their relations and obligations to him, and their sins against him; and without offering their supplications towards the temple, to him who dwelt upon a mercy-seat between the cherubim.

V. 36. *That thou*, &c. In addition to all the teaching of the written word, and the instructions of the priests, Levites, and prophets, Solomon entreated the Lord himself to teach the people to profit by these advantages, and by their chastisements: for this would make way for their forgiveness, and consequently for returning plenty and prosperity.—The *same words* are rendered in Chronicles, "when thou hast taught them the good way in which they "should walk."—The divine teaching particularly respects *this good way, in which we ought to walk*, and not mere notions and speculations.

V. 38. *The plague*, &c. Or, "his own sore, and his "own grief:" (2 *Chron.* vi. 29.) The former petitions particularly respected public judgments and distresses; but this passage related to private afflictions and trials, and whatever should fill the heart and conscience of any individual with anguish and dismay.—This interpretation doubtless includes, though it is not confined to, that meaning which is very frequently given to the expression, "the "plague of his own heart;" namely, the prevalence of indwelling sin, which as a *plague*, or pestilential disease, is the grief and sore of every true believer; and, in connexion with the guilt that in consequence accumulates upon his conscience, brings him, day by day, to offer his fervent prayers and supplications before the mercy-seat of a forgiving God.

V. 39. The Lord, "who only knoweth the hearts of "the children of men," could exactly distinguish betwixt the hypocrite, and the upright penitent believer: and would deal with each according to the covenant of mercy made with sinners through the promised Saviour, forgiving and doing all good to the one, and leaving the other under condemnation.

V. 40. *That*, &c. As "there is no man that sinneth "not," so no man could worship a holy God, "if there "were not forgiveness with him." Unless this was clearly revealed, that reverential fear, which unites with hope, and leads men to repent and seek the Lord, would be extinguished, when sinners became acquainted with their own character and state, and with his perfections and holy laws; and only that slavish fear would remain, which unites with enmity and despair, and drives men further and further from God and his worship.—It is very instructive to compare the several parts of this prayer with the preceding prophecies, and the subsequent history; which may in good measure be done by consulting the marginal references.

name, and of [r] thy strong hand, and of thy stretched-out arm;) [s] when he shall come and pray toward this house:

43 Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for; [t] that all people of the earth may know thy name, to [u] fear thee, as *do* thy people Israel; and that they may know that * this house, which I have builded, is called by thy name.

44 ¶ If thy people [x] go out to battle against their enemy, [y] withersoever thou shalt send them, and [z] shall pray unto the LORD toward [a] the city which thou hast chosen, and *toward* the house that I have built for thy name:

45 Then hear thou in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their † cause.

46 ¶ If they sin against thee, (for [b] *there is* no man that sinneth not,) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they carry them away captives [c] unto the land of the enemy, far or near;

47 Yet [d] if they shall ‡ bethink themselves in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captives, [e] saying, We have sinned, and have [f] done perversely, we have committed wickedness:

48 And *so* [g] return unto thee with all their heart, and with all their soul, in the land of their enemies which led them away captive, and [h] pray unto thee toward their land which thou gavest unto their fathers, [i] the city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name:

49 Then hear thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven thy dwelling-place, and maintain their § cause,

50 And forgive thy people that have sinned against thee, and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against thee, and [k] give them compassion before them who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them:

51 For they *be* [l] thy people, and thine inheritance, which thou broughtest forth out of Egypt, from the midst of [m] the furnace of iron:

52 That [n] thine eyes may be open unto the supplication of thy servant, and unto the supplication of thy people Israel, to hearken unto them [o] in all that they call for unto thee.

53 For thou didst [p] separate them from among all the people of the earth, *to be* [q] thine inheritance, [r] as thou spakest by the hand of Moses thy servant, when thou broughtest our fathers out of Egypt, O LORD God.

54 ¶ And it was *so*, that, when Solomon had made an end of praying all this

r Ex. iii. 19, 20. ix. 15, 16. xiii. 14. Deut. iii. 24. xi. 2, 3. 2 Kings xvii. 36. Ps. lxxxix. 13. cxxxvi. 12. Is. lxiii. 12. Jer. xxxi. 11. xxxii. 17.
s Is. lxvi. 20. Zech. xiv. 16. Acts viii. 27.
t 1 Sam. xvii. 46. 2 Kings xix. 19. 2 Chr. vi. 33. Ps. xxii. 27. lxvii. 2. lxxii. 10. lxxxvi. 9. Is. xi. 9. Rev. xi. 15.
u Ps. cii. 15.
*Heb. *thy name is called upon this house.*
x Deut. xx. 1—4. xxxi. 3—6. Josh. i. 2—5. 2 Chr. vi. 34.
y Num. xxxi. 1, &c. Josh. vi. 2—5. viii. 1, 2. Judg. i. 1, 2. iv. 6. vi. 14. 1 Sam. xv. 3. 18. xxx. 8. 2 Sam. v. 19. 23.
z 2 Chr. xiv. 9—12. xviii. 31. xx. 6—13. xxxii. 20.
a Ps. lxxviii 67—69. cxxxii. 13, 14. Dan. ix. 17—19.
† Or, *right.* Gen. xviii. 25. Ps. ix. 4. Jer. v. 28.
b 2 Chr. vi. 36. Job xiv. 4. xv. 14—16. Ps. xix. 12. cxxx. 3. cxliii. 2. Prov. xx. 9. Ec. vii. 20. Is. liii. 6. lxiv. 6. Rom. iii. 19. Gal. iii. 22. Jam. iii. 2. 1 John i. 8—10.
c Lev. xxvi. 34—41. Deut. iv. 26, 27. xxviii. 36. 63—68. xxix. 28. 2 Kings xvii. 6. 18. 23. xxv. 21. Dan. ix. 7—14. Luke xxi. 24.
d Lev. xxvi. 40—45. Deut. iv. 29—31. xxx. 1. 2 Chr. vi. 37. xxxiii. 12, 13. Ez. xvi. 61. 63. xviii. 28. Hag. i. 7. Luke xv. 17.
‡ Heb. *bring back to their heart*
e Ezra ix. 6, 7. Neh. i. 6. ix. 26—30. Ps. cvi. Is. lxiv. 6—12. Dan. ix. 5—11. Zech. xii. 10.
f Job xxxiii. 27, 28. Jer. xxxi. 18—20. Luke xv. 18.
g Deut. xxx. 2—6. Judg. x. 15. 16. 1 Sam. vii. 3, 4. Neh. i. 9. Is. lv. 6, 7. Jer. xxix. 12—14. Dan. ix. 13.
h Dan. vi. 10.
i 44.
§ Or, *right.* 45. 2 Kings xix. 19. Zech. i. 15, 16.
k 2 Chr. xxx. 9. Ezra vii. 6. Neh. ii. 8. Ps. cvi. 46. Prov. xvi. 7. Dan. i. 9, 10. Acts vii. 10.
l Ex. xxxii. 11, 12. Deut. ix. 26—29. 2 Chr. vi. 39. Neh. i. 10. Is. lxiii. 16—18. lxiv. 9.
m Deut. iv. 20. Jer. xi. 4.
n 29. 2 Chr. vi. 40.
o Ps. lxxxvi. 5. cxlv. 18.
p Ex. xix. 5, 6. xxxiii. 16. Num. xxiii. 9. Deut. iv. 34. vii. 6—8. xiv. 2. xxxii. 9. 2 Cor. vi. 14—18. Tit. ii. 14. 1 Pet. ii. 9.
q Deut. xxxii. 9. Jer. x. 16. Eph. i. 18.
r Deut. xxxiii. 1—3. 26—29.

V. 41—43. Solomon was persuaded that the heathen nations would hear of the name, perfections, and wonderful works of JEHOVAH; and would come and worship him at this temple, as the God of Israel, who dwelt among his people by the ark of his strength, and was propitious to them through the sacrifices there offered. He therefore interceded for them also, that they might be accepted, and obtain the same blessings with the native Israelites: and he desired and hoped, that all the nations of the earth might know, fear, and worship the God of Israel. Accordingly we are told, that there was a court built, called the court of the Gentiles, which was appropriated to the use of those who came from other nations to worship the God of Israel, but who were not circumcised, and did not observe the ceremonial law. (*Marg. Ref.*)—The prejudices of the Jews, in the days of Christ, against the admission of the Gentiles into the church, arose from ignorance of the Scriptures, connected with national prejudices, pharisaical pride, and bigotry; which being early imbibed, were not easily removed even from true believers.

V. 44. *Thou shalt*, &c. That is, in *any just and necessary war;* for *God did not send the Israelites*, when they were actuated by selfishness, to engage in oppressive and unrighteous wars; neither could they reasonably expect his assistance in them.

V. 46—53. This part of Solomon's intercession was evidently answered in the restoration of the Jews after the Babylonish captivity. Though the temple and city lay in ruins; yet when they bethought themselves, and repented, and prayed in the land of Chaldea, towards the land of Israel; the Lord heard, forgave, and restored them to their own land. But it will hereafter receive another more remarkable answer, when the Jews shall be gathered from their present dispersion, become a part of the Christian church, and probably be reinstated in their own country.—All Solomon's arguments, in this plea for his people, were deduced from the Lord's *choice of them, his separation of them from other nations to be his inheritance, and the favours he had already conferred upon them.*—It appears from Chronicles, that Solomon concluded with a passage taken from one of the Psalms. (*Marg. Ref.*)

prayer and supplication unto the LORD, he arose from before the altar of the LORD, from [s] kneeling on his knees [t] with his hands spread up to heaven.

55 And he stood, and [u] blessed all the congregation of Israel with a loud voice, saying,

56 [x] Blessed *be* the LORD, that [y] hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: [z] there hath not * failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant.

57 [a] The LORD our God be with us, as he was with our fathers: let him not leave us, nor forsake us:

58 That he may [b] incline our hearts unto him, to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, [c] which he commanded our fathers.

59 And let these my words, wherewith I have made supplication before the LORD, be [d] nigh unto the LORD our God day and night, that he maintain the cause of his servant, and the cause of his people Israel † at all times, as the matter shall require;

60 [e] That all the people of the earth may know that [f] the LORD *is* God, *and that there is* none else.

61 Let your heart therefore be [g] perfect with the LORD our God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments, as at this day.

62 ¶ And [h] the king, and all Israel with him, offered sacrifice before the LORD.

63 And Solomon offered [i] a sacrifice of peace-offerings, which he offered unto the LORD, two and twenty thousand oxen, and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the children of Israel dedicated the house of the LORD.

64 The same day did the king [k] hallow the middle of the court that *was* before the house of the LORD: for there he offered burnt-offerings, and meat-offerings, and the fat of the peace-offerings: because [l] the brazen altar that *was* before the LORD *was* too little to receive the burnt-offerings, and meat-offerings, and the fat of the peace-offerings.

65 And at that time Solomon [m] held a feast, and all Israel with him, [n] a great congregation, [o] from the entering in of Hamath unto [p] the river of Egypt, before the LORD our God, [q] seven days and seven days, *even* fourteen days.

66 On [r] the eighth day he sent the people away: and they ‡ blessed the king, and went unto their tents, [s] joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the LORD had done for David his servant, and for Israel his people.

e Pe. xcv. 9. Luke xxii. 41. 45. Acts xxi. 5.
t 22. 2 Chr. vi. 12, 13.
u 14. Num. vi. 23—26. 2 Sam. vi. 18 1 Chr. xvi. 2.
x 15.
y Josh. xxi. 44. 2 Chr. xiv. 6. Heb. iv. 3—9.
z Deut. xii. 10—12. Josh. xxi. 45. xxiii. 14, 15. Luke i. 54, 55. 72, 73. xxi. 33.
* Heb. *fallen.*
a Deut. xxxi. 6. 8. Josh. i. 5. 1 Chr. xxviii. 20. 2 Chr. xxxii. 7, 8. Ps. xlvi. 11. Is. viii. 10. xli. 10. Matt. i. 23. xxviii. 20. Rom. viii. 31. Heb. xiii. 5.
b Ps. cx. 3. cxix. 36. Cant. i. 4. Jer. xxxi. 33. Ez. xxxvi. 26, 27. Phil. ii. 13. Heb. xiii. 21.
c Deut. iv. 1. vi. 1.
d Ps. cii. 1, 2. cxlii. 2. John xvii. 9. 20—24. 1 John ii. 2.
† Heb. *the thing of a day in his day.* Luke xi. 3.
e 43. Josh. iv. 24. 1 Sam. xvii. 46. 2 Kings xix. 19.
f xviii. 39. Deut. iv. 35. 39. Is. xliv. 6. 8 24. xlv. 22. Jer. x. 10—12.
g xi. 4. xv. 3. 14. Gen. xvii. 1. 2 Kings xx. 3. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. Job i. 1. 8. Ps. xxxvii. 37. 2 Cor. vii. 1. Phil. iii. 12—16.
h 2 Sam. vi 17—19. 2 Chr. vii. 4—7.
i 1 Chr. xxix 21. 2 Chr. xv. 11. xxix. 32—35. xxx. 24. xxxv. 7—9. Ezra vi. 16, 17. Ez. xlv. 17. Mic. vi. 7.
k 2 Chr. vii. 7.
l 2 Chr. iv. 1.
m 2. Lev. xxiii. 34—43. 2 Chr. vii. 8, 9.
n 2 Chr. xxx. 13.
o iv. 21. 25. Num. xxxiv. 8. Josh. xiii. 5. Judg. iii. 3. 2 Kings xiv. 25. Amos vi. 14.
p Gen. xv. 18. Ex. xxiii. 31. Num. xxxiv. 5. Josh. xiii. 3.
q 2 Chr. vii. 8, 9. xxx. 23.
r 2 Chr. vii. 10.
‡ Or, *thanked.* i. 47.
s Deut. xii. 12. 18. 2 Chr. xxix. 36. xxx. 25. Neh. viii. 10. Phil. iv. 4.

V. 58. *Incline*, &c. No blessing can be expected, whilst men continue wilfully disobedient. No human heart is of itself inclined to obey the call to repentance, faith, and newness of life, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord. The first benefit communicated to sinners, through the intercession of him whom Solomon typified, is "the inclining of the heart" to this obedience. This, therefore, we should beg of God for others, and for ourselves when we perceive our need of it: for when this is granted all else will follow. Yet Solomon afterwards *exhorted the people* to be perfect with the LORD, &c. And this is the scriptural method; though to many it appears unsystematical and inconsistent: but the exhortation reminds men of their duty; and the prayer or promise shows how they may be enabled to do it.

V. 63—65. (*Notes, Num.* vii.) The sacrifices offered at the dedication of the tabernacle were very few, compared with this vast number: but those were proportioned to the circumstances of the princes of Israel *in the wilderness*, these to the riches and power of king Solomon. It is probable, that altars of earth, or of rough stone, were prepared all over the inner court. All these sacrifices were not offered on the same day, but during the whole time of the solemnity: and the immense multitudes assembled feasted on the flesh of the peace-offerings. The people separated on the twenty-third day of the seventh month, the day after the close of the feast of tabernacles; (2 *Chr.* vii. 9, 10;) so that the dedication of the temple must have preceded. And as the great day of atonement was observed on the tenth day of the seventh month, it is not improbably conjectured, that the seven days of the feast of dedication preceded that solemnity; and that the people waited, after it, to keep the feast of tabernacles also, before they returned home.

V. 66. The people departed full of admiration of Solomon's piety, wisdom, magnificence, and liberality; as well as of gratitude to the Lord for all his goodness: and they prayed most fervently for the king, being much enlivened by the sacred ordinance.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—10.

When those in authority heartily promote the cause of true religion, they will speedily engage increasing numbers in the work: thus, the pious designs, which were con-

CHAP. IX.

God appears again to Solomon, and makes a covenant with him, 1—9. *Transactions between Solomon and Hiram,* 10—14. *Solomon builds divers cities,* 15—19. *He subjects the remnant of the Canaanites to bond-service, and employs the Israelites in more honourable offices,* 20—23. *Pharaoh's daughter removes to her house,* 24. *Solomon sacrifices thrice every year,* 25. *His navy fetches gold from Ophir,* 26—28.

AND[a] it came to pass, when Solomon [b] had finished the building of the house of the LORD, and the king's house,

a 2 Chr. vii. 11.
b vii. 1. 2 Chr. viii. 1—6. Ec. ii. 4.

ceived in a single breast, may be completed with the concurrence, and to the benefit of thousands, and perhaps millions! and what a blessed improvement is this of influence, affluence, power, and wisdom! Numbers indeed will assist on such occasions, to please their superiors, or to acquire reputation, who are not cordially attached to the cause, and who will not be profited by it themselves; yet, even they may forward such measures as conduce to the good of others. True *wisdom* is displayed as much in the well-timing, as in the orderly conducting, of important undertakings; and in obtaining the *voluntary* concurrence of others, where *folly* would deem it sufficient to employ superior force. Without the gracious presence of the Lord, every religious observance is an empty form: the written word, the preaching of the gospel, prayer, baptism, the Lord's supper, orthodox creeds, professions, speculations, and external order, form but a well-proportioned lifeless carcass; a temple without the ark, and without the glory; unless we in these things hold communion with a reconciled God upon a mercy-seat, through the person and work of the Redeemer, and by the influences of his sanctifying Spirit. This is the *life* and *soul* of true godliness, which infuses efficacy into every truth, ordinance, or duty; and in all things it should be chiefly attended to. For, as far as this is attained, we sinners upon earth hold fellowship with the church above; and, with all the company of angels and archangels, we worship the name of God our Saviour, with acceptance, and to his glory.

V. 11—21.

When we wait upon the Lord in the ways of his appointment, we shall surely receive tokens of his special favour; yet, his light is inaccessible to us; and the cloud with which he veils his insufferable brightness, in his discoveries of himself to us, sometimes obstructs our view of his love, and causes us to tremble for fear of his judgments. The dark dispensations of Providence, the awful declarations of God's word, the apprehensions of his purity and justice, and the consciousness of guilt and pollution, often induce the awakened sinner to say, "Depart from me, for "I am a sinful man, O Lord," when such views should quicken him in fleeing for refuge to the hope of the gospel. On these occasions, they who are stronger in faith, and more advanced in knowledge and experience, should encourage their weaker brethren, and explain such things to them as needlessly alarm them: for the established believer can educe comfort and motives for thankful obedience, from that very darkness which dismays and confounds the inexperienced Christian. However, blessed be God, in the person of our Emmanuel, and in his complete redemption, the thick darkness in which JEHOVAH dwells, is greatly dispelled; the *dark cloud is become bright to us;* (Matt. xvii. 5:) and though compared with the beatific vision, we see through a glass darkly; yet, following him, who is "the "Light of the world," "we shall not abide in darkness, "but shall have the light of life." Yet in the best frames of the most eminent believers, sacred joy, gratitude, and love will be mixed with deep humility and reverential fear; and conscious guilt and pollution will mingle self-abhorrence and godly sorrow with their most fervent praises and adorations. We should all use our utmost exertion for the honour of God: yet the most zealous believer will be conscious, that he has lost opportunities of service, through infirmity, temptation, and encumbrances. But when the Lord is not pleased to employ us in any work, which we sincerely design and vigorously attempt, he will notice and recompense the intention, even as much as if it had been accomplished: let us then persevere in devising, and endeavouring to execute, plans of usefulness, though we be often baffled and unsuccessful; for it shall at last be declared, that we "did well that it was in our heart:" and let sinners remember, that they also are accountable to God, and will be punished for all the wickedness which was conceived in their hearts, though they were restrained in Providence, left destitute of the power, or deterred by the fear of man; and therefore did not actually commit it.—When the Lord's time arrives for any work to be done, all opposition will die away, all difficulties vanish, and all things concur in forwarding its completion: and whatever good work we have been employed in, and enabled to effect, we should consider it as a performance of his promises, and as an occasion afforded of celebrating his praises, to whom alone all the glory belongs.

V. 22—30.

The service of God is the highest honour of the greatest of men; and to lead others in prayer and praise, to animate and assist them in worshipping the Lord, forms the noblest employment on earth, and most resembles that of the angels in heaven. But indeed, the most exalted adorations of the noblest creatures are beneath the notice of his infinite majesty, and only accepted through his unspeakable condescension! With what internal awe and external indications of reverence, should we, worthless sinners, prostrate ourselves before his glorious and holy majesty! how should we approach his mercy-seat with admiring, adoring gratitude, and humble expectation of his invaluable and much needed benefits! and how should faith and love exalt our

and [c] all Solomon's desire which he was pleased to do,

2 That the LORD appeared to Solomon the second time, [d] as he had appeared unto him at Gibeon.

3 And the LORD said unto him, [e] I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me: [f] I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, [g] to put my name there for ever: and [h] mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually.

c Ec. ii. 10.
d iii. 5. xi. 9. 2 Chr. xi. 12.
e 2 Kings xx. 5. Ps x. 17. lxvi. 19. cxvi. 1. Dan. ix. 23. John xi. 42. Acts x. 31.
f viii. 10, 11. Ex. xx. 11. Num. xvi. 38. Mat. vi. 9.
g viii. 29. Deu. xii. 5. 11. 21. xvi. 11.
h Deut. xi. 12. 2 Chr. vi. 40. vii. 15, 16 Ps. cxxxii. 13, 14.

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souls above all external objects, and raise them to heaven, his dwelling place, where He displays his glory, who filleth immensity, and inhabiteth eternity!—But behold! he dwelleth in human nature, as in his temple: there sinners may see his glory and live: and when we pray, directing our faith towards that sacred residence of the Deity, he will assuredly hear, and forgive our sins.

V. 31—45.

It is a debt we owe to our brethren, neighbours, friends, and strangers, yea, to our enemies, to intercede for them as their cases may require. Having therefore such a multiplicity of persons, cases, and wants to spread before the Lord, our hearts should frequently be enlarged to pray *copiously*, as well as *fervently:* and we shall not be condemned for long prayers, if they be not *formal*, and rendered tedious by vain unmeaning repetitions.—It is also a comfort to the believer to reflect, how many prayers of parents, ministers, and pious friends, are laid up before God on his behalf; and how many are praying for him in one place or other. All these shall, in due time, be answered in blessings unnumbered: nay, even whole nations, through successive generations, have reaped the benefits of the fervent supplications of a single true believer. Such intercessors form the unseen strength and bulwark of kingdoms; may the Lord increase their numbers, and may we seek to be found among them!—Yet the prayers of all the subjects would be unavailing, did not the King, our Prince of Peace, the builder of the Spiritual Temple, intercede for them. His pleading is always prevalent, and gives efficacy to all the rest: yet neither the prayers of godly friends, nor even the Saviour's intercession, will benefit those who are never brought to pray earnestly for themselves. For he only intercedes for those who eventually are led to "believe in his name," and "who come to God by him:" and the prayers of his people, for such as continue impenitent and unbelieving, return into their own bosom.

V. 46—66.

Alas! we are all sinners; and sin is the cause of all calamities, public and personal; and, unless forsaken and forgiven, it must terminate in final misery. But when the vilest transgressor bethinks himself, and examines his heart and life; when he is humbled before God, and penitently confesses that he hath sinned, hath done perversely, and committed wickedness; when he returns to the Lord with his whole heart, and prays unto him, in the Saviour's name: then he hath begun to receive the benefit of his intercession, and the Father will hear in heaven his supplication, and maintain his cause. Then, whatever be his grief, his burden, and terror, the guilt of his conscience, the depravity of his heart, the force of temptation, or the pressure of affliction, he will bring it, and spread it in secret before a heart-searching and merciful God: thus he will obtain pardon and peace, and learn to love and fear the Lord all his days. In this manner the Israel of God is established and sanctified, and the backslider is recovered and healed; the stranger is brought nigh, and the mourner comforted; the name of God is glorified, and numbers are added to the church of such as shall be saved. Often did offending Israel in this way prove the mercy of God, when they sought him under their distresses; and there failed not one good word of all that he had promised them. But at length they wearied out his patience, and all his threatenings were accomplished: yet even in their present dispersion, they will at length bethink themselves, and turn to God, as dwelling in his true Temple, and then they shall be numbered amongst his people. O may they speedily be restored, that their conversion may be as life from the dead to all the Gentile nations, that all the people of the "earth "may know," and worship our God and Saviour! "May "the Lord our God be again with them, as he was with "their fathers, and incline their hearts unto him to walk "in all his ways!"—By the example of Israel, other nations should be warned and instructed: no war should be engaged in, which cannot be conducted in a spirit of faith and prayer: princes and nobles should set the example in the worship of God, and act accordingly: public calamities should excite to national repentance, reformation, and prayer: and these things would best secure public peace and prosperity. The same should be the conduct of churches, families, and individuals.—May the Lord then incline our hearts unto him, that we may walk in all his ways, and keep his commandments and statutes: may we abound in his work, and stir up others to do the same: may we love the Lord, and do good to and pray for one another, and rejoice together for all the goodness, that the Lord hath done for us and for his people! Then shall we enjoy some of the days of heaven upon earth, and be continually preparing for that world, where the feast of holy love and joy will be unalloyed and eternal.

NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 1, 2. As Solomon did not finish his other buildings till above twelve years after the dedication of the temple; and as it is thought improbable that this gracious appearance of God to him was delayed so long, some expositors thus render the words of these verses, "And it was, that thus Solomon finished," &c.—"And "the LORD appeared," &c.—The encouragement given Solomon while building the temple, (vi. 11—13.) was either sent by a prophet, or given in an answer by the high-priest: for this was only the *second* appearance of God to him.

4 And [i] if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, *and* wilt keep my statutes and my judgments:

5 Then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever, [k] as I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel.

6 *But* [l] if ye shall at all turn from following me, ye, or your children, and will not keep my commandments *and* my statutes which I have set before you, but [m] go and serve other gods, and worship them:

7 Then [n] will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and [o] this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and [p] Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all people:

8 And at this house, *which* is high, [q] every one that passeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss; and they shall say, [r] Why hath the LORD done thus unto this land, and to this house?

9 And they shall answer, [s] Because they forsook the LORD their God, who brought forth their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have taken hold upon other gods, and have worshipped them, and served them: therefore hath the LORD brought upon them all this evil.

10 ¶ And it came to pass [t] at the end of twenty years, when Solomon had built the two houses, the house of the LORD, and the king's house;

11 (*Now* [u] Hiram the king of Tyre had furnished Solomon with cedar-trees and fir-trees, and with gold, according to all his desire,) that then [x] king Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee.

12 And Hiram came out from Tyre to see the cities which Solomon had given him; and * they pleased him not.

13 And he said, What cities *are* these which thou hast given me, [y] my brother? And he called them the land of † Cabul unto this day.

14 And Hiram [z] sent to the king sixscore talents of gold.

15 ¶ And this *is* [a] the reason of the levy which king Solomon raised; for [b] to build the house of the LORD, and his own house, and [c] Millo, and the wall of Jerusalem, and [d] Hazor, and [e] Megiddo, and [f] Gezer.

i iii. 14. viii. 25. xi. 4. 6. 38. xiv. 8. xv. 5. Deut. xxviii 1 2 Chr vii. 17, 18. Job xxiii. 11, 12. Ps. xv. 2. xxvi. 1 11. Pro xx. 7. Zech. iii. 7. Luke i. 6. 1 Thes. iv. 1, 2.

k ii. 4. vi 12. viii. 15 2 Sam. vii 12. 16. 1 Chr. xxii. 10. Ps. lxxxix. 28—39. cxxxii. 12.

l 1 Sam. ii. 30. 2 Sam vii. 14—16. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. 2 Chr. vii. 19—22. xv. 2.

m xi. 4—10. Josh. xxiii. 15, 16.

n Deut. iv. 26. xxix 26—28. 2 Kings xvii. 20. 23. xxv. 9. Jer. vii. 15. xxiv. 9. Ez. xxxiii 27—29. Luke xxi. 24.

o 3. 2 Kings xxv. 9. 2 Chr. vii. 20. xxxvi. 19. Jer vii. 4—14. xxvi. 6. 18. lii. 13. Lam. ii. 6, 7. Ez. xxiv. 21. Mic iii. 12. Matt xxiv. 2. Luke xxi. 24.

p Deu. xxviii. 37. Neh. iv. 1—4. Ps xliv. 14. Is. lxvi. 15. Jer xxiv 9. Lam. ii 15, 16. Joel ii. 17.

q 2 Chr. vii. 21. xxix. 8. Jer. xix. 8. xlix. 17. 1. 13. Dan. ix 12.

r Deu. xxix. 24. Jer. xxii. 8, 9. 28.

s Deut. xxix 25—28. 2 Chr. vii. 22. Jer. ii. 10—13 19. v 19. xvi. 10—13. ix. 7. Lam. ii. 16, 17. iv. 13—15 Ez. xxxvi. 17—20.

t vi. 37, 38. vii. 1. 2 Chr. viii. 1.

u v. 6—10. 2 Chr. ii. 8—10. 16.

x 2 Chr. xiii. 2.

* Heb. *were not right in his eyes.*

y v. 1, 2. Am. i. 9.

† *Displeasing*, or, *dirty*. Josh. xix. 27.

z 11. x. 10. 25.

a 21. v. 13.

b 10. vi. 38. vii. 1.

c 24. xi. 27 Judg. ix. 6. 20. 2 Sam. v. 9 2 Kings xii. 20.

d Josh. xi. 1 xix. 36 Judg. iv. 2.

e Josh. xvii. 11. Judg v. 19.

f Josh. xvi. 10. Judg. i 29.

V. 3. *I have*, &c. The Lord graciously accepted the temple which Solomon had built and consecrated to him; and set it apart as holy, for the residence of his ark, the centre of his worship, the place of his altar and sacrifices, and the visible pledge of his gracious presence with Israel, so long as they adhered to his ordinances and commandments. And he promised, "that his eyes, and his heart "should be there perpetually:" that is, he would regard it with peculiar attention and favour, and delight in doing good to those, who worshipped at, or towards, that holy place: (2 *Chron.* vii. 12—16;) and had not the national sins of Israel forfeited the blessing, this would uninterruptedly have been the case until the coming of Christ.

V. 6. Solomon and his posterity, and Israel in that and future ages, were alike concerned in these promises and warnings. The obedience intended in all such declarations, is *the unreserved, though imperfect obedience of a penitent believing sinner;* by which he evidences his cordial acceptance of unmerited mercies, and aims to glorify the God of his salvation.—The words "if ye shall at all turn," &c. certainly mean, "if ye altogether turn," &c.: and indeed not every sin, but national idolatry or apostacy, sanctioned by the example of the prince, or tolerated by him, was intended.

V. 7—9. These denunciations were remarkably fulfilled during the Babylonish captivity; but the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and the state of the Jews to this very day, is the most extraordinary accomplishment of them. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 11—14. Hiram had furnished Solomon with timber, not only for building the temple, but also for his own house and his many other magnificent works: and he likewise "had sent him an hundred and twenty talents of "gold;" for that seems to be the proper construction of the fourteenth verse. Solomon therefore was indebted to Hiram, beyond the corn and wine and oil agreed upon: and he gave him these cities as a compensation. They seem to have been small towns in the vicinity of Tyre, beyond the boundaries of the land as divided by Joshua, and lately taken from the ancient inhabitants. Probably they lay in ruins.—Hiram, however, was not satisfied with them, and "called them the land of Cabul."—Perhaps, being accustomed to magnificence, and to acquire wealth by commerce, he had no turn for cultivating land; and finding the roads bad, the houses mean, and the country depopulated, he was not aware of the advantage which might be made of them. Solomon afterwards rebuilt them, and the Israelites dwelt in them: and probably Hiram was satisfied with some equivalent.

V. 15. *The reason*, &c. That is, *the occasion there was for the levy*, in order to accomplish so many great, and magnificent works: or *the method, in which he raised it.*

16 *For* Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up, and taken Gezer, and burnt it with fire, and slain the Canaanites that dwelt in the city, and given it *for* a present unto his [g] daughter, Solomon's wife.

17 And Solomon built Gezer, and [h] Beth-horon the nether,

18 And [i] Baalath, and [k] Tadmor in the wilderness in the land,

19 And all [l] the cities of store that Solomon had, and cities for his chariots, and cities for his horsemen, and * that which Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, and in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion.

20 *And* all the people, *that were* [m] left of the [n] Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, which *were* not of the children of Israel;

21 Their children [o] that were left after them in the land, whom the children of Israel also were [p] not able utterly to destroy, upon those did Solomon [q] levy a tribute [r] of bond-service unto this day.

22 But [s] of the children of Israel did Solomon make no bondmen: [t] but they *were* men of war, and his servants, and his princes, and his captains, and rulers of his chariots, and his horsemen.

23 These *were* the [u] chief of the officers that *were* over Solomon's work, five hundred and fifty, which bare rule over the people that wrought in the work.

24 But [x] Pharaoh's daughter came up out of [y] the city of David unto her house which *Solomon* had built for her: then did he build [z] Millo.

25 And [a] three times in a year did Solomon offer burnt-offerings and peace-offerings upon the altar which he built unto the LORD, and [b] he burnt incense † upon the altar that *was* before the LORD. [c] So he finished the house.

26 ¶ And king Solomon [d] made a navy of ships in [e] Ezion-geber, which *is* beside [f] Eloth, on the ‡ shore of the Red sea, in the land of Edom.

27 And Hiram sent in the navy [g] his servants, shipmen that had knowledge of the sea, with the servants of Solomon.

28 And they came to [h] Ophir, and fetched from thence gold, [i] four hundred and twenty talents, and brought *it* to king Solomon.

g 24. iii. 1.
h Josh. xvi. 3. xxi. 22. 2 Chr. viii. 5, 6.
i Josh. xix. 44.
k 2 Chr. viii. 4.
l iv. 26—28. Ex. i. 11.
* Heb. *the desire of Solomon which he desired.*
1. Ec. ii.10. vi.9.
m 2 Chr. viii. 7, 8.
n Gen. xv. 19—21 Ex xxiii.23. 28—33. xxxiv. 11, 12. Deut. vii. 1—3.
o Judg. i. 21. 27—35. ii. 20—23. iii. 1—4. Ps. cvi. 34—36.
p Josh. xv. 63. xvii. 12. 16—18.
q 15. v. 13. Judg. i. 28. 35.
r Gen. ix. 25, 26. Ezra ii. 55—58. Neh. vii. 57. xi. 3.
s Lev xxv. 39.
t iv. 1—27. 2 Chr. viii. 9, 10.
u v. 16. 2 Chr. ii. 18. viii. 10.
x iii. 1. vii. 8. 2 Chr. viii. 11.
y 2 Sam. v. 9.
z 15. xi. 27. 2 Chr xxxii. 5.
a Ex. xxiii. 14—17. xxxiv. 23. Deut. xvi. 16. 2 Chr. viii. 12, 13.
b Ex. xxx. 7. 1 Chr. xxiii. 13. 2 Chr. xxvi. 16—21. xxix. 11. xxxiv. 25.
† Heb. *upon it.*
c 2 Chr. viii. 16.
d 2 Chr. viii. 17, 18.
e xxii. 48. Num. xxxiii 35. Deut. xxii. 48
f 2 Kings xiv. 22.
‡ Heb. *lip.*
g v. 6. 9. xxii. 49. 2 Chr. xx. 36, 37.
h x. 11. 1 Chr. xxix 4. Job xxii. 24. xxviii. 16. Ps xlv. 9. Is. xiii. 12.
i 2 Chr. viii. 18.

V. 16. The Canaanites kept possession of Gezer in the time of Joshua and the Judges; but the inhabitants paid tribute to Israel: and it seems that they had continued in this state till Pharaoh expelled them; when, and on what account, we know not.

V. 18. *Tadmor in*, &c. This is supposed to have been the same with the city of Palmyra, whose magnificent ruins, in the midst of widely extended plains of barren sands, attract the attention, and excite the admiration, of modern travellers and antiquarians. But the architecture of these *ruins* being *Grecian*, does not allow us to suppose that they are the remains of buildings erected by Solomon: for they must be of much later date.

V. 20—22. It is probable that these remains of the Amorites, &c. had submitted to Israel, and renounced idolatry; and so were spared on terms not dissimilar from those formerly granted to the Gibeonites.—They and their posterity seem to have been afterwards called *Solomon's servants*, and thus to have been distinguished from the *Nethinims*.—By employing them in these laborious services, Solomon was enabled to exempt the native Israelites from all but the most honourable employments. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 23. (*Note*, v. 13—18.)

V. 24. (*Note*, 2 *Chron.* viii. 11.)

V. 25. Solomon observed the three great festivals with peculiar solemnity: yet he sacrificed at other times also; and *burned incense*, not personally, but by the priests.

V. 26—28. Solomon, possessing Ezion-geber, a seaport upon the Red sea; which communicates with the Indian ocean, united with Hiram, whose subjects were skilled in navigation and commerce; and traded to some part of the East Indies. This is perhaps as ancient an authentic account of the East-India trade, as any there is extant. Ophir is generally, and very probably, supposed to have been the island now called Ceylon.—Four hundred and fifty talents are mentioned in Chronicles: but perhaps thirty talents were divided among the officers and seamen; so that only four hundred and twenty were paid into the treasury.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

The Lord is ever ready to hear the prayers which we make before him, and to manifest his acceptance of our upright services; and when we present ourselves, in body and soul, to be consecrated as the temples of the Holy Spirit to his glory, he will hallow and sanctify us by his grace, and render us meet to be a holy habitation for himself; though before we were altogether polluted. In and through, Jesus Christ, his eyes and his heart are always upon every true believer, to watch over him, and to rejoice in doing him good; yet it is only at intervals that he manifests his presence, and lifts up the light of his countenance upon him: but in heaven we shall always behold his face, and be filled with unalloyed, uninterrupted felicity.—After all the services we can perform, we stand upon the same terms with the Lord as before: nothing can purchase for

CHAP. X.

The queen of Sheba comes to see Solomon, 1, 2. *He answers her questions; and she greatly admires his piety, wisdom, and magnificence,* 3—9. *Their presents to each other,* 10—13. *Solomon's yearly revenue,* 14, 15. *His golden targets and shields,* 16, 17. *His throne of ivory,* 18—20. *His rich vessels, and lucrative commerce; and the presents brought him by such as came to hear his wisdom,* 21—25. *His chariots and horsemen,* 26. *The plenty of silver and cedar in his time,* 27. *Horses, chariots, and linen-yarn brought out of Egypt,* 28, 29.

AND [a] when the queen of [b] Sheba [c] heard of the fame of Solomon [d] concerning the name of the LORD, she came [e] to prove him with hard questions.

2 And she came to Jerusalem with [f] a very great train, with camels that bare [g] spices, and very much gold, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart.

a 2 Chr. ix. 1. Matt. xii. 42. Luke xi. 31.
b Gen. x. 7. 28. xxv. 3. Job vi. 19. Ps. lxxii. 10. 15. Is. lx. 6. Jer. vi. 20. Ez. xxvii. 22, 23. xxxviii. 13.
c iv. 31. 34.
d Job xxviii. 28. Prov. ii. 3—6. John xvii. 3. 1 Cor. i. 20, 21.
e 24. Judg. xiv. 12—14. Ps. xlix. 4. Prov. i. 6. Matt. xiii. 11. 35. Mark iv. 34.
f Esth. i. 4. Acts xxv. 23.
g Is. lx. 6.

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us an exemption from obedience, or a dispensation to commit the least sin; nor would the true believer desire such a license. Rather, in the integrity and uprightness of his heart, he longs for the entire mortification of every lust, and the increase of grace in his soul: and in his calmest moments, would rather choose to be severely rebuked and chastened of the Lord, and thus kept from sin, or recalled from his wanderings, than be allowed to transgress with impunity and prosperity. As for mere professors, of every sect and creed, who make their forms and notions an excuse for breaking God's commandments, they will ere long be exposed to universal and everlasting contempt. For none will be so despised and miserable, either in this world or the next, as they who have continued wicked under the means of grace, who have apostatised from a religious profession, or who have made the truths and ordinances of God the cloak, or the occasion, of their iniquitous practices. —The conduct of individuals, of churches, and nations, who are exposed to great calamities, when carefully considered, will always sufficiently answer the inquiry, "Why "hath the LORD done this unto them?" Even infidels and profligates frequently justify God in the punishment of unrighteous professors, though not without casting unwarrantable scoffs and insults upon them.—Parents, who set their children good examples and give them good instructions, are in the way to have their prayers for them answered, and the blessings of the covenant entailed upon them. But the examples of those whose sins are recorded in their punishment, may be equally instructive. The present dispersed and despised state of the Jews is both a demonstration of the truth of the Scriptures, and a daily lesson to us, not to trust in outward privileges, not to trifle with God's commandments, and not to neglect the salvation of the gospel. We have indeed a better covenant, founded on better promises, than that made with the nation of Israel: but let us see to it, that it is really *made with us*, and that the law of God is written in our hearts as the proof that our iniquities are forgiven. If this be the case, our persevering obedience, as well as our faith in the Saviour, is provided for, and the Lord "will put his fear into our hearts, that we may "never depart from him."

V. 10—28.

In the world and in the church we all have need of each other, and should endeavour, according to our ability, to equal or to exceed the kindness of others to us: but we should not be surprised or discouraged, if our attempts be not acceptable even to our brethren. For men are, and will be, of different judgments and dispositions; and they may be allowed to differ in all temporal matters, and in some which pertain to the worship of God: but as all believers choose, and delight in, the same spiritual excellency of heavenly things; in that respect, they must and will be of one mind and of one judgment.—High stations furnish abundant work for men's hands and hearts; and it is wonderful, if they who fill them are not in some measure "careful and "troubled about many things," to the neglect of the "one "thing needful;" yet at last, all their magnificence and splendid achievements are vanity and vexation of spirit. Nothing is truly valuable, but in proportion as it is useful: and that is most valuable which promotes the salvation of souls. They, however, who begin with the service of God, regulate their worldly employments according to the precepts of his word, and still adhere to his worship and ordinances, take the best measures for obtaining all desirable success in their undertakings. Their activity and ingenuity may be beneficial to others, and they may perhaps escape material harm themselves; yet it is hard to persevere in such a course: few can resist the fascinating temptations of great prosperity; it gradually fosters pride and sensual indulgence, and eats out the life and power of godliness: and most of those, who have risen to great honour and affluence, after having given satisfactory evidence of real godliness, have evidently shown that their souls were losers in proportion. Let the rich and prosperous then "rejoice with trem-"bling," and take heed lest they forget the Lord; and let the poor and obscure be thankful for their safer condition.

NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1, 2. By comparing the texts referred to in the margin, it appears, that Cush, the son of Ham, had a descendant called *Sheba*, and it is probable he settled in Africa, to the south of Egypt. Eber also had a descendant called *Sheba*; and Abraham, a grandson by Keturah, called by the same name. On these and other accounts, it has been controverted, whether the queen of Sheba came from some part of Ethiopia in Africa, or from the most remote region of Arabia, near the Indian ocean, in Asia, —Tradition favours the former opinion, but then it blends manifest falsehoods with it. Our Lord says, "the queen

3 And Solomon [h] told her all her
* questions; there was not *any* thing [i] hid
from the king, which he told her not.
4 And when the queen of Sheba had
seen all Solomon's [k] wisdom, and [l] the
house that he had built,
5 And [m] the meat of his table, and
the sitting of his servants, and the † at-
tendance of his ministers, and their ap-
parel, and his ‡ cup-bearers, and his
[n] ascent by which he went up unto the
house of the LORD; there was no more
spirit in her.
6 And she said to the king, It was a
true § report that I heard in mine own
land of thy ‖ acts and of thy wisdom.
7 Howbeit I believed not the words,
until I came, and mine eyes had seen *it:*
and, behold, [o] the half was not told me:
* thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth
the fame which I heard.
8 [p] Happy *are* thy men, happy *are*
these thy servants, which stand continu-
ally before thee, *and* that hear thy wis-
dom.
9 [q] Blessed be the LORD thy God,
which [r] delighted in thee, to set thee on
the throne of Israel: [s] because the LORD
loved Israel for ever, therefore made he
thee king, [t] to do judgment and justice.

h 2 Chr. ix. 2. Prov. i. 5, 6. xiii. 20. 1 Cor i. 30. Col. ii. 3.
* Heb. *words.*
i iii. 12. 2 Sam. xiv. 17—20. Dan. ii. 21—25. Heb. iv. 12, 13.
k iv. 29—34. 2 Chr. ix. 3, 4.
l vi. vii.
m iv. 22, 23.
† Heb. *standing.*
‡ Or, *butlers.*
n 2 Kings xvi. 18. 1 Chr. ix. 18. 2 Chr. xxiii. 13. Ez. xliv. 3. xlvi. 2.
§ Heb. *word.* 2 Chr. ix. 5, 6.
‖ Or. *sayings.*
o Is. lxiv 4 Zech ix. 17. John xx. 29. 1 Cor. ii. 9. 1 John iii. 2.
* Heb. *thou hast added wisdom and goodness to the fame.*
p 2 Chr. ix. 7, 8. Prov. iii. 13, 14. viii. 34. x. 21. xiii. 20. Luke x. 39—42. xi. 28.
q v. 7. Ps. lxxii. 17—19.
r Ps. xviii. 19. xxii. 8. Is. xlii. 1. lxii. 4.
s Deut. vii. 8. 1 Chr. xvii. 22. 2 Chr. ii. 11.
t 2 Sam. viii. 15. xxiii. 3 Ps. lxxii. 2. Prov. viii. 15, 16. Is. ix. 7. xi. 4, 5. xxxii 1, 2. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. Rom. xiii. 3, 4.

"of the south, came from the uttermost part of the earth, "to hear the wisdom of Solomon:" and Ethiopia is more distant from Jerusalem than any part of Arabia; but at the same time it does not so well answer the description, *the uttermost part of the earth.* Learned men are therefore now generally of opinion, that Sheba lay in the most southern part of Arabia Felix, between the Red Sea and the Indian ocean; that the queen of Sheba was descended from Abraham by Keturah, and retained some traditional fragments of true religion; and that she had heard the fame of Solomon from the mariners of the fleet to Ophir, which had put into some of her ports: and the more general connexion in which the name Sheba is used in the subsequent part of Scripture, powerfully confirms this conclusion. (*Marg. Ref.*)—Our Lord's testimony to the motives which influenced the queen of Sheba, sufficiently refutes the disadvantageous surmises which have often been entertained and advanced. She "had heard of the fame of "Solomon, concerning the name of the LORD, and she "came to hear his wisdom." The report of his knowledge in the truths and precepts of religion, of his piety and zeal in the worship of JEHOVAH, and of the wisdom given him, peculiarly attracted her attention; and she came to propose many questions to him, which perplexed her mind, upon those important subjects; she could meet with no one who could clear them up to her; and she desired "to prove him," whether he could or not. This shows that she was used to reflect seriously upon religion; but for want of proper instruction, was not able to obtain satisfactory solutions of her difficulties; and considering her sex and rank, and the magnificence and indulgence in which she might have lived at home; her long journey, undertaken for these purposes, formed a strong proof of a pious and ingenuous mind, which knew the value of true wisdom, and was willing "to buy the truth" at any price. Her train and attendance were suited to her high rank; and many think that the treasures she brought serve to mark out the region from whence she came.

V. 3. With the books of holy Scripture, then extant, in his hand, and the wise and understanding heart that the Lord had given him, Solomon readily answered those questions which were most difficult to the queen of Sheba. He had prayed, that "all the people of the earth might "know the name of the Lord, to fear him," (viii. 43;) and he doubtless instructed her fully in those truths that relate to the being and perfections, the authority, law, and worship of the one living and true God; in the nature and meaning of the temple, altar, priests, and sacrifices, at Jerusalem; and in every other subject, which was essential to the acceptable worship of JEHOVAH. Her language also indicates that she profited by his instructions; and probably carried home with her the sacred Scriptures, and much profitable knowledge of true religion for the benefit of her subjects.

V. 5. *His ascent,* &c. Some understand these words of a magnificent communication, which Solomon had prepared, betwixt his palace and the courts of the temple, by which he and all his attendants regularly went up to worship the Lord. Others suppose that they mean the sacrifices which he offered upon the altar: while others explain them of the cheerful and fervent solemnity with which he worshipped, showing that his heart was much engaged in the sacred service. But, however that may be, Solomon's wealth and wisdom, his magnificence and good management of his numerous concerns, united with his exemplary piety, overpowered the queen's mind with astonishment.—This event probably took place about the middle of Solomon's reign, at least before he began to turn aside to idolatry.

V. 8, 9. Solomon's wisdom made a deeper impression upon the mind of the queen of Sheba than all his prosperity and grandeur. She congratulated, and almost seemed to envy, the felicity of his servants: she had derived such benefit from her occasional conversation with him, that she considered those persons peculiarly favoured, though her inferiors in rank, who continually enjoyed the advantage of his instructive discourse and wise counsels. She also very fervently praised God, for his love to Solomon and to Israel; in endowing him with such extraordinary wisdom, in raising him to the throne, and in blessing him with peace and prosperity, that he might rule over his people "in justice, and "in judgment." These sentiments concerning the sovereignty and providence of God, the giver of all wisdom and prosperity; his free and unfailing love to his people; the duty of kings; and the happiness of those nations who are favoured with those that do their duty; together with her praising God for his love to his people, in which she cor-

u 2. ix. 14. Mat. ii. 11.

10 And she gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of
x Gen. xliii. 11. Ex. xxx. 34. x spices very great store, and precious stones: there came no more such abundance of spices as these which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon.

11 And the navy also of Hiram that
y ix. 27. 28. 2 Chr. viii. 18. Ps. xlv. 9. brought gold from y Ophir, brought in
z 2 Chr. ii. 8. ix. 10. 11. *Algum.* from Ophir great plenty of z almug-trees, and precious stones.

12 And the king made of the almug-trees * pillars for the house of the LORD,
* Or, *rails.* Heb. *a prop.* and for the king's house, a harps also
a 1 Chr. xxiii. 5. xxv. 1, &c. Ps xcii. 1—3. cl. 3—5. Rev. xiv. 2, 3. and psalteries for singers: there came no such almug-trees, nor were seen unto this day.

13 And king Solomon gave unto the
b 2. ix. 1. Ps. xx. 4. xxxvii. 4. Matt. xv. 28. John xiv. 13, 14. Eph. iii 20. queen of Sheba b all her desire, whatsoever she asked, beside *that* which Solomon gave her † of his royal bounty. So she turned and went to her own country, she and her servants.

† Heb. *according to the hand of king Solomon.*

14 ¶ Now the weight of gold, that came to Solomon in one year, was six hundred threescore and six talents of gold,

15 Beside *that he had* of the merchantmen, and of the traffick of the spice-
c 2 Chr. ix. 13, 14. Ps. lxxii. 10. Is. xxi. 13. Gal. iv. 25. merchants, and of c all the kings of Arabia, and of the ‡ governors of the country.

‡ Or, *captains.*

16 And king Solomon made d two d xiv. 26—28. 2 Chr. ix. 15, 16. xii. 9, 10. hundred targets *of* beaten gold: six hundred *shekels* of gold went to one target.

17 And *he made* three hundred shields *of* beaten gold: three pound of gold went to one shield: and the king put them e in e vii 2. the house of the forest of Lebanon.

18 ¶ Moreover the king made f a f 2 Chr. ix. 17—19. Ps. xlv. 6. cx. 1. cxxii. 5. Heb. i. 3. 8. Rev. xx. 11. great throne of g ivory, and overlaid it with the best gold.

g 22. xxii. 39. Ps. xlv. 8. Ez. xxvii. 6. Am. vi. 4. Rev. xviii. 12.

19 The throne had six steps, and the top of the throne *was* round ◊ behind: and *there were* ‖ stays on either side on the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the stays.

◊ Heb. *on the hinder part thereof.* ‖ Heb. *bands.*

20 And twelve h lions stood there on the one side and on the other upon the six steps: there was not * the like made in any kingdom.

h Gen. xlix. 9. Num. xxiii. 24. xxiv. 9. Rev. v. 5.
* Heb. *so.*

21 And all king Solomon's i drinking vessels *were of* gold, and all the vessels of k the house of the forest of Lebanon *were of* pure gold; † none *were of* silver: it was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon.

i 2 Chr. ix. 20—22.
k vii. 2.
† Or, there was *no silver* in them.

22 For the king had at sea a navy of l Tharshish with the navy of Hiram: once in three years came the navy of Tharshish, bringing gold, and silver, ‡ ivory, and apes, and m peacocks.

l xxii. 48. Gen. x. 4. 2 Chr. ix. 21. xx. 36. 37. Ps. xlviii. 7. lxxii. 10. Is. ii. 16. xxiii. 1. 6. 10. lx. 9. lxvi. 19. Ez. xxvii. 12. Jon. i. 3.
‡ Or, *elephant's teeth.* 18. Am. iii. 15.
m Job xxxix. 13.

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dially rejoiced, prove an understanding and pious mind, and must convince the reflecting reader that she returned home much benefited by her journey.

V. 12. It is not known what kind of wood is intended by the words *almug-trees:* but the specimen brought from Sheba would remain to posterity in the pillars or rails, and the musical instruments made of it.

V. 14, 15. Perhaps the kings of Arabia were induced, by the queen of Sheba's report and example, to pay court to Solomon, and send him presents.

V. 16, 17. These shields seem to have been intended principally for magnificence, and to be carried before the king on special occasions. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 18—20. Ivory is not mentioned in Scripture till the time of Solomon, who doubtless imported it from India. —We must not suppose, that the ivory was entirely covered with gold, but rather inlaid with it, so as to add to its beauty.—The lions seem not only to have been intended for ornament, but as emblems of the courage and resolution requisite in the impartial administration of justice; and they denoted that magistrates should be a terror to evil doers, and the protectors of those who peaceably submit to their authority. Judah was compared by Jacob to a young lion; and our Lord is called "the Lion of the tribe of Judah."

V. 22. Many learned men have endeavoured to prove, that Tharshish was a city in Spain called Tartessus; and some think that this navy, which Solomon had with the navy of Hiram, was distinct from that which traded to Ophir, and was fitted out from some port on the Mediterranean: and they account for the length of time taken up in each voyage, by supposing that a great part of it was employed in selling and buying, or bartering, the several articles of commerce.—But, whatever gold might be, ivory, apes, and peacocks, (or *parrots*, as some render the word,) do not seem to have been articles of trade in any of the countries bordering on the Mediterranean.—"Jehoshaphat "made ships of Tharshish to go to Ophir for gold: but "they went not, for the ships were broken at Ezion-ga-"ber."—"He joined himself with Ahaziah to make ships "*to go to Tharshish*, and they made the ships in Ezion-"gaber.—And the ships were broken, that they were not "able *to go to Tharshish.*" (1 *Kings* xxii. 48. 2 *Chr.* xx. 35—37.) These passages being decisive proofs that the ships of Tharshish, ships *to go to Tharshish*, were built at Ezion-gaber on the Red sea, the learned Bishop Lowth, (having adopted the opinion, that Tharshish was Tartessus in Spain,) says 'Tharshish is celebrated in Scripture for 'the trade, which Solomon carried on thither in conjunc-'tion with the Tyrians. Jehoshaphat attempted afterward 'to renew that trade, and from the account given of that 'attempt, it appears, that his fleet was to sail from Ezion-

l iii. 12, 13. iv. 30, 31. 2 Chr. ix. 22, 23 Ps. lxxxix. 27. Col. i. 18, 19. ii. 2, 3.

23 ¶ So king Solomon [l] exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom.

* Heb. *the face of.* m iii. 28. Pro. ii. 6. Dan. i. 17. ii. 21. 23. v. 11.

24 And all the earth sought * to Solomon, to hear his wisdom, [m] which God had put in his heart.

n 1 Sam. x. 27. 2 Sam. viii. 2. 10. Job xlii. 11. Ps. lxxii. 10. 15. Matt. ii. 11.

25 And they brought [n] every man his present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and garments, and armour, and spices, horses, and mules, a rate year by year.

o iv. 26. 2 Chr. i. 14. ix. 25.

26 And [o] Solomon gathered together chariots and horsemen: and he had a thousand and four hundred chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen, whom he bestowed in the cities for chariots, and with the king at Jerusalem.

p 2 Chr. i. 15—17 ix. 27. Job xxii. 24, 25.

27 And [p] the king * made silver *to be* in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars made he *to be* as the sycamore-trees that *are* in the vale, for abundance.

* Heb. *gave.*

† Heb. *And the going forth of the horses which was Solomon's.*

q Deut. xvii. 16. 2 Chr. i. 16, 17. ix. 28. Is. xxxi. 1. Ez. xvii. 15.

28 † And Solomon had [q] horses brought out of Egypt, and [r] linen yarn: the king's merchants received the linen yarn at a price.

r xxvii. 7.

29 And a chariot came up and went out of Egypt for six hundred *shekels* of

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'gaber on the Red sea, and must therefore have designed 'to sail round Africa, as Solomon's fleet probably had done 'before: for it was a three years' voyage; and they brought 'gold from Ophir, probably from the coast of Arabia, sil-'ver from Tartessus, and ivory, apes, and peacocks, from 'Africa. It is certain, that under Pharaoh Necho, about 'two hundred years after, this voyage was made by the 'Egyptians,' &c. But with all deference to so eminent a writer, it must be allowed extremely improbable, that in regular voyages, for *commerce*, (not *discovery*, for which Pharaoh Necho's extraordinary expedition doubtless was undertaken,) such a circuitous course should be chosen; when, as far as we can learn, it was not then known that Africa was a peninsula! To fit out one navy for Ophir at Ezion-gaber, whether in Arabia or the East Indies, which might coast some parts of Africa: and to fit out another navy to Spain from some Mediterranean port, would be an obvious and compendious measure: but that the same ships should attempt the whole, and after taking in the far richest part of their freight comparatively near home; should with it attempt to sail round Africa, in order to add silver and some other articles of inferior value, at Tartessus, must strike every reflecting person as a most unparalleled proceeding. To sail round Africa at that time, would be vastly more formidable, than a voyage round the world at present: and a single glance at a map must convince any person, acquainted with commerce, that no man of common prudence would ever think of such a voyage for lucrative purposes. Tharshish seems indeed, in some places, to mean Tartessus, or Tarsus, or some place connected with the Mediterranean: for Jonah embarked for Tharshish at Joppa, which is situated on the Mediterranean. Ships of Tharshish seem also sometimes to mean, any large ships fitted out for long voyages. But in this place, and some others referred to, if the text be not corrupted, Tharshish must mean some place in the East Indies, or bordering on the Indian Ocean.

V. 24—27. These particulars were recorded, to show the faithfulness of God to the promises which he had made to David and to Solomon, whose reign typified the kingdom of the Messias, in its peace and prosperity, and in the submission and willing services of princes and nations. But Solomon was doubtless culpable in several respects, and his mind was gradually corrupted from its simplicity to overmuch luxury and ostentation, which prepared the way for the awful consequences recorded in the ensuing chapter.

V. 28, 29. Solomon and Pharaoh seem to have traded together by their merchants, to the exclusion of other persons. The price of the linen yarn, according to its quality, was fixed by contract. The price of a good chariot-horse also was fixed at about nineteen pounds sterling, and that of a chariot at seventy-five: and in a contract there is no absurdity in supposing that, the quality being described, a certain sum should be given for each, one with another. Besides those which were brought for the king's use, numbers were sold again, at a great profit doubtless, to the neighbouring princes: for Pharaoh reserved to his son-in-law the exclusive advantage of this lucrative trade. Some indeed suppose the stipulated sums to have been an exorbitant tax laid by Pharaoh on all chariots, or horses, which were exported: but the other seems the more probable way of explaining the passage.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—13.

Wisdom and piety are exceedingly valuable, and render men truly honourable: and they, who form a due estimate of their worth, will think no expense or labour too great to obtain them. When we first attend seriously to religion, we shall meet with many hard questions, which we cannot resolve, and which will often perplex and distress our minds, especially if at a distance from proper instructions. But "then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD." By waiting and prayer, by practising what we have learned, by diligently searching the Scriptures, and by consulting wise and experienced Christians, we shall be delivered from our difficulties, and a clearer light will shine upon our path. —They, who possess wisdom and knowledge, should be courteous and accessible, and as glad to communicate them for the good of others, as the rich should be to impart their wealth. Great wisdom and piety, in the midst of singular prosperity and grandeur, are very uncommon, and therefore excite the higher admiration! A good understanding will be displayed in the orderly and prudent regulation of domestic and secular concerns; so that propriety and consistency with a man's station and circumstances, will be visible to the attentive spectator: but our greatest diligence, constancy, seriousness, and cheerfulness should be manifested, in attending on the ordinances of God; that our example may influence others to "serve him in reverence and godly "fear." This gives a lustre to wisdom, learning, wealth;

silver, and an horse for an hundred and fifty; and so for all [s] the kings of the Hittites, and for the kings of Syria, did they bring *them* out * by their means.

[s] Josh i. 4 2 Kings vii. 6.

* Heb. *by their hand.* Mal. 1 1. *Marg.*

or greatness: but, alas, how few are ambitious of this honour that cometh from God!—The reports we hear concerning the achievements and excellencies of our fellow-creatures, or concerning any earthly glory, are seldom verified when we become acquainted with them. But there is a spiritual excellency in heavenly things, and in consistent Christians, to which no reports can do justice: and the better they are known the more they will be esteemed and relished.—Those who delight in the company of wise men will become wise: and they are highly favoured, who have continual opportunity of conversing with persons of this character: yet frequently such as have occasional interviews with them get more benefit, than those who are always with them.—All our comforts and prospects spring from the Lord's love to us: he delighteth in the fruits of his own Spirit: and he communicates many good gifts to magistrates, ministers, and private Christians, out of love to his people, that they may be serviceable to them; and happy are they who are governed and instructed by those in whom the Lord delighteth!—Whatever our station or endowments be, they are connected with correspondent duties: and we should take it kindly to be reminded of them, and excited to perform them with diligence and fidelity.—Reciprocal kindnesses cement friendship; and the wealthy should not willingly be outdone in generosity: but neither the company of God's people, nor the ordinances of his house, should detain us from our proper place and employments, but should send us to them, prepared and disposed to discharge them with greater wisdom and conscientiousness.

V. 14—29.

They have the most comfort in worldly things, (though seldom the largest share of them,) who expect least from them, and decidedly prefer wisdom and grace, and who devote the best of all they have to the Lord: for his largest promises, general and particular, shall surely be performed to those that trust and serve him. But, alas! what are worldly wealth and prosperity? They can only procure luxuries, embellishments, and curiosities, which add nothing to the real enjoyment of life: abundance creates satiety, and what is had in plenty is *nothing accounted of.* Such possessions always multiply cares and temptations; and they generally undermine humility and heavenly-mindedness, and eat out the life of religion, by leading to sensual indulgence, avarice, ostentation, or the pride of life. But the spiritual peace, riches, and abundance of the Redeemer's kingdom, are of another nature: they satisfy, but never satiate; they sanctify the soul and strengthen it to resist temptation, and to mortify every fleshly lust.—The awakened sinner, oppressed with perplexing difficulties, discouraging objections, and tormenting fears, hears the report of the Saviour's acts and wisdom, of his unsearchable riches and unfathomable love: but can scarcely believe the report. With trouble, self-denial, and forsaking many earthly things, he resorts by faith and prayer unto him, and is graciously encouraged, and entertained: the Lord's effectual teaching dispels his darkness and distress; he shows him his glory and grace, he satisfies him with the provisions of his house, and enriches him from his treasures of wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. The rejoicing believer no longer glories in himself and his own attainments: nor is he terrified, though humbled, with the consciousness of his own guilt and pollution. The person, the character, the love of Jesus, attract and engross his admiring attention, whilst they confirm his lively hopes of salvation: and he finds by experience, that the half was not told him of his excellency and preciousness. He now congratulates the felicity of the meanest servant of the Redeemer, but especially that of those above, who always behold his face, and do his will.—He blesses the Lord for his love to Israel, in giving them such a Prince and Saviour, and yields up himself both to be ruled and saved by him; and though Jesus needeth not, and is not enriched by all that he can render to him; yet he devotes his riches and talents to his service, and they are graciously accepted, and recompensed with all that he can desire: yea, of his royal bounty, our Prince of Peace gives more than any petitioner is able to ask, or think. The believer, who has thus been with Jesus, will return to his station in society, to discharge his duty, with new alacrity, from better motives, and to nobler purposes: yet he will still look forward to the day, when being absent from the body, he shall be present with the Lord; and when his transient glimpses of the Saviour's glory, which overpower him with admiration, shall be exchanged for uninterrupted vision, with faculties enlarged, and strengthened to endure and delight in that ineffable refulgency. But who can express or conceive aright of that state of felicity? Every enraptured spirit will then confess, that the thousandth part of what is there enjoyed never reached his ear, nor was thought of in his most delightsome moments upon earth.—O may the writer, and every reader of these observations aspire after, and at length rejoice together in, that unutterable felicity! Behold a greater than Solomon is here! Even upon earth he is present in his word, his ordinances, and on his throne of grace: and will be found of, and manifest himself to, all who seek him uprightly. But the queen of the south will rise up in judgment with the men of this generation also. "She came "from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom "of Solomon:" but they will not arise from their beds, or go out of their houses, or even open their Bibles, to learn the wisdom of the Son of God! they will not put themselves to the least inconvenience to receive his instructions, and seek his salvation! Yea, verily, this example shames every one of us; for we are all guilty of undervaluing our mercies, and of slackness in attending on the means of grace. Let then the careless and the infidel take warning; for evil is before them: let the negligent strive to enter in at the strait gate, lest he should be found without when the door is shut: let the drooping inquirer be encouraged, for poor sinners of the Gentiles are welcome to Christ: and let us all sit at his feet, hear his word, and wait for his salvation: and by reporting his praises, and doing his will, let us endeavour to recommend him to our fellow-sinners on every side.

CHAP. XI.

Solomon, having very many wives and concubines, even strange women, is in his old age seduced by them into idolatry, 1—8. *The Lord threatens to rend the greater part of the kingdom from his family,* 9—13. *Solomon finds an adversary in Hadad the Edomite, who had been entertained in Egypt,* 14—22. *And in Rezon, who reigned in Damascus,* 23—25. *And in Jeroboam, to whom Ahijah foretold that he should reign over ten tribes, and whom Solomon in vain attempted to kill,* 26—40. *Solomon dies and is buried, and Rehoboam succeeds him,* 41—43.

a Gen. vi 2–5 Deut. xvii. 17. Neb. xiii.26, 27. * Or, *beside*. iii.1.

BUT king Solomon [a] loved many strange women, * together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, *and* Hittites;

b Ex. xxxiv. 16. Deut. vii. 3, 4. Josh. xxiii. 12, 13. c xvi. 31—33. Num. xxv. 1—3. Judg. iii. 6, 7. 2 Chr. xxi. 6. Mal. ii. 11. 2 Cor. vi.14—16.

2 Of the nations *concerning* which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, [b] Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: *for* [c] surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: [d] Solomon clave unto these in love.

d iii. 2, 3. Judg. xvi. 4, &c. 2 Chr. xix. 2. Ps cxxxix. 31. Rom. i. 32. 1 Cor. xv. 33. Rev. ii. 4.

3 And he had [e] seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart.

e Judg. viii. 30, 31 ix. 5. 2 Sam. iii. 2–5. v. 13–16. 2 Chr. xi. 21. Ec. vii. 28.

4 For it came to pass, when Solomon was [f] old, *that* [g] his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and [h] his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as *was* the heart of David his father.

f vi. 1. ix. 10. xiv 21. g Deut. xvii. 17. Neb. xiii. 26, 27. h 6 38. vi. 12, 13. viii. 61. ix. 4. xv. 3.14.2 Kings xx. 3. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. xxix. 19. 2 Chr. xvii. 3. xxv. 2 xxxi. 20, 21. xxxiv. 2.

5 For Solomon went after [i] Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after [k] Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites.

i 33. Judg. ii. 13. x. 6. 1 Sam. vii. 3, 4. xii. 10. 2 Kings xxiii.13. Jer. ii. 10—12. k 7. *Molech*. Lev. xviii. 21. xx. 2—5. Zeph. i. 5. *Malcham*.

6 And Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and † went not fully after the LORD, as *did* David his father.

† Heb. *fulfilled not after*. Num. xiv. 24. Josh. xiv. 8, 14.

7 Then did Solomon [l] build an high place for [m] Chemosh, the [n] abomination of Moab, in [o] the hill that *is* before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon.

l Lev. xxvi. 30. Num. xxxiii.52. 2 Kings xxi. 2,3. xxiii. 13, 14. Ps. lxxviii. 58. Ez. xx. 28, 29. m Num. xxi. 29. Judg. xi. 24. Jer. xlviii. 13. n Deut. xiii. 14. xvii. 3, 4 xxvii. 15. Is. xliv. 19. Ez. xviii. 12. Dan. xi. 31. Rev. xvii. 4, 5. o 2 Sam. xv. 30. Zech. xiv. 4. Matt. xxvi. 30.

8 And likewise did he for [p] all his strange wives, which burnt incense, and sacrificed unto their gods.

Acts 9. 12.——p Ez. xvi. 22–29. Hos. iv. 11, 12. 1 Cor. x. 11, 12. 20–22.

NOTES.

CHAP. XI. V. 1—8. We have not a more melancholy and astonishing instance of human depravity in the sacred Scriptures, than that recorded in these verses. He, who was named *Jedidiah, beloved of the* LORD, and who early in life is declared to have *loved the* LORD: he, who had been favoured with such special tokens of God's favour, and had received such answers to his prayers: he, who had been honoured to build the temple, and was so enlarged in supplication when it was dedicated: he, who was renowned throughout the earth for his wisdom and piety, as well as his wealth and prosperity: he, who was employed as an inspired writer, whose name is affixed to a part of the oracles of God; who had given such excellent counsels and warnings to others, and was so illustrious a type of Christ: even he apostatized, and became a public and shameful worshipper of abominable idols, to the disgrace of his understanding, as well as the scandal of his profession! It is probable that his declension was gradual: he was perhaps elated with spiritual pride, as well as induced by his prosperity to indulge in luxury and ostentation: or perhaps, he deemed it unnecessary for one of his wisdom and ability, and of his rank and authority, to restrict himself by those rules, which were needful or salutary to inferior persons, as if he were secure from those evils which they were intended to prevent! He first multiplied horses, and caused the people to go down into Egypt for that purpose; then he *greatly* multiplied gold and silver, contrary to the law of Moses; (*Deut.* xvii. 16, 17;) not as his father had done, for the service of the sanctuary, but for the increase of his own splendour. Thus, the barrier was broken through, and the fervour of his piety abated. After the example of his father, he married several women, and added one to another more and more rapidly, till he had got together an immense number of wives and concubines. And he doubtless might argue, that if it was lawful to have two wives, why not many? and in his case, who could maintain them all, they might not be inexpedient, and would add to his magnificence and royal dignity. Probably Pharaoh's daughter, whom he first married, was a real convert, (for we find no temples to the gods of Egypt:) and this might induce him to take more wives of the heathens, flattering himself, that his wisdom and example would prevail with them also to embrace the worship of JEHOVAH. Thus he proceeded, till perhaps persons were employed to collect from every part of his kingdom, but especially from the subjected nations, every beautiful woman they met, without regard to her religion. Those of superior rank seem to have been numbered among his wives, and styled princesses; while the inferiors were his concubines without so many privileges. Towards the close of his life, when he was above fifty years of age, he grew more addicted to his women than before: and spending much time in their company, he doubtless neglected both the worship of God, and the affairs of his kingdom: and perhaps the enormous expense which their extravagance occasioned, rendered those burdens requisite of which the people afterwards complained; (xii. 4.) But the evil did

9 ¶ And the LORD was [q] angry with Solomon, because [r] his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel, [s] which had appeared unto him twice;

10 And had [t] commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded.

11 Wherefore the LORD said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is * done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, [u] I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant.

12 Notwithstanding, [x] in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake: *but* [y] I will rend it out of the hand of thy son.

13 Howbeit [z] I will not rend away all the kingdom; *but* will give [a] one tribe to thy son [b] for David my servant's sake, and [c] for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen.

14 ¶ And [d] the LORD stirred up [e] an adversary unto Solomon; Hadad the Edomite: he *was* of the king's seed in Edom.

15 For it came to pass, [f] when David was in Edom, and Joab the captain of the host was gone up to bury the slain, [g] after he had smitten [h] every male in Edom;

16 (For six months did Joab remain there with all Israel, until he had cut off every male in Edom:)

17 That Hadad fled, he and certain Edomites of his father's servants with him, to go into Egypt; [i] Hadad *being* yet a little child.

18 And they arose out of [k] Midian, and came to [l] Paran; and they took men with them out of Paran, and they came to Egypt, unto Pharaoh king of Egypt; which gave him an house, and appointed him victuals, and gave him land.

19 And Hadad [m] found great favour in the sight of Pharaoh, so that he gave him to wife the sister of his own wife, the sister of [n] Tahpenes the queen.

q Ex. iv. 14. Num. xii. 9. Deut. iii. 26. ix. 8. 20. 2 Sam. vi. 7. xi. 27. 1 Chr. xxi. 7. Ps. lxxviii. 58—60. xc. 7, 8.
r 2, 3. Deu. vii. 4. Prov. iv. 23. Is. xxix. 13, 14. Hos. iv. 11. 2 Tim. iv. 10.
s iii. 5. ix. 2.
t vi. 12, 13. ix. 4—7. 2 Chr. vii. 17—22.
* Heb. *with thee.*
u 31. xii. 15, 16. Num. xiv. 23, 34. 1 Sam. ii. 30—32. xii. 13, 14. xv. 26—28. 2 Sam. xii. 9—12.
x xxi. 29. 2 Kings xx. 19.
y Ex. xx. 5.
z 2 Sam. vii. 15, 16. 1 Chr. xvii. 13, 14. Ps. lxxxix. 33—37.
a 35, 36. xii. 20.
b 32, 36. Deu. ix. 5. 2 Kings xiii. 23. xix. 34. Ps. lxxxix. 49. cxxxii. 1, 17. Is. ix. 7. Jer. xxxiii. 17—21. Luke i. 32, 33.
c Deu. xii. 11. 2 Kings xxi. 4. xxiii. 27. Ps. cxxxii. 13, 14. Is. xiv. 32. lxii. 1, 7. Jer. xxxiii. 15, 16.
d xii. 15. 1 Sam. xxvi. 19. 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. 1 Chr. v. 26. Is. x. 5.
e 2 Sam. vii. 14. Ps. lxxxix. 30—34.

B. C. 1040.
f 2 Sam. viii. 14. 1 Chr. xviii. 12, 13. Ps. lx. *title.* cviii. 10.
g Gen. xxv. 23. xxvii. 40. Num. xxiv. 18, 19. Mal. i. 2, 3.
h Deut. xx. 13.
i Ex. ii. 1—3. 2 Sam. iv. 4. 2 Kings xi. 2. Matt. ii. 13, 14.
k Gen. xxv. 2, 6. Num. xxii. 4. xxv. 1, 6, 14.
l Gen. xiv. 6. xxi. 21. Num. x. 12. Deut. i. 1. xxxiii. 1. Hab. iii. 3.
m Gen. xxxix. 4, 21. Acts vii. 10, 21.
n Jer. xliii. 7—9.

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not stop here: for his women gained still greater ascendancy over him, and gradually prevailed with him to connive at their idolatries, to humour them by building them idolatrous temples, and at length to join with them in these abominations! And when one had been thus gratified, there could be no peace, unless the others were obliged in the same manner; and therefore he did thus *for all his strange wives.* They who have noted in history, or in society, the effects of the influence of inveigling women over the greatest and wisest of men, will readily perceive that matters were speedily in a train, and that it was almost impossible, without an immediate divine interposition, that Solomon should stop short of this extreme folly and wickedness, when he had once suffered himself to be entangled in the fatal net. The inspired historian therefore quotes the prohibition of marrying strange women, with the annexed consequence, "Surely they will turn away "your heart after their gods;" to show that no eminency of wisdom or firmness of resolution will stand any man in stead in such a situation, when in a careless or self-confident spirit he presumes to violate God's commandments. Of this, Solomon formed a most striking proof. David had committed several sins, but he had repented, and humbled himself for them: and he had still adhered to the worship of JEHOVAH, and never in the smallest instance set the people an example of idolatry, or given any connivance to the greatest of all abominations, that open treason against the King of heaven, and violation of the national covenant with Israel. But Solomon's heart was not *thus* "perfect "with the LORD his God:" and "he went not fully after "the LORD!"

V. 9—11. The Lord had twice appeared to Solomon, in the most condescending and encouraging manner: yet on the last occasion he had fairly warned him of the consequences of disobedience, especially of idolatry. (*Marg. Ref.*) This therefore aggravated his offence; and it is probable, that God sent this awful message by a prophet; as refusing to appear again to him, after his ingratitude for his former gracious visits.

V. 13. Benjamin was so connected with Judah, that it was but as one tribe, and therefore it is not here particularly mentioned. As a punishment of Solomon's sin, the other ten tribes would be rent from him: but in performance of the promises made to David, and in a gracious recompense for his obedience, and to maintain his own worship at Jerusalem which he had chosen, the Lord would continue the tribe of Judah under the government of Solomon's posterity. Every mitigation of the sentence was suited to *humble* and even *mortify* Solomon. Nothing was done for his sake, but all for his father's. It is very probable, that this message brought him to himself, and led him to repentance.

V. 14. As the opposition of Hadad accorded to the Lord's secret design of punishing Solomon, and was overruled for that purpose, he is said to have *stirred him up;* though it is evident Hadad was instigated by his own ambition and resentment.

V. 15, 16. These particulars do not occur in the preceding history, (2 *Sam.* viii. 14. 2 *Chr.* xviii. 12, 13.) As the Edomites afterwards continued a people, either some particular district only was treated with this severity, or numbers escaped from Joab and his men. Unless some very peculiar cause required it, this military execution cannot be justified.

20 And the sister of Tahpenes bare him Genubath his son, whom Tahpenes [o] weaned in Pharaoh's house: and Genubath was in Pharaoh's household among the sons of Pharaoh.

21 And when Hadad [p] heard in Egypt that David slept with his fathers, and that Joab the captain of the host was dead, Hadad said to Pharaoh, * Let me depart, that I may go to mine own country.

22 Then Pharaoh said unto him, But what hast thou lacked with me, that, behold, thou seekest to go to thine own country? And he answered, † Nothing: howbeit let me go in any wise.

23 ¶ And [q] God stirred him up *another* adversary, Rezon the son of Eliadah, which fled from his lord [r] Hadadezer king of Zobah:

24 And he gathered men unto him, and became captain over a band, when David slew them *of Zobah:* and they went to Damascus, and dwelt therein, and reigned in Damascus.

25 And he was an adversary to Israel [s] all the days of Solomon, beside the mischief that Hadad *did:* and he [t] abhorred Israel, and reigned over Syria.

26 ¶ And [u] Jeroboam the son of Nebat, [x] an Ephrathite of Zereda, [y] Solomon's servant, whose mother's name *was* Zeruah, a widow-woman, even he lifted up *his* hand against the king.

27 And this *was* the cause that he [z] lifted up *his* hand against the king: [a] Solomon built Millo, *and* * repaired the breaches of the city of David his father.

28 And the man Jeroboam *was* a mighty man of valour: and Solomon seeing the young man that he † was industrious, he made him ruler over all the ‡ charge of the house of Joseph.

29 And it came to pass at that time when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet [b] Ahijah the [c] Shilonite found him in the way: and he had clad himself with a new garment; and they two *were* alone in the field:

30 And Ahijah caught the new garment that *was* on him, and [d] rent it *in* twelve pieces:

31 And he said to Jeroboam, Take thee ten pieces: for [e] thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee:

32 (But [f] he shall have one tribe for my servant David's sake, and [g] for Jerusalem's sake, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel:)

33 [h] Because that they have forsaken me, and have worshipped [i] Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the children of Ammon, and have not walked in my ways, to do *that which is* right in mine eyes, and *to keep* my statutes and my judgments, as *did* David his father.

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[o] Gen. xxi. 7, 8. [p] 1 Sam. i. 24.

B. C. 1055.

[p] ii. 10. 34. Ex. iv. 19. Matt. ii. 20.

* Heb. *send me away.*

† Heb. *Not.*

[q] 14. 2 Sam. xvi. 11. Ezra i. 1. 5. Is. xlii. 17. xxxvii. 26. xlv. 5. Ez. xxxviii. 16.

[r] 2 Sam viii. 3. x. 15—18. 1 Chr. xviii. 3—9 xix. 6—19. Ps lx. *title.*

[s] v. 4. 2 Chr. xv. 2.

[t] Deut. xxiii. 7. 2 Sam. xvi. 21 Ps. cvi. 40. Zech xi. 8.

[u] 11. 28. xii. 2. 20, &c. xiii 1, &c.

[x] Gen xxxv. 16. Ruth i. 2. 1 Sam. i. 1. xvii. 12 1 Chr. ii. 19.

[y] ix. 22. 2 Chr. xiii. 6.

[z] 2 Sam. xx. 21.

[a] ix. 15. 24.

* Heb. *closed.*

† Heb. *did work.* Prov. xxii. 29.

‡ Heb. *burden.* v. 16.

[b] xii. 15. xiv. 2.

[c] Josh xviii. 1.

[d] 1 Sam. xv. 27, 28. xxiv. 5.

[e] 11—13.

[f] xii. 20.

[g] 13.

[h] 9 iii. 14. vi. 12, 13. ix. 5—7. xv. 4, 5. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. 2 Chr. xv. 2.

[i] 5—8.

V. 21. After David's death, Hadad returned to Idumea, in hopes to excite disturbances before Solomon's authority was established: but he seems to have been disappointed, till after Solomon's apostacy; when he perhaps attempted to seize the kingdom of Edom, and molested Solomon all the rest of his reign.

V. 23—25. When David had defeated Hadadezer, Rezon collected a company, over whom he became a captain; and it is probable, that for a long time they lived by plunder: for "David put garrisons in Syria-Damascus:" but at length Rezon found an opportunity of seizing Damascus, and usurping the kingdom of Syria.—He had indeed abhorred Israel from the first; but did not appear as Solomon's adversary, or to do him any injury, till Solomon had provoked the Lord by his idolatries.

V. 26—28. Jeroboam, having been employed in superintending the builders, so distinguished himself by capacity and industry, that Solomon preferred him to a post of considerable authority and influence. He either placed him over the tribute collected from the tribes of Ephraim and Mannasseh, or made him superintendant of the levy sent from them by courses to assist in his works.—This advancement, probably from a low situation, opened vast prospects to his ambitious mind: and he seems to have excited and encouraged the discontent of the people, on account of the burdens laid on them. Perhaps he was plotting an open revolt; at least he joined the disaffected party: and thus he might be said to "lift up his hand against the king;" though his designs were not executed till after Solomon's death.

V. 29—31. The meaning of the emblematical action, here recorded, seems to imply, that the *new garment* belonged to the prophet, not to Jeroboam; though many expositors suppose the contrary. The division of the kingdom took nothing from Jeroboam, but gave the dominion over ten tribes to him.—Some think that the rending of the garment into twelve pieces, represented also the subsequent divisions and distractions which prevailed in Israel.

V. 33. Induced by Solomon's example, and to obtain his favour, it seems that the people had generally joined in his idolatry.

34 Howbeit [k] I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand: but I will make him prince all the days of his life, for David my servant's sake, whom I chose, because he kept my commandments and my statutes:

35 But I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand, and [l] will give it unto thee, *even* ten tribes.

36 And unto his son will I give one tribe, that [m] David my servant may have * a light alway before me in Jerusalem, [n] the city which I have chosen me to put my name there.

37 And I will take thee, and thou shalt reign, [o] according to all that thy soul desireth, and shalt be king over Israel.

38 And it shall be, [p] if thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and do *that is* right in my sight, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did; [q] that I will be with thee, and [r] build thee a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel unto thee.

39 And I will for this [s] afflict the seed of David, but [t] not for ever.

40 Solomon [u] sought therefore to kill Jeroboam: and Jeroboam arose and fled into Egypt, unto [x] Shishak king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.

41 And [y] the rest of the † acts of Solomon, and all that he did, and his wisdom, *are* they not written in the book of the acts of Solomon?

42 And the ‡ time that Solomon reign-

k 12, 13. 31. Job xi. 6. Ps. ciii. 10. Hab. iii. 2.
l xii. 15—17. 20.
m xv. 4. 2 Sam. vii. 16. 29. xxi. 17. 2 Kings viii. 19. 2 Chr. xxi 7. Ps. cxxxii. 17. Jer. xxxiii. 17. 21. Am. ix. 11, 12. Luke i. 69, 70. 78, 79. Acts xv. 16, 17.
* Heb. *lamp, or candle.*
n 13. Gal. iv. 25, 26. Heb. xii. 22. Rev. xxi. 10.
o 36. Deut. xiv. 26. 2 Sam. iii. 21.
p iii. 14. vi. 12. ix. 4, 5. Ex. xix 5. Deut. xv. 5. Zech. iii. 7.
q Deut. xxxi. 8. Josh i. 5.
r xiv 7—14. 2 Sam. vii. 11. 16. 26—29 1 Chr. xvii. 10. 24—27.
s xli 16. xiv. 8. 25,26 Ps. lxxxix. 38—45. 49—51.
t Is. vii. 14. ix. 7. xi. 1—10. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. Luke i. 32, 33. ii. 4. 11.
u 2 Chr. xvi. 10. Prov. xxi. 30. Is. xlvi. 10 Lam. iii 37.
x xiv. 25.
y 2 Chr. ix. 29, 30.
† Or, *words* or, *things.*
‡ Heb. *days.*

V. 36. *A light*, &c. It was God's purpose that David's family should still continue illustrious; and be the instruments of preserving the light of true religion in Jerusalem, as well as types of Christ the Light of the world.

V. 37. *Thy soul desireth.* It appears from this expression, that Jeroboam secretly aspired at the kingdom. But neither the designs of God, nor this declaration by the prophet, vindicated his ambition and rebellion. David, long after he had been anointed to the kingdom, was faithful to Saul, and was not driven by persecution to attempt aught against him; nor would he even fill the vacant throne, till called to it by the voice of the people.

V. 38. *And build thee*, &c. Distrusting this promise, Jeroboam endeavoured to establish his authority by disobedience; and thus he forfeited the kingdom as to his posterity, and brought ruin upon them.

V. 39. *But not for ever.* Three alleviations of the denounced judgments are here mentioned. They would not happen in Solomon's days; therefore Jeroboam ought by no means to have attempted any thing *against him*: the whole kingdom was not to be taken from Solomon's posterity; therefore Jeroboam must not expect to subject Judah and Benjamin: and the affliction was not to be for ever; which seems especially to refer to Christ and his everlasting kingdom.

V. 40. The word *therefore* is not in the original, which may be rendered, *And Solomon*, &c. It does not appear that he sought to kill Jeroboam *because of Ahijah's prophecy*, which would have been an instance of most infatuated rebellion against God, and utterly inconsistent with repentance; but *because of Jeroboam's subsequent misconduct*, who perhaps divulged and boasted of the promise, and "lifted up his hand against Solomon," which implies an attempt to raise rebellion in his life-time. It is probable that Shishak was the successor of Pharaoh, whose daughter Solomon married: but perhaps of another family and interest. He is the only king of Egypt hitherto called by his proper name; all before him being known by the general title of Pharaoh. He is also thought to have been the Sesostris of pagan history.

V. 41. *In the book*, &c. Some annals or records of Solomon's life and reign, more copious than the account here given; from which such extracts were made as were needful for edification. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 42, 43. Solomon was the only king, who reigned so long as forty years over all Israel: yet he was not above sixty years of age when he died, and perhaps he had injured his constitution by indulgence. We are not here informed, whether he repented before his death, or not: and this silence speaks warning to every one of us, that we yield not to temptations, lest we should leave the world in uncertainty, and be condemned as hypocrites in the consciences of God's people. But this silence in the book of kings no more *proves* that Solomon did not repent, than the silence of the book of Chronicles proves that he did not commit idolatry. I would not indeed decide upon so controverted a point with unhesitating confidence: yet the book of Ecclesiastes seems fully to prove that he repented, and publicly declared that repentance before his death. We are not however much interested in the solution, as some persons seem to suppose; for it is extremely nugatory to put the proof of doctrines upon examples. If he did not repent, he doubtless perished, notwithstanding all his profession and eminent endowments: for no part of Scripture gives encouragement concerning those who die in unrepented wickedness. But this supposition would, I apprehend, prove all his profession to have been hypocritical; and this does not so well accord to his name *Jedidiah*, and the testimony of the Holy Spirit, that *he loved the Lord.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

We are repeatedly reminded by the examples of the most eminent men, that no abilities or endowments; that no illustrious services, fervent affections, or vigorous resolutions; that nothing inherent in man, forms in itself any

z ii. 11.
a i 21.xiv.20. xv. 8. 24. xvi. 6. Deut. xxxi. 16. 2 Kings xvi. 20. xx. 21. xxi. 18.

ed in Jerusalem over all Israel *was* [z] forty years.

43 And Solomon [a] slept with his fathers, and was [b] buried in the city of David his father: and [c] Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead.

b ii. 10. xiv. 31. 2 Kings xxi 18. 26. 2 Chr. xxi. 20. xxvi. 23. xxviii. 27. Jer. xxii. 19.
c Matt. i. 7. *Roboam*

security against the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of his heart, or may be depended on as sufficient to preserve him from the commission of the most atrocious crimes. Men of superior understanding find it much easier to lay down excellent rules for the conduct of others, than to reduce them to practice in the constant tenour of their own lives, (*Prov.* i—ix:) for, alas! they often fall into the same pit, and are caught in the same snare, against which they have repeatedly warned others; and sometimes are guilty of things as absurd and foolish as they are wicked. Nay, old age itself will not cure the heart of any evil propensity. The habit of indulgence in fleshly lusts will more than counterbalance the effect of nature's decay: and if our sinful passions are not crucified and mortified by the grace of God, they will never die of themselves, but will subsist, and rage, when every opportunity of gratification shall be taken away.—Thus we are taught to cease from man, and to watch and to be sober: for ours is a dangerous warfare in an enemy's country; whilst the worst of our foes are the traitors that occupy our own hearts.—We all *naturally* desire prosperity and pre-eminence; yet in general these operate as fatal poisons to the soul. And when we allow of one inordinate or inexpedient indulgence, we give energy to all our passions, and to every temptation of Satan. Not only will the same inclination grow more importunate; but others also, like humoured children, will expect to be gratified in turn; while the authority of reason and conscience over the inferior faculties is weakened by every concession. Our safety and comfort therefore consists in resolutely requiring them all to obey; and, though we cannot extinguish our passions, in rigorously confining them within the bounds of what is lawful and expedient.—Indulged luxury, or the pride of life, generally introduces greater licentiousness, where a man's affluence is equal to his inclination. But the history of the world and of the church demonstrates, that the love of women is one of the most dangerous passions of the human heart. When once the divine original appointment concerning marriage is violated, the unbridled propensity will know no bounds: nor can the wisest or the most determined say to it, "Thus far "shalt thou go, and no further:" but like a descending weight, the progress is from bad to worse, with accelerated rapidity. The designing objects of a sensual and roving affection will employ, by turns, all the arts of persuasion, dalliance, flattery, or upbraidings, to prevail over a man's resolution, and to induce his compliance with the most unreasonable and pernicious requests; till shame and conscience are surmounted, reputation and interest sacrificed, every barrier is broken down, and a perfect infatuation takes place. (*Judg.* xvi. 2 *Sam.* xi.)—Parents, and those who are in reputation for piety, should be peculiarly careful what practices they sanction by their examples: for such as will not imitate them in their best actions, will be encouraged to copy, and to exceed them in their mistakes and misconduct! And they, who have made the boldest profession of godliness, and have been most serviceable to its interests, may expect to be assaulted by the strongest temptations from the great enemy of souls, and should always entertain a jealous fear; lest being overcome in an unguarded hour, they should after all become a scandal to religion, a stumbling block to the prejudiced, an encouragement to hypocrites and infidels, or a snare and evil precedent to the unstable and injudicious. They should therefore be peculiarly watchful against the incursions of spiritual pride, or the fatal persuasion that *they* are superior to those rules and cautions that are needful for weaker persons. They should always meditate with seriousness on their danger of falling, and the wide-spreading fatal effects of their misconduct, and prefer any affliction or death to thus dishonouring God and his truth.—The fond hope, which numbers indulge who marry with ungodly persons, of being instrumental to their salvation, stands exposed throughout the Scripture, but especially in this chapter: the wisest, and best of men are more likely to be corrupted by the converse of a beloved ungodly companion, than to bring such an one to a sense of serious religion. Considering the state of human nature, the case is as desperate, as that of a healthy person associating with those that have got the plague, who is vastly more likely to be infected himself, than to recover them: and the Lord's prohibition of such marriages declares them to be means, which he doth not allow of, and will not generally use for that purpose.—The slaves of fleshly lusts are meet worshippers of abominable idols; but not of the God of Israel, who is holy, and whose worshippers must be holy too.—They, who connive at the wickedness which they ought to punish, will soon join in committing it, and in inducing others to do the same: but all this proceeds from the heart not being fully devoted to the Lord; for when the love of him occupies the affections, and the soul is satisfied with the earnests and hopes of his favour, all inferior desires will be regulated and subordinated.

V. 9—25.

The Lord is very angry even with the objects of his special love, when their hearts are for a season, or in a measure, turned from him; and the peculiar tokens of his favour, his answers to their prayers, and their comfortable communion with him in times past, will aggravate their guilt and increase his displeasure: nor can there be any peace or assurance of acceptance, without an unreserved persevering obedience to his commandments. Yet, in punishing transgressors, He will not dishonour his own faithful promises, desert the cause of true religion, or fail to honour the memories of those who have uprightly walked in his ways: and for the sake of Jesus, and his people whom he hath chosen, he will not suffer his whole displeasure to arise. It is grievous indeed to leave sore judgments for our sins to our posterity: yet it is a mercy to have peace and truth in our days. But when the Lord is become an adversary, he will give power, courage, and capacity to other adversaries, and thus render those formidable, who before appeared contemptible; and we should always ob-

CHAP. XII.

The Israelites, assembled at Shechem to make Rehoboam king, with Jeroboam now returned from Egypt at their head, demand redress of their grievances, 1—5. *Rehoboam, rejecting the counsel of the old men, and following that of the young, answers them roughly,* 6—15. *Ten tribes revolt, stone Adoram, and make Jeroboam king,* 16—20. *Rehoboam raises an army to subdue them; but is forbidden by the prophet Shemaiah,* 21—24. *Jeroboam builds Shechem and Penuel,* 25. *And to establish his kingdom, he sets up the worship of the golden calves in Bethel and Dan,* 26—33.

AND [a] Rehoboam went to [b] Shechem: for all Israel were come to Shechem to make him king.

2 And it came to pass, when [c] Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who was yet in Egypt, heard *of it*, (for he was fled from the presence of king Solomon, and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt;)

3 That they sent and called him: and Jeroboam and all the congregation of Israel came, and spake unto Rehoboam, saying,

4 Thy father made [d] our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the griev-

a 2 Chr. x. 1—5
b Gen. xii. 6. *Sechem.* xxxiii. 18, 19. Josh. xxiv. 1. Judg. ix. 1.
c xi. 26. 40.
d iv. 7. 20. 22, 23. 25. ix 22, 23. 1 Sam. viii. 11—18. Mat xi. 29, 30. 1 John v. 3.

serve his righteous hand, even in those sufferings which come upon us from the wickedness of others.—Unnecessary severity may excite resentments, which may long after create us, or ours, disturbance and grief: and it is best, as far as we can, to exercise lenity to all men, and to overcome evil with good.—But, if the abundance and pleasure of a court, and the friendship of a king, could not detain Hadad from his own desolate and subjected country; what earthly prosperity should take off a believer's affections from his glorious inheritance in heaven, or make him reluctant to remove thither?—Many abhor the Israel of God, who are not permitted to hurt them: nay, when they seem to succeed in their malice, they are only the instruments of salutary chastisement to them.

V. 26—43.

We often find our worst enemies among those whom we have most befriended: especially when ingenuity, industry, and resolution, rather than piety, have recommended them to our notice. These qualifications make way for a man's preferment, and every advance enlarges the ambition of a proud unsanctified mind: and when such men come within the attraction of supreme authority, and dare to hope for that dangerous pre-eminence; to reign according to the desire of their hearts forms the grand object, and to it every tie of gratitude or duty must be sacrificed.—Providential dispensations to this day, as well as prophetic declarations of old, try men's spirits, whether they will grasp at advantages at all events; or whether they will wait patiently, and use only lawful means of obtaining them, according to the will of God.—Many *so believe some parts of God's word*, as perversely to take encouragement from them to commit iniquity; instead of *so believing the whole*, as to expect the blessings proposed in the way of conscientious obedience there prescribed! They are shown, and seem to understand, that others have forfeited their most valuable interests by sin; and yet they will seek to seize or to secure theirs by similar transgressions! so inconsistent is human nature!—The Lord will not afflict for ever the people of his covenant: but when they grievously offend, he will eclipse all their honour: he will leave obscurity and reproach upon their characters; and perhaps bring them down to the grave in disgrace, discomfort, and uncertainty; distressed concerning the state of their own souls, and about the consequences of their conduct to their families, to the church, and to the world! May God help us to walk circumspectly; to pass the time of our sojourning here in fear; and to stand with our loins girt, and our lamps burning, prepared for and expecting the coming of our Lord!

NOTES.

CHAP. XII. V. 1. We read of no son that Solomon had, except Rehoboam, and his mother was an Ammonitess: thus he was, so to speak, but half an Israelite.—This may be considered as a providential rebuke for Solomon's multiplying wives in so unprecedented a manner. Solomon seems to have been sensible that his son was not likely to prove a wise man, or to carry on his designs for the good of Israel and the establishment of his family; and to have greatly regretted it: (*Eccles.* ii. 18, 19.) As he was the unrivalled heir of so flourishing a kingdom, we may be sure his natural imprudence and rashness would be increased by the flattery of the young men, with whom he was brought up. The people in general, upon Solomon's death, appeared disposed to recognize his succession, and convened at Shechem for that purpose. Yet it is probable that this city, which belonged to Ephraim, was chosen rather than Jerusalem or Hebron, that the tribe of Judah might not have too great influence in the transaction: and Rehoboam was impolitic in consenting to that appointment, if he could have prevented it.

V. 2, 3. Jeroboam, hearing of the death of Solomon, delayed not to return into the land of Israel, to wait his opportunity of seizing upon the prize which had been set before his ambition. For he did not wait the Lord's direction to proceed, as David had done when Saul died.—The elders of the people, by sending for him, indicated that they meant to impose very strict limitations upon Rehoboam.

ous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee.

5 And he said unto them, Depart yet *for* three days, then come again to me. And the people departed.

e 2 Sam. xvi. 20. Job xii. 12, 13. Prov. xxvii. 10. Jer. xlii. 2—5. xliii. 2.

6 And king Rehoboam [e] consulted with the old men that stood before Solomon his father, while he yet lived, and said, How do ye advise that I may answer this people?

f 2 Chr. x. 6, 7. Prov. xv. 1.

7 And they spake unto him, saying, [f] If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and will serve them, and answer them, and [g] speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever.

g 2 Sam. xv. 3—6.

h 2 Chr. xxv. 15, 16. Prov. i. 25. 30 xix. 20 xxv. 12. Ec. x. 2, 3.

8 But [h] he forsook the counsel of the old men, which they had given him, and consulted with the young men that were grown up with him, *and* which stood before him:

i xxii. 6—8. 2 Sam. xvii. 5, 6. 2 Chr. x. 8, 9.

9 And he said unto them, [i] What counsel give ye, that we may answer this people who have spoken to me, saying, Make the yoke which thy father did put upon us lighter?

10 And the young men that were grown up with him, spake unto him, saying, [k] Thus shalt thou speak unto this people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou *it* lighter unto us; thus shalt thou say unto them, [l] My little *finger* shall be thicker than my father's loins.

k 2 Sam. xvii. 7—13.

l iii. 7. 2 Chr. x. 10, 11. Pro x. 12. xviii. 6, 7. xxviii 25. xxix. 22.

11 And now, whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, [m] I will add to your yoke: my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with [n] scorpions.

m Ex. i 13, 14. v. 5—9. 18. 1 Sam. viii. 18. 2 Chr. xvi 10 Is lviii. 6. Jer xxvii. 11. xxviii. 13, 14

n 14. Ez. ii. 6. Rev. ix. 3. 10.

12 So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had appointed, saying, [o] Come to me again the third day.

o 5. 2 Chr. x. 12—44.

13 And the king answered the people * roughly, and forsook the old men's counsel that they gave him;

* Heb. *hardly* xx. 6—11. Gen. xlii 7. 30. Ex v. 2. x. 23. Judg. xii. 1—6. 1 Sam. xxv. 10, 11. 2 Sam. xix. 43 Prov. xv. 1.

14 And spake to them after [p] the counsel of the young men, saying, [q] My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father *also* chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

p 2 Chr. xxii. 4. Est i. 16—21. ii. 2—4. Ps. v. 10. Prov. xii. 5. Is. xix. 11—13. Dan. vi. 7.

q Prov. xiii. 10 xvi 18. xvii. 14. Ec. vii. 8. Jam. iii. 14—18. iv. 1, 2.

15 Wherefore the king hearkened not unto the people; for [r] the cause was from the LORD, [s] that he might perform his saying, which the LORD spake by Ahijah the Shilonite unto Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

r 24. xxii. 23. Deut. ii. 30. Judg. xiv. 4. 2 Chr. x. 15. xxii. 7. xxv. 15. 20. Am iii. 6 Acts ii. 23.

s xi. 11. 29—33. 1 Sam. xv. 23. 2 Sam. xvii 14. 2 Kings ix. 36. x. 10 Is. xlvi. 10, 11. Dan. iv. 35.

V. 4. When we consider the *scriptural* account of Solomon's reign, and the peace, affluence, and prosperity, which Israel then enjoyed, we cannot doubt, but that this charge was either false or greatly exaggerated. Solomon had never oppressed the people with heavy taxes, nor exercised cruelty towards them: and though some hardships might have been experienced in the latter end of his reign, compared with the former years, yet they were not *grievous services*, or *heavy burdens:* but in fact, "Jeshurun "waxed fat and kicked."—Whilst they complained of their own grievances and demanded redress, they were silent as to Solomon's idolatry, in which many of them had concurred: and about the more complete re-establishment of the worship of God among them.

V. 5. This delay of Rehoboam showed a reluctancy to give the elders satisfaction, and afforded the mal-contents time to tamper with the elders of Israel, and to render them evil-affected. It would have been far wiser, to have immediately assured them of a redress of all real grievances; and to have waited till particulars were inquired into, when the unreasonableness of exorbitant claims would have been detected.

V. 6, 7. The persons whom Rehoboam first consulted were the friends and counsellors of Solomon, firmly attached to the interests of his family, and capable of giving safe and prudent advice. Accordingly, they advised him to make all needful concessions to the assembly, to speak fair to them, and to show a readiness to pay regard to their interests and inclinations: this would have quieted the minds of the well disposed, and broken all the measures of the malcontents; and when matters were settled, the people in general would have quietly rendered all proper submission to the prince of the house of David.

V. 8—15. The wise counsel of the old men did not suit the rash, insolent, and domineering spirit of Rehoboam; and he opposed to it the advice of the companions of his youthful pleasures, who would be sure to accommodate themselves to his inclinations. They counselled him therefore to speak with authority, and to damp the spirits of the assembly by resolute language; that they might no longer dare to dictate to him in such a manner. The expressions which they suggested allowed to the utmost, and even aggravated, the injurious charge brought against Solomon; and yet avowed a resolution of greater oppression and severity! The king was advised to menace them, "that "his little finger should be thicker than his father's loins:" that is, that as he was vastly more powerful than Solomon was at the beginning of his reign; so he would certainly let them feel the weight of that power, if they dared to oppose him. Perhaps he thought so, because he came to the throne at a more mature age than Solomon had done; and had not any brothers to rival him in it.—He also declared that he would "add to their yoke," by demanding heavier services and taxes of them: and, if they

16 So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, [t] What portion have we in David? neither *have we* inheritance in the son of Jesse: [u] to your tents, O Israel: [x] now see to thine own house, David. [y] So Israel departed unto their tents.

17 But *as for* [z] the children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them.

18 Then king Rehoboam sent [a] Adoram, who *was* over the tribute; and [b] all Israel stoned him with stones, that he died. Therefore king Rehoboam* made speed to get him up to his chariot, to [c] flee to Jerusalem.

19 So [d] Israel † rebelled against the house of David unto this day.

20 And it came to pass, when all Israel heard that Jeroboam was come again, that they sent and called him unto the congregation, [e] and made him king over all Israel: there was [f] none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only.

21 ¶ And [g] when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah, with the tribe of Benjamin, [h] an hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men, which were warriors, to fight against the house of Israel, to bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam the son of Solomon.

22 But the word of God came unto [i] Shemaiah, [k] the man of God, saying,

23 Speak unto Rehoboam the son of Solomon king of Judah, and unto all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the remnant of the people, saying,

24 Thus saith the LORD, [l] Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel: return every man to his house; [m] for this thing is from me. [n] They hearkened therefore to the word of the LORD, and returned to depart, according to the word of the LORD.

t 2 Sam. xx. 1. 2 Chr. x. 16.
u xxii. 17. 36.
x xi. 13. 34. 36. 39. 2 Sam. vii. 15, 16. Ps. ii. 1—6. lxxvi. 10. lxxxix. 29—37. cxxxii. 17. Is. vii. 2 6, 7. Jer. xxxiii. 15, 16. 21. Luke xix. 14. 27.
y Judg. viii. 35. 2 Sam. xv. 13. xvi. 11.
z xi. 13. 36.
a iv 6. v 14. *Adoniram* 2 Sam. xx. 24. 2 Chr. x. 18. *Hadoram.*
b 2 Chr. xxiv. 21. Acts vii. 57, 58.
* Heb. *strengthened himself.*
c xx. 18—20. Pro. xxviii. 1, 2.
d 2 Kings xvii. 21. 2 Chro. x. 19. Prov. v. 12. 14. xxii. 3.
† Heb. *fell away.*
e 1 Sam. x. 24. Hos. viii 4.
f xi. 13. 32.
g 2 Chr. xi. 1—3.
h Ps. xxxiii. 10. cxlvi. 3. Prov. xxi. 30, 31.
i 2 Chr. xii. 5. 7.
k xiii. 1 4, 5. 11. xvii. 18. 24. 2 Kings iv. 16 22 25. 27. 1 Tim vi. 11.
l Num. xiv. 42. 2 Chr. xi. 4. xxv. 7, 8. xxviii. 9—13.
m 15 xi. 29—38. Hos. viii. 4.
n 2 Chr. xxv. 10. xxviii. 13—15.

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hesitated to obey, he would chastise them with scorpions, severe punishments as terrible as the sting of a scorpion; or, as some think, a terrible scourge thus called. Such language as this was not very wise in Pharaoh to the poor enslaved Israelites, but it was not at all likely it should be endured by a rich, numerous, and free people. Nothing can be conceived more foolish and exasperating, than such an address in so critical a juncture: but it was adopted, because it coincided with the self-importance and tyrannical temper of Rehoboam: and we may cease to wonder at his extreme infatuation, when we are told, that "the "cause was from the LORD that he might perform his "word."

V. 16. Though Rehoboam was very faulty, yet perhaps he might have been brought to a better temper by proper remonstrances. The Lord had indeed promised ten tribes to Jeroboam: but he had not commanded the people to revolt from the family of David; nor had he commissioned Jeroboam to wrench them from Rehoboam. His purposes and declarations were not the motive of their conduct, and therefore formed no excuse for it. Their contempt of the memory of David, and ingratitude to him and his son, who had done so much towards advancing them to their present prosperity, were very criminal: but their language concerning his house, as if the entail of the kingdom to his family, though confirmed to him by the faithful oath and covenant of God himself, would now come to nought, was extremely profane, and discovered the infidelity of their hearts. *They* indeed would have nothing more to do with the house of David, and he could not see to it himself: but the Lord would take care to fulfil his engagements; and David's family could not be destroyed, hough it would be corrected or weakened; for the Messiah was to descend from him. Indeed the ten tribes themselves were the chief losers by the revolt.

V. 17. The Benjamites and many of the Simeonites dwelt in Judah; and numbers of the Levites and of other tribes soon after joined them. (2 *Chr.* xi. 12—17.)

V. 18. It is not certain, whether Rehoboam sent Adoram to demand the taxes of the people, after their dispersion, as a feeble attempt to enforce his imprudent threats; or whether, previously to their departure from Shechem, he sent him to pacify them, with some proposals for an accommodation. But whatever his age, experience, and influence might have been, his *office* alone rendered him a very improper person for this embassy: for the discontents of the people were excited by the tributes over which he presided. Accordingly he lost his life in a popular tumult, and Rehoboam in a fright hastily fled to Jerusalem. All these measures seem to have been exceedingly impolitic; the result of passion, not of judgment. This is the first time that we read of the kings of Israel riding in a chariot.

V. 19, 20. The defection of Israel from Rehoboam is called *rebellion* against the house of David: as no misconduct of either Solomon or Rehoboam was sufficient to justify, or even excuse, it; and neither the people, nor Jeroboam, intended to obey God, though they accomplished his purposes, by pursuing their own schemes. No whole tribe, except Judah, and little Benjamin as united to it, adhered to Rehoboam.

V. 21—24. The Lord would not allow Rehoboam to recover the ten tribes, nor was it his will that he should lose Judah: and therefore he mercifully prohibited the war, and thus prevented much bloodshed; though both parties deserved punishment for their sins. It was commendable

o ix. 15. 17, 18. 2 Chr. xi. 5—12.
p Judg. ix. 1. 45—49.

25 Then Jeroboam [o] built [p] Shechem in mount Ephraim, and dwelt therein; and went out from thence, and built [q] Penuel.

q Gen. xxxii. 30, 31. Judg. viii. 17.
r Ps. xiv. 1. Mark ii. 6—8. Luke vii. 39.
s xi. 38. 2 Chr. xx. 20. Is. vii. 9. John xi. 47—50 Heb. iii, 19. 1 John v. 10.
t viii. 29, 30. 44. xi. 32. Deut. xii 5, 6.

26 And Jeroboam [r] said in his heart, [s] Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David:

27 If this people [t] go up to do sacrifice in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, *even* unto Rehoboam king of Judah, [u] and they shall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam king of Judah.

u Prov. xxix. 25. 1 Cor. i. 19, 20.
x 3, 9. Ex. i. 10. Is. xxx. 1.
y Ex xx. 4. Deut. iv. 14—18 2 King. x. 29. xvii. 16. 2 Chr. xi. 15. Hos. viii. 5—7. x 5, 6.
z 2 Pet. ii. 19.
a Ex. xxxii. 4, 8.

28 Whereupon the king [x] took counsel, and made [y] two calves *of* gold, and said unto them, [z] It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: [a] Behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

29 And he set the one in [b] Beth-el, and the other put he in [c] Dan.

b Gen. xxviii. 19. Hos. iv. 15.
c Judg. xviii. 29—31.

30 And this thing [d] became a sin: for the people went *to worship* before the one, *even* unto Dan.

d xiii. 34. 2 Kings x. 31. xvii. 21.

31 And he made [e] an house of high places, and made [f] priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi.

e xiii. 32. Ez. xvi. 25. Hos. xii. 11.
f xiii. 33. Num. iii. 10. 2 Kings xvii. 32. 2 Chr. xi. 14, 15. xiii. 9. Ez. xliv. 7, 8.

32 And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, [g] like unto the feast that *is* in Judah, and he * offered upon the altar. So did he in Beth-el, † sacrificing unto the calves that he had made: and [h] he placed in Beth-el the priests of the high places which he had made.

g viii. 2. Lev. xxiii. 34, &c. Num. xxix. 12. &c. Ez. xliii. 8. Matt. xv. 8, 9.
* Or, *went up to the altar.*
† Or, *to sacrifice.*
h Am. vii. 13.

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in Rehoboam, that he submitted to the message of the Lord by his prophet, when his loss had been so great, and his preparations were so formidable. But it is probable his more prudent counsellors opposed the war.

V. 25. Jeroboam repaired and fortified Shechem, and Penuel; and perhaps erected palaces, and other public buildings in them, that they might be the seats of his government, on each side of Jordan.

V. 26—29. The Lord had promised Jeroboam that he would give ten tribes to him, and confirm the kingdom over them to his posterity, in case he obeyed his commandments: but he either forgot, or despised, the word of the Lord; and, leaning to his own understanding, he concluded that he never could secure the obedience of the people, if they went up to Jerusalem to worship. For in case Rehoboam permitted them to come and return in safety, (as it is probable he would have done;) their friendly intercourse with their brethren, their social worship, and mutual kindness, would induce them to return to their submission to David's family, and to purchase Rehoboam's favour by killing his competitor. This might indeed seem natural and reasonable, but it contradicted the truth of God; and Jeroboam's wicked policy violated his commandments. To cover his secret intentions, he pretended, that it was too much trouble for the people to go to Jerusalem to worship; and that they might as acceptably serve God nearer home. He therefore made two golden calves, in imitation no doubt of the idolatries that he had witnessed in Egypt, or according to the idolatry of Israel in the wilderness: and he placed them at the southern and northern extremities of his kingdom; at Beth-el, afterwards called on that account *Beth-aven*, or *the house of vanity:* and at Dan, where the Danites had formerly established idolatry. These were also reputed sacred places; the one for Jacob's vision and vow, and the other for the customary idolatry which had there prevailed. Thus he made Israel to sin, and introduced the worship of the golden calves, which was perpetuated in the kingdom of Israel, without interruption, till the Assyrian captivity: and the bulk of the people readily concurred in his measures, as suited to their convenience and inclinations; though the priests, Levites, and many Israelites, were honourable exceptions. It is evident, that Jeroboam meant this worship for Jehovah the God of Israel "who brought them out of the land of Egypt:" though it was directly contrary to the law of God, and infinitely dishonourable to his glorious majesty, to be thus represented. Perhaps the people would be less shocked at worshipping the God of Israel under the similitude of the golden calf, than if they had been at once invited to worship Baal: but it made way for that species of idolatry also. Thus the worship of images of Christ, and similar superstitions, in the ancient Romish church, soon introduced the worship of saints and angels. (*Notes, Exod.* xx. 3—6.)

V. 30. *Even unto Dan.* The people readily resorted to sacrifice to the appointed places; though sometimes that might occasion them longer journeys, than if they had gone to Jerusalem. Perhaps they often went even from the southern part of the land even to Dan, to maintain communion with those who worshipped there, and who would not be backward in repaying their civility.

V. 31. Temples on high places were erected for the worship of the calves, at Beth-el and Dan; which were intended to serve the purpose to the religion of the ten tribes, that the temple did to Judah. Some think there were several chapels and altars erected, for the conveniency of the worshippers; and perhaps others were added in different parts of the land. For these, he appointed and consecrated priests of the poorest and most illiterate of the people, who would on that account be the more obsequious to him, for their own interest. Or, as others explain the words, he made priests from every extremity of the land, or from every tribe and family without exception. Thus he exempted the people from paying tithes to the Levites, whom he drove out of his kingdom, because they would not concur in his idolatry: and he paid court to the other tribes by admitting them to the priesthood, of which many were ambitious: and in both respects he, no doubt, thought himself, and was considered by others, as a consummate politician.

‡ Or, *went up to*, &c.

33 So he * offered upon the altar which he had made in Beth-el the fifteenth day of the eighth month, *even* [i] in the month which he had devised of his own heart; and ordained a feast unto the children of Israel: and [k] he offered upon the altar, and † burnt incense.

[i] Num. xv. 39. Ps. cvi. 39. Is. xxix. 13. Matt. xv. 6. Mark vii. 13.

[k] xiii. 1. 1 Sam. xiii. 12. 2 Chr. xxvi. 16.

† Heb. *to burn incense.*

V. 32, 33. This feast in the eighth month was intended as an imitation of the feast of tabernacles, which was kept in the seventh month, and it is probable it lasted as many days. But Jeroboam affected the credit of devising an entirely new system; and perhaps he hoped to draw in those who still went up to Jerusalem, by having his feast at a different time. He seems to have acted as priest, in offering sacrifice and burning incense.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—20.

Many wise and pious men have had the severe affliction of foolish and wicked children: and as the Lord alone giveth wisdom, even good instructions will not ensure their prudent and proper conduct. But bad examples generally defeat the effect of wise counsels: and they who are likely to inherit great dignity, are commonly so flattered and indulged, that it is almost a miracle if they are not intoxicated with pride and sensual lusts. Man is a discontented being; and whilst one desire remains ungratified, and one inconvenience unremoved, he is *naturally* more disposed to murmur, than to be thankful either to God or man, for the multiplied unmerited blessings with which he is surrounded! It is true, that rulers are often oppressive, and make their yoke grievous; and the people possess liberties and privileges, which they have a right in a regular manner to defend: but it is also true, that the people often complain without cause, and in an improper manner; that they do not make proper allowances for human infirmity, and the arduousness of government; that they expect all the advantages of it, whilst they grudge the necessary expenses; and are more anxious about their own interests, than about general equity, or the cause of truth and righteousness. Of these unreasonable dissatisfactions ambitious men are ready to take the advantage, and put themselves in the way to head any formidable opposition to the powers that be, when it can subserve their own purposes. It requires great wisdom to prevent or defeat such pernicious machinations: and if they, who have not prudence or experience adequate to such emergencies would follow the counsel of their real friends, who are older or wiser than themselves, much mischief would be prevented. But, commonly, weak men are the most obstinate, and relish no counsel but what flatters their silly pride, and humours their unreasonable prejudices: and when the companions of a prince's pleasures are his select counsellors, his inclinations, however mischievous, will be preferred to the important interests of the whole kingdom. Yet experience decides that, in general, men best mount by first stooping, prevail by yielding, and rule by becoming serviceable and giving good words: and when this consists with duty, it is in most cases our wisdom and interest. To the haughty indeed it appears degrading and mean: they delight to exert their authority, and show their courage, by boasting, hectoring, and threatening; without considering whether they have power and abilities to bear them out against the enraged opposition which such language and behaviour must excite. By domineering, men expose themselves to the contempt of the wise: their enemies are rejoiced, and their friends are grieved, by it; and they who have power to resist, will scorn to fear those who are above seeking to be loved. Thus, fatal contests are excited, and all parties are hurried on to commit many crimes: yet the Lord overrules the whole, to accomplish his own righteous purpose and holy word! We need not wonder to see those persons recompense their earthly benefactors with reproach and insult, who forget the mercies of God, and oppose his appointments with ingratitude and contempt: but the Lord will take care of the characters, families, and interests of his faithful servants, and they may safely leave their cause in his hand, though they cannot see to it themselves. But when men are left to their own infatuated counsels, they add one mistake to another: they perceive their folly, in some instances, when it is too late; yet, in attempting to rectify their errors, they the more entangle themselves, and expose their friends: and those who were most rash and daring, when danger was out of sight, are generally the most cowardly, when it seems to approach.

V. 21—33.

It is in vain to attempt to disannul the Lord's counsel: when his revealed will is contrary to our pursuits, they should be relinquished, however great our apparent loss may be; and it is his will, and should be our desire, as much as possible to prevent the effusion of human blood. Unbelieving men judge by appearances, and often conclude that safety and prosperity can only be obtained by those measures which the word of God condemns. They engage in enterprises, in which they must either succeed or be ruined; success in this case appears the grand object; and the necessity, they suppose, will warrant or excuse their deviations from general rules: and thus they regard not what wickedness they commit, nor what numbers they involve in the same guilt and condemnation. But faith waits upon God, in the path of duty, for the performance of his own promises, whatever difficulties may seem to impede it: and it perceives and aims at nobler objects, than the success of any temporal project, or even the preservation of life itself. The duplicity of politicians often consists in concealing their secret selfish purposes, under plausible ostensible pretences: but men frequently conjecture aright in such matters: and God sees, and will expose the thought of their hearts, notwithstanding all their disguises. The benefit of the public is often the plea: personal impunity for their crimes, the retaining of their places, or the increase of their own authority, are the real motives of their conduct. The people, however, are generally willing to gratify their rulers in matters of religion; provided it be easy, cheap, pompous, or sensual; and if a few scruples intervene, the revival of some old superstition,

CHAP. XIII.

A man of God from Judah prophecies, that Josiah of David's race should defile the altar at Beth-el; and gives a sign, 1—3. *Jeroboam's hand, stretched forth against him, withers; and the altar is rent,* 4, 5. *Jeroboam's hand is restored at the prophet's prayer,* 6. *He refuses entertainment and a reward, and leaves Beth-el,* 7—10. *He is seduced, and brought back by an old prophet, who denounces the judgment of God against him for his disobedience,* 11—22. *A lion kills him on his way home,* 23—25. *The old prophet fetches his body, buries it with lamentations, and confirms his prophecy,* 26—32. *Jeroboam persists in his evil ways,* 33, 34.

a xii. 22. 2 Kings xvii. 23.
b xiv. 7, 8. 2 Chr. ix. 29.
c xii. 33. 2 Chr. xxvi. 18.
* Or, *offer.*

AND, behold, there came [a] a man of God out of Judah [b] by the word of the LORD unto Beth-el: and [c] Jeroboam stood by the altar to * burn incense.

2 And he cried against the altar in the word of the LORD, and said, [d] O altar, altar, thus saith the LORD; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, [e] Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee.

d Deut. xxxii. 1. Is. i. 2. lviii. 1. Jer. xxii. 29. Ez. xxxvi. 1. 4. xxxvii. 4. Luke xix. 40.
e 2 Kings xxii. 1, 2. xxiii. 15—18. Is. xliv. 28.

3 And [f] he gave a sign the same day, saying, This *is* the sign which the LORD hath spoken; Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that *are* upon it shall be poured out.

f Ex. iv. 3—5. 8, 9. vii. 10. Deut. xiii. 1—3. Is. vii. 11—14. xxxviii. 6—8.

4 And it came to pass, when king Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, which had cried against the altar in Beth-el, that he put forth his hand from the altar, saying, [g] Lay hold on him. And [h] his hand, which he put forth against him, dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him.

g 2 Chr. xvi. 10. xxv. 15, 16. Jer. xx. 2. xxvi. 8—11. 20—23. xxxviii. 4—6. Am. vii. 10—13. Acts vi. 12—14.
h Gen. xix, 11. 2 Kings vi. 18—20. Jer. xx. 4—6. xxviii. 16, 17. Luke iii. 19, 20. Acts ix. 4, 5. xiii. 8—11. Rev. xi. 5.

5 The altar also was rent, and the ashes poured out from the altar, [i] according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD.

i xxii 28. 35. Ex. ix. 18—25. Num. xvi. 23—35. Deut. xviii. 22. Jer. xxviii. 16, 17. Mark xvi. 20 Acts v. 1—10.

6 And the king answered and said

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some plea of antiquity, of liberality of sentiment, or of agreement, in the main, with more scrupulous persons, though expedient alterations are adopted, will generally conciliate the minds of the majority to any religion that suits their conveniency, agrees with their interests, and does not disquiet their consciences, or disturb them in gratifying their lusts.—When persons in authority aim to render religion conducive to their secular purposes, they generally love to bring every thing under their own management. The ceremonies must be of their own devising, and the ministers of their own selecting: and indeed a hireling ignorant priesthood well suits with an idolatrous or superstitious worship, a usurping tyrannical prince, or a rebellious apostate people. But the pride, arrogance, and enmity of the human heart never appear more horrible, than when it presumptuously dares to change the divine appointments for those "which a man hath devised of "his own heart," and to mould the worship of God into *contrariety to his will*; when ministers, *so called*, can be found shameless enough to countenance such arrogance; and when whole nations of professing worshippers quietly submit to it: and nothing in such a case, but a torrent of ungodliness and most awful judgments, can be expected.—But alas, how soon all earthly prosperity is clouded! every remarkable prevalence of true religion on earth hath hitherto been succeeded by lamentable declensions, apostacies, or divisions. May the Lord hasten that time, when our Prince of Peace shall set up his kingdom of truth and of righteousness all over the earth, and when his cause shall finally and universally prevail!

NOTES.

CHAP. XIII. V. 1. *To burn incense.* Jeroboam seems on this occasion to have officiated himself: and to have burned incense at the same altar on which the burnt sacrifices had been. As the typical meaning of these institutions was not at all understood, and as the divine appointment was entirely disregarded, every kind of innovation was made without scruple.

V. 2. We are not informed of this prophet's name; but he came from Judah, in the name of JEHOVAH, whose worship at the temple Jeroboam and Israel had forsaken; and he predicted the prevalency of the house of David, whose authority they had rejected. With holy boldness and great earnestness, he cried against the altar, whilst Jeroboam and his attendants were performing their religious rites. As the destruction of this newly instituted worship was to be expressly foretold, and the stupidity of the idolaters themselves to be severely reproved, he addressed himself to the altar, and not to the worshippers.—This prediction was delivered above three hundred years before Josiah was born: yet during all those years no one of the house of David gave his son, or assumed himself, this name, or attempted to fulfil the prophecy, until the appointed time was arrived; and then Amon, a wicked prince, named his son Josiah!—This extraordinary prophecy was a plain declaration, that the family of David would continue, and be honoured as the supporters of true religion, when the kingdom of the ten tribes should be incapaple of resisting them. The burning of men's bones upon the altar was the greatest contempt of it imaginable: and the offering of the priests themselves upon it the greatest mark of God's abhorrence of their crimes. (*Marg. Ref.*)

unto the man of God, [k] Entreat now the face of the LORD thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again. [l] And the man of God besought * the LORD, and the king's hand was restored him again, and became as *it was* before.

7 And the king said unto the man of God, Come home with me, and [m] refresh thyself, and I will give thee [n] a reward.

8 And the man of God said unto the king, [o] If thou wilt give me half thine house, [p] I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place:

9 For [q] so was it charged me by the word of the LORD, saying, [r] Eat no bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that thou camest.

10 So he went another way, and returned not by the way that he came to Beth-el.

11 ¶ Now there dwelt [s] an old prophet in Beth-el; and his † sons [t] came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Beth-el: the words which he had spoken unto the king, them they told also to their father.

12 And their father said unto them, What way went he? for his sons had seen what way the man of God went, which came from Judah.

13 And he said unto his sons, [u] Saddle me the ass. So they saddled him the ass, and he rode thereon,

14 And went after the man of God, and found him [x] sitting under an oak: and he said unto him, [y] *Art* thou the man of God that camest from Judah? And he said, I *am*.

15 Then he said unto him, Come home with me and eat bread.

16 And he said, I may not return with thee, nor go in with thee: neither will I eat bread nor drink water with thee in this place

17 For ‡ it was said to me [z] by the word of the LORD, Thou shalt eat no bread nor drink water there, nor turn again to go by the way that thou camest.

18 He said unto him, I *am* a prophet also as thou *art*; and [a] an angel spake unto me by the word of the LORD, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread, and drink water. [b] *But* he lied unto him.

19 So [c] he went back with him, and did eat bread in his house, and drank water.

k Ex. viii. 8. 28. ix. 28. x. 17. xii. 32. Num. xxi 7. 1 Sam. xii. 19. Jer. xxxvii. 3. Acts viii. 24.
l Ex. viii. 12, 13. Num. xii. 13. 1 Sam. xii. 23. Matt. v. 44. Luke vi. 27, 28. xxiii. 34. Acts vii. 60. Rom. xii. 14. 21. Jam. v. 16—18.
* Heb. *the face of the.*
m Gen. xviii. 5. Judg. xiii. 15. xix. 21.
n 1 Sam. ix. 7, 8. 2 Kings v. 15. Mal. i. 10. Acts viii. 18—20. 1 Pet. v. 2.
o Num. xxii 18. xxiv. 13. Esth. v. 3. Mark vi. 23.
p 2 Kings v. 16. 26, 27. Mark vi. 11. 2 Cor. xi. 9, 10.
q 21, 22. 1 Sam. xv. 22. Job xxiii. 12. John xiii. 17. xv. 9, 10.
r Num. xvi. 26. Deut. xiii. 13—18. Ps. cxli. 4. Rom. xvi. 17. 1 Cor. v. 11. Eph. v. 11 2 John 10, 11. Rev. xviii. 4.
s 20, 21. Num. xxiii. 4, 5. xxiv. 2. 1 Sam x 11. 2 Kings xxiii. 18. Ez. xiii. 2. 16. Mat. vii. 22. 2 Pet. ii. 16.
† Heb *son.*
t 1 Tim. iii. 5.
u Num. xxii. 21. Judg. v. 10. x. 4. 2 Sam. xix. 26.
x xix. 4. John iv. 6. 34. 1 Cor. iv. 11, 12. 2 Cor. xi. 27. Phil. iv. 12, 13.
y 1.
‡ Heb. *a word was.*
z xx. 35. 1 Thes. iv. 15.
a Num. xxii. 35 Judg. vi. 11, 12. xiii. 3.
b Is. ix 15. Jer. v. 12. 31 xxiii. 14. 17. 32. xxviii. 15. 16. Ez. xiii. 9, 10. 22. Matt. vii. 15. xxiv. 24. 2 Pet. ii. 1. 1 John iv. 1. Rev. xx. 10.
c 9. 2 Pet. ii. 18, 19.

V. 3—6. The judgment inflicted upon Jeroboam, and the rending of the altar as it had been foretold, intimidated him, so that he durst not attempt any thing further against the man of God, whose message was thus confirmed. In this emergency he had no confidence in his idol-gods, his upstart priests, or his self-invented sacrifices, but he expected help from the prayers of the prophet. He therefore begged him to entreat the *face*, (or the *favour*,) of the Lord his God for him: but he neither acknowledged his guilt, nor desired instructions from the prophet, nor sought forgiveness of his sins, nor desisted from his idolatry. He merely desired the removal of the divine judgment, which the prophet readily prayed for and obtained.

V. 7—10. Jeroboam neither repented nor returned thanks to God for the restoration of his withered hand; but he was willing to entertain and reward the prophet for it; perhaps supposing that he was ready to do any thing for hire, like his own priests. But the Lord had prescribed to his servant a different conduct. As a solemn protestation against the idolatry of Beth-el, he was forbidden to eat or drink in that city, whatever hardship he might endure. God would not accept their most costly sacrifices: nor would he allow his servant to accept of any gift or entertainment from its inhabitants; or to do any thing which had the appearance of having fellowship with them, whose works of darkness he was sent to reprove. Nay, the more fully to express his abhorrence of their apostacy, and his determination not to make himself in any way familiar with them, or aught belonging to them, no not even with their high ways, he was ordered to return by another road! And, though solicited by the king himself, and promised some royal recompense; and though probably he was poor, as well as hungry and weary; he thus far obediently observed his instructions.

V. 11—19. This old prophet continued to reside at Beth-el, after the priests and Levites had been driven away, and after idolatry was publicly established there: yet he entered no protest against it; and his sons were present at the idolatrous sacrifice, and made no secret of it. These circumstances, joined to his conduct on this occasion, are convincing proofs, that though called *a prophet*, he was not a real godly man. Perhaps he had been educated in the schools of the prophets, and had been favoured with the Spirit of prophecy. This had acquired him the reputation of a prophet, and he had maintained it in the days of Solomon, when religion was respected. But when the change took place under Jeroboam, being a carnal man, he preferred his ease and interest to his religion, and made no opposition to the prevailing party: perhaps satisfying his conscience with holding his own sentiments privately, and not actually joining in the idolatry. Yet he was still desirous of the reputation of a prophet, as far as he could safely retain it: and this appears to have been his leading motive, in enticing the prophet of Judah back again; and

20 And it came to pass, as they sat at the table, that [e] the word of the LORD came unto the prophet that brought him back:

21 And he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, saying, [f] Thus saith the LORD, Forasmuch as [g] thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the LORD, and hast not kept the commandment which the LORD thy God commanded thee;

22 But camest back, and hast eaten bread, and drunk water in the place, of the which *the LORD* did say to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water, [h] thy carcase shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers.

23 ¶ And it came to pass, after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled for him the ass, *to wit*, for the prophet whom he had brought back.

24 And when he was gone, [i] a lion met him by the way, and slew him: and his carcase was cast in the way, and the ass stood by it, the lion also stood by the carcase.

25 And, behold, men passed by, and saw the carcase cast in the way, and the lion standing by the carcase: and they came and told *it* in the city where the old prophet dwelt.

26 And when the prophet that brought him back from the way heard *thereof*, he said, *It is* [k] the man of God who was disobedient unto the word of the LORD: therefore the LORD hath delivered him unto the lion, which hath * torn him, and slain him, according to the word of the LORD which he spake unto him.

27 And he spake to his sons, saying, Saddle me the ass. And they saddled *him*.

28 And he went and found his carcase cast in the way, and the ass and the lion standing by the carcase; [l] the lion had not eaten the carcase, nor † torn the ass.

29 And the prophet took up the carcase of the man of God, and laid it upon the ass, and brought it back: and the old prophet came to the city to mourn, and to bury him.

30 And he laid his carcase in his own grave; and they [m] mourned over him, *saying*, Alas, my brother!

31 And it came to pass, after he had buried him, that he spake to his sons, saying, When I am dead, then bury me in the sepulchre wherein the man of God *is* buried; [n] lay my bones beside his bones:

32 [o] For the saying which he cried by the word of the LORD against the altar in Beth-el, and against all [p] the houses of the high places which *are* [q] in the cities of Samaria, shall surely come to pass.

e Num. xxiii. 5. John xi. 51. 1 Cor. xiii. 2.
f 17. Gen. iii. 6. &c. Esth. v. 14. vi. 13. Jer. ii. 19 Gal. i. 8, 9.
g Lev. x. 3. Num. xx. 12. 24 1 Sam. iv. 18 2 Sam. vi 7. xii. 9—11 xxiv. 13. Rev. iii. 19.
h xiv. 13. 2 Chr. xxi. 19, 20 Is. xiv. 19, 20. Jer. xxii. 19.
i xx. 36. 2 Kings ii. 24. Am. v. 19. 1 Cor. xi. 31. 32. 1 Pet. iv. 17, 18.
k 2 Sam. xii. 14. Ps. cxix. 120. Prov. xi. 31. 1 Cor. xi. 30. Heb. xii. 28, 29.
* Heb. *broken*.
l xvii. 4. 6. Lev. x. 2. 5. Job xxxviii. 11. Ps. cxlviii. 7, 8. Jer. v. 22, 23. Dan. iii. 22. 27, 28. vi. 22—24. Acts xvi 26.
† Heb. *broken*.
m xiv. 13. Jer. xxii 18. Acts viii. 2.
n Num. xxiii. 10. 2 Kings xxiii. 17, 18. Ps. xxvi. 9.
o 2 2 Kings xxiii. 16. 19.
p xii. 29. Lev. xxvi. 30.
q xvi. 24. John iv. 4, 5.

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not kindness to him as some, or malice against him as others, have conjectured. Many would doubtless applaud the resolution and disinterestedness of the man of God, who at last was not injured by Jeroboam: and perhaps this old prophet was afraid of being censured for his cowardice, connivance, and selfishness. He might hope to avert this disgrace by showing kindness to the man of God; and he found he might do it, without incurring Jeroboam's displeasure. He therefore followed him, and found him sitting under a tree, weary and in need of refreshment, which would add energy to his temptation: and when he perceived him decided against eating bread at Beth-el, he assured him that he also was a prophet, and came by commandment from God to bring him back; thus imposing upon him by speaking lies in the name of the Lord! And the other perhaps supposed that he might refresh himself at the house of a prophet in Beth-el, though not in the house of an idolater. But as the commandment of God to him had been immediate and express; and he had only this man's *own word for it* that he was a prophet, or that the Lord had spoken to him; his conduct was very criminal, and calculated to weaken the effect of his message upon the consciences of Jeroboam and his other auditors; and doubtless his judgment was on this occasion bribed by his inclinations. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 20—22. As the Lord inspired Balaam, contrary to his intentions, to pronounce blessings, and to utter, though doubtless with the greatest reluctance, prophecies concerning Israel: so was this man constrained to pronounce sentence against the man of God, whom he had seduced into disobedience; and thus to publish the shame of his own horrible imposture, and to read against himself a more dreadful doom, except he repented. The sentence was direct, that the prophet should not die in peace at home, to be buried in his own sepulchre: but the time and circumstances of his death were not specified.

V. 23—32. The old prophet did not accompany the prophet of Judah, perhaps apprehensive of some divine judgment overtaking him: but some think, that he supplied him with the ass on which he rode, and that he had come on foot. The lion, commissioned of God, slew the prophet, but did not devour his body; and he neither hurt nor frighted away the ass: nay, he behaved so tamely, that travellers ventured past him, perhaps at a distance! And

r xii. 31—33. 2 Chr. xi. 15. xiii. 9. Am. iv. 6—11.
* Heb. *returned and made.*
s Num. i. 51. iii. 10. xvii. 5. 12, 13.
† Heb. *filled his hand.* Ex. xxviii. 41. Judg. xvii. 12.

33 ¶ After this thing Jeroboam [r] returned not from his evil way, but * made again of the lowest of the people priests of the high places: [s] whosoever would, he † consecrated him, and he became *one* of the priests of the high places.

34 And this thing [t] became sin unto the house of Jeroboam, even [u] to cut *it* off, and to destroy *it* from off the face of the earth.

t xii. 30. 2 Kings x. 31. xvii. 21
u xii. 26. xiv. 10 xv. 29, 30.

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even the old prophet ventured, and was allowed, unmolested, to take away his body for burial! All these miraculous circumstances marked his death as a divine rebuke for his disobedience, in eating bread at idolatrous Beth-el; and both counteracted the conclusion, which Jeroboam might have been tempted to draw from his death against the truth of his message, and formed a solemn proof, how God abhorred, and would have all his people abhor, this newly instituted worship.—Thus, for one offence, a faithful servant of God was punished with immediate death, being "chastened of the Lord, that he should not be condemned with the world:" whilst the lying prophet, and the idolatrous king, escaped with impunity, being reserved to the punishments of a future state; which were in this instance loudly proclaimed! The old prophet indeed paid respect to the man of God, and expressed his conviction that his predictions would be verified, and a concern about his own bones. But he seems to have expressed no humiliation for his enormous crimes, no tokens of true repentance, no care about his soul: he did not depart from Beth-el, nor enter a public protest against Jeroboam's idolatry; nor do any thing, which many a hypocrite hath not equalled or exceeded, in attempting to bolster up his own presumption, or to impose upon others. Nay, he appears to have been desirous of gratifying his own vanity, and his claim to be considered as a prophet, when he buried the man of God in his own sepulchre, and lamented over him. "Alas, my brother!" He was, however, instrumental in accomplishing the Lord's word: and the prophet of Judah being buried at Beth-el, with a monumental inscription, would tend to keep his prediction in remembrance, and be an abiding protest against the worship of the golden calves.—The man of God from Judah appears to have spoken more prophecies than are mentioned in the beginning of the chapter: and though the *city Samaria* was not yet built, the historian calls the cities in that neighbourhood, *The cities of Samaria;* in some of which Jeroboam had built high places.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

The Lord often meets sinners in the midst of their crimes, with alarming indications of his displeasure, to show that "their way is perverse before him."—It requires great fortitude to deliver faithfully the messages of God, especially to those in authority: for they will certainly exasperate the proud and ungodly of every description, whether profane, superstitious, or hypocritical. But the Lord will bear those out whom he sends, and who simply trust and obey him; and faith in him is sufficient to overcome the fear of man. They who are thus employed should speak and act decidedly, as men in earnest, calling upon the very inanimate creation to testify, as it were, against the crimes of presumptuous offenders, who will not regard the word of God; in order that a deeper impression may be left upon the minds of their hearers.—The Lord is peculiarly offended with those, who attempt any thing against such intrepid reprovers of sin; and they, who have most insulted his servants, are often brought by affliction to pay court to them, and to desire their prayers. Nor ought this ever to be refused: for by returning good for evil, their severity against men's crimes is proved to be connected with compassionate love for their persons; and in answer to such prayers, God will often bestow temporal mercies upon impenitent sinners, though continuing such they cannot escape the damnation of hell.—Carnal men frequently betray their impenitency under convictions, even by their concessions: they acknowledge the true believer to be the servant of God, but they do not imitate him! they feel the vanity of their own superstitions or worldly idols, but they will not renounce them! they desire the removal of their afflictions, rather than the forgiveness of their sins, or the mortification of their lusts! and they show kindness or offer presents to the minister who prays for them, whilst they requite the Lord with base ingratitude!—When persons are living in open sins, and causing others to sin by their influence and authority, the "men of God" should manifest their abhorrence of their crimes, by refusing to accept of any favours, and by separating from all intercourse with them. And when those, who are in low circumstances, act in this manner with firmness and meekness, and plainly assign the reasons of their conduct, it will be one of the most alarming and convincing warnings which can possibly be given. Ministers and Christians must often go among ungodly people, but they ought never to make themselves familiar with them; and should show that they are so uneasy in their company, that none of their temporal good things can bribe them needlessly to prolong or repeat their visits. In order to this, they must be superior to the love of worldly pleasure and interest, inured to hardship and self-denial, and well acquainted with the commandments of God.—In the mystery of Providence false religion is permitted to be planted, and to prevail, to the deceiving of many: but the Lord keeps the times and seasons in his own power; he foresees and determines those events which are most distant, and appear most contingent: and he will in his appointed time destroy every species of irreligion or superstition, by one of the house of David, of nobler name and greater excellency than Josiah.—But the tokens of his displeasure on the instruments of iniquity proclaim his awful vengeance upon the sinners themselves: and none will become sacrifices to his justice with deeper detestation and contempt, than *hireling* ministers, who for filthy lucre have countenanced false religion, to the destruction of the souls of those who blindly followed such blind guides.

CHAP. XIV.

Jeroboam sends his wife, disguised, to Ahijah the prophet, to inquire concerning his son Abijah, who was sick, 1—4. *Ahijah, forewarned by God, denounces to her the destruction of Jeroboam's family, the death of her son, and the rejection of Israel,* 5—16. *Abijah dies, and is buried,* 17, 18. *Jeroboam dies, and is succeeded by Nadab,* 19, 20. *Rehoboam reigns over Judah, and they provoke the Lord by their wickedness,* 21—24. *Shishak carries much treasure, and the golden shields, from Jerusalem,* 25, 26. *Rehoboam makes brazen shields in their stead,* 27, 28. *His acts, and wars with Jeroboam,* 29, 30. *He dies and is succeeded by Abijam,* 31.

AT [a] that time Abijah the son of Jeroboam [b] fell sick.

2 And Jeroboam said to his wife, Arise, I pray thee, and [c] disguise thyself, that thou be not known to be the wife of Jeroboam; and get thee to Shiloh: behold, there *is* Ahijah the prophet, which [d] told me that *I should be* king over this people.

3 And [e] take * with thee ten loaves, and † cracknels, and a ‡ cruse of honey, and go to him: [f] he shall tell thee what shall become of the child.

4 And Jeroboam's wife did so, and arose, and went to [g] Shiloh, and came to the house of Ahijah. But Ahijah could

[a] xiii. 33, 34.
[b] 12. 13 Ex xx. 5. 1 Sam. iv. 19, 20. xxxi. 2.
[c] xxii. 30. 1 Sam. xxviii 8. 2 Chr. xviii. 29. Luke xii. 2. Heb. iv. 13.
[d] xi. 29—33.
[e] xiii. 7 1 Sam. ix. 7, 8. 2 Kings v. 5. 15. viii. 7—9.
* Heb. *in thine hand.*
† Or, *cakes.*
‡ Or, *bottles.*
[f] 2 Kings i. 2. viii. 8.
[g] xi. 29.

V. 11—19.

The cause of God does not admit of a neutrality: in times of general apostacy and increasing infidelity and ungodliness, we are especially called to bear our testimony, without yielding to fear or shame: and if any professed christian will not confess Christ in this world, Christ will not own him at the day of judgment. But if a reputed prophet, an old prophet, who appeared zealous for the truth whilst credit and advantage accrued from it, purchase security by conniving at prevailing abominations, he may justly be suspected of hypocrisy. These are indeed "dumb dogs "that cannot bark," when the Lord is robbed of his worship and honour; and are not fit persons to be employed by him, or countenanced by his faithful people. In some cases they are even worse than the active instruments of deception: because they sin against greater light, more stumble and mislead unestablished persons, and bring the deeper disgrace upon the truths which they have professed. Such time-servers, however, are often willing to be thought the servants of God by religious people, though ashamed of him among his enemies: and *for that purpose*, they will covertly seek the acquaintance of, and show civility to, those ministers who are in reputation for faithfulness. But they are the most dangerous, because the most plausible and unsuspected, of all tempters to real Christians, whose candour makes them willing to hope the best of them, to credit their professions, and to return their civilities: having learned to be silent, when called to defend the truth, they will soon learn to forge lies in the name of God, when it can answer their purpose; and by various specious pretences, they obtain the esteem of the unwary, and abuse their confidence by inveigling them into disobedience. And tempters of this description often prevail, when the terrors of persecution, and the allurements of preferment, have been resolutely withstood. 'Surely such good men would never propose an 'ill thing! they bring the word of God for it! they were so 'very kind, and could have no interest in it!' For our own sakes, and for the credit of the gospel, let us all with one consent withdraw from such worldly professors of religion, and be upon our guard against them: let them decidedly serve God, or Baal, that we may know what they are; or let us refuse to have any acquaintance with them.

V. 20—34.

Nothing can excuse any act of wilful disobedience: the tempter hath the greater sin, but the tempted is criminal; and the offences of those who are much honoured and employed of God, are of all others the most dishonourable to him, as they rivet the prejudices and embolden the blasphemies of his enemies. Such offenders therefore shall by no means escape correction in this world: and perhaps their very tempters shall be employed to denounce, or inflict, the chastisements of the Lord upon them: or in other respects they shall be made very severe and alarming; whilst the wicked sometimes escape here, being reserved unto the day of judgment to be punished. The exact obedience of the irrational creatures to their Maker's will, forms a reproach of man's rebellion: for he can restrain or change the very nature of every creature, to render it subservient to his wise and righteous purpose. Happy are they who are habitually ready for death: even if the Lord should call them hence by some awful rebuke for an incidental transgression; whilst they are made useful warnings to others, they will be found safe and happy themselves. But many will show respect to the servants of the Lord, assent to the truth of their words, appear to lament their death, and wish to have their lot with them in another world; who yet live and die impenitent: and many are warned, convinced, and alarmed, who stifle their consciences, and practise increasing wickedness, to the utter ruin of themselves and those connected with them. Let all then fear provoking God to leave them to final hardness of heart: let us take heed and beware of hypocrisy; let us dread prospering in sinful ways; let us tremble whilst we read this chapter, and pray earnestly to be kept from every delusion and temptation, and to be enabled to walk with self-denying perseverance in the way of God's commandments!

not see; for his eyes * were set by reason of his age.

5 And the LORD said unto Ahijah, [h] Behold, the wife of Jeroboam cometh to ask a thing of thee for her son; for he *is* sick: thus and thus shalt thou say unto her: for it shall be, when she cometh in, that she shall feign herself *to be* another *woman.*

6 And it was *so,* when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door, that he said, [i] Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam; [k] why feignest thou thyself *to be* another? for I *am* sent to thee with † heavy *tidings.*

7 Go, tell Jeroboam, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, [l] Forasmuch as I exalted thee from among the people, and made thee prince over my people Israel,

8 And [m] rent the kingdom away from the house of David, and gave it thee: and *yet* thou hast not been as my servant David, [n] who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart, to do *that* only *which was* right in mine eyes;

9 But [o] hast done evil above all that were before thee: for [p] thou hast gone and made thee other gods, and molten images, [q] to provoke me to anger, and hast [r] cast me behind thy back:

10 Therefore, behold, [s] I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam [t] him that pisseth against the wall, *and* [u] him that is shut up and left in Israel, and will take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam, [x] as a man taketh away dung, till it be all gone.

11 [y] Him that dieth of Jeroboam in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat: for the LORD hath spoken *it.*

* Heb *stood for his hoariness.* Gen. xxxii. 1. xlviii. 10. Ec. xii. 3.

h Prov. xxi. 30. Am. iii 7.

i Job v. 13. Ps. xxxiii. 10.

k Ez. xiv. 3—5. 7, 8. Luke. xx. 20—23. Acts v. 3—5. 9, 10.

† Heb. *hard.* 10, 11. xxii. 8. Is. xi. 3. Jer. xxi. 3—7. Ez. ii. 4, 5.

l xii. 24. xvi. 2. 1 Sam. ii. 27—30. xv. 16. 2 Sam. xii. 7, 8.

m xi. 31.

n iii. 14. xi. 33. 38. xv. 5. Acts xiii. 22. 36.

o 16. xii. 28. xiii. 33. xv. 34. xvi. 31. Deut. xxxii. 21.

p Deut. xxxii. 16, 17. Judg. v. 8. 2 Chr. xi. 15. Ps. cvi. 19, 20. cxv. 4—8 Is. xliv. 9—20. Jer. x. 14—16.

q 22. Deut. ix. 8—16. 2 Kings xxi. 3. xxiii. 26. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 6. Ps. lxxviii. 40. 56. Jer. vii. 9, 10. Ez. viii. 3. 17. 1 Cor. x 22.

r Neh. ix. 26. Ps L 17 Ez. xxiii. 35.

s xv. 29, 30. xxi. 21. Am. iii. 6.

t xvi. 11. 1 Sam. xxv. 22. 34. 2 Kings ix. 8, 9.

u Deut. xxxii. 36. 2 Kings xiv. 26.

x 1 Sam. ii 30. 2 Kings ix. 37. xxi. 13 Job xx. 7. Ps lxxxiii. 10 Is. v. 25. xiv. 19. 23. Jer. viii. 2. Ez xxvi. 4. Zeph. i 17 Mal. ii 3. Luke xiv. 34, 35

y xvi. 4 xxi. 24. Is. lxvi. 24 Jer. xv. 3. Ez. xxxix. 17—19. Rev. xix. 17, 18.

NOTES.

CHAP. XIV. V. 1—4. Henceforth, in the books of the Kings, we have the history of Judah and Israel carried on together, or with continued transitions from one to the other. But the latter part of the second book of Chronicles more fully relates the history of the kings of Judah, and drops that of the kings of Israel, except as connected with the other.—Jeroboam had taken no notice of Ahijah, either in getting possession of the kingdom, or in establishing his idolatrous worship at Dan and Beth-el; being conscious that the prophet would have opposed and condemned his whole conduct. But when his son Abijah was dangerously ill, he wished to know from the prophet whether he would recover, or not: for he was convinced, that more dependence might be placed on his word than on that of all his priests. But he did not inquire, Wherefore the Lord corrected him? or how he might avert his displeasure? He did not desire the prophet's instructions or prayers; or even his directions what to do in order to his son's recovery: he only wished to be relieved from his anxiety, by being informed whether he would recover, or not. He would not go himself to the prophet, fearing his severe reproofs and warnings: and perhaps being unwilling that the people should discover his own private judgment concerning his calves, and their priests, &c. Nor would he confide the business to any servant, but sent his wife: yet she must go in disguise, as the wife of a husbandman, with a present suitable to one in that station, to inquire about her son, without informing the prophet of her rank! Alas, what ideas must he have had of the infinite and omniscient God, that he should expect him to reveal to his prophet, whether the son of this unknown person would recover; without revealing to him who it was that came to inquire of him!—Ahijah was infirm, and blind with age; and, not being fitted as formerly for active service, he lived retired, and probably much respected, at Shiloh; lamenting, doubtless, though he could not prevent, the sin and misery of his people.

V. 5, 6. The Lord informed his servant of the whole contrivance by immediate revelation, and instructed him what message to deliver from him. Though the wife of Jeroboam *came to the prophet;* yet, as he was commissioned to declare to her the purpose of God, he told her, that *he was sent to her* with heavy tidings: and, as she came in hypocrisy, and Jeroboam had apostatized to idolatry, he showed no manner of respect to her rank, or to that of her husband.

V. 9—11. Jeroboam *intended* that his calves, at Dan and Beth-el, should represent the God of Israel, who brought the nation out of the land of Egypt; and would have his subjects to think, that they were worshipping the God of their fathers. But the Lord called them, "other "gods;" for as he cannot be represented by any similitude, so he abhors all image-worship as the grossest idolatry. None of the rulers or judges of Israel had acted so wickedly: Saul, who had been rejected for his rebellion, had not committed open idolatry; much less had he used his authority to promote it. Even Solomon, for whose apostacy the ten tribes had been rent from his son, had not established idolatry by a law, as Jeroboam had done; nor had any thing so atrocious been attempted by Israel since it became a nation. Such judgments therefore were denounced against Jeroboam's house, as had never before been inflicted. By "him "that is shut up and left in Israel," may be meant, 'every 'one who has taken refuge in the most fortified cities;' and 'every one that has escaped from the more general 'devastations;' or, in general, all, without exception, however secure they might suppose themselves to be: even these would be pursued and cut off. Or, an allusion may be made to those peculiar treasures, which are shut up for

12 Arise thou therefore, get thee to thine own house: *and* [z] when thy feet enter into the city, the child shall die.

13 And all Israel [a] shall mourn for him, and bury him: for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because in him [b] there is found *some* good thing toward the LORD God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam.

14 Moreover [c] the LORD shall raise him up a king over Israel, who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam that day: [d] but what? even now.

15 For [e] the LORD shall smite Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water, and he shall root up Israel [f] out of this good land which he gave to their fathers, and [g] shall scatter them beyond the river, [h] because they have made their groves, [i] provoking the LORD to anger.

16 And [k] he shall give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, [l] who did sin, and who made Israel to sin.

17 ¶ And Jeroboam's wife arose, and departed, and came to [m] Tirzah: *and* [n] when she came to the threshold of the door, the child died;

18 And they buried him: and all Israel mourned for him, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by the hand of his servant Ahijah the prophet.

19 And the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how he [o] warred, and how he reigned, behold, they *are* written [p] in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

20 And the days which Jeroboam reigned *were* two and twenty years: and he * slept with his fathers, and Nadab his son reigned in his stead.

21 ¶ And Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah. [q] Rehoboam *was* forty and one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, [r] the city which the LORD did choose out of all the tribes of Israel, [s] to put his name there. And his mother's name *was* [t] Naamah an Ammonitess.

z 17. 2 Kings i 6. 16.
a Num. xx. 29. Jer. xxii. 10. 18.
b 2 Chr. xii. 12. xix. 3. Job. xix. 26. Philem. 6. 2 Pet. ii. 6, 9.
c xv. 27—29.
d Ec. viii. 11. Ez. vii. 2—7. xii. 22—28. 2 Pet ii 3.
e 1 Sam xii. 25. 2 Kings xvii. 6, 7. Ps. lii. 5.
f Lev. xxvi. 32—34. 43. Deut. iv 26, 27. xxviii. 36. 64—68. xxix. 24—28. Josh. xxiii. 15, 16.
g 2 Kings xv. 29. xvii. 23. xviii. 11, 12. Am. v. 27.
h Ex. xxxiv. 13, 14. Deut. xii. 3, 4.
i 9. 23, 24.
k Is. xl. 24. Hos. ix. 11, 12. 16, 17.
l xii. 30. xiii. 34. xv. 30. 34. xvi. 2 Ex. xxxii. 21. 35. Jer. v. 31. Hos. v. 11, 12. Mic. vi. 16. Matt. xviii. 7. Rom. xiv. 13.
m xvi. 6. 8. 15 23. Josh. xii 24 Cant. vi 4
n 12, 13. 1 Sam. ii. 30—34. iv. 18—20.
o 30. 2 Chr. xiii. 2, &c.
p xv. 31. xvi. 5. 14. 20 27 xxii. 39. 1 Chr. xxviii. 24. Est. vi. 1.
B. C. 954.
* Heb. *lay down.* ii. 10. xi. 43.
B. C. 975.
q 2 Chr. xii. 13. xiii. 7.
r viii. 16. 44. xi. 36. Ps. lxxxviii. 68, 69. lxxxvii. 1, 2. cxxxii 13. 14. Is. xii. 6.
s Ex. xx. 24. Deut. xii. 5. 21.
t 31. Deut. xxiii. 3.

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security in the safest repositories, and are reserved to the last, when all else is spent; and yet must be parted with, or will be searched out and seized upon. Indeed the house of Jeroboam was become as offensive to the Lord, as dung would be in a man's habitation; and should therefore be taken away till there was none left. Nor should any of his family, save Abijah, be buried, but their dead bodies should be left above ground, till the dogs or the fowls of the air devoured them, to their deeper disgrace and abhorrence.

V. 13. Abijah was the only person of all the house of Jeroboam, that was well disposed to the worship and service of JEHOVAH: and, it is probable, he had expressed strong disapprobation of his father's idolatry, and a purpose of suppressing it, if he should ever have it in his power. His removal was therefore a judgment upon Israel, who were unworthy of so pious a prince to reign over them: and it was the earnest of the entire destruction of Jeroboam's family, and a sort of preparation for it. It seems that Israel, though generally apostate, had some sense of Abijah's worth, and of their loss by his death, and sincerely mourned for him. (18.)

V. 14. *But what? even now.* That is, 'Do not think 'that these judgments are distant events; but prepare for 'them, and consider what will be the consequence, if they 'should come immediately: for they are even now at 'hand!' In two years after Jeroboam's death, Baasha utterly extirpated his family. Some, however, interpret the clause to mean, that the desolation of Jeroboam's house should merely be an introduction to still greater calamities on Israel.

V. 15, 16. These verses emphatically predict the enfeebled, distracted state of Israel, until they were given up finally at the Assyrian captivity. They were punished for "willingly walking after Jeroboam's commandment" to worship the golden calves: and concurring in his revolt from the house of David, and the worship of God. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 19. *The book*, &c. These chronicles, or *words of days, or journals*, were the public records of the kingdom, from whence extracts seem to have been made by the inspired penmen, with such additions as were suited for instruction. If any one wished further to gratify his curiosity, he was referred to the original records: but these have now long since been buried in oblivion. The same may be said of The book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah, (29,) which were the records of that kingdom, and not that part of holy writ, which we call the Books of Chronicles. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 21. Rehoboam having been born one year before David's death, and having had his education in the best years of his father's reign, had abundant opportunity of becoming a wiser man than he proved to be. Naamah is supposed to have been the daughter of Shobi, the Ammonite, who was kind to David in Absalom's rebellion; (*Note*, 2 *Sam.* xvii. 27:) and Shobi having been proselyted to the religion of Israel, David married his son Solomon to his daughter, perhaps out of gratitude for his kindness. He had himself married the daughter of Talmai the king of Geshur: but the character of Absalom, his son by her, should have cautioned him against such marriages. It is very doubtful whether Naamah ever cordially embraced the true religion: and as Solomon worshipped the gods of Ammon among the rest, it has been thought that she at last became one of his seducers.

22 And [u] Judah did evil in the sight of the LORD, and [x] they provoked him to jealousy with their sins which they had committed, [y] above all that their fathers had done.

23 For they also [z] built them high places, and * images, and [a] groves, on every high hill, and under every green tree.

24 And [b] there were also Sodomites in the land: *and* they did according to all the abominations of the nations which the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.

25 And it came to pass in the fifth year of king Rehoboam, *that* [c] Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem:

26 And [d] he took away the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house; he even took away all: and he took away all [e] the shields of gold which Solomon had made.

27 And king Rehoboam [f] made in their stead brazen shields, and committed *them* unto the hands of the chief of the * guard, which kept the door of the king's house.

28 And it was so, when the king went into the house of the LORD, that the guard bare them, and brought them back into the guard-chamber.

29 Now the rest of the acts of Rehoboam, and all that he did, [g] *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

30 And [h] there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all *their* days.

31 And [i] Rehoboam slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David. And [k] his mother's name *was* Naamah, an Ammonitess. And [l] Abijam his son reigned in his stead.

u Judg. iii. 7. 12. iv. 1. 2 Chr. xii. 1. Jer. iii. 7—11. x 9. Deu. iv. 24. xxix 28. xxxii. 16—21. Ps. lxxviii. 58. Is lxv. 3. 4. 1 Cor. x. 22.
y Ez. xvi. 47, 48.
z iii. 2. Deu. xii. 2. Is lvii. 5. Ez. xvi. 24, 25
* Or, *standing images*, or, *statues*.
a 2 Kings xvii. 9, 10 xxi. 3—7. 2 Chr xxviii. 4.
b xv. 12. xxii.46. Gen xix. 5. Deut. xxiii. 17. Judg. xix. 22. 2 Kings xxiii. 7. Rom i 24—27. 1 Cor vi. 9.
c xi. 40. 2 Chr. xii. 2—4.
d vii 51. xv. 18. 2 Chr. xii. 9—11. Ps. cxxvii. 1.
e x. 16, 17. 2 Chr. ix 15, 16. Prov. xxiii. 5. Ec. ii. 18, 19.
f Lam. iv. 1
* Heb. *runners*. i. 5. xviii. 46. 1 Sam viii. 11. xxii. 17. 2 Sam. xv. 1.
g 19. xi. 41. xv. 23. xxii. 45. 2 Chr. xii. 15.
h xii. 24. xv. 6, 7.
i B. C. 958. 20 xi. 43. xv. 8. 24. xxii. 50. 2 Chr. xii. 16.
k 21.
l 2 Chr. xiii. 19 *Abijah*. Matt. i. 7. *Abia*.

V. 22—24. It was an extraordinary circumstance, that, after the priests and Levites, and pious persons from Israel, had settled in Judah, (2 *Chr.* xi. 13—17.) Rehoboam and his subjects in general should become more gross idolaters than the Israelites were. Yet this was actually the case; for they directly worshipped false gods: and the *groves* seem to have been temples erected in shady places, where abominable lewdness was practised in honour of their filthy idols.

V. 25—27. It is probable that Shishak was excited by Jeroboam, as well as allured by the prospect of an immense booty, in thus making war against Rehoboam. If, (as some learned men suppose,) Shishak was the Sesostris of pagan historians, he was a most powerful and formidable conqueror: and Rehoboam, perhaps intimidated by seeing the hand of God so speedily lifted up against him, seems to have tamely surrendered. Thus in less than five years from Solomon's death, the temple was plundered, as well as his royal palaces: and Shishak, having seized his booty, seems to have relinquished his conquests in Judah. Rehoboam replaced the golden shields with others made of brass: and the use he made of these, shows for what purposes those of gold had been designed; and intimates, that he still on some occasions attended the worship of God at his temple.

V. 30. Though Rehoboam was not allowed to attack Jeroboam in the beginning of his reign, and we read of no great battles fought betwixt them; yet, by mutual incursions, they molested and weakened each other all their days.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—20.

Parents often suffer, and are corrected, in the affliction of their children: and on such occasions they should examine their lives, repent of their sins, humble themselves before God, submit to his will, seek help from him, and beg that the affliction may be sanctified for the good of their souls. But sinners are more anxious to know the *secret* purposes of God, than to understand his *revealed* will and their own duty: they are often conscious, that their forms are not to be depended on: but are afraid that others should perceive their convictions, and despise them! They often secretly reverence the faithful servants of God; and having found the truth of some of their words, they have an inward persuasion, that the rest will be verified too, except as they flatter themselves with hopes of escaping the miseries denounced against them. They form indeed very erroneous judgments both of God and of his servants; yet they would be glad of help or information in times of trouble, did they not fear rebukes and warnings. They therefore either keep at a distance, or attempt to impose upon faithful ministers, by disguising their real characters, and pretending kindness to them. Indeed the wisest of men may thus be deceived; but God searcheth every heart, and he often unmasks the hypocrite before the world: but more frequently he enables his servants to see through their disguises, and to address them in their *real*, not their *assumed* characters; and at last he will expose them to universal shame and contempt before the assembled world. 'What then doth it avail thee, thou deceiver, to attempt imposing upon men? Why feignest thou thyself to be another person? In vain dost thou expect an answer of peace, whilst thou continuest in sin. The ministers of Christ are all sent to thee with heavy tidings: thy attempt to impose on them, or to bribe them by presents, does but increase thy guilt: they will not thus be diverted from giving thee faithful reproofs and awful warnings; and the event will shortly inform thee of the purpose of God concerning thee; the foreknowledge of which, would only augment thy

CHAP. XV.

Abijam's wicked reign, 1—7. *He dies, and is succeeded by Asa,* 8. *Asa's good reign,* 9—15. *In his war with Baasha, he makes a league with Benhadad, king of Syria; compels Baasha to desist from building Ramah; and with the materials builds Geba and Mizpah,* 16—22. *He dies, and is succeeded by Jehoshaphat,* 23, 24. *Nadab's wicked reign over Israel,* 25, 26. *Baasha slays him, seizes the kingdom, and executes Ahijah's prophecy against Jeroboam's family,* 27—31. *Baasha's wicked reign,* 33, 34.

NOW [a] in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam the son of Nebat, reigned Abijam over Judah.

2 Three years reigned he in Jerusalem: And [b] his mother's name *was* [c] Maachah, the daughter of [d] Abishalom.

3 And he walked in [e] all the sins of his father, which he had done before him; [f] and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father.

4 Nevertheless [g] for David's sake did

a 2 Chr. xiii. 1, 2. *Abijah.*
b 13. 2 Chr. xi. 20—22.
c 2 Chr. xiii. 2. *Michaiah the daughter of Uriel.*
d 2 Chr. xi. 21. *Absalom.*
e xiv. 22.
f iii. 14. xi. 4. 2 Kings xx. 3. 2 Chr. xxv. 2. xxxi. 20, 21. Ps. cxix. 80.
g xi. 12. 32. 36. 2 Sam. vii. 12—16. 2 Chr. xxi. 7. Ps. cxxxii. 17. Is. xxxvii. 35. Jer. xxxiii. 20. 26.

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misery except thou repent of all thy wickedness, and turn to the Lord in uprightness of heart.—Every providential favour demands a return of grateful obedience, and aggravates future transgression; and thus prosperous sinners accumulate guilt and wrath with a rapidity proportioned to their abused mercies.—When men have witnessed, and have even profited by, God's displeasure against the sins of other men, and yet imitate and exceed them in iniquity, they may expect to be visited with more tremendous vengeance: and as they dishonour him by their crimes, he will disgrace them in their punishment. Though a man is not affected by the indignity shown to his dead body, or even by the miseries of his posterity, yet the prospect may torment his mind whilst he lives; such judgments form a proper emblem of the punishment of the wicked after death; and they strongly express God's abhorrence and indignation, for a warning to others.—Instruments will readily be found among the depraved sons of men, for the most bloody and savage acts of inhumanity; but Providence raising them up to power, and then over-ruling their crimes to the accomplishment of his own righteous purposes, forms no excuse for their ambition and cruelty. Sinners often flatter themselves, that threatened judgments are very distant, when they are even at the door; and excuse themselves, because they were persuaded or frighted into compliance.—Awful indeed will be the doom of those who employ their abilities and authority to make others sin; for thousands will for ever execrate some of them, as the causes of their eternal perdition. They however who yield to temptation, follow bad examples, and obey sinful commands, will provoke the Lord to give them up, and cast them off, unless they deeply repent of their iniquity.—The Lord deals with men according to their *habitual character:* and he will not mention against the upright believer, who hath cordially followed him, those incidental sins of which he hath repented, and for which he hath patiently borne correction.—To show the power and sovereignty of his grace, he frequently reserves an individual or two out of the worst of families, in whom there is "some good thing toward the "LORD GOD of Israel." The fruits of his grace he peculiarly delights in, when they flow from the hearts of the young and the affluent, and of those who are surrounded with contagious examples and instructions. When such young persons are spared, they often prove blessings to their families and connexions: but their premature death forebodes awful judgments, and may well be mourned over as a public calamity. But they are taken away from the evil to come, and their death can never be a loss unto themselves.

V. 21—31.

No wonder that they who are at a distance from God's ordinances are hardened in iniquity: when such as are most favoured provoke him to jealousy by their crimes, and are uninfluenced by his judgments, mercies, warnings, and promises!—The perpetration of the worst crimes of the worst of the heathen, in Jerusalem, the city that the Lord had chosen for his temple and worship; and at present in this favoured land and city, demonstrates, that nothing can mend the heart of fallen man, but the special sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit: on this alone may we depend; for this may we daily pray, in behalf of ourselves and of all around us!—But sin quickly enfeebles, impoverishes, and disgraces the most prosperous nations: and when holiness, the real glory of a religious profession, is gone, all external splendour will follow it, or become worthless. Yet many who live in gross wickedness keep up their formal attendance upon divine ordinances, and are fond of an ostentatious imitation of the usages of better times; which have lost all their intrinsic value, and retain nothing except the external glitter that amuses weak and carnal minds.—Death still marches his solemn round, and conveys monarchs from their thrones, as well as peasants from their cottages. Happy are they alone, who possess the lively hope of an incorruptible inheritance in that world, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the "weary are at rest!"

NOTES.

CHAP. XV. V. 2, 3. There is no ground for the opinion that Maachah was the daughter of Absalom the son of David. (*Marg. Ref.*)—As Abijam, though a wicked man, was a professed worshipper of JEHOVAH; he is called "the LORD his God."

the LORD his God give him a * lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him, and [h] to establish Jerusalem:

5 Because [i] David did *that which was* right in the eyes of the LORD, and turned not aside from any *thing* that he commanded him all the days of his life, [k] save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.

6 And [l] there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of his life.

7 Now [m] the rest of the acts of Abijam, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And [n] there was war between Abijam and Jeroboam.

8 And [o] Abijam slept with his fathers: and they buried him in the city of David; and Asa his son reigned in his stead.

9 ¶ And in the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel reigned Asa over Judah.

10 And forty and one years reigned he in Jerusalem: and his * mother's name *was* Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom.

11 And [p] Asa did *that which was* right in the eyes of the LORD, as *did* David his father.

12 And he took away [q] the Sodomites out of the land, and removed all [r] the idols that his fathers had made.

13 And also [s] Maachah [t] his mother, even her he removed from *being* queen, because she had made an idol in a grove: and Asa † destroyed her idol, and [u] burnt *it* by [x] the brook Kidron.

14 But [y] the high places were not removed: nevertheless Asa's heart [z] was perfect with the LORD all his days.

15 And [a] he brought in the ‡ things which his father had dedicated, and the things which himself had dedicated, into the house of the LORD, silver, and gold, and vessels.

16 ¶ And [b] there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.

* Or, *candle.*
h Ps. lxxxvii. 5. Is. lxii. 7. Jer. xxxiii 2. Mic. iv. 1. Matt. xvi. 18.
i xiv. 8. 2 Kings xxii. 2. 2 Chr xxxiv. 2. Ps. cxix. 6. Luke i. 6. Acts xiii. 22 36.
k 2 Sam xi. 4. 15—17. xii 9, 10. Ps. li *title.*
l xiv. 30.
m xiv. 29. 2 Chr. xiii. 2. 22.
n 2 Chr. xiii. 3, &c.
B. C 955.
o xiv 31. 2 Chr. xiv. 1.
* *grand-mother's.* 2 13. 2 Chr. xv. 20, 21. xiii. 2.
p 3. 2 Chr. xiv. 2. 13. xv. 17. xvi. 7—10.
q xiv. 24. xxii. 46. Rom i. 26, 27. Jude 7.
r 3. xi. 7, 8. xiv. 23. 2 Chr. xiv. 2—5. Ez xx. 18, 19. Zech. i. 2—6. 1 Pet. i. 18.
s 2. 10. 2 Chr. xv. 16.
t Deut. xiii. 6—11. xxxiii. 9. Zech. xiii. 3. Matt. x. 37. xii. 46—50. 2 Cor. v. 16. Gal ii. 5, 6. 14.
† Heb. *cut off.* Lev. xxvi. 30. Deut. vii. 2. 2 Kings xviii. 4 xxiii. 12.
u Ex. xxxii. 20. Deut. ix. 21. Josh. vi 24.
x 2 Sam. xv. 23. John xviii. 1. *Cedron.*
y xxii. 43. 2 Kings xii 8. xiv. 4. xv. 4. 2 Chr. xiv. 3. 5.
z xi. 4. 2 Chr. xv. 17. xxv. 2.
a vii. 51. 1 Chr. xxvi. 26—28. 2 Chr. xiv. 13. xv. 18.
‡ Heb. *holy.*
b 6, 7. 32. xiv. 30. 2 Chr. xvi. 1, &c.

V. 4. *To establish*, &c. Notwithstanding the wickedness of Abijam, and others of David's race; they were continued as "a lamp in Jerusalem:" and they were useful both to establish the civil state of that city, and to maintain the true worship of God in it; when the light of divine truth was almost extinguished in all other places.

V. 5. *Save only*, &c. Many other parts of David's conduct were evidently faulty; but in this instance alone did he act so inconsistently with his profession, in all respects, as otherwise it could scarcely have been conceived a real godly man could have done.—They who know the human heart, and the state of a believer in this world of conflict and temptation, will never expect to see a character and conduct free from blemish and criminality; though they see many preserved from falling, or from continuing long under the power of notorious evils. David, however, deeply repented of this part of his conduct; and to the close of his life he showed himself to be the upright and devoted servant and worshipper of the Lord.

V. 6, 7. Though God vouchsafed the continuance of the royal authority over Judah in the family of David: yet, instead of ruling over Israel also, as David and Solomon had done, both Rehoboam and Abijam were harassed by perpetual wars with Jeroboam the king of Israel. Rehoboam left this unnatural war, after it had lasted all his days, to his son Abijam, who did not live to terminate it. This seems a more satisfactory interpretation, than to suppose that *Rehoboam* means *the son of Rehoboam;* when Abijam is separately mentioned in the next verse. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 9. Abijam began to reign during the eighteenth year of Jeroboam; he reigned through his nineteenth year, and he died before the close of his twentieth, when Asa succeeded. Thus Abijam is said, according to the Hebrew idiom, to have reigned *three years*, in the same manner that Christ is said to have risen after *three days*. Thus also Nadab began to reign in the second year of Asa, and reigned two years: yet Baasha succeeded him in the third year of Asa. This is one way in which the computation of the years between the two kingdoms can be made to coincide: for, in the numerous successions in the kingdom of Israel, the same year is frequently twice reckoned; both to him who reigned in the commencement, and to him who succeeded before the close of it.

V. 10—13. Maachah was Asa's *grandmother*, but probably his own mother was dead, and Maachah had brought him up: he however deprived her of authority, and removed her from court, for her idolatry, which he entirely suppressed.—The words translated, "from being queen," may be rendered, *from the queen*, namely, lest Maachah should seduce Asa's queen also into idolatry.

V. 14. *Was perfect*, &c. This expression is opposed to the external good behaviour, and the insincere and divided heart, of hypocrites; and signifies, that Asa was cordially devoted to the service and worship of God all his days; and that his sins arose from infirmity, not from presumptuous deliberate wickedness. He had not, however, zeal and resolution enough to suppress the high places, on which the people sacrificed to the Lord, instead of coming to the temple; though he destroyed the idols out of the land.

V. 15. It seems Abijam, in his war with Jeroboam, had made some vow of dedicating the spoil to God, which he did not live to perform. But Asa fulfilled it, as well as some similar vow of his own.

17 And [c] Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah, and built [d] Ramah, that he might not suffer any to go out or come in to Asa king of Judah.

18 Then [f] Asa took all the silver and the gold *that were* left in the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and delivered them into the hand of his servants; and king Asa sent them to [g] Ben-hadad, the son of Tabrimon, the son of Hezion, king of Syria, that dwelt at [h] Damascus, saying,

19 *There is* a [i] league between me and thee, *and* between my father and thy father: behold, I have sent unto thee a present of silver and gold; come and [k] break thy league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may ◊ depart from me.

20 So Ben-hadad hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the captains of the hosts which he had against the cities of Israel, and smote [l] Ijon, and [m] Dan, and [n] Abel-beth-maachah, and all [o] Cinneroth, with all the land of Naphtali.

21 And it came to pass, [p] when Baasha heard *thereof*, that he left off building of Ramah, and dwelt in [q] Tirzah.

22 Then king Asa [r] made a proclamation throughout all Judah; (none *was* ‖ exempted:) and they took away the stones of Ramah, and the timber thereof, wherewith Baasha had builded; and king Asa built with them [s] Geba of Benjamin, and [t] Mizpeh.

23 [u] The rest of all the acts of Asa, and all his might, and all that he did, and the cities which he built, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? Nevertheless [x] in the time of his old age he was diseased in his feet.

24 And Asa slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and [y] Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead.

25 ¶ And Nadab the son of Jeroboam * began to reign over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned over Israel two years.

26 And [z] he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and [a] walked in the way of his father, and [b] in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin.

27 And [c] Baasha the son of Ahijah, of the house of Issachar, [d] conspired against him: and Baasha smote him at [e] Gibbethon, which *belongeth* to the Philistines; (for Nadab and all Israel laid siege to Gibbethon;)

28 Even [f] in the third year of Asa king of Judah did Baasha slay him, and reigned in his stead.

29 And it came to pass, when he reigned, *that* he smote all the house of Jeroboam; [g] he left not to Jeroboam any that breathed, until he had destroyed him, according unto the saying of the LORD, which he spake by his servant Ahijah the Shilonite:

30 [h] Because of the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned, and which he made Israel sin, by his provocation wherewith he provoked the LORD God of Israel to anger.

31 Now the rest of the acts of Nadab, and all that he did, *are* [i] they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

32 And [k] there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel, all their days.

33 In the third year of Asa king of Judah, began Baasha the son of Ahijah to reign over all Israel in Tirzah, [l] twenty and four years.

34 And [m] he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and [n] walked in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin.

a 27. 2 Chr xvi. 1.
d Jos xviii. 25. 1 Sam. xv. 34 Jer. xxxi 15
e xii 27. 2 Chr. xi. 13–17.
f 2 Kings xviii. 15, 16. 2 Chr. xv. 18. xvi. 2–6.
g xx. 1–5 33, 34. 2 Kings viii. 7–15.
h xi. 23, 24.
i 2 Chr. xix. 2. 18. xxxi. 1.
2 Sam. xxi. 2. Ez xvii. 13–16. Rom i. 31. iii. 3.
◊ Heb. *go up.*
l 2 Kings xv. 29.
m xii 29 Judg. xviii. 29
n 2 Sam. xx. 14, 15.
o Josh. xi. 2. xii. 3.
p 2 Chr. xvi. 5
q xiv. 17. xvi. 15–18. Cant. vi. 4.
r 2 Chr xvi. 6.
‖ Heb. *free.*
s Josh. xviii. 24. *Gaba.* xxi. 17.
t Josh. xviii 26 1 Sam vii. 5. Jer. xl 6. 10.
u 7, 8. xiv. 29–31.
x 2 Chr. xvi. 12–14. Ps. xc. 10.
B. C. 914.
y xxii. 41–43. 2 Chr xvii. 1. Mat. i. 8. *Josaphat.*

B. C. 954.
* Heb. *reigned.*
z xvi. 25.
a xii. 28–33. xiii. 33. 34.
b 19. xiv. 16. Gen. xx. 9.
c 16.
d xvi. 9. 2 Kings xii. 20.
e xvi. 15. 17 Josh. xix. 44. xxi. 23.
f Deut. xxxii. 35.
g xiv. 10–14. 2 Kings ix. 7–10. 36, 37. x. 10, 11. 34. xix. 25.
h xiv. 9. 15.
i xiv. 19. xvi. 5. 14. 20. 27.
k 16.
l xvi. 8.
m 26.
n xii. 28, 29. xiii. 33. xiv. 16.

V. 17—23. This league with Benhadad evidently arose from unbelief, and it was criminal in itself. It was also very wrong to tempt Benhadad to *break his league* with the king of Israel, and still worse to hire him to it with the consecrated treasures of the temple. This occurred in the latter years of Asa's reign. Baasha's policy was not unlike the impious devices of Jeroboam; but God could have turned it into foolishness, without Asa opposing it by a policy not more justifiable. (*Notes, Chron.* xiv. xv. xvi.)

V. 29, 30. We may be sure, that Baasha left the dead bodies of Jeroboam's family unburied, as it had been predicted. He only sought to secure himself in the kingdom by this cruelty, and therefore he imitated Jeroboam in his idolatry and other impieties. (34.)

CHAP. XVI.

Jehu predicts the ruin of Baasha's family, 1—4. *Baasha dies, and is succeeded by his son Elah,* 5—7. *Zimri slays Elah, succeeds him, and fulfils Jehu's prophecy,* 8—14. *Omri usurps the kingdom, and besieges Zimri in Tirzah, who burns himself in the palace,* 15—20. *Tibni opposes Omri, who prevails against him,* 21, 22. *Omri builds Samaria, reigns wickedly, dies, and is succeeded by Ahab,* 23—28. *Ahab's excessive wickedness and idolatry, as instigated by his wife Jezebel,* 29—33. *Joshua's curse on the building of Jericho fulfilled on Israel,* 34.

THEN the word of the LORD came [a 7. 2 Chr. xix. 2. xx. 34.] to [a] Jehu the son of [b] Hanani [b 2 Chr. xvi. 7—10.] against Baasha, saying,

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—15.

A superficial acquaintance with the divine law may enable us to perceive evident defects in the conduct of eminent believers; and man's natural enmity to God disposes him to delight in severely animadverting on them: yet if the habitual conduct of the righteous towards God and man be impartially contrasted with that of unbelievers, the difference is very visible, and they appear to be of another spirit, and far more excellent than their neighbours. But when the secret desires and good works of the righteous, and the secret evils of the hearts and lives of ungodly men, shall be made manifest at the day of judgment; the glory of the divine justice and mercy will be displayed to the whole world, in the allotment of their everlasting portions of happiness or misery. The general conduct of the Lord's servants may therefore be held forth as an example for imitation: and numbers fare the better on their account, both whilst they live, and after they are gone to their rest. But, alas! even children, who have been favoured and spared for their parents' sake, often forsake their righteous ways; and but few, especially in superior stations, have hitherto served God in uprightness of heart. He hath however still taken care of his cause; whilst those who ought to have been serviceable to it have perished in their sins: and the Son of David will continue a Light to his church, to establish it in truth and righteousness, to the end of time. It is happy for nations when wicked rulers are speedily removed, and when the righteous come in their stead, and are long preserved, "to do that which "is right in the eyes of the LORD." They that would please him, and promote reformation, must prefer his glory to the reputation of every friend or relative: nay, they must oppose the crimes even of their own parents, though this may seem a reflection upon the memory of the deceased, or a slight put upon the characters of the living. Nor may any age, sex, or relative tie, induce such as are intrusted with authority to allow those to possess power, who abuse it to the dishonour of God, and to the spread of ungodliness: and in every situation our duty to him must have the precedency over all other duties. How absurd then is it, to be satisfied with a religion merely because our fathers professed it! for indeed that reason, if allowed to be valid, would generally prove that men ought to continue in idolatry, superstition, and immorality! Every reformation upon earth hath hitherto been defective: the utmost attainment of fallen man has been an upright and persevering endeavour to glorify God, and this meets with his *merciful* acceptance, through faith in Jesus Christ.

V. 16—34.

Even believers find it hard, in times of urgent danger, "to trust in the LORD with all their heart, and not to lean "to their own understanding:" and unbelief makes way for carnal policy. This has often induced Christians to call in the help of the enemies of God, in their contests with their brethren; to spend that time and substance to obtain their favour, which ought to have been devoted to the Lord's service; and to tempt others to behave deceitfully or cruelly. Such evils have frequently disgraced religious disputes: the victories thus acquired have weakened the common cause, and ended in shame and bitterness: and some, who once shone bright in the meridian of the church, have been thus covered with a dark cloud towards the close of their days. May God help us "to "follow after peace, and those things, wherewith one may "edify another;" that our path may shine more and more bright unto the perfect day.—But after all, how much happier are they who are connected with godly people, than such as have their lot cast among the profane and wicked!—Wretched is it for others, but most so for themselves, when children inherit the vices with the estates of their wicked parents: their temporal calamities may arise from the sins of their fathers; but the wrath to come will be the recompense of their own crimes. Ungodly men execute the just judgment of God upon each other, whilst gratifying their own ambition, avarice, or revenge; and at the same time they ripen for severer vengeance, by imitating the sins of those whom they have supplanted.—Many suffer, and many are induced to commit iniquity, by such rulers and usurpers. But in the midst of all these enormities, and this apparent confusion, the Lord is carrying on his universal plan: and when it shall be fully completed, all rational and holy creatures, and all the company of redeemed sinners, will perceive, admire, and adore the glorious justice, wisdom, truth, and mercy, displayed in every part of it, through all the ages of eternity.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVI. V. 1. Hanani, the father of Jehu, was a prophet as well as his son. Jehu was a young man at this time, and he continued for many years employed by the Lord, and useful to his people. (*Marg. Ref.*) Thus a suc-

2 Forasmuch as [c] I exalted thee out of the dust, and made thee prince over my people Israel, and [d] thou hast walked in the way of Jeroboam, and [e] hast made my people Israel to sin, to provoke me to anger with their sins;

3 Behold, I will take away the posterity of Baasha, and the posterity of his house; and [f] will make thy house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

4 Him that dieth of Baasha in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth of his in the field shall the fowls of the air eat.

5 Now [g] the rest of the acts of Baasha, and what he did, and his might, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

6 So [h] Baasha slept with his fathers, and was buried in Tirzah: and [i] Elah his son reigned in his stead.

7 And also by [k] the hand of the prophet Jehu the son of Hanani came the word of the LORD against Baasha, and against his house, even for all the evil that he did in the sight of the LORD, in provoking him to anger [l] with the work of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam; and [m] because he killed him.

8 ¶ In the twenty and sixth year of Asa king of Judah began Elah the son of Baasha to reign over Israel in Tirzah, two years.

9 And his servant Zimri, captain of half *his* chariots, [n] conspired against him, as he was in Tirzah, [o] drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza, * steward of *his* house in Tirzah.

10 And Zimri went in, and smote him, and killed him, in the twenty and seventh year of Asa king of Judah, and [p] reigned in his stead.

11 And it came to pass, when he began to reign, as soon as he sat on his throne, *that* [q] he slew all the house of Baasha: [r] he left him not one that pisseth against a wall, † neither of his kinsfolks nor of his friends.

12 Thus did Zimri destroy all the house of Baasha, [s] according to the word of the LORD, which he spake against Baasha ‡ by Jehu the prophet;

13 For all the sins of Baasha, and the sins of Elah his son, by which they sinned, and by which they made Israel to sin, in provoking the LORD God of Israel to anger with their [t] vanities.

14 Now the rest of the acts of Elah, and all that he did, *are* [u] they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

15 ¶ In the twenty and seventh year of Asa king of Judah did Zimri reign [x] seven days in Tirzah; and the people *were* [y] encamped against Gibbethon, which *belonged* to the Philistines.

c xi. 11. xiv. 7. xxi. 20—24. 1 Sam. ii. 8. 27, 28 xv. 17—19. 2 Sam. xii. 7—11. Ps. cxiii. 7, 8.
d xiii. 33, 34 xv. 34.
e xiv. 16. Ex xxxii. 21. 1 Sam. ii. 24. xxvi. 19.
f 11, 12. xiv. 10, 11. xv. 29, 30. xxi. 22—24. Is lxvi. 24. Jer. xxii. 19.
g xiv. 19. xv. 31.
h xiv. 17. 20. xv. 21.
i 8. xv. 33.
k viii. 53.
l Ps. cxv. 4. Is. ii. 8. xliv. 9—20.
m xiv 14. xv. 27—29. 2 Kings x. 30, 31. Is. x. 6, 7 Hos. i 4. Acts ii. 23. iv. 27, 28
n xv. 27. 2 Kings ix. 14 31. xii. 26.
o xv. 10. 25. 30.
xx. 16. 1 Sam. xxv. 36—38. 2 Sam. xiii 28, 29. Prov. xxiii. 29—35. Jer li. 57. Dan. v. 1—4. 30. Nah. i. 10. Hab. ii. 15, 16. Matt. xxiv. 49—51. Luke xxi 34.
* Heb. *which was over.* Gen xv. 2 xxiv. 2 16 xxxix 4 9.
p 15 Job 20 5. B. C. 929.
q xv. 29. Judg. i. 7.
r xiv. 10. 1 Sam. xxv 22 34
† Or. *both his kinsmen and his friends.*
s 1—4.
‡ Heb. *by the hand of.* 7.
t Deut. xxxii. 21. 1 Sam. xii. 21. 2 Kings xvii. 15. Is xli. 29 Jer. x. 3—5. 8. 15. Jon. ii. 8 1 Cor. viii. 4. x. 19, 20.
u 5.
x 2 Kings ix. 31. Job xx. 5. Ps. xxxvii. 35, 36.
y xv. 27. Josh. xix. 44.

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cession of prophets was raised up in Israel, through every generation, till the advent of Christ drew nigh.

V. 2. The conduct of Baasha in conspiring against Nadab, and murdering him and Jeroboam's family, was highly criminal. But the success of his conspiracy, and his advancement from a very low condition to the throne of Israel, were from the Lord; whose benefits aggravated the guilt of his subsequent idolatry; (*Note*, 2 *Sam.* xii. 9.) God acknowledged Israel as his people, notwithstanding their apostacy: because they professed themselves his worshippers: because there were many believers in the land; and because he intended to maintain religion among them, and not utterly to cast them off. This also was an aggravation of Baasha's sin; that being, in providence, made prince over the Lord's people, he employed his authority in causing them to sin against him. It is likely that Jehu was sent from Judah, and delivered his message to Baasha, as the old prophet did to Jeroboam.

V. 7. *Killed him.* 'Baasha destroyed Jeroboam in his 'posterity, by cruelly murdering them all!' God had not *commanded* him to do this, though he had *predicted* that it should be done. Baasha was actuated by his own ambition and other corrupt passions; and was therefore deserving of punishment, though he fulfilled the Lord's righteous purposes. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 8—14. Baasha began to reign in the third year of Asa; and he reigned twenty-four years; yet he died, and was succeeded by Elah, in the twenty-sixth year of Asa. Thus it is evident, that a part of the third year of Asa, after Baasha came to the throne, is calculated as a whole year. In like manner Elah, who began to reign in the twenty-sixth year of Asa, and was killed in the twenty-seventh, is said to have reigned two years, that is, a part of two years. —The sentence denounced against the house of Baasha greatly resembles that denounced against Jeroboam and his family: and both Jeroboam and Baasha died in peace; while Nadab and Elah, their sons, were slain within two years, and the posterity of each of them was entirely and ignominiously extirpated! but Baasha's friends likewise were involved in the same ruin.

V. 15. The death of Nadab had before prevented the prosecution of the siege of Gibbethon: and it was the second time interrupted by the murder of Elah, who staid at home to indulge himself, whilst his army was besieging

16 And the people *that were* encamped heard say, Zimri hath conspired, and hath also slain the king: wherefore all Israel made [z] Omri, the captain of the host, king over Israel that day in the camp.

z Mic. vi. 16.

17 And Omri went up from Gibbethon, and all Israel with him, and they [a] besieged Tirzah.

a Judg. ix. 45 50. 56, 57. 2 Kings vi. 24, 25. xviii. 9—12. xxv. 1—4. Luke xix. 43, 44.

18 And it came to pass, when Zimri saw that the city was taken, that he went into the palace of the king's house, and [b] burnt the king's house over him with fire, and died,

b Judg. ix. 54. 1 Sam. xxxi. 4, 5. 2 Sam. xvii. 23. Job ii. 9, 10. Matt. xxvii. 5.

19 For his sins which he sinned [c] in doing evil in the sight of the LORD, in walking in the way of Jeroboam, and [d] in his sin which he did, to make Israel sin.

c 7. 13. xv. 30. Ps. ix. 16. lviii. 9—11

d xii. 28. xv. 26. 34.

20 Now [e] the rest of the acts of Zimri, and his treason that he wrought, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

e 5. 14. 27. xiv. 19. xv. 31. xxii. 39.

21 Then were the people of Israel [f] divided into two parts: half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king; and half followed Omri.

f Judg. v. 8. Prov. xxviii. 2. Is. ix. 18—21. xix. 2.

22 But the people that followed Omri prevailed against the people that followed Tibni the son of Ginath: so Tibni died, and Omri reigned.

B. C. 925.

23 ¶ In the thirty and first year of Asa king of Judah began Omri to reign over Israel, [g] twelve years: six years reigned he in Tirzah.

g 8. 29.

24 And he bought the hill Samaria of Shemer for two talents of silver, and built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill, * Samaria.

* Heb. *Shomeron.* xiii. 32. xviii. 2. xx. 1. xxii. 37. 2 Kings xvii. 1. 6. 24. John iv. 4, 5. Acts viii. 5—8.

25 But Omri wrought evil in the eyes of the LORD, and [h] did worse than all that *were* before him.

h 30. xiv. 9. Mic vi. 16.

26 For [i] he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin, to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger with [k] their vanities.

i 2. 7. 19. xii. 26—33. xiii. 33. 34.

k 13. Ps. xxxi. 6. Jer. viii. 19. x. 3. 8. xiv. 22. xvi. 19. xviii. 15. Acts xiv. 15. Rom. i. 21—23.

27 Now [l] the rest of the acts of Omri, which he did, and his might that he shewed, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

l 5. 14. 20. xv. 31.

28 So Omri [m] slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria: and Ahab his son reigned in his stead.

m 6.

B. C. 918.

29 ¶ And in the thirty and eighth year of Asa king of Judah began Ahab the son of Omri to reign over Israel: and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel [n] in Samaria twenty and two years.

n 23, 24.

30 And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD [o] above all that *were* before him.

o 25. 33. xiv. 9. xxi. 25. 2 Kings iii. 2.

31 And it came to pass, † as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that

† Heb. *was it a light thing*, &c.

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that city. Gibbethon lay in the lot of Dan, but it was given to the Levites. The Philistines, however, had got possession of it during the distractions that prevailed in Israel. (*Josh.* xix. 44. xxi. 23.)

V. 18, 19. Zimri, finding his cause desperate; afraid of falling alive into the hands of his enemies; and perhaps envying his competitor the possession of that palace and those riches which he had coveted, burnt himself, with the palace, and all its treasures. He was driven to this extremity, and left to this desperation, for his sins: in the space of seven days he had butchered all the posterity and relations of Baasha; and had manifested his determination to support the worship of the golden calves. (*Note*, 1 *Sam.* xxxi. 4.)

V. 21, 22. The army encamped before Gibbethon, chose Omri, their commander, king: but it seems, either that some of them were afterwards disgusted by him; or that the principal persons, who were absent, disapproved of this measure, and set up Tibni against him. As the war lasted six years, numbers no doubt were cut off on both sides, before the contest ended with the death of Tibni.

V. 23. Twelve years elapsed between the death of Zimri and that of Omri; namely, from the beginning of the twenty-seventh, to the end of the thirty-eighth year of Asa's reign. But half that time had been spent in civil wars, between Omri and Tibni; and the thirty-first year of Asa was nearly concluded, when Omri obtained the undisputed possession of the throne; from which time he reigned six complete years. Thus, whilst Israel was torn to pieces by intestine commotions and continued conspiracies, massacres, and the succession of one usurper to another, who were all monsters of iniquity, Judah was quietly governed by one pious prince, who began to reign in the days of Jeroboam, survived Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, and Omri, and lived till the fourth year of Ahab. The revolt of Israel therefore proved to be mainly their own loss.

V. 24. It is probable that the burning of the palace at Tirzah by Zimri induced Omri to this measure. It is conjectured that Shemer sold this estate at a low price, upon condition of having the city to be built on it called by his name. From this city the whole surrounding country was called Samaria, and sometimes the whole kingdom of the ten tribes is thus called, after Samaria became the capital city.

p Gen. vi. 2. Deut. vii. 3, 4. Josh. xxiii. 12, 13.
q xviii. 4. 19. xix. 1, 2. xxi. 5—14. 25. 2 Kings ix. 30—37. Rev. ii. 20.
r Judg. xviii. 7.
s xi. 4—8.
t xxi. 26. Judg. ii. 11. iii. 7. x. 6. 2 Kings x. 18. xvii. 16.
u 2 Kings x. 21. 26, 27.
x Ex. xxxiv. 13. 2 Kings xiii. 6. xvii. 16. xxi. 3. Jer. xvii. 2.——y 30. xxi. 4. 19. 25. xxii. 6. 8.

p he took to wife q Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the r Zidonians, and s went and served t Baal, and worshipped him.

32 And he reared up an altar for Baal in u the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria.

33 And Ahab x made a grove; and Ahab y did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him.

34 In his days did Hiel the Beth-elite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his first born, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest *son* Segub, z according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun.

z Josh. vi. 26. xxiii. 14, 15. Zech. i. 5, 6. Mat. xxiv. 35.

V. 30—33. Omri had done worse than all that had been before him, and probably had enforced the worship of the golden calves with greater severity: but it seemed a light thing to Ahab to tread in his steps, or in those of Jeroboam; for without any *political* inducement he proceeded to still grosser idolatries. He had a rooted enmity to the worship of JEHOVAH, and to every thing which approached to it: and he married Jezebel, a zealous and furious worshipper of Baal, on purpose, as it seems, to have her assistance in supplanting the worship of the Lord, and even that of the golden calves; and establishing that of Baal throughout the land.

V. 34. Four hundred and forty years had passed since this word had been spoken; and the exact accomplishment of it, after so long a period, was a solemn warning to the people, to expect the fulfilment of the curses denounced against them in case of their idolatry, by Moses and Joshua. —This account illustrates the daring spirit of rebellion against God, which prevailed in those wretched times. Hiel, inured to idolatry at Beth-el, set the curse of God at defiance: and though his eldest son died when he laid the foundation of Jericho, he scorned to be intimidated, or to desist from his undertaking; till, when he completed the work, his youngest son died also; and the rest of his children, as it is supposed, in the intermediate space of time.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14.

Though we do not always understand the rules by which God governs nations and individuals, yet we may draw general instructive conclusions from this history. Frequently the Lord warns before he punishes: and they who are not induced to repentance, are rendered more inexcusable in their wickedness. By whatever means men are advanced to authority; their exaltation is from the Lord, they are bound to use it in his service, and are liable to severe punishment for their abuse of it: yet they must also give an account to God for the crimes committed in order to obtain the dangerous pre-eminence. The same observations hold good in respect of wealth, and every other temporal distinction. God is greatly displeased with those who tempt others to commit iniquity; but he is especially provoked by those who seduce his professing people to apostacy, or true believers to conceal or disgrace their profession: persecutors, therefore, will be answerable for all the sins to which they tempt men by the dread of punishment, as well as for all the injustice they commit, and the blood they shed. They who follow the examples of such as have been awfully punished for their sins, may expect to be overtaken with similar vengeance: and many very wicked men have been men of might and renown; have built cities, and perpetuated their memories in the annals of history: but they have no name in the book of life, and stand condemned in the word of God. The impunity of the principal culprits, whilst their children, relatives, or helpers suffer for their crimes, loudly declares the approaching day of judgment, and the more exact discrimination of characters, and distribution of rewards and punishments, which shall then take place. No crime more degrades and exposes a man than drunkenness: and they who sit down with the intention of "drinking themselves drunk," or are persuaded to do so, should recollect how easily they may be murdered in such a state; in how many ways they may be hurried before the tribunal of God; and what an awful thing it would be to meet their Judge in such a situation! and when rulers and great men spend their time in intemperate indulgence, instead of attending to the duties of their station, it bodes ill to the public and to themselves.

V. 15—34.

Wicked men accomplish God's purposes without intending it; and their injustice and cruelty towards each other display his righteousness. When they are hurried on by their vile passions, and have got the power into their hands, they can perpetrate much wickedness in a little time: and thus they speedily fill up their measure, and hasten the vengeance of God upon themselves. Whether they destroy themselves, or are murdered by others, the ruin is brought upon them by sinning against the Lord: even in death they frequently show the predominancy of their pride, envy, and malice; and thus are driven away into the eternal world, not only under condemnation as sinners, but under the domineering power of their diabolical dispositions, being "vessels of wrath fitted for destruction:" from such a death, good Lord, deliver us!—In all cases the triumphing of the ungodly is short: and for the wickedness of nations many are their princes. When tyrants hastily succeed one another, with massacres, conspiracies, and civil wars; and when every one is worse than all that went before him: we may be sure that the Lord hath a controversy with the people for their sins; and they are loudly called to repentance and reformation. Indeed they who forsake God, will generally be left to plague one another: they who seek not rest in his service, will always be unsettled and uneasy: and when his professed people quarrel with each other, their enemies will always be gainers. Intermarriages with daring offenders greatly embolden men's minds in wickedness, and hurry them on to the greatest excesses. The

CHAP. XVII.

Elijah foretells to Ahab a long drought; and is sent by God to the brook Cherith and fed by ravens, 1—7. *He is afterwards sent to Zarephath, and sustained by a widow-woman, whose barrel of meal and cruse of oil failed not,* 8—16. *Her son dies, but is restored to life in answer to Elijah's prayer; whom she believes to be sent by God,* 17—24.

AND * Elijah the Tishbite, *who was* of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, [a] *As* the LORD God of Israel liveth, [b] before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain [c] these years, but according to my word.

2 [d] And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying,

3 Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and [e] hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that *is* before Jordan.

4 And it shall be, *that* thou shalt drink of the brook; and [f] I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there.

5 So he went and [g] did according unto the word of the LORD: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that *is* before Jordan.

6 And [h] the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook.

* Heb. *Eliyahu.* Luke i. 17. iv. 24, 25 ix. 30. 33. *Elias.*
a xxii. 14 2 Kings iii. 14 v. 16. Matt. vii. 29. Luke i. 17.
b Deut. x. 8.
c Luke iv. 25. Jam. v. 17. Rev. xi. 6.
d Jer. vii. 1. xi 1. xviii 1.
e xxii. 25. Ps. xxxi. 20 lxxiii. 3. Jer. xxxvi. 19. 26. John viii. 59. Acts xvii. 14. Heb. xi. 33. Rev. xii. 6. 14.
f 9. xix. 5—8. Num. xx. 8. Job xxxiv. 29. xxxviii. 8—13. 41. Ps. xxxiii. 8, 9. xxxvii. 3. 19. lxxviii. 15. 16. 23. cxlvii. 6. Am. ix. 3, 4. Matt. vi. 31, 32. xiv. 19—21.
g xix. 9. Prov. iii. 5, 6. Matt. xvi. 24. John xv. 14.
h Ex. xvi. 35. Num. xi. 23. Judg. xiv. 14. xv. 18, 19. Ps. xxxiv. 9, 10. Jer. xxxvii. 21. xl. 4. Hab. iii. 17, 18. Mat xix. 26. Luke xxii. 35. Heb. vi. 18.

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progress of iniquity must be from bad to worse; it seems a light thing to notorious sinners to walk in the steps of their predecessors; and they are often ambitious of distinguishing themselves, and of expressing their enmity and contempt of God, in ways before unheard of! Hence we hear of so many new-invented oaths, blasphemies, superstitions, and species of false religion; as well as new refinements in licentiousness and immorality!—When princes set the example of rebellion against God, their subjects will often ambitiously emulate them, and thus ungodliness becomes fashionable: and no warnings will daunt the stout spirits of presumptuous sinners, till wrath come upon them to the uttermost. But they who despise the denunciations of God's word, will certainly know his truth in them by their own dreadful experience.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVII. V. 1. The most illustrious prophet Elijah was raised up in the reign of the most wicked of the kings of Israel: and he is brought to our notice in a very abrupt manner. We are not informed either of his parentage, education, or previous manner of life. He is called the *Tishbite:* but it is not agreed whether this title was taken from the place where he lived; or given him because he was *the reformer of Israel;* for the word signifies *a converter.* He was of the inhabitants of Gilead, beyond Jordan, but we know not of which of the tribes. His name signifies, *The* LORD *my God is He.* This might imply that JEHOVAH, the true God, would stand by him in the perilous services to which he was called in opposing the worship of false gods. We may suppose that Elijah had previously warned Ahab to forsake his idolatry, and that he had treated his message with contempt: at length therefore he declared, and confirmed it with a solemn oath by the LORD God of Israel, before whom he stood, (as his servant acting by his authority,) that there should be neither rain nor dew for *years,* but according to his word; that is, until he came again, and foretold its coming, and prayed for it. The expression, "As the LORD God of Israel "liveth," intimated that the idols of the heathens were lifeless stocks, and could not help their worshippers. The duration of this drought was three years and a half; and the effects must have been inexpressibly calamitous. (*Marg. Ref.*) One whole year without rain or dew would most terribly afflict this land, even beyond conception: but in three years and a half nearly all the cattle must be destroyed, and most of the inhabitants would be either dead or migrated into other countries. Yet the bulk of Israel continued mad upon their idols, throughout this most tremendous calamity! Rain was sent in answer to the prophet's *prayer,* which probably he offered in Ahab's hearing: and the judgment was intended to be a demonstration, that Baal could not defend his worshippers against the indignation of JEHOVAH. The glory of God, and the interests of true religion were therefore so greatly concerned in this decision, which was needful in order to prevent the utter apostacy and rejection of Israel, that the prophet might present this petition in wise zeal, and true benevolence; and doubtless he was immediately instructed by the Lord to do so. The benefit of the calamity would abundantly outweigh the miseries: for though many were hardened, yet doubtless numbers were eventually brought to repentance, and made to embrace and continue steadfast in the service of the true God.

V. 3. Elijah was commanded to abscond, not only to avoid the persecuting rage of Ahab as instigated by Jezebel, but as an additional judgment upon the Israelites. The Lord did not intend to shorten the term of the calamity, and he would not have his servant pray for it and be denied. He was pleased therefore to send him out of the way, that he might not be solicited and refuse: and all this time the people were deprived of the benefit of Elijah's example and instructions. Thus he was excluded from society and usefulness: but he doubtless was engaged in heavenly contemplation and communion with God; and in prayers for the reformation of his people, and for their being turned unto the Lord, though not for the present removal of the famine. —The brook Cherith ran into the river Jordan; but it seems the place was so retired, and the prophet kept so close, that neither friends nor foes knew where he was.

7 And it came to pass * after a while, that [i] the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land.

8 ¶ And the [k] word of the LORD came unto him saying,

9 Arise, get thee to [l] Zarephath, [m] which *belongeth* to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a [n] widow-woman there to sustain thee.

10 So he arose, and went to Zarephath: and when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow-woman *was* there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, [o] Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink.

11 And [p] as she was going to fetch *it*, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, [q] a morsel of bread in thine hand.

12 And she said, [r] *As* the LORD thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I *am* gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, [s] that we may eat it and die.

13 And Elijah said unto her, [t] Fear not; go *and* do as thou hast said: but [u] make me thereof a little cake [x] first, and bring *it* unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son.

14 For [y] thus saith the LORD God of Israel, [z] The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day *that* the LORD † sendeth rain upon the earth.

15 And she went and [a] did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat ‡ *many* days.

16 *And* [b] the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, [c] according to the word of the LORD, which he spake ∮ by Elijah.

17 ¶ And it came to pass after these things, *that* [d] the son of the woman, the

* Heb. *at the end of days.*
B. C. 909.
i Is. xl. 30, 31. liv. 10. Mark xiii. 31.
k 2. Gen. xxii. 14. Is. xli. 17. Heb. xiii. 6.
l Ob. 20. Luke iv. 26. *Sarepta.*
m Matt. xv. 21, 22.
n 4. Judg. vii. 2. 4. Rom. iv. 17—21. 2 Cor. iv. 7.
o Gen. xxi. 15. xxiv. 17. John iv. 7. 2 Cor. xi. 27. Heb. xi. 37.
p Gen. xxiv. 18, 19. Matt. x. 22. xxv. 35. 40. Heb. xiii. 2.
q Gen. xviii. 5.
r 1. 1 Sam. xxv. 26.
s Gen. xxi. 16. Jer. xiv. 18. Lam. iv. 9. Ez. xii. 18, 19. Joel i. 15. 16. Acts xii. 20.
t Ex. xiv. 3. 2 Kings vi. 16. 2 Chr. xx. 17. Is. xli. 10. 17. Matt. xxviii. 5. Acts xxvii. 24.
u Gen. xxii. 1, 2. Judg. vii. 5—7. Matt. xix. 21, 22. Heb. xi. 8. 1 Pet. i. 7.
x Prov. iii. 9, 10. Mal. iii. 10. Mat. vi. 33. x. 37.
y 2 Kings iii. 16, 17. v. 1, 2. iv. 6.
z 4. 2 Kings iv. 2—7. 42—44. Mat. xiv. 17—20. xv. 36—38.
† Heb. *giveth.*
a Gen. vi. 22. xii. 4. xxii. 3. 2 Chr. xx. 20. Mat. xv. 28. Mark xii. 43. John xi. 40. Rom. iv. 19, 20. Heb. xi. 7, 8. 17.
‡ Or. *a full year.*
b Mat. ix. 28—30. xix. 26. Luke i. 37. 45. John iv. 50. 51.
c xiii. 5.
∮ Heb. *by the hand of.* xvi. 12.
d 2 Kings iv. 18—20. Zech. xiii. 9. John xi. 3. 4. 14. James i. 2—4. 12. 1 Pet. i. 7. iv. 12.

V. 4—6. Elijah was a very extraordinary person, and every circumstance relating to him was rendered equally extraordinary, in order to excite the attention of a stupid generation. Ravens, being birds of prey, were more likely to rob the prophet, than to bring him food. But God's command suspended their natural instinct, and made them act contrary to it. We need not inquire where they procured the bread and flesh, or how the food was prepared? He, who commanded them to feed his servant, had ten thousand ways of enabling them to fulfil his word. Thus Elijah was sufficiently provided for, when numbers were starving: and the consolations of the Lord would render him contented with his solitude and sustenance. Some have objected that *ravens*, being unclean birds, would pollute the food they brought: but this arises from a mistake. The flesh of unclean animals might not be eaten; but the touch of them when living, communicated no ceremonial uncleanness either to food or any other thing: for asses and camels were also unclean; yet in constant use, for carrying provisions, as well as for other purposes.

V. 7. Elijah seems to have continued in this situation about a year: the natural supply of water which came by common providence failed him; but the miraculous supply of food, that was ensured to him by promise, failed not.

V. 9. This woman was of Gentile extraction, a Zidonian, of the very same nation with Jezebel the patroness of the worship of Baal: yet she was acquainted with the God of Israel, and probably a spiritual worshipper of him, when the nation of Israel had in general lapsed to idolatry. That *ravens* first, and then a *poor widow-woman, a Gentile*, should be employed to feed God's prophet, in preference to the Israelites, was a severe reflection upon that people: and Elijah's being sent to Zarephath, rather than to any of the cities, or poor distressed widows, of Israel, was an illustration of God's sovereignty, and a pre-intimation of the calling of the Gentiles. (*Marg. Ref.*)—As the Lord *commands* his creatures according to their natures and capacities, perhaps this poor widow had received some intimation of Elijah's coming, and a command to entertain him, nothing doubting.

V. 10—16. The effects of the famine in the land of Israel were severely felt at Zidon, and probably in all the adjacent countries, Judah perhaps being excepted. The poor woman was gathering fuel when addressed by the prophet, who probably knew that she was the person appointed to entertain him. Notwithstanding her distress, and the scarcity that prevailed, she readily complied with the request of a stranger to fetch him a little water. But when he craved a morsel of bread also, she called "the "LORD his God" to witness, that she had none baked, but was going to prepare her last provision, and then had nothing to look for, but death by hunger for herself and her son. We must suppose that she knew Elijah to be an Israelite, and he had perhaps declared himself the servant of JEHOVAH, and asked her for bread and water in his name; and for his sake, she would have been ready to help him if it had been in her power. Moreover, she doubtless perceived something venerable in his aspect, which prepossessed her in his favour: so that when he required her, "in the name of the LORD," to make him a cake *first*, (which, *in her circumstances*, was surely one of the hardest commands that ever was given,) promising her that her scanty supply should not fail; her faith surmounted all difficulties and silenced all objections: she believed his words, and did as she was directed, and thus became heir of the righteousness that is by faith. Thus having "entertained a prophet in the name of a prophet, she received a prophet's reward:" for above two years she

mistress of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him.

18 And she said unto Elijah, [e] What have I to do with thee, [f] O thou man of God? [g] art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?

19 And he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him up [h] into a loft, where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed.

20 And [i] he cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, [k] hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son?

e 2 Kings iii. 13. 2 Chr. xxxv. 21. Luke viii. 28. John ii. 4.
f xiii. 1.
g xviii 9. 1 Sam. xvi. 4. Luke viii. 23.
h 2 Kings iv. 10. 32, 33 Mark v. 40—42. Acts ix. 37.
i xviii. 36, 37 Ex. xvii. 4. 1 Sam. vii 8, 9 2 Kings xix. 4 15 Ps. xcix. 6 Matt. xxi. 22. James v. 13—18
k Gen. xviii. 23—25. Josh. vii. 8, 9. Ps. lxxiii. 13, 14. Jer xii. 1.

21 And [l] he * stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the LORD, and said, [m] O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come † into him again.

22 And the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he [n] revived.

23 And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, [o] See, thy son liveth.

24 And the woman said to Elijah, [p] Now by this I know that thou *art* a man of God, and *that* the word of the LORD in thy mouth *is* truth.

l 2 Kings iv. 34, 35. Acts xx 10.
* Heb. *measured.*
m Acts ix. 40.
† Heb *into his inward parts.*
n Deut. xxxii. 39 2 Kings xiii. 21. Luke vii 14. viii. 54 55. John v 28, 29 xi 43, 44 Acts xx. 12. Heb xi 35. Rev xi. 11.
o 2 Kings iv. 36, 37 Luke vii 15. Acts ix 41.
p John ii. 11 xi 15. 41. xvi. 22.

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and her son, as well as Elijah, were fed miraculously with sufficient provision; and she lived by faith in temporal as well as spiritual things. For though the margin renders the words *many days, a full year;* it is evident from the continuance of the famine, that Elijah abode with her a much longer time.

V. 17. Perhaps the child died suddenly, before the prophet had had time to pray for him; because the Lord intended a greater display of his own glory, and a more distinguishing favour to the woman, than the sparing of his life: or, he was left to die without any miraculous interposition, to try the faith of his mother.

V. 18. This woman had heard that the drought had come upon Israel in answer to Elijah's prayer; and perhaps she supposed that this affliction had come upon her in the same way. She seems to have venerated his sanctity, and to have had a trembling consciousness of her own sinfulness. Perhaps this loss brought her former worship of Baal to remembrance; or she thought she was not worthy of the company of the prophet, or had not duly profited by it. But her mind was much agitated; and her words imply a mixture of unbelief and impatience, as well as self-abasement and a sense of guilt. And she seems to have thought the presence of the man of God was dangerous to such a sinner, and hastened divine judgments upon her! Yet by her own account the prophet's presence had prolonged her son's life.

V. 20. Elijah himself could not understand the mystery of this dispensation: but wondered that the Lord should bring evil upon the woman, that entertained him for His sake, as well as upon those who rejected both God and his prophet.

V. 21, 22. These actions denoted the earnestness of the prophet's desires, and the greatness of his expectations of the child's restoration to life. He would, if possible, have communicated of his own life to him, or have concurred, if any thing had been in his power, to his revival. The expression, "Let the child's soul come into him again," not only intimates the prophet's certainty that he was really dead; but it marks the distinction betwixt the rational soul and the earthly body to be as real as that betwixt the house and its inhabitants: for both the prophet and the historian, speaking "as they were moved by the Holy "Ghost," used proper language. No one had yet, as far as we know, been raised from the dead, and perhaps no prayer to this effect had before been offered: Elijah's petition was no doubt dictated by immediate inspiration.

V. 24. The woman had been strongly tempted to unbelief: but she had got the victory, and was more confirmed and assured in her faith and hope than ever. She had doubted, but now she knew, that Elijah was God's servant; and she fully expected the performance of all his declarations.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—7.

The Lord will have witnesses to his truth in the worst of times: and, as he doth not immediately cast off his professing people, when they renounce his service, he employs various methods to convince them of their sin, and to bring them to repentance.—Great intrepidity and resolution are necessary for those that are employed to stop the torrent of prevailing iniquity, or to declare the message of God before persecuting tyrants: but he that sends them, will qualify them, and bear them out in such arduous and perilous services. Impenitent sinners have even the prayers of God's people against them: because, if they go on in sin, his glory requires their destruction; and every servant of the Lord seeks his glory, in preference to every other consideration. But if the severest temporal judgments are made effectual to bring men to serve God, they will have great cause to bless him for sending them. Fruitful seasons, and abundance of provisions for the body, are valuable mercies; and famine is a terrible evil: yet the liberty and opportunity of attending on divine ordinances are more valuable advantages; and a famine of the word of God is above all to be dreaded and deprecated. The Lord will provide for those who serve him faithfully: and he will teach them to be satisfied with their provisions though mean, and their situation though outwardly uncomfortable. Indeed, if we consider how much better we are dealt with

CHAP. XVIII.

Elijah is sent to meet Ahab, 1, 2. *Ahab and pious Obadiah go different ways, to search the land for pasture,* 3—6. *Elijah meets Obadiah and sends him to call Ahab,* 7—16. *Ahab, at Elijah's word, convenes Israel, with the prophets of Baal, at Carmel,* 17—20. *Elijah proposes to decide, whether* JEHOVAH *or Baal be God, by proving which would answer by fire,* 21—24. *Baal's prophets inokve him in vain,* 25—29. *Elijah prepares a sacrifice, pours water upon it, and calls on* JEHOVAH, *who answers by fire consuming the altar with the sacrifice; the people are convinced that* JEHOVAH *is God, and at Elijah's word slay Baal's prophets,* 30—40. *Elijah gives Ahab notice of rain, which he obtains by prayer; and then runs before Ahab's chariot to Jezreel,* 41—46.

AND it came to pass [a] *after* many days, that the word of the LORD came to Elijah in [b] the third year, saying, [c] Go,

a Luke iv. 25. Jam. v. 17. Rev. xi 2. 6.
b xvii. 15.
c 18. &c.

than we deserve, and how many are destitute of the necessaries of life; we shall see abundant reason to be contented with food and raiment of the meanest and coarsest kind; nor should we ever covet luxuries or superfluities. It is the greatest trial to the faithful and zealous minister, to be taken off from his work and usefulness, and excluded from the society of pious persons: yet, if thus circumstanced, he ought to submit to it as his cross, to wait the Lord's time to be employed again, to seek his comfort from communion with him, and diligently to prepare for future service. And if the trying dispensation did not arise from his own misconduct; the loss will not eventually be his, but that of those from whom he is banished; being frequently a judgment upon them for not profiting by their former advantages whilst they enjoyed them.—All nature shall sooner change its course, than one of God's promises fail. We do not indeed now expect to be fed by ravens *literally:* but the Lord often employs selfish men, contrary to their nature and general character, to support his indigent people, or to maintain his cause by their property. The thanks indeed, in this case, are due to the Lord, who sends the provision by such instruments: but we should pray, that as he has counteracted their natural disposition in one instance, he would be pleased also to change them by his renewing grace.

V. 8—16.

The Lord doth not generally provide long together for his people in the same way, or by the same means, lest they should rest in them, and expect help from them: but he permits one resource to fail; and when he hath left them nothing but his own promise to trust to, he unexpectedly opens another; that they may admire the manifold riches of his wisdom, as well as adore his power, truth, and love. Frequently he raises supplies from those who themselves need relief: "the abundance of "their joy, and their deep poverty, abound unto the riches "of their liberality;" (2 *Cor.* viii. 2:) and he supplies their wants, whilst they are encouraged to communicate of their pittance to others still more destitute. Indeed our faith must be proved by various trials in providence, as well as by our obedience to the commandments of God; and it must also grow strong by exercise; but when it is genuine, it worketh by love of him and of his people: and the desire of doing good to others for his sake, united to a firm expectation that his promises will be performed, produces obedience even to hard commands, notwithstanding all the reluctancy and objections of our distrustful selfish hearts.—They who come unto God and walk with him, must simply trust him, nay, venture their lives and souls upon his word, and at his command renounce every present interest, in expectation of future and more enduring advantages. This genuine faith induces and enables men to do, while unbelief dislikes the security, holds fast things present, and for the perishing pleasures and interests of this world, foregoes the blessings of eternal salvation.—But none can be losers in the event by giving up secular advantages at the Lord's command: and what is expended upon his people for his sake, shall be recompensed as if given to himself: so that the self-denial and liberality of faith, are the best means of excluding the fear of future want, of providing for our families, and of placing out our substance at the highest interest, and upon the most unexceptionable security. In these funds the poor may obtain property, as well as the rich: for a morsel of bread, or a cup of water, will go as far, when it is all we can give, as thousands of gold and silver when they can be spared. (2 *Cor.* viii. 12.)

V. 17—24.

Neither faith nor obedience, however exemplary, can exclude afflictions and death: and under severe and unexpected trials it is hard to avoid impatience, and to exercise unshaken confidence and unreserved submission. But the Lord bears with our infirmities and compassionates our sorrows; and we should pity and readily help each other, thus baring one another's burdens, according to the example and command of Christ: and though we cannot work miracles for the relief of the afflicted, we may afford much assistance to them; and in all cases we may pray in faith, that the Lord would sanctify and make up every loss, by the influences and consolations of his Spirit.—The Lord by afflictions calls our sins to remembrance; and this should quiet our spirits, and lead us to self-examination and repentance, that we may obtain forgiveness from him; and thus all shall issue in our increase of faith, assurance of hope, and joyful expectation of every promised good.—Thus when Jesus comes to communicate his blessings, the convinced trembling sinner often mistakes the meaning of those humbling lessons that he teaches, and those trials which he employs; he is ready to suspect, that he means to bring his sins to remembrance, and to slay all his hopes; and is tempted to say, "what have I to do with thee?" But the loving Saviour

shew thyself unto Ahab; and [d] I will send rain upon the earth.

2 And Elijah [e] went to shew himself unto Ahab: and *there was* [f] a sore famine in Samaria.

3 And Ahab called * Obadiah, which *was* † the governor of *his* house: (now Obadiah [g] feared the LORD greatly;

4 For it was *so*, when ‡ Jezebel [h] cut off the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty [i] in a cave, and [k] fed them with [l] bread and water;)

5 And Ahab said unto Obadiah, Go into the land, unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks; [m] peradventure we may find grass to save the horses and mules alive, that ‖ we lose not all the beasts.

6 So they divided the land between them, to pass throughout it: [n] Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another way by himself.

7 And as Obadiah [o] was in the way, behold, Elijah met him: and [p] he knew him, and [q] fell on his face, and said, *Art* thou that [r] my lord Elijah?

8 And he answered him, I *am:* go, tell [s] thy lord, Behold, Elijah *is here.*

9 And he said, [t] What have I sinned, that thou wouldst deliver thy servant into the hand of Ahab, to slay me?

d Lev. xxvi. 4. Deu. xxviii 12 Ps lxv. 9—13 Is. v. 6. Jer. x 13. xiv. 22. Joel ii. 23. Am. iv. 7.
e Ps. xxvii 1. lvi. 4. Prov. xxviii. 1. Is. li. 12 Heb. xiii 5, 6
f Lev xxvi. 26. Deu xxviii. 23, 24 2 Kings vi. 25. Jer xiv. 2—6. 18. Joel i. 15—20.
* Heb. *Obadiahu.*
† Heb. *over* his *house.* Gen. xxiv 2. 10. xxxix. 4, 5. 9. xli 40.
g 12. Gen. xxii. 12. xlii. 18. 2 Kings iv. 1. Neh. v. 15 vii. 2. Prov xiv. 26, 27. Mal. iii. 16 Matt. x. 28. Acts x. 2. 35.
‡ *Izebel.*
h Neh ix. 26. Matt. xx. 35 Rev. xvii. 4—6
i Heb. xi. 38.——k 13. Is xxxiii. 16. Matt. x. 40—42. xxv. 35. 40.——l xiii. 18.
m Ps. civ. 14. Jer xiv. 5, 6, Joel i. 18. ii. 22. Hab. iii. 17. Rom. viii. 20—32.
‖ Heb. *we cut not off* ourselves *from the beasts.*
n Jer. xiv. 3.
o xi. 29.
p 2 Kings i. 8. Matt. iii. 4. xi. 8.
q Gen. xviii. 2. 1. 18. 1 Sam. xx. 41. 2 Sam. xix. 18. Is. lx. 14.
r Gen. xviii. 12. xliv. 16. 20. 33. Num xii. 11.
s 3. Rom. xiii. 7. 1 Pet. ii. 17, 18.
t 12. xvii. 18. Ex. v. 21.

pities and bears with such trembling souls: and when he hath turned their mourning into joy, by reviving their hopes and forgiving their sins: then they admire his love and power, and know assuredly that his word is truth; and expect every future good in reliance on his promise, and obedience to his holy will.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVIII. V. 1. *The third year.* That is, *in the third year of Elijah's abode at Zarephath.* For he seems to have continued there above two years; which, added to a year at the brook Cherith, completed three years and a half, which was the time the drought lasted. Some, however, think he remained just two years at Zarephath; and that the six months preceded his retiring to the brook Cherith.—He seems to have been little noticed at Zarephath, notwithstanding the miracles he had wrought.

V. 2. Though Elijah could not but lament the miseries of Israel, he did not leave his retirement till the Lord ordered him to go to Ahab, previously to his sending 'rain upon the land:' as it should be rendered; for the land of Israel was especially intended.—The extremity of the famine rendered it the more dangerous for him to show himself to that enraged tyrant.

V. 3. Obadiah signifies *The servant of the Lord.* He was so faithful and useful a servant to Ahab, that even Jezebel's instigation did not induce him to dismiss or injure him: and he was, it seems, willing to retain his place, though perilous and difficult, while he could with a safe conscience; as he might do some good, and prevent some evil, by continuing in it: and though he witnessed abominable idolatries and iniquities, we may be sure that he was not required to bow his knee unto Baal. "He feared the "LORD greatly." Obadiah, at a distance from religious ordinances, and surrounded by bad examples and strong temptations, was eminently pious and devoted to God! (*Note, Gen.* xxii. 12.)

V. 4. Bad as Ahab was, he does not seem to have directly persecuted, except as instigated by Jezebel, until she had long trained him up to it.—After the institution of the worship of the golden calves, the priests and Levites, and pious Israelites, had generally left their possessions, and gone up to the tribe of Judah, and united with it, (2 *Chron.* xi. 13—16:) but the Lord had mercifully raised up prophets, who promoted true religion throughout the land. It is probable, that they were brought up in the schools of the prophets, first instituted by Samuel, which still remained, and were made very serviceable by the blessing of God upon them. These prophets did not statedly offer sacrifices; nor did they require the people to go up to Jerusalem to keep the solemn feasts: but they taught them the essentials of true religion, either in private houses, or in such assemblies as were afterwards called synagogues. Thus they worshipped the God of Israel *towards*, though not *at* the temple and Jerusalem: and there seems to have been considerable numbers of believers dispersed through the tribes. Against these prophets, who were the chief opposers of idolatry, (and doubtless against the seminaries where they were educated,) Jezebel's rage was directed, and she cut off many of them: but Obadiah found means to conceal and preserve a hundred persons, through the persecution, supporting them in their concealment at his own expense. And though his conduct was no secret, he was still protected and employed by Ahab!

V. 5. *Horses,* &c. Ahab seems to have been more anxious about the animals which ministered to his luxury, than about those which were more immediately necessary to his poor subjects, as sheep, goats, and oxen. That the king in person should go upon such a business, could only be the effect of the extremity of the famine. Probably most of the cattle, and many of the people had perished: yet no mention was made of returning to the Lord with repentance, fasting, and prayer! Had God never sent to them, it seems they would never have applied to him to terminate the calamity, whatever extremities they had endured: but he had a remnant, for whose sake he was pleased to return to them in mercy: and the glory of his name required that he should not yet give up Israel to utter destruction.

V. 7. Elijah was a poor man, and greatly hated in Ahab's court, in which Obadiah held considerable preferment: yet Obadiah, by word and deed, testified the greatest reverence for him; as a man of God, and a person of eminent sanctity!

10 [u] *As* the LORD thy God liveth, there is [x] no nation or kingdom, whither my lord hath not sent to seek thee: and when they said, *He is* not *there;* he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that [y] they found thee not.

11 And now thou sayest, [z] Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah *is here!*

12 And it shall come to pass, *as soon as* I am gone from thee, that [a] the Spirit of the LORD shall carry thee whither I know not; and *so* when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot find thee, [b] he shall slay me: but I thy servant fear the LORD [c] from my youth.

13 Was it not told my lord [d] what I did when Jezebel slew the prophets of the LORD, how I hid an hundred men of the LORD's prophets by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water?

14 And now thou sayest Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah *is here:* and he shall slay me.

u 15 i. 29. ii. 24. xvii. 1. 12. 1 Sam. xxix. 6.
x Ps. x. 2. Jer. xxvi. 20—23.
y xvii. 5. 9. Ps. vii. 7, 8. xxxi. 20. xci. 1 Jer. xxxvi. 26. John viii. 59.
z 9.
a 2 Kings ii. 11. 16. Ez. iii. 12—14. Matt. iv. 1. Acts viii. 39.
b 1 Sam xxii. 11—19. Dan. ii. 5—13. Matt. ii. 16. Acts xii. 19.
c 1 Sam ii. 18. 26. iii. 19, 20. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 3 Luke i. 15. 2 Tim. iii. 15.
d 4. Gen. xx. 4, 5. Ps. xviii. 21—24. Acts xx. 34. 1 Thes. ii. 9, 10.

15 And Elijah said, [e] *As* the LORD [f] of hosts liveth, [g] before whom I stand, I will surely shew myself unto him to-day.

16 So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him: and Ahab went to meet Elijah.

17 ¶ And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, *Art* thou he that [h] troubleth Israel?

18 And he answered, [i] I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, [k] in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim.

19 Now therefore send, *and* gather to me all Israel unto [l] mount Carmel, and [m] the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the [n] prophets of the groves four hundred, which [o] eat at Jezebel's table.

20 So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel.

e 10. Heb vi. 16. 17.
f Gen. ii. 1. Deu iv. 19 Ps xxiv. 9, 10 ciii. 21 cxlviii. 2. Is. vi. 3. Jer. viii. 2. Luke ii. 13, 14.
g xvii. 1. Deut i. 38 Luke i 19
h xxi 20. Josh. vii 25 Jer. xxvi 8, 9. xxxviii. 4 Am. vii. 10. Acts xvi. 20. xxii. 6. xxiv. 5.
i Ez. iii 8. Matt. xiv. 4. Acts xxiv 13. 20.
k 2 Chr. xv. 2. Prov. xi. 10. xiii. 21. Is. iii. 11. Jer ii. 19. Rom. ii 8, 9.
l Josh xix 26.
m 2 Pet. ii. 1. Rev. xix. 20.
n xv. 13. xvi. 33. 2 Kings xiii. 6.
o xix. 1, 2 2 Kings ix. 22. Rev. ii. 20.

V. 10. *No nation*, &c. That is, in the neighbourhood, amongst Ahab's dependents and allies. He was so earnest to discover Elijah, that he caused the rulers of those countries to swear that they did not conceal him, and perhaps that they would deliver him up if they found him: yet Elijah lived part of the time in Ahab's kingdom, and the rest in the country of Zidon, whence Jezebel came! As Ahab offered no violence to the prophet when he met him, it has been thought that he did not seek him from a vindictive motive, but in expectation that he would terminate the judgment which he had denounced: as if the prophet could do it without the Lord, to whom no application was made. However, it is probable that resentment and enmity greatly influenced Ahab; and that Jezebel intended to have cut off Elijah also if he could have been found, at least unless he consented to remove the famine. But Ahab was overawed by his unexpected appearance and intrepidity, and did not dare to proceed against him.

V. 12—16. Obadiah in Ahab's family, had from his youth been a worshipper of God! He introduced the mention of his good services, not in ostentation, but as an evidence of his sincerity. He well knew how exceedingly Ahab would be offended, if he thought himself imposed upon, in a matter that he had so much at heart; and perhaps he concluded he would be enraged, that he had not attempted to apprehend the prophet, when he had the opportunity: he could not suppose that Elijah intended to venture into the presence of his indignant enemy, and he was persuaded, that the Spirit of the Lord could readily convey him away, and again conceal him: and therefore he desired to be excused from so perilous a service. But when the prophet solemnly assured him that he did not mean to elude Ahab, but to show himself unto him, he willingly went to inform him.

V. 17. Elijah was the grand opposer of Ahab's scheme for bringing Israel to unite in the worship of Baal, and so making *a quiet settlement of the religious concerns of the nation:* and in this sense he perhaps deemed him a *troubler of Israel.* But it is not easy to determine certainly what his sentiments were concerning the drought, which came at Elijah's word. If he supposed that it was caused and continued by the prophet's power, and could be removed at his will; and that therefore he troubled Israel in not removing it; he must have been disposed to credit any absurdity, rather than believe that JEHOVAH was the author of it, and that it could only be removed by his power; or be convinced, that it was his interest and duty to return to the worship of God which he had forsaken.

V. 18—20. *Baalim* is the plural number; for the Israelites worshipped many false gods. The boldness and authority with which the prophet charged Ahab as the troubler of Israel, intimidated the king, who had not his prompter with him. He was afraid perhaps that Elijah would execute judgment upon him at once, if he further offended him: he found the prophet would not be hectored into compliances, and he was willing to be upon terms with him, in hopes that he would procure the removal of the famine: and thus he was induced to consent to the demand which he made. It seems that an altar had been built upon mount Carmel, and sacrifices offered on it to JEHOVAH; (v. 30:) but the worship of Baal had supplanted even this irregular service of the one living and true God. There were no less than four hundred and fifty *prophets* or *priests* of Baal, and four hundred of the *groves*, who are supposed to have been devoted to a Zidonian goddess. These four hundred especially, were entertained at Jezebel's table, as a kind of domestic chaplains; though no doubt they too were at times sent at her expense into every part

21 And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, [p] How long halt ye between two * opinions? [q] if the LORD *be* God, follow him: but if Baal, *then* follow him. And the people [r] answered him not a word.

22 Then said Elijah unto the people, I, *even* [s] I only, remain a prophet of the LORD; but [t] Baal's prophets *are* four hundred and fifty men.

23 Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay *it* on wood, and put no fire *under:* and I will dress the other bullock, and lay *it* on wood, and put no fire *under:*

24 And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD: and the God that [u] answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, † It is well spoken.

25 And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress *it* first; for ye *are* many; and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire *under.*

26 And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed *it,* and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal ‡ hear us. But *there was* [x] no voice, nor any that § answered. And they ‖ leaped upon the altar which was made.

27 And it came to pass at noon, that [y] Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry * aloud; for he *is* a god; either † he is talking, or he ‡ is pursuing, or he is in a journey, *or* peradventure he sleepeth, and [z] must be awaked.

28 And they cried aloud, and [a] cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till § the blood gushed out upon them.

29 And it came to pass, when midday was past, and they [b] prophesied until the *time* of the ‖ offering of the *evening*-sacrifice, that *there was* [c] neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any * that regarded.

30 And Elijah said unto all the people,

p 2 Kings xvii. 41. Matt. vi. 24. 2 Cor. vi. 14—16. Rev. iii. 15, 16.
* Or, *thoughts.*
q Josh. xxiv. 15.
r Gen. xxiv. 50. xliv. 16. Job xl. 4, 5. Matt. xxii. 12. Rom. iii. 19. vi. 21.
s xix. 10. 14. xxii. 6, 7. Rom. xi. 3.
t 19, 20. Mat. vii. 13—15. 2 Tim. iv. 3, 4. 2 Pet. ii. 1—3.
u 38. Lev. ix. 24. Judg. vi. 21. 1 Chr. xxi. 26. 2 Chr. vii. 1.
† Heb. *The word is good.* 2 Sam. xiv. 19. Is. xxxix. 8.
‡ Or, *answer.*
x Ps. cxv. 4—7. Jer. x. 5. Dan. v. 23. Hab. ii. 18. 1 Cor. viii. 4. x. 19, 20. xii. 2.
§ Or, *heard.*
‖ Or, *leaped up and down at the altar.* Zeph. i. 9.
y xxii. 15. 2 Chr. xxv. 8. Ec. xi. 9. Is. viii. 9, 10. xlv. 15—17. Ez. xx. 39. Am. iv. 4, 5. Mat. xxvi. 45.
* Heb. *with a great voice.*
† Or, *he meditateth.*
‡ Heb. *hath a pursuit.*
z Ps. xliv. 23. cxxi. 4. Is. li. 9.
a Lev. xix. 28. Deut. xiv. 1. Mic. vi. 7. Mark v. 7. ix. 22.
§ Heb. *they poured out blood upon them.*
b xxii. 10. 12. 1 Sam. xviii. 10. Jer. xxviii. 6—9. Acts xvi. 16, 17. 1 Cor. xi. 4, 5.
‖ Heb. *ascending.* 36.
c 26. Ps. cxxxv. 15—18. Gal. iv. 8. 2 Tim. iii. 8, 9.
* Heb. *attention.*

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of the land to promote idolatry among the inhabitants. Elijah, however, desired to confront the whole company before all the people of Israel, and to bring the matter in dispute to a fair decision. But when JEHOVAH had called for drought, and neither Baal nor their other idols could send rain, the matter was already sufficiently plain to every reasonable person.

V. 21. *Halt ye,* &c.? The metaphor is taken from the unequal walk of a lame person. Many of the people wavered in judgment, and varied in practice; sometimes worshipping JEHOVAH, at others worshipping Baal, as their convictions or interests prevailed: or they endeavoured to form a coalition between them, of which Baal's prophets would probably admit; but JEHOVAH would never consent to it. Elijah therefore called upon them to determine, which of the two was the self-existent, and eternal God, the Creator, Governor, and Judge of the world; and to follow him alone, whether JEHOVAH or Baal were he, as there could be no more than one supreme God. To this the people answered nothing; being unwilling to confess their guilt and offend the king; and not being able to object to what he said: or being ashamed of their conduct.

V. 22. Elijah was the only prophet of JEHOVAH, who stood forth at this time; the prophets whom Obadiah preserved, and the sons of the prophets of whom we afterwards read, being driven into concealment.

V. 23. Elijah conceded the preference in every external circumstance to the prophets of Baal, that the victory might be the more conspicuous to the glory of God alone: for doubtless he acted by immediate direction from heaven.

V. 24. Thus Baal's prophets were constrained to comply with Elijah's proposal; or to allow Baal to be a worthless impotent idol, and JEHOVAH the only true God. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 26. *O Baal,* &c. The continued cry of four hundred and fifty priests for several hours, with an unmeaning repetition of the words, "O Baal, hear us," with great vehemence, must have formed a most disagreeable vociferation; whilst, like frantic men, they leaped upon, or round, their altar and sacrifice, according to the worship which they were accustomed to perform!—Some think that the sun was worshipped under the name Baal; and that this encouraged his prophets to expect an answer by fire.

V. 27—29. Elijah ironically observed, that Baal no doubt had a vast number of engagements, and therefore was taken up, or at a distance, or asleep; and therefore his votaries would not speed without greater earnestness and louder cries! The *absurdity* of the idolatry was worthy of being exposed to ridicule and contempt before the people, though the effects of it were very melancholy. It seems, however, that they thought Elijah in earnest in his counsel, and determined to follow it: and, still more to please the demon, they cut their flesh, and mingled their own blood with that of their sacrifice, according to the frequent custom of idolators! But all their efforts proved in vain: though they continued three hours more to *prophesy,* after their manner; and to show the tokens of being under a supernatural influence; and, as many suppose, to sing hymns to Baal along with their absurd and frantic devotions:—No doubt Satan could and would have sent fire, if he might: but he can do nothing more than what is *permitted* him.

Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And [d] he repaired the altar of the LORD *that was* broken down.

31 And Elijah took [e] twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the *LORD* came, [f] saying, Israel shall be thy name:

32 And with the stones [g] he built an altar [h] in the name of the LORD: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed.

33 And [i] he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid *him* on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and [k] pour *it* on the burnt-sacrifice, and on the wood.

34 And he said, [l] Do *it* the second time. And they did *it* the second time. And he said, Do *it* the third time. And they did *it* the third time.

35 And the water * ran round about the altar, and he filled [m] the trench also with water.

36 And it came to pass [n] at *the time of* the offering of the *evening* sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, [o] LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, [p] let it be known this day that thou *art* God in Israel, and [q] *that* I *am* thy servant, and *that* I have done all these things at thy word.

37 [r] Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou *art* the LORD God, and *that* [s] thou hast turned their heart back again.

38 Then [t] the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt-sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that *was* in the trench.

39 And when all the people saw *it*, [u] they fell on their faces: and they said, [x] The LORD, he *is* the God; the LORD, he *is* the God.

40 And Elijah said unto them, † Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook [y] Kishon, and [z] slew them there.

41 ¶ And Elijah said unto Ahab, [a] Get thee up, eat and drink; for *there is* a ‡ sound of abundance of rain.

d xix. 10 14. 2 Chr. xxix. 3. 18, 19.
e Ex. xxiv. 4. Josh. iv. 20. Ezra vi 17. Eph. ii. 20 iv. 4—6. Rev. vii. 4—8. xxi. 12.
f Gen. xxxii. 28. xxxiii 20 xxxv. 10. 2 Kings xvii. 34. Is. xlviii. 1.
g Judg. xxi. 4. 1 Sam. vii. 9. 17.
h 1 Cor. x. 31. Col. iii. 17.
i Gen xxii. 9. Lev. i. 6—8.
k Judg. vi. 20.
l 2 Cor. iv. 2. viii. 21.
* Heb. *went.*
m 32. 38.
n Ex. xxix 39—41. Ezra ix. 5. Dan. ix. 21. Acts x 30.
o Gen. xxvi. 24. xxxi. 53. xlvi. 3. Ex. iii. 6. 15, 16. 1 Chr. xxix. 13. 2 Chr. xx 6, 7.
p viii. 43. 1 Sam. xvii. 46, 47. 2 Kings i. 3. 6. v. 15. xix. 19. Ps. lxvii. 1, 2. lxxxiii. 18.
q xxii. 29. Num. xvi. 28—30.
r 24 29. 36. Gen. xxxii. 24. 26. 28. 2 Chr. xiv. 11. xxxii. 19, 20. Is. xxxvii. 17—20. Dan. ix. 17—19. Luke xi. 8. Jam. v. 16, 17.
s Jer. xxxi. 18, 19. Ez. xxxvi. 25—27. Mal. iv. 5, 6. Luke i. 16, 17.
t Lev. ix. 24. 1 Chr. xxi. 26. 2 Chr. vii. 1.
u Judg. xiii. 20. 1 Chr. xxi. 16. 2 Chr. vii. 3.
x 24. John v. 35. Acts ii. 12. 37. iv. 16.
† Or, *Apprehend.* 2 Kings x. 25.
y Judg. v. 21.
z Deut. xiii. 5. xviii. 20. Jer. xlviii. 10. Rev. xix. 20. xx 10.
a Ec. ix. 7. Acts xxvii. 34.
‡ Or, *a sound of a noise of rain.* 1. xvii. 1. 2 Sam. xxi. 14.

V. 30. The prophet gave his competitors the opportunity of making fair trial, what Baal could do: but when they had prophesied till almost evening, it was time that he should proceed to show them what JEHOVAH could and would do; and therefore he interrupted them by addressing the people. (*Note*, 18—20.)

V. 31. Elijah meant to show, that the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, notwithstanding their divisions and apostacies, were yet in some sense the people of JEHOVAH, and formed one Church and nation; and that they ought to unite in worshipping the God of their fathers, and in opposing all idolatry. The reference to the name of *Israel* given to Jacob, when he wrestled with God and prevailed, (28.) was suited to shame the people from their idol-worship, as well as to encourage Elijah's own heart in prayer. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 33—35. By pouring this quantity of water upon the altar and the sacrifice, Elijah excluded all possibility of suspicion that any fire had been concealed, and thus rendered the divine interposition more illustrious and convincing.

V. 36, 37. The prophet, by the time chosen for his sacrifice and prayer, avowed his communion with the worshippers of God at his temple in Jerusalem: and he briefly, but most fervently, besought JEHOVAH on this important occasion to interpose; that the people might be convinced that he was indeed the true God, the God of their fathers, and of their nation; and also that all which he, his servant, had done, concerning the famine especially, had been in obedience to God's command. This would be for his glory, and for the profit of the people; and that they might henceforth know and worship him, as that God who had thus turned their hearts back from idolatry unto himself, that they might give him the praise.

V. 38, 39. It is probable that this fire appeared as lightning; though no cloud could be seen: or it was called "the fire of God," from its extraordinary force, and its unparalleled effects; and especially as sent to plead the cause of God, and to expose his worthless rival to contempt.—It would be more emphatical to retain the original word JEHOVAH in the translation of this chapter. The people were convinced, for the time, that JEHOVAH was the only true God; and they prostrated themselves before him with terror, mixed with reverence. It has been observed, that the fire on this occasion consumed the altar as well as the sacrifice; because oblations were not there statedly to be offered: but at the dedication of the temple, the sacrifice was consumed, and the altar continued.

V. 40. Baal's prophets, as idolaters, and teachers of idolatry, were condemned by the prophet to die, according to the express injunctions of the Mosaic law. (*Marg. Ref.*) The people, under the present impression, readily concurred with Elijah, and Ahab allowed them to execute the condemned criminals. "The four hundred prophets of the "groves," were not present on this occasion. Some learned men think, that they were Zidonians, not Israelites; and therefore their attendance had not been insisted on, or they had refused to come.

42 So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And [b] Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and [c] he cast himself down upon the earth, and [d] put his face between his knees,

43 And said to his servant, [e] Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, *There is* nothing. And he said, [f] Go again seven times.

44 And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth [g] a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, * Prepare *thy chariot*, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not.

[b] Matt. xiv. 23. Acts x. 9.
[c] 2 Sam. vii. 27. xii. 16. Ps. xci. 15. Dan. ix. 3. Mark xiv. 35. Jam. v. 16, 17.
[d] xix. 13. Is. xxxviii. 2. Dan. ix. 7.
[e] Ps. v. 3. Luke xviii. 1.
[f] Gen. xxxii. 26. Hab. ii. 3. Luke xviii. 7. Eph. vi. 18. Heb. x. 36, 37.
[g] Job viii. 7. Zech. iv. 10.
* Heb. *Tie*, or, *bind*.

V. 41. (xvii. 1.) The idolatry of Israel having received such a check, and its chief abettors having suffered condign punishment; the prophet intimated to Ahab the approach of deliverance from that awful calamity, under which the land had so long groaned; and encouraged him to go and cheerfully refresh himself.

V. 42. In a posture of most profound reverence the prophet sought of God, by earnest prayer, the blessing of rain upon the parched land: and he continued his supplications in the same place and posture, till he had sensible evidence that his desire was granted.

V. 43, 44. As Elijah seems to have had no servant before he went to Zarephath, some have thought, that the widow's son, whom he had raised to life, had accompanied him. But, it appears from the narrative, that he was not old enough: and it is more likely, that a young person, from the schools of the prophets, attended Elijah on this occasion.—The prophet spake as one assured that his prayer would immediately be answered; and like Jacob of old, he seemed determined not to let the Lord go until he had blessed him. The servant was therefore to go seven times; and he saw no appearance till the last, when a very small cloud arose, which the prophet knew to be the forerunner of the desired blessing: and he sent word to Ahab accordingly.—We may be sure that the rain was equal to the necessities of the land; and it formed another demonstration that JEHOVAH was the only true God.

V. 46. *And he*, &c. The Lord directed and strengthened Elijah, though old, and weak with fasting and fatigue, to show this respect to Ahab; and to run as a footman before his chariot; in order to convince him, that his severe reproofs were consistent with affection and loyalty in secular matters: nor would the prophet fear going to Jezreel, where Jezebel was; though he did not appear in her presence.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—16.

The severest judgments will not of themselves humble or change the hearts of sinners; which often grow more hardened under them, even to desperation! The *imagined* fire of purgatory, therefore, or the *real* torments of hell, possess no purifying efficacy; and the sinner under the anguish of his sufferings will continually increase in wickedness, and accumulate wrath to all eternity. For nothing, except the atoning blood of Christ, can expiate the guilt; nothing, except the sanctifying Spirit of God, can purge away the pollution of sin: and all other expedients are satanical delusions, to keep men from this one fountain, which God hath opened for sin and for uncleanness.—The enmity of man's heart against God, expresses itself by persecuting those who bear his image and seek his glory: yet He protects them, until their testimony be finished.—It has been the common lot of his prophets and faithful servants, to be lodged in caves or dens of the earth, and fed with bread and water, (if that could be procured,) whilst the ministers of Satan have rioted in luxury. Yet he has had a remnant in all places, where any part of his word has been known, in every age of the world: and notwithstanding errors and irregularities, that faith, fear, and love of his name, which are the fruits of his Holy Spirit, are accepted through the Redeemer. And the remnant in Israel, when that nation had generally apostatized to idolatry, encourages the hope, that there are true believers, in those parts of the Christian church, where the ostensible body is most deformed by superstition and idolatry.—If men of eminent piety were found in Ahab's family, and in Nero's palace, we may conclude that the Spirit of God will keep alive the holy flame that he hath kindled, in any situation to which a believer can be called. We should therefore be very cautious about leaving, or persuading others to leave, the posts assigned in Providence, however perilous or ensnaring; whilst they can be maintained without sinful compliances, and whilst they afford opportunities of doing good.—They who begin early to serve God, are likely to be eminent in their generation: and they that "fear the "LORD greatly," will devise various methods of usefulness; for they will not shrink from trouble, danger, or expense, in promoting his cause, or protecting and relieving his oppressed and afflicted servants. Providence indeed hath often remarkably preserved those who have ventured their lives freely in his cause, in times of triumphant wickedness; yet singular activity, prudence, and fidelity in secular concerns, frequently prove the means of their security.—Many are careful to prevent the effects of sin upon their temporal interests, whilst they continue by their crimes to augment the fierce wrath of God, which is the cause of all their miseries: and ungodly rich men are commonly more careful about their own self-indulgence, than the preservation of the multitude of the poor from starving. But whilst sinners remain on earth, the Lord will afford them some respite; that his judgments and mercies may concur either to lead them to repentance, or to display his justice in their condemnation: and national calamities are often retarded or terminated, for the sake of a despised remnant of believers; for if persecutors could extirpate them all, they would open the floodgates of divine vengeance upon themselves.—The servants of God may, in his cause, boldly face their most powerful enraged enemies; for they *dare not* touch them when he intimidates their hearts, and *cannot* when he holds their hands: and such as fear the Lord, however exalted in life, will greatly respect his faithful servants, though poor and hated by all around them.—They whose situations have

45 And it came to pass in the meanwhile, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and [h] there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to [i] Jezreel.

h 39. Num. xxv. 8.
i Josh. xix 18.

46 And [k] the hand of the LORD was on Elijah; and [l] he girded up his loins, and [m] ran before Ahab * to the entrance of Jezreel.

k 2 Kings iii. 15. Is. viii. 11. Ez. i. 3. iii. 14.
l 2 Kings iv. 20. ix. 1. Job xxxviii. 3. Jer. i. 17. 1 Pet. i. 13.
m Matt. xxii 21. 2 Pet. ii. 17. —— * Heb. *till thou come to Jezreel.*

long required them to be cautious of giving unnecessary umbrage, are apt to grow too timid, and to apprehend consequences which are not likely to follow: if, however, they be sincere, they will surmount their fears, and join with their more courageous brethren in doing the will of God.

V. 17—29.

The ministers of the Lord have generally been accounted the *troublers* of nations, nay, even of the Church, by ungodly rulers: because they oppose prevailing abuses though sanctioned by authority, and denounce the wrath of God against impenitent sinners. Nay, they have sometimes been treated as the authors of those calamities which have come upon men for persecuting them, and neglecting their warnings! But they are able to refute, and even to retort such charges, when urged to their faces; and to show that they who forsake the commandments of the Lord, and teach others to do so, are the real troublers of the world, of the Church, and of themselves and their own families: and when this is done with firmness and solemnity, as by the authority of God, it will often cause the proudest sinner to tremble; to desist from present purposes of violence, and comply with reasonable requirements. The condescension of the Lord in repeatedly proving the most evident truths, concerning his being, perfections, the divine authority of his word, and the nature of his worship, is as wonderful as the perverseness of men which requires such repeated demonstrations: but the fundamentals of religion stand on such manifest grounds of reason and sound argument, that they need fear no fair investigation. It is of vast importance, that we come to a decision on such subjects: for whilst we waver respecting them, we must be unstable in all our ways. But we should be equally decided in our practice, else our creed, however orthodox, will be received only by a *dead faith*. If the LORD be God, let us worship him, choose him for our Portion, and devote ourselves to his service: if Jesus be the divine and only Saviour, let us come to him, cleave to him, and depend on him alone for every thing; if the Bible be the word of God, let us reverence, study, and receive, the whole of it, and submit our understanding to its teaching: and let us no longer endeavour to serve God and Mammon; to reconcile religion and secret sin; or to believe revelation, to accept of salvation, or to give up ourselves to the service of our Redeemer, by halves, or with reserves. This, Satan will be content with, but the LORD abhors it. The cause of truth is not to be determined by vote, authority, or wealth: one poor prophet or minister for JEHOVAH; hundreds and thousands for Baal, even of those in reputation and favour, and who have possessed wealth and learning, has been a common cause! But God will plead his own cause, and that of his witnesses, which will countervail all disadvantages; and his truth is great, and will prevail. In confidence of his support, we may concede every external precedency to our opponents, and boldly stand forth in his cause, without apprehension about the event. It however is right to state every thing in so equitable, plain, and convincing a manner, that all may be constrained to say, "It is well spoken," and that the mouths of gain-sayers may be stopped. The absurdities of superstition and false religion might excite our ridicule, did not their awful effects demand our tears. The example of Elijah, in this instance, must be imitated with great caution, and only on very peculiar occasions. The service of Satan, whether in the observations of idolatrous worship, or in the practice of immoralities, whilst it promises indulgence to men's lusts, is cruel to their persons, and tends to torment them even in this world.

V. 30—46.

All religious diligence, *which runs counter to the word of God*, however self-denying or plausible, is unavailing: "for he, who gathereth not with the Saviour, scattereth." Yet, when it is impracticable for us *exactly* to come up to the scriptural standard; or when we cannot have personal communion with God's people in his more solemn ordinances; we must come as near as we can to the one, and show our fellowship with the other by such expressions as we are capable of: and the Lord will graciously accept our upright intentions, and dispense with the unavoidable irregularity.—Hypocrites expect to be heard for their much, or their loud, speaking; but a few words uttered in assured faith, and with fervent affections of zeal for the glory of God, and love to the souls of men, or thirstings after the Lord's image and favour, often form "the effectual fervent "prayer of the righteous man, which availeth much." Such principles should dictate all our prayers, and we should utterly disregard even our own reputation in the judgment of men; except when it is connected with the credit of religion, the conviction of sinners that our cause is that of God, and the establishment of believers in the faith: but for these purposes we should endeavour to obviate every occasion of suspicion, and to be careful that our good be not evil spoken of. The awful display of the divine justice and holiness may terrify and convince the sinner; extort many confessions, and dispose him to external acts of obedience, whilst the impression lasts: but the view of these attributes harmonizing with mercy, love, and truth, in Christ Jesus, is needful to draw the soul into self-abasement, affiance, and love. Yet the Spirit of God employs both methods in effecting the conversion of sinners, in order and measure, as he pleases: and in our endeavours for that same blessed purpose, it is generally adviseable to inform the understanding and convince the judgment first, and then to address the heart and conscience. When sinners are deeply impressed with divine truth, they should be earnestly exhorted without delay to set about those self-denying duties to which the Saviour calls his disciples.—Under the Christian dispensation, we must not destroy

CHAP. XIX.

Ahab shows Jezebel, that Elijah had slain Baal's prophets; she threatens Elijah's life; and he flees into the wilderness; he is weary of living: but being twice strengthened with food rought by an angel, he fasts forty days, and arrives at Horeb, 1—8. *There God appears to him, preceded by a strong wind, an earthquake, and fire; and, speaking to him in a still small voice, commissions him to anoint Hazael, Jehu, and Elisha,* 9—17. *Elisha is informed that seven thousand worshippers of* JEHOVAH *still remain in Israel,* 18. *Elijah casts his mantle on Elisha, who takes leave of his friends, and follows him,* 19—21.

AND Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal [a] how he had slain all the prophets with the sword.

a xviii. 40.

2 Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, [b] So let the gods do *to me*, and more also, [c] if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by [d] tomorrow about this time.

b ii. 23. xx. 10, 11. Ruth. i. 17. 2 Kings vi. 31.
c Ex. x. 28. xv. 9. 2 Kings xix 10—22. 21. 27, 28. Dan. iii. 15.
d Prov. xxvii. 1. Jam. iv. 14.

3 And when he saw *that*, [e] he arose, and went for his life, and came to [f] Beer-sheba, which *belongeth* to Judah, and left his servant there.

e Gen. xii. 12, 13. Ex. ii. 15. 1 Sam. xxvii. 1. Is. li. 12, 13. Matt. xxvi. 56. 70—74. 2 Cor. xii. 7.
f iv. 25. Gen xxi. 31.

4 But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and [g] sat down under a juniper-tree: and [h] he requested * for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I *am* not better than my fathers.

g xiii. 14. Gen. xxi. 15, 16.
h 3. Num. xi. 15. Job iii. 20—22. Jer. xx. 14—18. Jon. iv. 3. 8.
* Heb. *for his life.*

5 And [i] as he lay and slept under a juniper-tree, behold, then [k] an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise *and* eat.

i Gen. xxviii. 11—15.
k Ps. xxxiv. 7. 10. Heb. i. 14. xiii. 5.

6 And he looked, and, behold, *there* [l] *was* a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his † head. And he

l xvii. 6. Ps. xxxvii. 3. Is. xxxiii. 16. Mat. vi. 32. Mark viii. 2, 3. John xxi. 5. 9.
† Heb. *bolster.*

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men's lives, though they have deceived others to idolatrous worship. When, however, false teachers are removed, silenced, or put to shame, it exceedingly promotes the revival of true religion. And after effectual measures for public reformation have been used, we may hope for the merciful removal of public calamities.—Faith perceives things imperceptible to sense, and anticipates future and distant blessings: it therefore excites fervent prayers, in which reverence, humility, importunity, and perseverance, are requisite, in order to success.—The love of faithful ministers to the persons of sinners should not only be manifest to that God, who in secret hears their affectionate prayers for those whom they most severely reprove; but they should show it by every external expression, and be ready to give honour to whom honour on any account is due; and in their private conduct to become the meanest servants to those whom, speaking in God's name, they rebuke with all authority. And He will strengthen his people for every service, to which his commandments and his providence shall call them.

NOTES.

CHAP. XIX. V. 2. The Lord permitted this wicked woman to be so intoxicated by rage, that instead of sending a messenger to apprehend or kill Elijah, she gave him warning and time to make his escape! Some indeed think, that she durst not venture at once the rage of the people, and the miraculous power that the prophet evidently possessed, by attempting to slay him: but contented herself with threatening him, that he might abscond and occasion her no further interruption; while others suppose, that she had such an opinion of his intrepidity, that she concluded he would certainly wait the event. Yet her absolute language, and the imprecation upon herself if she failed, seem more like the outrageous effusion of passion, than the effect of deliberation and design. Without reflecting that she might not live till the morrow, or not be able to find him or to prevail against him; she sware by her gods that she would put him to death, as if all events were absolutely in her own power!

V. 3, 4. It seems that Elijah fled on the very night after the sacrifice and the fire from heaven, and before he had time to refresh himself from the fatigues of the preceding day. He therefore left his servant at Beer-sheba, as unable to proceed with him through weariness: or perhaps he was unwilling to expose him to further hardship; being, as some think, purposed to end his life in the desolate wilderness, where Israel had wandered forty years.—He had passed through the kingdom of Judah, where doubtless pious Jehoshaphat would have welcomed and protected him! But he seems on this occasion to have been left to himself for his humiliation; and consequently he was seized with unreasonable terror. Instead of venturing all consequences, assured of the protection of the Almighty; and pushing his advantage, by leading the people to destroy the worship of Baal and restore that of JEHOVAH; he fled from his work, and impatiently wished and prayed for death! Thus the people, left without a leader, and intimidated by his example, would probably be too afraid of Jezebel, to reap those decisive advantages from the miracle, and the events recorded in the former chapter, which might have been hoped for.—When Elijah said, "I am no better than my fathers," he seems to have referred to some intimations given him of his translation: but he was willing rather to die than to live in misery, and to behold, without being able to prevent, the wickedness and ruin of his people: yet he would rather die by the hand of the Lord, than by that of Baal's worshippers, lest they should blaspheme that God whose prophet they had slain.

did eat and drink, and laid him down again.

7 And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise, *and* eat; [m] because the journey *is* too great for thee.

8 And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went [n] in the strength of that meat [o] forty days and forty nights unto [p] Horeb the mount of God.

9 And he came thither unto [q] a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the LORD *came* to him, and he said unto him, [r] What doest thou here, Elijah?

10 And he said, I have been [s] very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, [t] thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, *even* [u] I only, am left; and [x] they seek my life, to take it away.

11 And he said, Go forth, and [y] stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, [z] the LORD passed by, and [a] a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; *but* the LORD *was* not in the wind: and after the wind [b] an earthquake; *but* the LORD, *was* not in the earthquake:

12 And after the earthquake [c] a fire; *but* the LORD *was* not in the fire: and after the fire [d] a still small voice.

13 And it was *so*, when Elijah heard *it*, that [e] he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold *there came* a voice unto him, and said, [f] What doest thou here, Elijah?

14 And he said, [g] I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, *even* I only, am left; and they seek my life to take it away.

m Deut. xxxiii. 25. Ps. ciii. 13, 14.
n Dan. i. 15. 2 Cor. xii 9.
o Ex. xxiv. 18. xxxiv. 28. Deu. ix. 9. 18. Matt. iv 2. Luke iv. 2.
p Ex. iii. 1. xix. 18.
q Ex. xxxiii. 21, 22. Jer. ix. 2 Heb. xi. 38.
r 13. Gen iii. 9. xvi 8.
s Ex. xx. 5 xxxiv. 14. Num. xxv. 11. Ps. lxix. 9. cxix. 139. John ii. 17.
t 14. xviii. 4. 30. Hos. v. 11. Mic. vi. 16.
u xviii. 22. Rom. xi. 2, 3.
x 2. xviii. 10 17.
y Ex. xix. 20. xxiv. 12. 18. xxxiv. 2. Matt. xvii. 1—3. 2 Pet. i. 17, 18.
z Ex. xxxiii. 21—23 xxxiv. 6.
a Ex. xix. 16. xx. 18. Job xxxviii. 1. Ps. l. 3 Is. xxx. 30. Ez. i. 4. Nah. i. 3. 6. Heb. xii 18—21. Rev. xx. 11.
b Ps. lxviii. 8. Nah i 5. Matt. xxiv. 7. xxvii. 51—54. xxviii. 2. Heb. xii 26. Rev. xi. 19. xvi 18.
c xviii. 38. Gen. xv. 17. Ex iii. 2. Deut. iv. 11, 12. 33. 2 Kings i. 10. ir 11. Heb. xii 29.
d Ex. xxxiv. 6. Job iv. 16, xxxiii. 7. Zech. iv 6. Acts ii. 36, 37.
e Ex. iii 6. xxxiii. 23 Is. vi. 2. 5.
f 9. Gen. xvi. 8. John xxi. 15—17.
g 10. Is. lxii. 1. 6, 7.

V. 5—8. The Lord intended that Elijah should visit Horeb, where Moses had fasted forty days and nights; that in him the miracle might be repeated: because, as Moses was the lawgiver, so Elijah was in some respects the chief of the prophets. God at first miraculously provided his servant with food; and then supported him without food, or any need or desire of it.—As mount Horeb was but a few days journey from Beer-sheba; the forty days here mentioned seem to include the whole of the time which passed till his return out of the wilderness.

V. 9. *What doest thou*, &c.? Elijah had been secretly guided to mount Horeb, rather than to another place; and probably he sought retirement for meditation and prayer. But this was not at that crisis his proper work; he ought not to have fled from the land of Israel, but there to have persevered in promoting the revival of true religion.

V. 10. The prophet pleaded in his own behalf, that "he had been very jealous for the LORD," having had his glory exceedingly at heart, and having been deeply grieved, and even filled with holy indignation, at Israel's apostacy. This he had long endeavoured to prevent: and he had now fled from his work, not through defect of zeal, but for want of encouragement. The whole nation, he thought, had renounced their covenant with JEHOVAH, and had concurred with their rulers in breaking down his altars which had been erected on the high places; as if they were determined to worship him no more: they had also joined in murdering the prophets; so that he stood alone to stem the torrent, and they were all ready to assist Jezebel in putting him to death also.—But he supposed matters to be worse than they really were; for probably many of the hundred prophets, whom Obadiah had protected, were living, and privately attempting to do good with some success. So that he needlessly discouraged himself: and his mind was so much embittered, that he is said to have made intercession against Israel. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 11—14. There seems to have been, in this manifestation of God to Elijah, an intended reference to that with which Moses was favoured, when the Lord caused his goodness to pass before him; and to the terrific solemnities from mount Sinai, (where Elijah now was,) compared with the mild majesty, in which he communed with Israel from above the mercy-seat. (*Marg. Ref.*) It was *preceded* by a vehement wind rending the mountains and rocks; by an earthquake, still more tremendous; and by a fire, similar perhaps to that which appeared on mount Sinai at the delivery of the law: all these effects were no doubt produced by the ministration of angels. But the Lord made known his more immediate presence, not by these terrors, but by a small still voice: and it is not said, that there was any visible appearance of glory. This intimated that miraculous judgments, and terrifying displays of the Lord's power and indignation; though proper for the destruction or intimidation of his enemies, or to excite attention, were only preparatives for that real good intended for Israel; which must be effected by the energy of his Spirit accompanying the convincing and persuasive instructions of his word. Elijah had perhaps expected to carry all before him, with a high hand, and with continued miracles or judgments: or he had supposed that the desired reformation was to be effected by the sanction of civil authority, or the support of the people at large. Whereas, having gained their attention by the famine, and its gracious removal, in answer to his prayers, by calling for and obtaining fire from heaven to consume the sacrifice, and by the execution of Baal's priests; he ought to have proceeded to instruct them with meekness and gentleness, publicly and from house to house, and to

15 And the LORD said unto him, Go, return on thy way to [h] the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, [i] anoint Hazael *to be* king over Syria;

16 And [k] Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint *to be* king over Israel: and [l] Elisha the son of Shaphat of [m] Abel-meholah shalt thou anoint *to be* prophet in thy room.

17 And it shall come to pass, *that* [n] him that escapeth [o] the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from [p] the sword of Jehu shall [q] Elisha slay.

18 [r] Yet * I have left *me* seven thousand in Israel, all [s] the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and [t] every mouth which hath not kissed him.

19 ¶ So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who *was* ploughing *with* twelve yoke *of oxen* before him, and [u] he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed by him, and cast [x] his mantle upon him.

20 And [y] he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, [z] Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and *then* I will follow thee. And he said unto him, * Go back again: for what have I done to thee?

21 And he returned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen, and slew them, and [a] boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and [b] gave unto the people, and they did eat. Then he arose, and went after Elijah, and [c] ministered unto him.

h Gen. xiv. 15.
i 2 Kings viii. 12, 13. Is. xlv. 1. Jer. i. 10. xxvii. 2, &c.
k 2 Kings ix. 1—3. 6.
l 19—21. Luke iv. 27. *Eliseus.*
m iv. 12. Judg. vii. 22.
n Is. xxiv. 17, 18. Am. ii. 14. v. 19.
o 2 Kings viii. 12. x. 32. xiii. 3.
p 2 Kings ix. 14, &c. x. 6, &c.
q Is. xi. 4. Jer. i. 10. Hos. vi. 5. Rev. xix. 21.
r Is. i. 9. x. 20—22. Rom. xi. 4, 5.
* Or, *I will leave.*
s Ex. xx. 5. Is. xlv. 23. Rom. xiv. 10—12. Phil. ii. 10.
t Job xxxi. 27. Ps. ii. 12. Hos. xiii. 2.
u Ex. iii. 1. Judg. vi. 11. Ps. lxxviii. 70—72. Am. vii. 14. Zech. xiii. 5. Matt. iv. 18—22.
x 2 Kings ii. 8. 13, 14.
y Matt. iv. 20, 22. ix. 9. xix. 27.
z Matt. viii. 21, 22. Luke ix. 61, 62.
* Heb. *Go, return.*
a 2 Sam. xxiv. 22.
b Luke v. 28, 29.
c xviii. 43. Ex. xxiv. 13. Num. xxvii. 18—20. 2 Kings ii. 3. iii. 11. Acts xiii. 5. 2 Tim. iv. 11. Philemon 13.

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have excited others to assist him: and then the Lord would have blessed that still small voice, for the most important purposes, notwithstanding the persecuting rage of Ahab and Jezebel, and the general apostacy of the people. Thus miracles in the first ages of Christianity called men's attention to the Gospel, which was the power of God to salvation to thousands and millions.—Though Elijah showed tokens of humble adoration on this occasion, his repetition of his answer to the Lord's renewed inquiry, "What "doest thou here!" shows that he did not fully understand the emblematic display: and that he was not properly convinced of his unbelief, in fleeing out of the land; or reconciled to going back to his work. He afterwards better understood the Lord's meaning, as appears from his subsequent conduct.

V. 15—17. As the prophet was ordered to go on the way to the wilderness of Damascus, it seems probable that he went directly towards Syria, and meeting with Hazael anointed him; though this is not recorded. Jehu was afterwards anointed by a prophet sent by Elisha; and perhaps Elisha was anointed by Elijah, when called to be his successor. Some, however, think the expression is not always to be taken literally; but merely as an intimation, that God would advance the persons spoken of to the stations assigned, and qualify them for the work to be performed by them.—Jehu executed vengeance upon Jezebel and Ahab's posterity, and the priests and worshippers of Baal: Hazael through his whole reign wasted and destroyed the people of Israel: and at Elisha's word the Lord took vengeance on those who would not attend to the instructions of his prophets. (*Marg. Ref.*)—God was infinitely more jealous for his own glory, than Elijah could be for it; and he would by no means desert his cause, or suffer his enemies to triumph, as the prophet feared: but before he proceeded to vengeance, he would gather in his chosen people, and separate a remnant from among the idolaters.

V. 18. The Lord "*had reserved for himself*" seven thousand Israelites, who had neither bowed to Baal, nor kissed his image, nor in any way been induced to worship him. (*Marg. Ref.*) These, though few in comparison, were a considerable number in themselves, and far more than Elijah supposed.—As Ahab and Jezebel aimed to establish the worship of Baal, we may suppose that the golden calves were neglected, and that these persons as conscientiously adhered to the worship of JEHOVAH, as the times would admit. They would therefore need further instruction and encouragement; others might be recovered from idolatry; and the rising generation rescued from its contagion. So that there was useful employment for Elijah worth living for; and a good reason why the Lord should defer his anger, though provoked to jealousy every day.

V. 19. This might occur after Elijah's return from the wilderness of Damascus, or in his journey thither.—Elisha was employed in husbandry, and his father seems to have been a man of wealth. Whilst he was employed in his labour, Elijah cast his mantle upon him, which was intended and understood as a call to him to follow and attend upon him.

V. 20, 21. It is probable that Elijah intended to discover whether Elisha was decided to renounce his temporal interests, and to venture persecution as a prophet of the Lord; and to lead him to count his cost ere he engaged. But Elisha's heart was touched by the Holy Spirit, and he was ready to leave all to attend Elijah. He asked not to tarry till the death of his parents, but only to bid them farewell: and having made a feast for his neighbours of the flesh of the oxen, prepared with their yokes, as the fuel, (in token, that he never meant to return again to that employment;) he follwed Elijah, and ministered to him, that under his tuition he might be prepared to succeed him, and in the mean time be a help and comfort to him.—The prophet could now no longer complain, that he only was left, for the Lord had provided him a companion. From the ensuing history it appears, that Elijah and Elisha employed themselves, not only in privately instructing the people, but also in founding and superintending seminaries of prophets in the different parts of the land, who might

CHAP. XX.

Ben-hadad, not satisfied with Ahab's submission, wars against Samaria, 1—12. *Ahab, directed by a prophet, gains a complete victory over him,* 13—21. *A prophet warns Ahab to prepare for another assault. The Syrians come again, the next year, with vast preparations; and are opposed by a very small company,* 22—27. *A prophet assures Ahab of victory, because the Syrians thought* JEHOVAH *the God of the hills, but not of the valleys. The Syrians are smitten with immense slaughter, and Ben-hadad flees and hides himself,* 28—30. *He submissively sues to Ahab, who makes a league with him,* 31—34. *A prophet, by a parable, leads Ahab to condemn himself, and then denounces the judgment of God against him for his unseasonable lenity,* 35—43.

AND [a] Ben-hadad the king of Syria gathered all his host together: and *there were* [b] thirty and two kings with

a xv. 26. 2 Kings viii. 7—15
b Gen. xiv 1, 2. Judg. i. 7. Ezra vii. 12 Is. x. 8. Ez. xxvi. 7. Dan. ii. 37.

assist them in the work of reformation, and maintain it when they were removed.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

No miracles or judgments can finally stop the fury of persecutors: for though they be intimidated for a season; yet when they have respite, and leisure to confer with one another, they grow desperate in proportion as they have been baffled and mortified. Nay, such diabolic enmity can inhabit the breasts of females, and has sometimes raged there with peculiar vehemency!—Mad passions often defeat their own end, and furious threats prevent the execution of determined malice.—The most eminent believers cannot exercise even those graces which most distinguish their characters, without the immediate assistance of God: and when in danger of being exalted above measure, they are sometimes left to struggle with temptation without their wonted support. Then the boldest, who before feared no number or power of the adversaries, tremble at the distant prospect of danger; the most zealous quarrel with their work, and sit down disconsolate and desponding; nay the most resigned grow fretful, and even pray in a peevish manner, and want to die, not out of longing for heavenly glory, but from weariness of worldly tribulations! But it is shameful for a soldier to wish to be absent from his place in the day of battle, or to expect the victory without the peril and the hardship of the conflict! The Lord however bears with his faithful servants, notwithstanding their infirmities; and preserves them for every service that he has allotted them, whatever they wish or fear. As all creatures are at his command, they for whom he engages to provide, can want no good thing: and yet if he pleases he can support them without either means or instruments. His mercy and power are the same from generation to generation, whether displayed in the same way or not: and he will vouchsafe his gracious presence to his people into whatever place they are banished. Indeed when they flee from the path of duty, he will meet and rebuke them, but he will not forsake them.

V. 10—14.

No former zeal, boldness, or usefulness, will excuse present neglects: yet we are most apt to boast of what we have been and done, when most remiss in present duty! Disappointments in our sanguine expectations often sour our tempers, as well as render us discontented: and then we are ready to blame others for our failures, and to be severe in our censures and remarks.—The zealous minister often finds this leaven corrupting his services: he is sometimes tempted to think all his labour in vain, when he does not see the immediate effect; and to conclude, that he can do no good, because he cannot do all that he hoped for: and when he witnesses much evil in the church, or in that part in which he labours, he often imagines matters to be much worse than they really are.—Thus "our hands hang down, "and our knees wax feeble;" and we are ingenious in discouraging and disquieting ourselves! But upon reflection, this very experience may explain to us that rebellion of others which so disconcerts us; and teach us gentleness and long-suffering, without disdaining, or despairing of the worst of sinners.—The blessing is from the Lord; and he often works most effectually when proper means are used with quiet assiduity and perseverance, without any of that bustle and vehemence which excite the public attention. Magistrates should indeed exercise their authority, according to the word of God, and for his glory; but attempts to promote reformation by the secular arm bearing all down before it, like the strong wind, the earthquake, and the fire, promise more than they effect; and, even when confined within proper bounds, in repressing immorality, and countenancing the ministers in their work, they only make way for the still small voice of the gospel, by means of which the holy Spirit performs his gracious work upon the heart. And the minister, when deprived of this protection, and driven by persecution into obscure corners, may expect great usefulness, by this power accompanying his labours. The word of God is indeed "like a fire, and a "hammer, that breaketh the rock in pieces," and the whole of it should be preached with zealous plainness and faithfulness: but the ministration of condemnation, and the awful terrors of eternal vengeance, only precede, and make way for, the ministration of righteousness, and the sweet gospel of Christ, attended by urgent persuasions, melting expostulations, and tender invitations, in which the Lord chiefly comes to seal our hearts for himself.—We shall do well often to imagine we hear the Lord inquire, "What doest thou here?" In scenes of worldly dissipation, in trifling company, in riotous feastings, or where unlawful traffic is carrying on, the Christian can have no

him, and horses and chariots: and he
c Lev. xxvi. 25. Deu xxviii. 52 2 Kings vi. 24–29 xvii. 5, 6. went up and [c] besieged Samaria, and
warred against it.

2 And [d] he sent messengers to Ahab
d 2 Kings xix 9. Is. xxxvi. 2 &c. xxxvii. 9, 10. king of Israel into the city, and said
unto him, Thus saith Ben-hadad,

3 [e] Thy silver and thy gold *is* mine;
e Ex. xv. 9. Is. x. 13, 14. thy wives also and thy children, *even* the
goodliest, *are* mine.

4 And the king of Israel answered and
said, My lord, O king, according to thy
f Lev. xxvi. 36 Deu xxviii. 48. 1 Sam. xiii 6, 7. 2 Kings xviii. 14 —6. saying, [f] I *am* thine, and all that I have.

5 And the messengers came again,
and said, Thus speaketh Ben-hadad,
saying, Although I have sent unto thee,
saying, Thou shalt deliver me thy sil-
ver, and thy gold, and thy wives, and
thy children;

6 Yet I will send my servants unto
g 1 Sam. xiii. 19–21. 2 Sam. xxiv. 14. 2 Kings xviii. 31, 32. thee to-morrow about this time, [g] and
they shall search thine house, and the
houses of thy servants; and it shall be,
* Heb. *desirable.* *that* whatsoever is * pleasant in thine
eyes, they shall put *it* in their hand, and
take *it* away.

7 Then the king of Israel called [h] all
h viii. 1. Lev iv. 15. 1 Chr. xiii. 1. xxviii. 1. Prov. xi. 14. the elders of the land, and said, [i] Mark,
I pray you, and see how this *man* [k] seek-
i 2 Kings v 7. k Prov. xi. 27. xxiv. 2 Rom iii. 13–18. eth mischief: for he sent unto me for
my wives, and for my children, and for
my silver, and for my gold, and I † de-
† Heb. *kept back from him* nied him not.

8 And all the elders and all the people
said unto him, Hearken not *unto him*,
nor consent.

9 Wherefore he said unto the mes-
sengers of Ben-hadad, Tell my lord the
king, all that thou didst send for to thy
servant at the first I will do: but this
thing I may not do. And the messengers
departed, and brought him word again.

10 And Ben-hadad sent unto him,
l xix. 2. Acts xxiii. 12. and said, [l] The gods do so unto me, and
m 2 Sam. xvii. 12, 13. Is. xxxvii. 24, 25. more also, [m] if the dust of Samaria shall
suffice for handfuls for all the people
‡ Heb. are *at my feet.* Ex. xi. 8. Judg. iv. 10. that ‡ follow me.

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good answer ready: no more can the minister, if engrossed by needless worldly business, by trifling studies, or by the pursuits of ambition, preferment, pleasure, or reputation, to the neglect of the important duties of his calling. Nay, if we be at home when we should be in the pulpit; asleep when we should be at work; or in company when we should be engaged in prayer and meditation, or reading the Scriptures; such a question must confound us. In short, every station has its proper duties, and every portion of time its proper work, and we should frequently call ourselves to account, whether we are in our place and duty as the season requires.

V. 15—21.

It is not easy to convince men of their faults, and silence their excuses or boastings: and whilst the Lord encourages his servants under their difficulties, he sends them back to their proper work, ashamed of their timidity and neglect: and then he gives them both helpers and success. He hath "a remnant according to the election of grace," which he reserves to himself, and preserves from prevailing abominations. For their conversion and edification he waits and provides: in the mean time impenitent sinners ripen for vengeance; and he raises up instruments to execute it upon them from whom they shall by no means escape: for the word of God spoken by his despised ministers, ensures their destruction, more than the sword of any enemy. Nor will he ever desert his own cause, however it seems to be run down: he will furnish men for the most perilous and self-denying services: and they, who duly understand the importance of the sacred ministry, will renounce every other honour, pleasure, and interest for the sake of it, though called to labour in the midst of hardships, poverty, and persecution.—Zeal for the glory of God, and the salvation of souls, will subordinate, though it will not extinguish, natural affections. Generally the work of the ministry requires the whole man: and when such are employed, as have not been regularly educated for it, they are especially concerned to attend the instructions, to frequent the company, and to copy the examples of aged and approved ministers: and "no man having set his hand to "the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of "God." In difficult times helpers of inferior abilities may be a great comfort to the discouraged servants of God: and his work is carried on to advantage, when different ministers concur from the same principles, to seek the same great end of his glory in the salvation of souls. May the Lord of the harvest send forth many such labourers into his harvest! Amen.

NOTES.

CHAP. XX. V. 1. *Benhadad* signifies *the son of Hadad;* (xi. 14—22:) yet he is said to have been "the son of Tabrimon, the son of Hezion." (xv. 18.)—Perhaps Hadad was his father, and Tabrimon and Hezion his more remote ancestors.—The thirty and two kings were petty princes of the adjacent countries, who were either vassals or allies to the king of Syria.—Ben-hadad seems to have been induced by rapacity to wage war against Ahab: and it is probable that he had wasted the country before he besieged Samaria.—The late famine had much diminished the numbers of the Israelites, by their death and emigration: and by the righteous judgment of God, the remainder were so disaffected to Ahab, or so dismayed by Ben-hadad, that they had retired or fled; and thus they left the capital city in a very defenceless condition.

11 And the king of Israel answered and said, Tell *him*, [n] Let not him that girdeth on *his harness* boast himself as he that putteth it off.

12 And it came to pass, when *Benhadad* heard this * message, as he *was* [o] drinking, he and the kings in the † pavilions, that he said unto his servants, ‡ Set *yourselves in array*. And they set *themselves in array* against the city.

13 And, behold, there § came a prophet unto Ahab king of Israel, saying, Thus saith the LORD, [p] Hast thou seen all this great multitude? behold, I will deliver it into thine hand this day; [q] and thou shalt know that I *am* the LORD.

14 And Ahab said, By whom? And he said, Thus saith the LORD, *Even* by ‖ the young men of the princes of the provinces. Then he said, Who shall * order the battle? And he answered, Thou.

15 Then he numbered the young men of the princes of the provinces, and they were [r] two hundred and thirty-two: and after them he numbered all the people, *even* all the children of Israel, *being* [s] seven thousand.

16 And they went out at noon. But [t] Ben-hadad *was* drinking himself drunk in the pavilions, he and the kings, the thirty and two kings that helped him.

17 And the young men of the princes of the provinces went out first; and Ben-hadad sent out, and they told him, saying, There are men come out of Samaria.

18 And he said, [u] Whether they be come out for peace, take them alive; or whether they be come out for war, take them alive.

19 So these young men of the princes of the provinces came out of the city, and the army which followed them.

20 And [x] they slew every one his man: and [y] the Syrians fled; and Israel pursued them: and Ben-hadad the king of Syria [z] escaped on an horse, with the horsemen.

21 And the king of Israel [a] went out, and smote the horses and chariots, and slew the Syrians with a great slaughter.

22 ¶ And [b] the prophet came to the

n 1 Sam. xiv. 6. 12, 13. xvii 44—47. Prov. xxvii. 1. Ec. ix. 11. Is. x. 15, 16.

* Heb. *word.*

o 16. xvi. 9. 1 Sam. xxv. 36. Prov. xxxi. 4, 5. Dan. v. 2. 30 Luke xxi. 34.

† Or, *tents*

‡ Or, *Place* the engines *And they placed* engines.

§ Heb. *approached.*

p 2 Kings vi 8—12. 33. vii. 1. xiii. 23. Is vii. 1—9. Ez. xx. 14. 22

q 28. xviii. 37. Ex xiv. 18. xvi. 12 Ps. lxxxiii. 18. Is. xxxvii. 20. Ez vi. 7. Joel iii 17.

‖ Or, *servants.* Gen. xiv. 14-16. Judg. vii 20. 1 Cor i. 27-29.

* Heb. *bind*, or, *tie.*

r Judg. vii. 7. 16. 1 Sam xiv. 6. 2 Chr. xiv. 11.

s xix. 18. 1 Sam xiv. 2. 2 Kings xiii 7. Ps. cvi. 40—43.

t 12. xvi. 9. Prov. xxiii. 29—32. Ec. x. 16, 17

u 1 Sam. ii. 3, 4 xiv. 11. xvii 44. 2 Kings xiv. 8—12. Prov. xviii. 12.

x 2 Sam. ii. 16.

y Lev. xxvi. 8. Judg. vii 20-22. 1 Sam. xiv 13—15. 2 Kings vii. 6, 7 Ps. xxxiii. 16. xlvi. 4. 6.

z 2 Kings xix. 36.

a Judg iii. 28. vii. 23-25. 1 Sam. xiv 20—22. xvii. 52. 2 Kings iii. 18. 24.

b 13. 38. xix. 10. xxii 8.

V. 2—11. Ben-hadad's first message was couched in insulting language. He not only considered Ahab's riches as already his property, but his wives and children, even the goodliest of them, as his slaves. Yet Ahab understood this only as a claim to the dominion over him and his property or kingdom, and in abject terms consented to be his vassal, and to do him homage, and pay him tribute. Ben-hadad, therefore, perhaps perceiving his terror and pusillanimity, grew more insolent, and by a second message demanded the *immediate possession, and use, of them all for himself and his servants*, who meant to carry away what was most valuable, whether it belonged to Ahab or to his people. To this the elders of Israel would not allow him to consent: the dominion, and the public treasures, Ben-hadad might have taken; but to plunder the city, and enslave the inhabitants, might not be granted. To this answer the king of Syria sent a blustering menace, confirmed with an oath by his idols, implying, that he would enter Samaria with such numbers, that, when the whole city was reduced to a heap of dust, it would not afford them every one a handful: but Ahab very pertinently reminded him not to triumph, till he had got the victory; as at present he was only preparing for the battle.

V. 13. Elijah had complained that he was left alone; yet the Lord had other prophets whom he could send to speak before Ahab. Probably he and Elisha were at this time well employed in some distant part of the land; and Ahab and Jezebel were too much engaged, to prevent their labours or usefulness.—JEHOVAH was pleased to predict the victory to this wicked prince, for his further conviction, that He, not Baal, was the living God; for the punishment of Ben-hadad's insolence; for the honour of his own name; and for the benefit of his true worshippers.

V. 14, 15. Ahab, sensible that the promised victory must be *miraculous*, inquired, By whom it was to be obtained? And he was directed to employ, not his bravest soldiers, but the *servants* or *pages* of the chief men in the different provinces; and also himself to lead on the attack. His whole army consisted only of seven thousand men; (the same number with those preserved from idolatry, but not the same persons:) and none of them were to be employed, till the first assault had been made, and the first advantage gained, by this small company of servants! And under the present impression of terror and hope, Ahab readily obeyed the uncommon orders; though in general he despised and hated both the prophets, and Him that sent them.

V. 16—18. It is probable, that Ahab chose to lead out his little troop at noon, when he supposed the Syrians would be at dinner, or reposing themselves.—Ben-hadad, despising the Israelites, was indulging to excess: and on hearing that a small company came out of Samaria, he gave orders, in his pride and intoxication, which were exactly suited to embarrass his officers and soldiers; and to prevent their attacking the assailants with spirit, lest they should slay those whom they had been ordered to take alive!

V. 20, 21. The two hundred and thirty-two servants, whom especially Ben-hadad had ordered to be taken alive, slew every one the man who attempted to seize him: and this unexpected resistance, by the secret operation of God upon the minds of the Syrians, so dismayed them, that they yielded the army an easy and extensive victory. Ben-hadad might think himself well off, after all his boasts and menaces, that he escaped with life, drunken as he then was.

king of Israel and said unto him, Go, [c] strengthen thyself, and mark, and see what thou doest: for [d] at the return of the year the king of Syria will come up against thee.

23 And the servants of the king of Syria said unto him, [e] Their gods *are* gods of the hills; therefore they were stronger than we: but let us fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they.

24 And do this thing; [f] Take the kings away, every man out of his place, and put captains in their rooms:

25 And number thee an army, like the army that *thou hast lost, horse for horse, and chariot for chariot: and we will fight against them in the plain, *and* surely we shall be stronger than they. And he hearkened unto their voice, and did so.

B. C. 900.

26 And it came to pass at the return of the year, that Ben-hadad numbered the Syrians, and went up to [g] Aphek † to fight against Israel.

27 And the children of Israel were numbered, and ‡ were all present, and went against them: and the children of Israel pitched before them [h] like two little flocks of kids; but the Syrians filled the country.

28 ¶ And there came [i] a man of God, and spake unto the king of Israel, and said, Thus saith the LORD, [k] Because the Syrians have said, The LORD *is* God of the hills, but he *is* not God of the valleys, [l] therefore will I deliver all this great multitude into thine hand, *and* [m] ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

29 And they pitched one over against the other [n] seven days. And *so* it was, that in the seventh day the battle was joined: and the children of Israel slew of the Syrians [o] an hundred thousand footmen in one day.

30 But the rest fled to Aphek, into the city: and *there* [p] a wall fell upon twenty and seven thousand of the men *that were* left. And Ben-hadad [q] fled and came into the city, ‖ into an inner chamber.

31 And [r] his servants said unto him, Behold now, we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel *are* merciful kings: let us, I pray thee, [s] put sackcloth on our loins, and ropes upon our heads, and go out to the king of Israel; [t] peradventure he will save thy life.

32 So they girded sackcloth on their loins, and *put* ropes on their heads, and came to the king of Israel, and said, [u] Thy servant Ben-hadad saith, I pray thee, let me live. And he said, *Is* he yet alive? [x] he *is* my brother.

33 Now [y] the men did diligently observe whether *any thing would come* from him, and did hastily catch *it:* and they said, Thy brother Ben-hadad. Then he said, Go ye, bring him. Then Ben-hadad came forth to him; and he caused him to come up into the chariot.

c Prov. xviii. 10 xx. 18. Is viii. 9. Joel iii. 9, 10. Eph. vi. 10
d 2 Sam. xi. 1. 1 Chr xx. 1. Is. xxvi. 11.
e xiv. 23. 2 Chr. xxxii 19. Ps l. 21, 22. cxxi. 1, 2. Is. xlii. 8.
f 16. Ps. xxxiii. 10. Prov. xxi. 30.
* Heb. *was fallen.*
g 30. Josh. xiii 4. xix. 30. Judg. i. 31. *Aphik.*
† Heb. *to the war with Israel.*
‡ Or, were *victualled.* Josh i. 11. Judg vii. 8.
h Deut. xxxii. 30. Judg vi. 5. 1 Sam. xiii 5—7. xiv. 2. 2 Chr. xxxii. 7, 8. Ec. ix. 11.
i 13. 22. xiii. 1. xvii. 18. 2 Chr. xx. 14—20.
k 23.
l Ps. lviii. 10, 11. Is. xxxvii. 29. Ez. xxxvi. 21—23 32
m 13. Ez. vi. 14. xi. 12. xii. 16.
n Josh. vi. 15. 1 Sam. xvii. 3. 16.
o 2 Sam x. 18. 2 Chr xiii. 17. xx. 23 — 25. xxviii. 6. Is. xxvi 1. xxxvii 36
p Is. xxiv. 18. Jer xlviii. 44. Am. ii. 14. v. 19. Luke xiii. 4.
q 10. 20.
‖ Or, *from chamber to chamber.* Heb. *into a chamber within a chamber.* xxii. 25. Dan iv. 37. 1 Pet v. 5.
r 2 Kings v. 13.
s xxi. 27 — 29. Gen xxxvii. 34. 2 Sam xiv. 2. Is xxxvii 1
t Joel ii. 4. Matt. x 28.
u 3—6 Job. xii. 17, 18. xl 11, 12 Is. ii 11, 12. x 12. Dan v 20. 23. Ob. 3, 4
x 42. 1 Sam. xv. 8. 20.
y Prov. xxv. 15. Luke xvi. 8.

V. 22. It does not appear that Ahab regarded this merciful and seasonable warning: or that he made any suitable return for his late unexpected deliverance!

V. 23, 24. The servants of Ben-hadad, either in flattery as if no *human* valour could possibly rout his army, or from present conviction, ascribed their defeat to the gods of Israel: but they supposed that Israel had many deities like the gods of other nations, to whom they ascribed a limited power, within a certain district, out of which they could do nothing.—JEHOVAH had displayed his glory from mount Sinai; the temple was built on mount Zion; Samaria was situated on a hill; and the people loved to sacrifice on high places: and therefore the Syrians concluded that the gods of Israel were powerful upon the mountains, but not in the plains: and they foolishly expected to prevail against Israel and the Lord, by changing their ground. It is, however, probable that they considered the plain country as better suited to their army, which was furnished with cavalry and chariots of war, than to the foot soldiers of Israel.—Their other advice was sensible and pertinent. The kings served rather for pomp and feasting, than for war; and it could not be expected that they would either be so hearty in the cause of Syria, or so observant of exact discipline; as Syrian captains, appointed by the king, and desirous of signalizing themselves, would be.

V. 27. This small company was all that Ahab had collected upon this emergency; or, all the seven thousand before mentioned were present: but their appearance conveyed the idea of weakness and timidity.

V. 28. Ahab and Israel merited the most dreadful vengeance: but it was proper that the ignorance or blasphemy of the Syrians should be confuted; that all might know that JEHOVAH, the God of the whole earth, was almighty in every place.—Probably this man of God informed Ahab, that the Lord had devoted Ben-hadad to destruction, and would deliver him into his hands, that he might execute his vengeance upon him.

V. 30. *A wall,* &c. The falling of this wall, at least the immense slaughter made by it, must be ascribed to the immediate interposition of the Almighty.

34 And *Ben-hadad* said unto him, [z] The cities, which my father took from thy father, I will restore; and thou shalt make streets for thee in Damascus, as my father made in Samaria. Then *said Ahab*, I will send thee away with this covenant. [a] So he made a covenant with him, and sent him away.

35 ¶ And a certain man [b] of the sons of the prophets said unto his neighbour [c] in the word of the LORD, [d] Smite me, I pray thee. And the man refused to smite him.

36 Then said he unto him, [e] Because thou hast not obeyed the voice of the LORD, behold, as soon as thou art departed from me, a lion shall slay thee. And as soon as he was departed from him, a lion found him, and slew him.

37 Then he found another man, and said, [f] Smite me, I pray thee. And the man smote him, * so that in smiting he wounded *him*.

38 So the prophet departed, and waited for the king by the way, and [g] disguised himself with ashes upon his face.

z xv. 20.
a 42. Is. xxvi. 10.
b 38. 1 Sam. x. 12. 2 Kings ii. 3. 5, 7. 15. iv. 1. 38. Am. vii. 14.
c xiii. 1, 2. 17, 18
d 37. Is. viii 18. xx. 2, 3. Jer xxvii. 2, 3. Ez. iv. 3. Matt. xvi. 24.
e xiii. 21—24. 28. 1 Sam. xv. 22, 23.
f Ex. xxi. 12.
* Heb. *smiting and wounding.*
g xiv. 2. xxii. 30.

39 And as the king passed by, he cried unto the king: and he said, [h] Thy servant went out into the midst of the battle; and, behold, a man turned aside and brought a man unto me, and said, Keep this man: if by any means he be missing, then shall [i] thy life be for his life, or else thou shalt † pay a talent of silver.

40 And as thy servant was busy here and there ‡ he was gone. And the king of Israel said unto him, [k] So *shall* thy judgment *be;* thyself hast decided *it*.

41 And he hasted, and took [l] the ashes away from his face; and the king of Israel discerned him that he *was* of the prophets.

42 And he said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, [m] Because thou hast let go out of *thy* hand a man, whom I appointed to utter destruction, therefore [n] thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people.

43 And the king of Israel [o] went to his house heavy and displeased, and came to Samaria.

h Judg. ix. 7—20. 2 Sam. xii. 1—7. xiv. 5—7. Mark xii. 1—12.
i 2 Kings x. 24.
† Heb. *weigh.*
‡ Heb. *he was not.*
k 2 Sam. xii 5, 6. Job xv. 6 Matt. xxi. 41. xxv. 24—28. Luke xix. 22.
l 2 Sam. xiii. 19. Job ii. 8. Jer. vi. 26.
m 1 Sam. xv. 9—11.
n xxii. 31—37. 2 Kings vi. 24. viii. 12.
o xxi. 4. xxii. 8. Job v. 2. Prov. xix. 3.

V. 31—34. It seems, a general opinion prevailed, that the princes of Israel, the people of God, were more generous and clement than other kings: and indeed sentiments derived from the oracles of God produce good effects, in this respect, on many who do not act habitually on religious principles. Ben-hadad's ambassadors, appearing in his name before Ahab, clothed in sackcloth, and with ropes on their heads, formed a remarkable contrast to the preceding state of affairs. Thus they acted as penitents and criminals, who were sorry that they had attacked Ahab, and confessed that they deserved to die for that offence. This was a very great mortification to Ben-hadad: and it was equally flattering to Ahab's vanity, who, seduced by it, forgot both the interests of Israel, and his own real honour and security. Indeed he ought to have given God the glory of his victory, and to have consulted his prophets in what manner to deal with Ben-hadad. But he acknowledged this wicked prince as his brother; (being more pleased with the dignity of a king, than the distinction of an Israelite:) he treated him with respect, and made a league with him upon disadvantageous terms; and sent him away, without any security, except his bare word, for the performance of the treaty. The streets of Damascus were probably allotted to the Israelites for the purposes of trade, that in them they might live unmolested according to their own laws. It is probable that the same liberty had been allowed the Syrians in Samaria; where the idolaters were at ease, when God's prophets were cut off.

V. 35, 36. This command was given by one of the sons of the prophets, in the name of the Lord, and probably to another of the same school. His refusal therefore was direct disobedience to God, which he was pleased to punish with immediate death. Ahab would doubtless hear of this event: and if one, who humanely refused to smite a pious prophet at God's command, were thus punished; he might conclude, that he should not be spared who disobeyed God, by forming an alliance with a haughty idolatrous king, whom the Lord required him to destroy. It seems that the prophet intended, by being wounded, the better to personate a soldier that had been in the battle, and had deserved well of his king, though he had failed in one particular.

V. 38. The prophet appeared, either as one wounded in the face, and so covered with a bandage like a veil to disguise himself, as many understand it; or he assumed the character of a mourner, being under condemnation to die, seeing he could not pay the talent of silver.

V. 41, 42. As soon as Ahab discovered who the prophet was, he perceived that he had been drawn in to pass sentence upon himself. Ahab lost his life in fighting against Ben-hadad, who did not fulfil this treaty: and great evils came upon Israel from the Syrians, whom Ahab might at this time have subjugated and deprived of power.

V. 43. *Heavy*, &c. Whilst the Lord secured his own glory, and protected his people; he deprived Ahab of all satisfaction in his success, and filled him with vexation and dismay. He did not repent of his fault, but he was chagrined at the message, and enraged at the messenger. Many think it was Michaiah, which is not wholly improbable.

CHAP. XXI.

Ahab covets Naboth's vineyard, and is greatly vexed because Naboth refuses to part with it, 1—4. *Jezebel causes Naboth to be stoned, as a blasphemer,* 5—14. *She excites Ahab to take possession of his vineyard,* 15, 16. *Elijah is sent to meet Ahab, and to denounce the judgments of God against him, and his family, and Jezebel,* 17—24. *Ahab's enormous wickedness,* 25, 26. *He humbles himself before God, and the judgments are deferred to his son's days,* 27—29.

AND it came to pass [a] after these things, *that* Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard, which *was* in [b] Jezreel,

a Ezra ix. 13, 14
b xviii. 45 Judg. vi. 33. 1 Sam xxix. 1.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—21.

The indignation of the Lord will surely weaken and dispirit sinners; and those nations especially, that have been favoured with the light of revelation, will be brought low for their iniquity, when they forsake the service of God.—Wicked men delight to insult over the fallen; success increases pride and insolence; and thus they too are prepared for vengeance. They who most daringly rebel against God, are often mere cowards when assaulted by their fellow-creatures: and no extremities or consolations will bring sinners, *when left to themselves*, to advert to the real causes of their distress. Men will part with their most pleasant things, which they most love, to save their temporal lives: and yet they lose their souls, and incur everlasting misery, rather than bestow any labour, or give up any pleasure or interest, to prevent it! Boasting and menacing language generally betrays a weak and foolish mind, exposes men to cutting rebukes, and terminates in abject meanness and disgrace. To glory in what we have done is pride and vanity; but to glory in what we will do is extreme ignorance and folly: for no capacity or management can ensure success.—Drunkards perform great things, as far as vapouring words can go; and they urge one another on to rash and foolish enterprises, which expose them in every way to detriment and to ruin. The Lord will secure his own glory, and take care of his own people, notwithstanding the wickedness of the great, or of the many: he will leave every impenitent sinner without excuse: and he delights to save by unlikely instruments, that his own power may be the more conspicuous. At some seasons the convictions of the most abandoned may get an advantage over their lusts: for a time they may be restrained from iniquity, do many things according to the command of God, and even regard the admonitions of his ministers: thus they are sometimes externally favoured; that they may experience the different effect of obedience and of disobedience, for their deeper condemnation if they relapse into their former crimes. The Lord inspires counsel and courage, or sends infatuation and dismay, as he pleases: so that the battle is not to the strong; but all calculations are strangely proved erroneous when this secret influence is not taken into the account.

V. 22—43.

Fallen man has very confused, absurd, and dishonourable apprehensions of the divine attributes. He conceives of God as if he were such an one as himself, and is thus emboldened to persist in his rebellion: And the most consummate wisdom, in worldly concerns, often unites with the most contemptible ignorance on religious subjects. To silence the blasphemies, or to expose the mistakes, of some of his enemies, the Lord sometimes gives temporary success to those who *in another way* despise his warnings and disobey his precepts: but he will not countenance them in their crimes, nor let them finally escape condign punishment. The whole creation is at war with those who fight against God: and he will surely render contemptible, as well as miserable, the haughtiest of them. The ambitious are pleased with abject submissions and adulation; and love the society of the most wicked men, who will stoop low enough to them. Thus they are seduced and bribed, not only to disregard the will of God, and to prefer the friendship of his enemies; but to forego the most solid temporal advantages to themselves and their connexions, for the sake of empty words and fair professions! It becomes all to be *merciful;* and clemency is the ornament of royalty; especially of the kings of Israel, the rulers of God's people; yet to be clement to notorious criminals, while those who love and serve God are treated with cruelty, is a strange inconsistency: to pretend to be more merciful than the Lord, by sparing those whom he commands to be put to death, is an awful presumption; and to regard those as brethren, whom he hath doomed to utter destruction, is an evidence of great impiety. In every thing the Lord demands *implicit* obedience; even the plea of compassion will not excuse rebellion against his will: and by severe temporal judgments on such as have committed lighter offences, he loudly speaks terror to more atrocious criminals; whom he will at length constrain to decide against themselves. And whatever prosperity they may in the mean time obtain, it will be embittered to them by what they feel, and what they fear; for "there is no peace, saith "my God, to the wicked." But may we not here, by an allowable accommodation, hint some profitable instructions? The convinced sinner, not daring any longer to persist in his impotent contest against the Almighty; and unable to flee from him, or purchase his forgiveness and favour, is almost reduced to despair. Then he hears a report of mercy abounding in Christ Jesus to the chief of sinners; and in hopes of obtaining a free salvation, with penitent tears and humiliating confessions, he cries out, "God be merciful "to me, a sinner." Becoming acquainted with the gracious appellations of Father, Brother, and Friend of sinners, and the exceedingly great and precious promises contained in the scripture; he diligently observes, and eagerly catches them, as it were, from the Saviour's lips, and

hard by the palace of Ahab king of Samaria.

2 And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, [c] Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it *is* near unto my house: and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it; *or*, if it * seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money.

3 And Naboth said to Ahab, [d] The Lord forbid it me, that [e] I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee.

4 And Ahab came into his house [f] heavy and displeased, because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him; for he had said, [g] I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers. And [h] he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread.

5 But [i] Jezebel his wife came to him, and said unto him, Why is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no bread?

c Ex xx. 17. Deu. v. 21. 1 Sam. viii. 14 Jer. xxii 17. Hab. ii. 9—11. Luke xii. 15. 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10. Jam. i. 14, 15.
* Heb. be *good in thine eyes.*
d Gen. xliv. 7. 17. Josh. xxii 29. xxiv. 16 1 Sam xii. 23 xxiv 6. xxvi. 9—11. 1 Chr. xi. 19. Job xxviii. 5. Rom. iii. 4. 6. 31. vi. 2. 15 vii. 7. 13. 1 Cor. vi. 15. Gal. vi. 14.
e Lev. xxv. 23. Num. xxxvi. 7. Ez. xlvi. 18.
f xx. 43. Is. lvii. 20, 21.
g 3.
h Gen. iv. 5—8. 2 Sam. xiii. 2. 4. Ec. vi 9. vii. 8, 9. Eph. iv. 27. Jam. i. 14, 15.
i 25. xvi. 31. xviii 4. xix. 2. Gen. iii. 6.

6 And he said unto her, [k] Because I spake unto Naboth the Jezreelite, and said unto him, Give me thy vineyard for money; or else, if it please thee, I will give thee *another* vineyard for it: and he answered, [l] I will not give thee my vineyard.

7 And Jezebel his wife said unto him, [m] Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? Arise *and* eat bread, and let thine heart be merry; [n] I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.

8 So [o] she wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed *them* with his seal, and sent the letters unto [p] the elders, and to [q] the nobles that *were* in the city, dwelling in Naboth.

9 And she wrote in the letters, saying, [r] Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth * on high among the people;

10 And set [s] two men, sons of Belial, before him, to bear witness against him, saying, [t] Thou didst blaspheme God and

k Esth. v. 9—14. Prov xiv. 30. 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10. Jam iv. 5—7.
l 3, 4.
m 1 Sam. viii. 14. 2 Sam. xiii 4. Dan. v. 19. 27.
n 15, 16. Mic. vii. 3.
o 2 Sam. xi 14, 15. 2 Chr. xxxii. 17. Neh. vi. 5. Esth. iii. 12—15. viii. 8—13.
p Deut. xxi. 2. Judg viii. 14.
q 1. 2 Kings x. 1—7. 11.
r Gen. xxxiv. 13—17. Is lviii. 4. Mat. ii. 8. xxiii. 14. Luke xx. 47. John xviii. 28.
* Heb *in the top of the people.*
s Deut. xiii. 13. xix. 15. Matt. xxvi 59, 60. Acts vi 11.
t Ex xxii. 28. Lev. xxiv 15, 16. Matt. xxvi. 65, 66 Acts vi 13.

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pleads them in humble prayer. Thus he obtains forgiveness; the everlasting covenant is made with him, and all the blessings of the Gospel are secured to him: at the same time he yields himself to the Lord to be his servant, and love constrains him to live to his glory. But, alas! most that hear these glad tidings are busy here and there, till the day of salvation is gone; and not having wherewithal to ransom their souls, they must spend eternity in unavailing lamentations and despair. Nay, even true believers are often so taken up with trifles, as to let seasons of important usefulness glide away unimproved, to the loss both of themselves and of others. May the Lord "teach us so to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom!"

NOTES.

CHAP. XXI. V. 1, 2. Ahab had just before lost an opportunity of enlarging his dominions: and now he foolishly and sinfully coveted Naboth's vineyard, to make him an additional kitchen-garden or pleasure-garden. He seemed, however, to propose equitable terms to the possessor; but his fault lay in desiring it in an inordinate manner.

V. 3. Naboth seems to have been a conscientious man, and a worshipper of Jehovah, which might render Jezebel more determined on his destruction. He valued his vineyard as the inheritance of his fathers, originally assigned to them by the Lord himself. He might, if in want, have *leased out, or mortgaged*, his estate: but this was not the case; and he was sensible that if his vineyard became a part of the royal gardens, it would never revert to his family at the year of jubilee. The Lord had forbidden him to alienate his land from his family; and he seriously gave Ahab the true reason, why he could not comply with his desires; for he would rather seem uncourteous, or offend his prince, than transgress the law of God; whatever otherwise he might have been disposed to do. The original expression is stronger than that translated in the New Testament, "God forbid;" by which St. Paul especially marks his abhorrence of any pernicious opinion. (*Marg. Ref.*) It implies the idea of *impiety*, and Naboth seems to have started back from the proposal with aversion and alarm, as from a temptation to a heinous sin.

V. 4—6. Ahab, a victorious and prosperous king, was filled with anguish and vexation, because he met a denial in so small a matter! Such was the conflict of his passions, that he lay down, and, either through sickness or sullenness, would not taste food! He greatly desired the vineyard. His pride was intolerably offended, that one of his own subjects should peremptorily refuse to comply with his proposal: he was ashamed to yield the point in contest; and he was afraid of proceeding to extremities. The effects of these conflicting passions made him very miserable: yet it is probable he would not have attempted violence against Naboth, had not Jezebel his wife stirred him up.—It is observable that in relating the cause of his disquietude, Ahab made no mention of Naboth's conscientious reason for his refusal; but stated it as the effect of insolence and obstinacy!

V. 7. It was indeed unworthy of the king of Israel to fret himself about such a trifle. But this base woman meant to rouse her husband to gratify both his covetousness and revenge. She intimated, that he was incapable of managing a kingdom, if he hesitated to seize on Naboth's vineyard, and to punish his insolence. 'What! hast thou not power to crush such an adversary? Arise and enjoy thyself; and leave the business with me; I will speedily settle it to thy satisfaction.' This was her evident meaning, to which Ahab made no objection or opposition.

the king. And *then* carry him out, and stone him, that he may die.

11 And the men of his city, *even* the elders, and the nobles, who were the inhabitants in his city, [u] did as Jezebel had sent unto them, *and* as it *was* written in the letters which she had sent unto them.

12 They proclaimed a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people.

13 And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him: and [x] the men of Belial witnessed against him, *even* against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did [y] blaspheme God and [z] the king. Then they carried him forth out of the city, and [a] stoned him with stones, that he died.

14 Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, [b] Naboth is stoned, and is dead.

15 And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, [c] Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money: for Naboth is not alive, but dead.

16 And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that [d] Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.

17 ¶ And [e] the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,

18 Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, [f] which *is* in Samaria: behold, *he is* in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to possess it.

19 And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, [g] Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, [h] In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine.

20 And Ahab said to Elijah, [i] Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have found *thee:* because [k] thou hast sold thyself [l] to work evil in the sight of the LORD.

u Ex. i. 17. 21. Lev. xix. 15 1 Sam xxii. 17, 18. xxiii. 20 2 Kings x. 6, 7. Prov. xxix. 12. Mat. ii. 16. Acts iv. 19. v. 29.

x Deu. v. 20. xix. 16--21. Pro xix. 9. Mark xiv. 56 —59.

y Job i 5. 11. ii 9. Mat. ix. 3. John x. 36. Acts vi. 11. 13.

z Ec. x. 20 Luke xxiii. 2. John xix. 12. Acts xxiv. 5 15

a Num. xv 35, 36. Josh vii. 24, 25. 2 Kings ix. 26.

b Ec. v. 8. viii. 14.

c 7.

d 2 Sam. i. 13-16. iv. 9--12. Ps. l. 18. Is. xxxiii 15. Obad. 12--14. Rom. i. 32. 2 Pet. ii. 15.

e 2 Kings i. 16. v. 26. Ps. ix. 12. Is. xxvi 21.

f xiii. 32. 2 Chr. xxii. 9.

g Gen. iii. 11. iv. 9, 10. 2 Sam xii. 9. Hab. ii. 9. 12.

h xxii 38. Judg. i 7. 2 Sam xii. 11 Ps vii. 15, 16. ix 16. lviii. 10, 11.

i xviii 17. xxii. 8. Am. v. 10. Mark xii 12. Gal. v. 16. Rev. xi. 10.

k 25 2 Kings xvii. 17 Is. l. 1. lii 3. Rom. vii 14.

l 2 Chr xxxiii. 6. Eph. iv. 19.

V. 8—14. Jezebel wrote *in Ahab's name;* and sealed the letters with *his seal,* which it seems he allowed her to use when she pleased. Thus the elders of Jezreel were required to obey her directions, as they valued the king's favour. She represented Naboth as a dangerous criminal, who must be taken off, without a particular inquiry into the nature of his offence: yet, as he bore a fair character, some charge must be brought against him, which might prevent the people from taking umbrage at his execution. A fast must therefore be proclaimed: as if some horrid wickedness had been discovered, which threatened the city with divine judgments, till solemnly expiated. This would excite general consternation: and on the day appointed, Naboth was to be seized; and *men of Belial,* (that is, abandoned villains,) hired, to testify that he had blasphemed God and the king: thus he would be condemned to be stoned for the blasphemy; and for the treasonable words, his estate would be confiscated; and the elders were required to see the sentence immediately executed! These infamous orders were as infamously obeyed, without hesitation or reluctance; and by elders and nobles of Israel, though in contempt of all religion, law, and justice!—It seems they stoned Noboth's sons also, that there might be none to avenge his death, or to demand his estate. When Jezebel cut off the Lord's prophets, she had, doubtless, inured the magistrates to similar practices, and rewarded their wickedness: so that she did not fear a refusal from the elders of Jezreel. They knew from whom the orders came, and reported the execution of them to Jezebel, not to Ahab. The elders of the same city, not long after, paid as implicit obedience to Jehu's orders, in putting to death seventy of Ahab's descendants. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 15, 16. Ahab proved, that he was pleased with the conduct of Jezebel and her agents, by readily going in person to take possession of the estate, for which the murder had been committed.

V. 17—19. The junior prophets were sent upon ordinary messages to Ahab: but Elijah himself was employed on this occasion, whose very presence would dismay the proud tyrant, and whose strong faith and intrepid spirit qualified him for such a service. In the very vineyard of Naboth, even whilst Ahab was seizing upon his prey, and surrounded by his officers, the prophet delivered this message to him, for his deeper mortification, and that it might be more noticed by others. He directly charged Ahab with the murder of Naboth, nor did he attempt to deny or excuse himself. The prediction that dogs should lick the blood of Ahab, certainly implied that he would be cut off by a violent death: but the expression, "In the place where, &c." occasions considerable difficulty; because Samaria was several miles distant from Jezreel. Some learned men think that the word rendered *the place where,* may mean, "In like *manner as:*" but this signification is perhaps unprecedented. Others suppose, that the word *place* is taken in a large sense, for all the adjacent region; and so includes Samaria, where Ahab dwelt, and where he was buried, as well as merely the city of Jezreel. But may we not say, that as dogs licked the blood of Ahab, *literally,* when his chariot was washed in the pool of Samaria; so they licked *his* blood, as flowing through the veins of his son Joram, when Joram was slain by Jehu, and his body thrown into this very spot? (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 20. After the slaughter of Baal's prophets, and Elijah's flight, Ahab had returned to his wicked course of

21 Behold, [m] I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity, and will cut off from Ahab [n] him that pisseth against the wall, and [o] him that is shut up and left in Israel.

22 And will [p] make thine house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, for the provocation wherewith thou hast provoked *me* to anger, and [q] made Israel to sin.

23 And of [r] Jezebel also spake the LORD, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the * wall of Jezreel.

24 [s] Him that dieth of Ahab in the city the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat.

25 But [t] there was none like unto Ahab, which did [u] sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the LORD, [x] whom Jezebel his wife * stirred up.

26 And he did very [y] abominably in following idols, [z] according to all *things* as did the Amorites, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.

27 And it came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that [a] he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and [b] lay in sackcloth, and [c] went softly.

28 And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,

29 [d] Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? [e] because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring [f] the evil in his days: *but* [g] in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house.

m xiv. 10 2 Kings ix. 8.
n 1 Sam. xxv. 22 34.
o Deut. xxxii. 36. 2 Kings xiv. 26.
p xv. 29. xvi. 3, 4. 11.
q xiv. 16. xv. 30. 34.
r 2 Kings ix. 10. 36.
* Or, *ditch*.
s xiv. 11. xvi. 4. Jer. xv. 3.
t xvi. 30—33. 2 Kings xxiii. 25.
u 20. Rom. vi. 19.
x 7. xi. 1—4. xvi. 31. xviii. 4. xix. 2. Prov. xxii. 14. Ec. vii. 26. Mark vi. 17—27
* Or, *incited*.
y 2 Chr. xv. 3. Jer. xvi. 18. xliv. 4. Ez. viii. 10. 1 Pet. iv. 3. Rev. xxi 8.
z Gen. xv. 16 Lev. xviii. 25-30. xx. 22, 23. Deut xii. 31. 2 Kings xvi. 3. xxi 2. 11. 2 Chr xxxvi. 14. Ps. cvi. 35—39.
a Gen. xxxvii. 34. 2 Kings vi. 30, 31. xviii. 37. John iii. 6.
b 2 Sam. xii. 17. Is. lviii. 5—8.
c Is. xxxviii. 15.
d Ps. lxvi. 3. lxxviii. 34—37. Jer. xlii. 20.
e Ex. x. 3. Ps. lxxxvi. 15. Ez. xxxiii. 10, 11. Mic vii. 18. Rom. ii. 4. 15. 2 Pet iii. 9.
f 21—23.
g 2 Kings ix. 25, 26. 33—37. x. 1—7. 11.

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life, and he shunned the prophet as his worst enemy. Once indeed he had bestowed much pains to find him: but being now determined in his idolatry, and yet afraid of *him*, whose prayers had called for drought upon the land and fire and rain from heaven; and especially still feeling in his conscience the anguish of his cutting rebukes, he even trembled at the thoughts of him. Other prophets had come to him with milder messages; and he thought them more friendly: but Elijah's severity could not be mollified. His presence therefore on this occasion surprised, offended, and affrighted him: and when his enemy had found him, he expected not to go well away, but to hear some awful judgment denounced against him for his recent transgression.—Nor did Elijah deny that he was an enemy to his wickedness: so that he neither paid respect to him, nor was intimidated by his anger or power. He had found him, as a thief caught in the fact; and in the name of God he denounced the most tremendous sentence of condemnation on him and on his posterity. For Ahab had *sold himself as a willing slave to his lusts;* which is very different from *being sold under sin;* so that, through the remaining power of corrupt nature, a man who delights in the law of God, and hates all sin, yet *cannot do the things that he would.*

V. 21, 22. Elijah was the voice, the Lord was the speaker, whose words these evidently are. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 23. This circumstance not only declared the shocking death of Jezebel, but denoted the worst punishment of sin to be after death.

V. 25, 26. Ahab's crime was not a detached part of his conduct, contrary to the general course of his life; as David's sin in the matter of Uriah had been: but it was a specimen of his continued rebellion against God; and no worse in his sight, than the idolatry to which Jezebel had first stirred him up. But having sold himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, as if in contempt and defiance of him, he was openly, constantly, and diligently employed in it, as a slave in his master's business: and it was requisite that his punishment should be as notorious as his crimes had been.

V. 27—29. Ahab was greatly terrified at Elijah's message, and at the severe, determined, and solemn manner in which he delivered it: but his humiliation was superficial, and productive of external observances only. He did not, that we find, so much as restore Naboth's vineyard to his heirs; much less did he put away Jezebel, or renounce idolatry and establish the worship of God. But he rent his clothes, wore and lay in sackcloth, fasted, and appeared in public with the dejected air of a penitent.—But though his humiliation was formal and hypocritical; yet it allowed the justice of God, and his own sin, and put an outward honour upon the divine law. Bad as it was, it would have been worse, if he had vindicated and gloried in his crimes, or attempted to put the prophet to death: and therefore the Lord recompensed his outward temporary repentance with a similar reward; for he granted him a respite of the judgment as far as it respected his family, and spared him the anguish of witnessing the slaughter of his children.—Jezebel was too hardened to show any symptoms of remorse on this, or any other occasion.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—14.

It is natural to us, as fallen creatures, to hanker after those things which are withheld from us; and every accession of wealth or prosperity increases the violence of this propensity. The commandment indeed, which forbids us to covet, "is holy, just, and good," the fence of our neighbour's property, and of our own peace and integrity. But, alas! "it is weak through the flesh;" and the impetuous torrent of our lusts easily bursts the salutary barrier, and rages the more for having been opposed. Yet every violation of the precept proves its excellency; as indulged con-

CHAP. XXII.

Ahab persuades Jehoshaphat to go with him against Ramoth-gilead, 1—4. *Jehoshaphat proposes to inquire of the Lord; and the false prophets assure Ahab of success,* 5—7. *At Jehoshaphat's request Micaiah is sent for,* 8—12. *The messenger's advice and Micaiah's answer,* 13, 14. *Micaiah, adjured by Ahab to declare the truth, predicts his death, and shows that his prophets were deceived by a lying spirit,* 15—23. *He is abused and sent to prison,* 24—28. *Jehoshaphat goes to battle in his robes, but Ahab in disguise,* 29, 30. *Jehoshaphat, mistaken for Ahab, narrowly escapes; Ahab is mortally wounded; and the people are dispersed by proclamation,* 31—36. *Ahab dies; and dogs lick his blood,* 37, 38. *The acts of Ahab, who is succeeded by Ahaziah,* 39, 40. *Jehoshaphat's good reign, and acts,* 41—49. *He dies, and is succeeded by Jehoram,* 50. *Ahaziah's wicked reign,* 51—53.

AND they continued [a] three years [a xx. 34.] without war between Syria and Israel.

2 And it came to pass in the third year,

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cupiscence opens the door to temptations, makes way for the most atrocious crimes, and prepares misery and destruction for every one that stands in the way of its gratification. If fair means fail to procure the object of inordinate desires, fraud or violence must be employed. Pride cannot brook opposition: every plea of conscience is treated as mere pretence: and the best intended actions of the most blameless and excellent persons are ascribed to the worst of motives. But such passions are serpents cherished in a man's bosom, till they sting him to death with exquisite torture.—Vain indeed are earthly advantages, if the want of a trifle, or the supercilious or conscientious behaviour of an inferior, can rob a prosperous monarch of all his comfort, and render him sick with rage and vexation! This however is wholly the effect of men's lusts and passions, which, like children, are always most restless when most indulged. Providential blessings well answer the end for which they were intended, but cannot form a rational creature's felicity: and that degree of contradiction or disappointment, which would scarcely cause a humble man to heave one sigh, will break a proud man's heart. We should then beware of covetousness, pride, anger, envy, and discontent: we should watch and pray that we may not enter into temptation: we should aim to make the spiritual precept, "Thou shall not covet," the barrier *in our hearts*, as well *as in the law of God*, against the violation of the other commandments; and not allow ourselves *so* to desire things lawful, as not to be able to brook a denial or disappointment. Our more intimate connexions are of vast importance. In the married state we expect, and should reciprocally impart, sympathy, counsel, encouragement, and assistance: but when, instead of a prudent and pious counsellor, a man has a factor for Satan in the form of an artful, unprincipled, and beloved woman, what fatal effects may not be expected! "Be "ye not therefore unequally yoked with unbelievers."—It is hard to relate facts respecting ourselves, with simplicity and impartiality; but much more difficult to restrain those within the strict limits of equity, who are able to seize on the objects of their desires, without fear of being called to account before any human tribunal. Hence rapines and oppressions have disgraced human nature, and desolated the earth, in all ages: and every resistance to the will of a superior has been condemned as rebellion; and this has occasioned assassinations, massacres, or public executions! A little acquaintance with history, and with human nature, will terminate our *astonishment* at such transactions; but they must ever excite our *regret*, our *compassion*, and our *indignation*.—The most flagrant injustice has generally been committed under the colour of *legal forms*; and the most horrid crimes have been perpetrated under the mask of piety; because the show of *these good things* hides the deformity of such transactions, as otherwise could never be endured.—Many command, and reward villany, who in their hearts despise and detest the mercenary wretches whom they employ. It is grievous that men of Belial abound even in the lower order of society: but most horrible when judges and nobles deserve this harsh appellation. Yet there will always be found those in every rank, who will prostitute their talents, influence, and conscience, to the tyrant who rewards iniquity. Let us then bless God for a *limited* government, and for security from such outrages of oppression: though even *in Britain*, men of Belial, by false testimony and perjury, may deprive us of our property, our liberty, our reputation, or our lives. We should therefore commit all that is dear to us, to the Lord's keeping; seek those good things, which cannot be taken from us; and wait with cheerful patience for that approaching judgment, when all iniquitous sentences shall be reversed. And let judges, juries, and witnesses beware of being warped in their decisions, verdicts, or testimony, by fear, affection, or interest: for they, who now are placed upon the tribunal, must shortly stand at the bar, to answer before a heart-searching impartial Judge, for their conduct in their important stations.—They who rejoice in iniquity, and gladly seize on the profit derived from the crimes of others, will be condemned equally with the perpetrators: and the triumphing of the wicked in the success of their villany resembles the flash of lightning, which leaves the night more dark and gloomy than before: for the Lord beholds and is displeased; and his tremendous threatenings are only preludes to his more tremendous vengeance.

V. 15—29.

Such ministers of God, as are most decidedly faithful, must expect to be deemed morose, and even malevolent, by sinners whose consciences have often been galled with

that [b] Jehoshaphat the king of Judah came down to the king of Israel.

3 And the king of Israel said unto his servants, Know ye, that [c] Ramoth in Gilead *is* ours, and we *be* * still, *and* take it not out of the hand of the king of Syria?

4 And he said unto Jehoshaphat, [d] Wilt thou go with me to battle to Ramoth-gilead? and Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, [e] I *am* as thou *art*, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses.

5 And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, [f] Inquire, I pray thee, at the word of the LORD to-day.

6 Then the king of Israel gathered [g] the prophets together, about four hundred men, and said unto them, Shall I go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? and they said, [h] Go up; for the LORD shall deliver *it* into the hand of the king.

b 2 Kings viii. 18. 2 Chr. xviii. 1, 2.
c iv. 13. Deu. iv. 43. Josh. xx. 8.
* Heb. *silent from taking it.*
d 2 Kings iii. 7. 2 Chr. xviii. 3.
e 2 Chr. xix. 2. Ps. cxxxix. 21, 22. Prov. xiii. 20. 2 Cor. vi. 16, 17. Eph. v. 11. 2 John 11. Rev. ii. 2, 6.
f Num. xxvii. 21. Judg. i. 1. xx. 18. 23. 28. 1 Sam. xxiii. 2, 4. 9—12. xxx. 8. 2 Kings i. 3. iii. 11. 2 Chr. xviii. 4, 5. Prov. iii. 5, 6.
g xviii. 19. 2 Tim. iv. 3
h 15. 22, 23. 2 Chr. xviii. 14. Jer. viii. 10, 11. xiv. 13, 14. xxiii. 14—17. xxviii. 1—9. Ez. xiii. 7—16. 22. Mat. vii. 15. 2 Pet. ii. 1—3. Rev. xix. 20.

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their plain warnings and rebukes, but whose hearts are wedded to their lusts. Men of this character often count the very persons to be their enemies, whose hearts bleed with compassion for them, and whose secret prayers in their behalf are recorded before God, as a demonstration of their disinterested love for them. Indeed this appears in their being willing rather to incur their keenest resentment, than not endeavour to save their souls. If men allow that they hate the minister for his faithfulness, they condemn themselves; but if they dislike him for his excessive severity, and his ill-nature, they are perfectly excusable: and what sinner would not wish to stand fair with his own conscience, and with society? On the other hand, impenitent sinners often account those to be their friends, who speak smooth things, and help them to deceive themselves: and are very lavish in their commendation, by way of contrasting them with those whom they deem their enemies; that it may be thought they love religion, whilst they hate its firmest friends. But *the real man of God* will neither desire the applause, nor fear the reproach, of those who have sold themselves to work wickedness, and evince that they are the enemies of God and holiness. His testimony will one day find out, and condemn, those who have rejected it. Terrible things may come upon the willing slaves of sin in this world; but they will surely receive its awful wages in the second death. (*Rev.* xx. 14, 15.) At the tribunal of God the difference will be manifest to all men, betwixt the most lamentable falls of true believers, and the habitual wickedness of ungodly men; and betwixt true repentance, and all external, partial, and temporary appearances of it. Before the searching word of God, the most stupid conscience will sometimes be disquieted, and the stoutest heart tremble; and for a season sinners will speak and act as if truly penitent: but by their fruits ye shall know them: and as the heart remains unchanged, nature will soon return to that course from which it has been violently forced: so that relapses into former iniquities, with continuance and quietness, will evince such hopeful appearances to be widely different from "that repentance, "which is to salvation not to be repented of." Yet, as these concessions *outwardly* yield the point in contest, and are thus honourable to God, he will notice and recompense them with respites and outward benefits. So that whilst we are warned to beware of counterfeits, we are encouraged by the abounding grace of God, which he will never withhold from the upright humble soul; seeing he so delights in mercy, that he extends it even to wicked men, as far as consists with his justice, holiness, truth, and wisdom. We may also be animated to abound in the work of the Lord, assured that our labour will not be in vain; since he even recompenses *in kind* the formal services of his enemies. And finally, may we seek the blessings of the new covenant for the good of ourselves, and of our children after us: whilst wicked men leave their inheritances to their posterity, burdened with the curse of God; and ensure destruction to their own souls.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXII. V. 2. We shall have a better opportunity hereafter of fully considering Jehoshaphat's character. (2 *Chr.* xvii—xx.) He was very criminal in intermarrying with the family of idolatrous Ahab, which probably occasioned his visit at Samaria, with all its consequences.

V. 3. *Ramoth*, &c. This seems to have been one of the cities that Ben-hadad had engaged to restore to Ahab: but having recovered his liberty, he made no scruple of violating his word.

V. 4. *I am*, &c. Jehoshaphat meant nothing more than to express his readiness to afford Ahab every assistance in his power, as both he and his forces were at his command: but the language seemed to countenance all Ahab's undertakings; or at least to treat all the differences in opinion and conduct between them as unimportant! Yet surely there was an essential difference between the reformer of Judah, and the corrupter of Israel! But excessive pliability of temper was Jehoshaphat's failing, which exposed him to many temptations, and involved him, his family, and his kingdom, in many and heavy calamities.

V. 5. Jehoshaphat had been used to acknowledge God in all his ways, and not to engage in any important undertaking without inquiring of him by his prophets or high priest: and he was not satisfied for Ahab to do otherwise. But what true servant of God could bring an acceptable, or even a tolerable, message to a vile idolater and oppressor, who for twenty-two years after he came to the throne had been hardening in iniquity, amidst warnings, judgments, mercies, and conviction?

V. 6. It is most probable, that these were the prophets of the groves, who escaped, when the prophets of Baal were slain at the command of Elijah: for certainly they were false prophets. As they ate at Jezebel's table, we may be sure, that they commonly prophesied in the name of Baal: but it seems, that to serve a turn they could use the name of the Lord. In this verse indeed the word is not JEHOVAH, but *Adonai*, which is used with greater

7 And Jehoshaphat said, [i] *Is there* not here a prophet of the LORD besides, that we might inquire of him?

8 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, *There is* [k] yet one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may inquire of the LORD; [l] but I hate him, for he doth not prophesy [m] good [n] concerning me, but evil. And Jehoshaphat said, [o] Let not the king say so.

9 Then the king of Israel called an * officer, and said, [p] Hasten *hither* Micaiah the son of Imlah.

10 And the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah sat each on his throne, [q] having put on their robes in a † void place in the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and [r] all the prophets prophesied before them.

11 And Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah made him [s] horns of iron: and he said, [t] Thus saith the LORD, With these shalt thou push the Syrians, until thou have consumed them.

12 And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, [u] Go up to Ramoth-gilead, and prosper; for the Lord shall deliver *it* into the king's hand.

13 And the messenger that was gone to call Micaiah spake unto him, saying, [x] Behold now, the words of the prophets *declare* good unto the king with one mouth: let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of them, and speak *that which is* good.

14 And Micaiah said, *As* the LORD liveth, [y] what the LORD saith unto me, that will I speak.

i 2 Kings iii. 11—13. 2 Chr. xviii. 6, 7.
k xviii. 4. xix 10.
l 27. xx. 43. xxi. 20. Gen. xxxvii. 8. 2 Chr xxxvi. 16. Prov. ix. 8. xv. 12. Jer. xviii. 18. xx 10. xliii. 3, 4 Am. v 10. John vii. 7. xv. 18, 19. Gal. iv. 16.
m Is. xxx. 10. Jer xxxviii. 4. Mic. ii. 14.
n xx 35—42. 2 Kings ix. 22. Is. lvii. 19—21.
o xxi. 27—29. Prov. v. 9—13. xxv 12. Mic. ii. 7.
* Or, *eunuch*.
p 26, 27. 2 Chr. xviii. 8—11.
q 30. Esth. v. 1. vi. 8, 9. Matt. vi 29. Acts xii. 21. xxv. 23.
† Heb. *floor*.
r xviii. 29. Jer. xxvii. 14—16 Ez. xiii. 1—9.
s Jer. xxvii. 2. xxviii. 10—14. Zech. i. 18—21. Acts xix. 13—16. 2 Cor. xi. 13—15. 2 Tim iii. 8.
t Jer. xxiii. 17. 25. 31. xxviii. 2, 3. xxix. 21. Ez. xiii 6. xxii. 27. 28. Mic. iii. 11.
u 6. 15. 32—36.
x Job xxii. 13. Ps. x. 11. xiv. 1. 1. 21. Is. xxx. 10, 11. Hos. vii. 3. Am. vii. 13—17. Mic. ii. 6, 7. 11. 1 Cor. ii. 14—16
y Num. xxii. 38. 2 Chr xviii. 12, 13. Jer. xxiii 28. xxvi. 2, 3 xlii 4. Ez. ii. 4—8. iii. 17—19. Acts xx. 20. 26. 27. 2 Cor. ii. 17. iv. 2.

latitude, but afterwards both Zedekiah and the rest of them used the word JEHOVAH. Like some modern philosophers and poets, they perhaps would argue, that it was all one, whether the Supreme Being were called Baal, or JEHOVAH, or Jupiter: to humour the matter therefore with Jehoshaphat, and to show that they were no bigots, but men of candour and liberality, they would for once prophesy in the name of the Lord. They perhaps allowed Jehoshaphat to be a good sort of a man: but he had some narrow prejudices, and would not be satisfied, if they said, 'Go up, 'for Baal shall deliver it into the hand of the King;' and they would scorn to disagree with him about a trifling variation, which they could make with little trouble and without expense. They perceived likewise, which way Ahab's inclinations leaned, and to please him too they assured him of success. It is however to be supposed, that the number and valour of his forces, his alliance with Jehoshaphat, and the scandalous treachery of Ben-hadad, concurred in encouraging their hopes that he would obtain the victory: for notwithstanding his idolatries, he had before been successful.

V. 7. It is probable that Jehoshaphat suspected these prophets to be mere sycophants, whose trade it was to counsel Ahab to please himself. He knew that Israel was favoured with Elijah, Elisha, and other eminent prophets, though none of them appeared at court: he felt dissatisfied; but being too afraid of giving offence, he seemed to allow that these were prophets of God, yet he wished to consult some other, if there were any to be found. Perhaps he took occasion, from their using the word *Adonai*, (which might mean either the God of Israel, or a false god,) to inquire after some other prophet of JEHOVAH: and this might induce them afterwards to change their language in this respect. His subsequent conduct shows, that he paid more regard to them than they deserved.

V. 8. We never read of Micaiah but in this chapter and the parallel chapter in Chronicles: yet he doubtless had several times been sent with messages of rebuke and warning to this haughty idolater; and therefore, whilst Ahab allowed that they might inquire of the LORD by him, he acknowledged that he hated him! But Jehoshaphat ventured gently to intimate that he ought not to say so: he ought neither to hate him, nor be displeased with his word, nor seek agreeable, but useful things; and he hoped on this occasion he would bring him an encouraging message.

V. 9. Ahab knew where to find Micaiah, whom he perhaps had put in prison for some of his faithful reproofs, (v. 26, 27.) Some conjecture that Micaiah was the prophet, that three years before had chagrined Ahab, and that he had kept him in prison ever since. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 11. *Horns*, &c. These horns of iron were intended to represent the joint forces of the two kings made successful by the power of God. The false prophets imitated the true ones in using external signs, the more deeply to impress the minds of those whom they addressed. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 13, 14. Perhaps this man meant to be friendly to Micaiah: and thought it was a pity, that he should balk his preferment, and expose himself to Ahab's resentment, for the sake of a needless scrupulousness. He advised him to show some deference to royalty; to have some respect to the other prophets; and not to affect singularity, or pretend that he alone was divinely inspired. But he must have entertained very absurd notions concerning prophecy; either considering the whole to be a mere imposition; or supposing that the truth, will, and purpose of God, could be moulded and modelled to the inclinations of man! If he thought that Micaiah, by speaking that which was good to Ahab, could promote the success of the enterprise, he must have been extremely ignorant. And it was still worse, if he advised Micaiah to humour the king, without regard to the consequences. Perhaps he thought that the unanimity and confidence, with which so great a number of prophets assured Ahab of success in the name of the LORD, proved them to be in the right; and that it would be foolish in Micaiah to oppose his single voice to such a multitude. And indeed, not only Ahab, but Jehoshaphat himself, seems to have been imposed upon by the same de-

15 ¶ So he came to the king. And the king said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall we forbear? And he answered him, [y] Go, and prosper: for the LORD shall deliver *it* into the hand of the king.

16 And the king said unto him, How many times [z] shall I adjure thee [a] that thou tell me nothing but *that which is* true in the name of the LORD?

17 And he said, [b] I saw all Israel [c] scattered upon the hills as sheep that have not a shepherd: and the LORD said, These have no master: let them return every man to his house in peace.

18 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, [d] Did I not tell thee that he would prophesy no good concerning me, but evil?

19 And he said, Hear thou therefore the word of the LORD: [e] I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, and [f] all the host of heaven standing by him, on his right hand and on his left:

20 And the LORD said, Who shall * persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner.

21 And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said, I will persuade him.

22 And the LORD said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be [g] a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, [h] Thou shalt persuade *him*, and prevail also: go forth, and do so.

23 Now therefore, behold, [i] the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and [k] the LORD hath spoken evil concerning thee.

24 But [l] Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah went near, and smote [m] Micaiah on the cheek, and said, [n] Which way

y xviii. 27. 2 Chr. xviii. 14. Judg. x. 14. Ec. xi 9 Matt. xxvi 45.
z 1 Sam xiv. 24. 2 Chr. xviii. 15. Matt. xxvi. 63.
a Jer. xlii. 3—6. Matt. xxii 16, 17.
b 1 Sam. ix. 9. Jer. i. 11—16 Ez i 4. Acts x. 11—17.
c 34—36. Num. xxvii 17. 2 Chr. xviii 16, 17. Jer. xxiii. 1, 2. Ez. xxxiv. 4—6. Zech xiii. 7. Matt ix. 36.
d 8. Prov. x. 24. xxvii. 22 xxix. 1. Luke xi 45.
e 2 Chr. xviii 18—22 Is. vi. 1. Dan. vii. 9, 10. Acts vii. 55, 56. Rev. iv. 2, 3.
f Ps ciii 20, 21. Is. vi 2, 3. Zech. i. 10. Mat xviii. 10 Heb. i. 7 14 xii 22 Rev. v. 11.
* Or, deceive.
g Job i. 6. ii. 1. John viii. 44. 1 John iv. 6. Rev. xii 9 xiii. 14.
h Judg ix. 23. Job xii. 16. Ps. cix 17. 2 Thes. ii. 11, 12.
i Ex. iv. 21. x. 20. Deut. ii. 30. 2 Chr. xxv. 16. Is. vi. 9, 10 xliv. 20 Ez. xiv. 3—5. 9 Matt. xiii 13—15. xxiv. 21, 25.
k 8. Is iii. 11.
l 11.
m 2 Chr xviii. 23, 24. Is 1. 5, 6. Lam iii. 30. Mic. v. 1. Mark xiv. 65. xv. 19, 20. John xv. 18. 20. Acts xxiii 2.
n Jer. xxviii. 10, 11. xxix. 26, 27. Matt. xxvi. 68. xxvii 42, 43.

lusive argument; which, in one form or other, has been urged as conclusive, by very able and sensible men, in every age of the church. Micaiah however at once silenced the courtier, and with a solemn oath protested, that he would deliver the Lord's message, without any alteration, whatever the king thought of it, and whatever the other prophets might agree in. A noble example!

V. 15. *Go*, &c. The prophet did not preface this address, with "Thus saith the Lord!" and Ahab perceived that he did not speak with his usual decision and authority. It was, as if he had said, 'You intend to go up against Ra-'moth-gilead, and your prophets assure you of success, 'and if I do not, you will disregard my warning, and treat 'me as an enemy. But you have my good will and good 'wishes, if they could profit you: and if my conscience 'would allow me, I too could easily seek your favour, by 'saying,' "Go, and prosper, for the LORD shall deliver it "into the hand of the king."

V. 16. Ahab spake as if he had, on former occasions, thus adjured Micaiah to speak nothing to him but the truth; and with some intimation, that the prophet needed such adjurations. He evidently aimed to be thought, especially by Jehoshaphat, exceedingly solicitous about discovering the will of God. Perhaps Micaiah hesitated, till repeatedly urged to speak: and some think, that he did not receive his message, till the very moment before he delivered it.—The adjuring a person to speak, was equivalent to putting him upon his oath; and calling on him, as in the presence and by the authority of God, to speak all he knew. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 17. This vision exactly represented the condition of Ahab's forces, when he was slain; and showed, that Benhadad's malice being gratified by Ahab's death, he would allow them, when vanquished, and scattered without a leader, to return home in peace.

V. 18. Ahab wished to persuade Jehoshaphat *and himself*, that this warning originated from Micaiah's malignity and enmity to him: being similar to the messages he had formerly delivered; and therefore that it ought not to be put in competition with the predictions of all the other prophets.

V. 19—23. In order to leave this hardened criminal without excuse, and to give a salutary lesson to others in future ages, Micaiah received and related this vision. We need not determine what passes in that world where the Lord unveils his glory; for *truths*, not *facts*, are revealed in such representations. God had doomed Ahab to fall at Ramoth-gilead, by the army of Ben-hadad, whom he had sinfully spared. In order to bring him thither, he was pleased to give Satan leave to impose upon him with the hopes of success in that expedition. That evil spirit is always ready for such attempts, and generally uses false teachers as his ministers. This method he followed upon this occasion, and prevailed against Ahab, by inducing all his prophets to promise him victory. And by *permitting* him to do this, "the LORD put a lying spirit in the mouth "of all his prophets." He neither commanded nor inclined the lying spirit to tempt Ahab's prophets; nor did he put the wickedness into their hearts, or the lies into their mouths. He likewise gave Ahab fair warning; and if he had not hated the truth, and loved a lie, he would not have gone to Ramoth-gilead: but God foresaw he would go, and would perish there. The prophet "saw the LORD sit-"ting upon his throne," and that made him disregard Ahab upon his throne, and not fear his frown and vengeance; nor the resentment of the four hundred prophets, who must have been enraged even to madness, at being thus publicly declared to be the ministers of the devil, to entice their king to his destruction! (*Marg. Ref.*)

went the Spirit of the Lord from me to speak unto thee?

25 And Micaiah said, [o] Behold, thou shalt see in that day, when thou shalt go into * an inner chamber to hide thyself.

26 And the king of Israel said, Take Micaiah, and [p] carry him back unto Amon the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son;

27 And say, Thus saith the king, [q] Put this *fellow* in the prison, and feed him with [r] bread of affliction and with water of affliction, [s] until I come in peace.

28 And Micaiah said, [t] If thou return at all in peace, the Lord hath not spoken by me. And he said, [u] Hearken, O people, every one of you.

29 ¶ So [x] the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramoth-gilead.

30 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, † I will disguise myself, and enter into the battle; but [y] put thou on thy robes. And the king of Israel [z] disguised himself, and went into the battle.

31 But the king of Syria commanded his [a] thirty and two captains that had rule over his chariots, saying, [b] Fight neither with [c] small nor great, save only with the king of Israel.

32 And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, Surely it *is* the king of Israel. And they turned aside to fight against him: and [d] Jehoshaphat cried out.

33 And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots perceived that it *was* not the king of Israel, that they turned back from pursuing him.

34 And a *certain* man drew a bow ‡ at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the ◊ joints of the harness: wherefore he said unto the driver of his chariot, Turn thine hand, and carry me out of the host; for I am ‖ wounded.

35 And the battle * increased that day: and the king was stayed up in his chariot against the Syrians, and [e] died at even: and the blood ran out of the wound into the † midst of the chariot.

36 And [f] there went a proclamation

o Num. xxxi. 8. Jer. xxiii. 15. xxviii 16, 17. xxix. 21, 22. 32.
* Or, *from chamber to chamber.* Heb. *a chamber in a chamber.* xx. 30.
p 8, 5.
q 18, 19. 2 Chr. xvi. 10. xviii. 25—27. Jer. xx. 2. xxix. 26. xxviii. 6. Mark vi. 17—28.
r Deu. xvi. 3. Ps. lxxx. 5. cii 9. cxxvii. 2. Is. xxx. 20.
s Luke xii. 45, 46. 1 Thes. v. 2, 3.
t Num. xvi. 29. Deut. xviii. 20—22. Is. xlv. 26. Jer. xxviii. 8, 9. Acts xiii. 10, 11.
u 2 Chr. xviii. 27. Am. iii. 1. Mic i. 2. Mark vii. 14—16.
x 2. 2 Chr. xviii. 29.
† Or, *When he was to disguise himself, and enter into the battle.* xiv. 2. xx. 38. Prov. xxi. 30. Jer. xxiii. 21.
y 10. Ps. xii. 2.
z 2 Chr. xviii. 29. xxxv. 22.

a xx. 34. 2 Chr. xviii. 30.
b xx. 33—42.
c Jer. xvi. 6.
d Ex. xiv. 10. 2 Chr. xviii. 31, 32. Ps. l. 15. cxvi. 1, 2. cxxx. 1—4.
‡ Heb. *in his simplicity.* 2 Sam. xv. 11.
◊ Heb. *joints and the breast-plate.*
‖ Heb. *made sick.* 2 Chr. xviii. 33. xxxv. 23. Mic vi. 13.
* Heb. *ascended.*
e 28. xx. 42.
† Heb. *bosom.*
f 17. 31. xii. 16. 2 Kings xiv. 12.

V. 24, 25. Zedekiah seems to have been the principal person among Ahab's prophets: he therefore highly resented Micaiah's words, and abused him without rebuke, in the presence of the king and his nobles. As one who would appear confident that he spake by the Spirit of the Lord, he inquired, when, and how, that Spirit left him to inspire such a one as Micaiah? But the prophet answered, that the event would determine which of them spake by the Spirit of God; and he would not need information on that head, when he should conceal himself in the closest recesses, for fear of those who sought his life. Probably Zedekiah accompanied Ahab to the war, and this prediction was fulfilled when he fled from the enemy, after Ahab's death. Then he would have leisure to reflect on his own impiety, and the fatal effects of his counsels to his king, for whom he had pretended great friendship.

V. 26, 27. Ahab sent Micaiah back to prison, ordering him to be closely confined and treated with severity, till his return in peace, probably intending then to put him to death as a false prophet. He forgot his own counsel to Ben-hadad, when he spake so confidently of returning in peace. (xx. 11.)

V. 28. Micaiah thus put the difference betwixt himself and Ahab's prophets to the trial; and made his appeal to the people at large: that if the king despised the word of God, they might from his fate learn to reverence it.

V. 29. Jehoshaphat's silent connivance at Ahab's treatment of Micaiah, and his willingness to go with him to battle, after these solemn warnings, were very criminal, and almost unaccountable! Perhaps he feared personal insults; or he persuaded himself, that in Ahab's court he had no business to intermeddle; or matters were carried with such violence and precipitation, that he had scarcely time to reflect on his own conduct.

V. 30. Perhaps Ahab was secretly alarmed by the solemnity of Micaiah's address, though he scorned to desist from his enterprise; or he was aware that he should be peculiarly aimed at by the Syrian forces. Under pretence of honouring Jehoshaphat with the chief command, he made this insidious proposal to him, that he might be exposed to the greatest danger, and so favour his own escape. Such was his friendship! But Jehoshaphat meant no harm and suspected none.

V. 31. *Save*, &c. Some have imagined, that Ben-hadad wished to wipe off the disgrace of his own captivity, by making Ahab prisoner in return; and to reciprocate his kindness in liberating him without ransom. But his proud heart seems to have rankled with a more malignant resentment, and Ahab's success against him had excited such hatred as no subsequent kindness could erase.

V. 32—35. Jehoshaphat in extreme danger "cried unto "the Lord," and he wonderfully preserved him: (2 *Chr.* xviii. 31, 32.) But Ahab, notwithstanding all his precautions, could not escape the destined blow. The captains of Ben-hadad knew not where to seek for him: but an arrow shot at random by a Syrian was directed by God to penetrate the joints of his coat of mail, and give him a mortal wound. Perhaps he did not think that it would prove fatal, and would not intimidate his forces by finally leaving the field of battle; and therefore having retired that his wound might be dressed, he returned, and remained in his chariot till he died.

throughout the host about the going down of the sun, saying, Every man to his city, and every man to his own country.

37 So the king died, and was * brought to Samaria; and they buried the king in Samaria.

38 And *one* washed the chariot in the pool of Samaria, and the dogs liked up his blood, and they washed his armour, [g] according unto the word of the LORD which he spake.

39 Now [h] the rest of the acts of Ahab, and all that he did, and [i] the ivory-house which he made, and all the cities that he built, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

40 So Ahab slept with his fathers; and [k] Ahaziah his son reigned in his stead.

41 ¶ And Jehoshaphat the son of Asa began to reign over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel.

42 Jehoshaphat *was* [l] thirty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and five years in Jerusalem: and [m] his mother's name *was* Azubah, the daughter of Shilhi.

43 And he walked [n] in all the ways of Asa his father, [o] he turned not aside from it, [p] doing *that which was* right in the eyes of the LORD: nevertheless [q] the high places were not taken away; *for* the people offered and burnt incense yet in the high places.

44 And Jehoshaphat [r] made peace with the king of Israel.

45 Now [s] the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, and his might that he showed, and how he warred, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

46 And [t] the remnant of the Sodomites, which remained in the days of his father Asa, he took out of the land.

47 *There was* then [u] no king in Edom: a deputy *was* king.

48 [x] Jehoshaphat † made [y] ships of Tharshish to go [z] to Ophir for gold: but [a] they went not; for the ships were broken at [b] Ezion-geber.

49 Then said Ahaziah the son of Ahab unto Jehoshaphat, Let my servants go with thy servants in the ships: but Jehoshaphat would not.

50 And Jehoshaphat [c] slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and [d] Jehoram his son reigned in his stead.

51 ¶ Ahaziah the son of Ahab [e] began to reign over Israel in Samaria, the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned [f] two years over Israel.

* Heb. *came.*

g xxi. 19 Is. xliv. 26, 26. xlviii. 3—5. Jer xliv. 21—23. Zech. i. 4—6. Matt xxiv. 35.
h xiv. 19. xv. 23. 31. xvi. 5. 20. 27.
i x. 18. Ps. xlv. 8. Am. iii. 15.
k 51. 2 Kings i. 2. 17. B. C. 914.
l 2 Kings i. 17 viii 6. 2 Chr. xvii 1.
m xiv. 21. xv. 2. 10.
n xv. 11. 14 2 Chr xiv 2—5. 11. xv 8 17
o 1 Sam. xii 20, 21. 2 Chr. xvi 7—12. Prov. iv. 27.
p 2 Chr. xvii. 3—6. xix. 3, 4. xx. 3, &c.
q xiv 23. xv. 14. 2 Kings xii 3. xiv 3, 4. xv 3, 4. xviii. 22
r 2. 2 Kings viii. 18. 2 Chr. xix 2 xxi. 6. 2 Cor. vi 14.
s xi. 41. xiv. 29.
t xiv. 24. xv. 12. Gen. xix. 5. Deut. xxiii. 17. Judg. xix. 22. Rom i. 26, 27. Jude 7.
u Gen xxv. 23. xxvii 40. 2 Sam. viii. 14 2 Kings iii. 9. viii. 20. Ps. cviii. 2. 10.
x 2 Chr. xx. 35, 36.
† Or, had ten *ships.*
y x. 22. 2 Chr. ix. 21. Ps. xlviii. 7. Is. ii. 16. lx. 9. Jon. i. 3.
z ix. 28. Ps. xlv. 9.
a 2 Chr. xx. 37. xxv. 7.
b ix. 26. Num. xxxiii. 35, 36.
B. C. 889.
c ii. 10. 2 Chr. xxi. 1.
d 2 Kings viii 16—18. 2 Chr. xxi. 5—7.
B. C. 897.
e 40.
f xv. 25. 2 Kings i. 17.

V. 36. When Ahab's death was known, either Jehoshaphat, or they who succeeded in command, issued this proclamation, probably with reference to Micaiah's vision.

V. 38. (*Note* xxi. 17—19.)

V. 39. It cannot be supposed, that this house was built of ivory: but it was so inlaid and ornamented with ivory, that it thence derived its principal elegance or magnificence. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 41—46. Perhaps this general account is here given of Jehoshaphat's reign over Judah, in order to contrast it with Ahab's wicked reign over Israel. The chief blemish in Jehoshaphat's character is hinted at, when it is said, "He made peace with the king of Israel:" not merely engaging to avoid all hostile measures; but entering into the most intimate alliance with him, and confirming the treaty by marrying his son to Ahab's daughter, which introduced much idolatry and wickedness into Judah, brought great calamities on the inhabitants, and occasioned the almost entire ruin of Jehoshaphat's family.

V. 47. David had conquered Edom; and it is probable, that till this time, the nominal king of Edom had been merely a viceroy of the kings of Judah. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 48, 49. Jehoshaphat at first joined with Ahaziah, and lost his fleet: but being reproved by a prophet, he would not consent to Ahaziah's proposals the second time. (*Marg. Ref.*)—These ships of Tharshish were made to go to Ophir: yet it is said in Chronicles, they were "made "to go to Tharshish." Was there not therefore a Tharshish near Ophir, as well as a place of that name in Spain? (*Note*, 1 *Kings* x. 22.)

V. 51. Jehoshaphat began to reign in the *fourth* year of Ahab, who reigned *twenty and two* years, (41:) yet Ahaziah succeeded Ahab, in the *seventeenth* year of Jehoshaphat. This occasions some difficulty; but learned men suppose, that the chronology of the kings of Israel was adjusted to that of the kings of Judah. Now Ahab began to reign, after Asa had entered on his thirty-eighth year, and Asa died before the end of his forty-first year. (xvi. 29. 2 *Chr.* xvi. 13.) And Jehoshaphat began to reign in the same year, which thus was reckoned both to Asa and Jehoshaphat. Ahab therefore is computed to have reigned four years in Asa's time, and eighteen in Jehoshaphat's, including a part of the year in which Asa died, and in which Jehoshaphat succeeded him: though Ahab did not live till Jehoshaphat had fully completed his seventeenth year; having died nearer the beginning of the year than Asa had done. It is difficult to make this intelligible to persons not acquainted with the Jewish method of comput-

g xv. 26. xvi. 30. —33.
h xxi. 25.

52 And g he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father, and h in the way of his mother, and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

ing time: who, (whether in days or years,) take in both the first and last of the account, as if entire, even though only a small part of each had actually passed. Thus Ahaziah, having reigned part of the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat, and part of the eighteenth, (for he died in the eighteenth,) is said to have reigned *two* years.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

They who neglect the word of God to rely on the promises of ungodly men, generally meet with merited disappointment: but this does not excuse the treachery and ingratitude of those who deceive and injure the very persons that have been criminally kind to them. There are cartain critical seasons, when advantages are placed within our reach: but if we let the opportunity pass we shall in vain attempt to recal it, and our endeavours will only serve to increase our losses. Wicked men court the friendship of the righteous, when they can render their assistance subservient to their own purposes; but their professions of regard must be insincere. The same easiness of temper, which betrays some pious persons into amity with the declared enemies of religion, renders such connexions peculiarly dangerous to them: they are perpetually persuaded to improper compliances of every kind; and induced to connive at, and even sanction, such converse and conduct as they ought decidedly to protest against: and the fear of being deemed uncourteous, and the desire of escaping censure, ridicule, or insult for their religious peculiarities, stop their mouths, and cause them to deviate from sincerity in their expressions of civility. Yet these are the only godly people whose acquaintance the men of the world will much desire. If, however, we are necessarily placed among profane or infidel characters; we must not yield either to fear or shame, so as to conceal our dependence on God and devotedness to him; for these mark the difference betwixt those who serve him, and those that serve him not. If it were to be decided by vote, what was the true religion, we see plainly, that those abominations that God abhors would gain the election, against that worship which he hath instituted. Even in the visible church, numbers, authority, and unanimity, have repeatedly been in favour of delusions, against a single poor despised prophet of the Lord! It is, *in a worldly sense*, worth while, for a man of competent talents and address, to employ himself in reconciling men's consciences to their inclinations: and if great men cannot discard their religious scruples, to enable them, by help of some false system, to render them subservient to the commission of sin without remorse. *In some places and at some times*, such false prophets will be well paid for their delusions: and they who, from ambition, avarice, or sensuality, "turn away their ears from the truth," and "can-"not endure sound doctrine," will "heap to themselves "teachers of this kind, after their own lusts:" that the agreement of so many ministers may embolden them to disregard those *singular unfashionable* persons, who are always robbing them of their comfort, and putting them upon an unnecessary strictness.—A few individuals indeed hint, that something is wanting in their favourite instructors; nay, seem to prefer such as they dislike. But then, are not these too scrupulous? Do they not carry matters too far? Do they make proper allowances for human frailty, and peculiar situations? So that eventually smooth doctrine, united with confidence, ingenuity, and courtly manners, obtains the preference, and opens the way to the favour of the great and of the many. The faithful servants of God must therefore lay their account with hatred, contempt, and insult. They know not to give flattering words, or to call base crimes by soft names, or to buoy up the hopes of hypocrites with insinuating falsehoods: they cannot be silent, when called to speak, but must declare the counsel of God, and not keep back any thing profitable, however displeasing. Their conscientiousness will often be ascribed to pride and obstinacy; the language of their tender compassion for souls will be called severity or malevolence; and their plain-dealing will be branded as insolence and ill manners. But they must commit their cause to God: and wicked men, who hate them for the truth's sake, will at length find, that they were their own enemies in so doing, and that in opposing them they strove against the Almighty.

V. 10—28.

Unprincipled teachers are often sufficiently pliable in matters of religion: they carefully avoid the imputation of bigotry; they make great pretensions to candour, and even treat the most fundamental truths of Revelation as matters of indifference or uncertainty: but the same men are exceedingly tenacious of their own interests, and stubborn in their own concerns. Whereas we ought to be as pliant as the willow, where our own ease, credit, advantage, or indulgence, are at stake; and as firm as the sturdy oak, in standing up for the great things which relate to the glory of God and the salvation of souls.—They who are rising in the world, or possessed of wealth, are apt to counsel the ministers of Christ, *what they ought to speak in the name of the* Lord, though they betray their own incompetency by every word. We should indeed be accessible and teachable, and willing to take a friendly hint from any man: but when others would persuade us to consult our own ease and interest, to shun the cross, to prefer courtesy to integrity, and to bend the word of God to the humours of the rich and great; we must recognize the tempter in such counsellors, and by peremptory language stop at once their insidious proposal, by declaring our determination, whatever others do, to adhere to what we consider as the truth and will of our Lord and Judge.—In some cases however we should not be forward to speak; when men evidently do not wish to hear the truth, and appear determinately set against our testimony, it may be enough to express our compassionate good will, and our fears for them; or to show our disapprobation by silence. But if we are fairly called upon to give our sentiments, we must do it with all seriousness and firmness, without regarding personal consequences.—A believing view of the presence and glory of the King of

i Judg. ii. 1–11.
k xxi. 29. Ez. xviii. 14—18.

53 For [i] he served Baal, and worshipped him, and [k] provoked to anger the Lord God of Israel, according to all that his father had done.

Heaven, will raise us above the fear of our fellow creatures, however powerful or enraged; and will enable us to commit ourselves to his protection, in the discharge of our duty, in the midst of apparent danger. But we must not expect exemption from hardship and ill usage; and need not wonder, if we eat the bread of affliction, and are even rewarded with blows, imprisonment, and cruel mockings: and when princes, false teachers, and apostates unite against the servants of God, even the remnant of his people will often be afraid to interfere in their behalf. Alas! how should we be ashamed to complain of what we in this day call *trials*, when we consider what the servants of God have formerly endured! Yet it will be well, if our exemption from trouble prove not more injurious to us, than persecutions did to them: for we are more easily allured and bribed into unfaithfulness and conformity to the world, than influenced by terrors and threats. Let us then watch and pray, and prepare for temptations of every kind: and be careful that the quietness of our enemies do not arise from our making too many concessions, and going upon their ground, to meet them half way, in order to form the worst of all coalitions.—Nothing can by any means harm us, if we continue faithful, and meekly valiant for the truth: the Lord will remove every aspersion from our characters, and bear testimony to his truth, in his due time: and some will profit by our warnings, though others rush headlong on ruin.—Little do unbelievers suspect how many legions of crafty, malicious, and powerful enemies are unwearied in plotting their destruction; restrained by no hand, but that of him whom they despise and disobey. The whole multitude of those, "who privily bring in damnable "heresies," or propagate infidelity with vast industry and ingenuity, speak and write no other things, *than are suggested to them by the prompter behind the curtain.* Let us then fear stifling our convictions, and returning back to sin after professions of repentance, lest Satan should thus prevail against us. For if he obtain leave to deceive, the disposition of our hearts to prefer a flattering lie, to a humbling truth that crosses our inclinations, will give him such an advantage, that every attempt of others to prevent his success, will only exasperate the mind to persecution or blasphemy.

V. 29—53.

They who are rebellious against God, and injurious to his people, will not often be very faithful or grateful to their friends. Self-love is their supreme principle, to which all other considerations must be sacrificed: and the children of God are seldom so politic as the children of the wicked one. When, however, the Lord hath rebuked his offending people, he will mark that difference betwixt them and his enemies, which they did not sufficiently observe. "His eyes are upon the righteous, "and his ears are open to their prayers: but his face "is against the workers of iniquity." None can hide themselves in secret places from him. That which is casual to man, is the appointment of God, to fulfil his word of mercy or of wrath: so that "men shall say, "This hath God wrought, for they shall perceive that "it is his work." The deceiver and the deceived are his, and the flatterer and flattered shall be taken in the same net, and fall into the same destruction. Alas! what will all riches, monuments, or splendid achievements avail, when God shall require the sinner's soul? Happy are they in death, who have served him in their generation: but man's best service is so defective and defiled, that "blessed "is he" alone "whose iniquity is forgiven, and whose "sin is covered." Yet sincere endeavours to do good are the proper evidences and effects of saving faith: and the concurring reproofs of God's word and rod will lead the upright believer to repent of every transgression, and to bring forth fruits meet for repentance: whilst hardened sinners rush forward, unawed and unmoved, in the ways which have led others before them into everlasting misery.

THE SECOND BOOK OF THE

KINGS,

COMMONLY CALLED

THE FOURTH BOOK OF THE KINGS.

THIS book is merely a continuation of the preceding, to which it is joined in the Hebrew Canon: the remarks therefore already made on that, *in a great measure apply to* this.—*It contains the history of above three hundred years.—In Israel the kings were uniformly idolatrous and wicked: and though the labours of Elijah, Elisha, and other prophets, were prospered to preserve a considerable number of the people from the general contagion; yet the measure of their national iniquity was soon filled up; so that they were conquered and carried captive by the kings of the Assyrians, and dispersed among the Gentiles, no more, as a collected body, to be restored to their own land. Their country was after this planted by the conquerors with a mingled people; these established a corrupt and partial worship of* JEHOVAH, *from whom originated the nation and religion of the Samaritans. These events began to take place considerably above a hundred years before the Babylonish captivity.—In Judah indeed some remarkable revivals of religion took place, under the pious princes of David's family; and by means of the faithful labours of the prophets: but these promising appearances were of short duration: many of the kings were idolatrous and extremely wicked; the priests and Levites exceedingly neglected their important duty; and the people were generally prone to idolatry and iniquity. So that, after the death of pious Josiah, the nation became almost universally corrupt; and the melancholy account closes with the destruction of the city and temple, the desolation of the country, and the enslaving and carrying away of the inhabitants, by the Chaldeans.—As all the prophets,* (*commonly so called,*) *whose writings have been preserved, lived in the latter part of this period;* (*those excepted who lived during or after the captivity;*) *and as they continually refer to the facts recorded in this history; we may consider all their predictions as sanctioning, by their accomplishment, the divine authority of the narrative; though it does not contain any express prophecy, the completion of which extended much beyond the term of the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity.*

B. C. 896.

CHAP. I.

Moab rebels, 1. *Ahaziah, being sick, sends to inquire of Baal-zebub; and Elijah orders the messengers to inform him, in the name of God, that he should surely die,* 2—4. *Ahaziah sends to apprehend Elijah, who twice calls down fire to consume those who came against him,* 5—12. *The captain of the third company sues for mercy; and Elijah, encouraged by an angel, goes to Ahaziah, and assures him that he would die at that time,* 13—16. *Ahaziah dies, and is succeeded by Jehoram,* 17, 18.

B. C. 896.

THEN [a] Moab rebelled against Israel [b] after the death of Ahab.

2 And Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber that *was* in Samaria, and [c] was sick: and he sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, inquire of [d] Baal-zebub the [e] god of Ekron, [f] whether I shall recover of this disease.

a viii. 20—22. 2 Sam. viii. 2. 1 Chr. xviii. 2. Ps. lx. 8.
b iii. 4, 5.
c 1 Kings xxii. 34. 2 Chr. xxi. 14, 15.
d Matt. x. 25 xii. 24—27. *Beelzebub.*
e 1 Sam. v. 10.
f viii. 7—9. 1 Kings xiv. 3.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1. After David had subjugated the Moabites, they continued in subjection until the division of the kingdom; when their vassalage and tribute were transferred to the kings of Israel, as those of Edom were to the kings of Judah. But after Ahab's death the Moabites revolted. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 2. *Baal-zebub* signifies the *lord of a fly* or *flies.* Probably the country was grievously infested with swarms of flies, and the Ekronites fancied that their idol delivered

g 15. 1 Kings xix. 5. 7. Acts viii. 26. xii. 7—11.
h 1 Kings xvii. 1.

3 But [g] the angel of the LORD said to [h] Elijah the Tishbite, Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say unto them, [i] *Is it* not because *there is* not a God in Israel, *that* [k] ye go to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron?

i v. 8. 15. 1 Sam. xvii. 46. 1 Kings xviii. 36.
k Jer. ii. 11—13. Jon. ii. 8.

4 Now therefore thus saith the LORD, * Thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, [l] but shalt surely die. And Elijah departed.

* Heb. *The bed whither thou art gone up, thou shalt not come down from it.*
l Prov. xi. 19. xiv. 32. Is. xiv. 21. Ez. xviii. 4. 13—17.

5 And when the messengers turned back unto him, he said unto them, Why are ye now turned back?

6 And they said unto him, There came a man up to meet us, and said unto us, Go, turn again unto the king that sent you, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, *Is it* not because *there is* not a God in Israel, *that* thou sendest to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron? [m] therefore thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die.

m 1 Chr. x. 13, 14.

7 And he said unto them, † What manner of man *was he* which came up to meet you, and told you these words?

† *What was the manner of the man?* Judg. viii. 18. 1 Sam. xxviii. 14.

8 And they answered him, *He was* [n] an hairy man, and girded with a girdle of leather about his loins. And he said, It *is* Elijah the Tishbite.

n Zech. xiii. 4. Matt. iii. 4. xi. 8. Luke i. 17.

9 ¶ Then the king [o] sent unto him a captain of fifty with his fifty: and he went up to him; and, behold, [p] he sat on the top of an hill; and he spake unto him, [q] Thou man of God, the king hath said, Come down.

o vi. 13. 14. 1 Kings xix. 2. Matt. xiv. 3.
p 1 Kings xviii. 42. Luke vi. 12.
q Matt. xxvii. 29. 41—43. Heb. xi. 36.

10 And Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, [r] If I *be* a man of God, then [s] let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And there came down fire from heaven, [t] and consumed him and his fifty.

r Num. xvi. 28—30. 1 Kings xviii. 36—38. xxii. 28. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 16. Ps. cv. 15. Matt. xxi. 25—31. xxiii. 34—37.
s Num. xi. 1. xvi. 35. Job i. 16. Ps. cvi. 18. Luke ix. 54. Acts v. 3—10. Rev. xi. 5.
t Dan. iii. 22. vi. 24. Acts xii. 18.

11 [u] Again also he sent unto him another captain of fifty, with his fifty: and he answered and said unto him, [x] O man of God, thus hath the king said, Come down quickly.

u Num. xvi. 41. 1 Sam. vi. 9. Is. xxvi. 11. Jer. v. 3. John xviii. 5. 12. Acts iv. 16, 17.
x 1 Sam. xxii. 17—19. Prov. xxix. 12. Is. xxxii. 7. Matt. ii. 16. Luke xxii. 63, 64.

12 And Elijah answered and said unto them, [y] If I *be* a man of God, let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And the fire of God came down from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.

y 10.

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and preserved them from them. Beelzebub, (which is the same name,) is called in the New Testament "the prince "of the devils;" and hence we learn that, under these names and images, evil spirits were actually worshipped as gods.—The *Baal* generally worshipped in Israel at that time, was the god of the Zidonians; but *Baal-zebub* was the god of Ekron in Philistia; for they "had lords "many, and gods many." It seems that this oracle was then in great repute, as that of Delphos was in Greece some ages afterwards—Ahaziah did not send to inquire what he was to do in order to his recovery, but merely to know whether he should recover or not. Perhaps he had been making preparations for reducing the Moabites, and was impatient to march against them.

V. 3. When a king of Israel sent to inquire of a heathen oracle, he proclaimed to the Gentiles his want of confidence in JEHOVAH: as if the only nation, favoured with revelation, and the knowledge of the true God, had been the only nation in which no God was known! This was peculiarly dishonourable and provoking to the Lord.

V. 4. *Elijah departed.* The prophet, having delivered his message, departed to his usual place of retirement, but did not conceal himself as formerly.

V. 8. Elijah was a hairy man, either in his person, or by reason of the coarseness and roughness of his garments, made perhaps of hair, and girded round him with a piece of undressed skin. In this manner he showed his mortifiedness to the world, and expressed his concern and grief for the idolatry and iniquity of his people.

V. 9. This officer called Elijah a man of God *by way of derision*, not out of *respect*, as others did.—Jezebel's name is not mentioned in this transaction: but probably she stirred up her son, as she formerly had done her husband, against the prophets of the Lord.

V. 10. No doubt Elijah was moved to call for fire from heaven upon these men, by immediate revelation. He was influenced by a holy zeal for the honour of God, which was attacked in his person by these worshippers of Baalim; for if he had been actuated by resentment or selfish passions, the fire from heaven would not have come at his word.—He had before proved JEHOVAH to be the only true God, by fire from heaven consuming the sacrifice; yet the nation in general, and especially the rulers, adhered to the worship of Baal: it was therefore proper, that they should be convinced by a still more awful proof; and made sensible that all the enemies of the Lord would at length be destroyed. The officers and soldiers who were slain, not only deserved death as idolaters, but doubtless they had been the instruments of Ahab and Jezebel in persecution: and the example would have salutary effects upon many in Israel.

V. 11, 12. It is hard to say, which was on this occasion the more wonderful; the madness of the wounded and enfeebled Ahaziah, or the presumption of his officer and soldiers! for the second attempt was made in a more peremptory and haughty manner than the foregoing! But perhaps the former calamity was ascribed to chance. 'Indeed it had so happened that terrible lightning, just at

z Job xv. 24, 25. Prov. xxvii. 22. Is. i. 5.

13 And [z] he sent again a captain of the third fifty with his fifty: and the third captain of fifty went up, and came and * fell on his knees before Elijah, and [a] besought him, and said unto him, O man of God, I pray thee, [b] let my life, and the life of these fifty thy servants, be precious in thy sight.

* Heb. *bowed.*

a Ex. xi. 8. Num. xii. 11—13. 1 Kings xiii 6. Is. lx. 14. Rev. iii. 9.

b Ps. cii. 17. Jam. iv. 7.

14 Behold, there came fire down from heaven, and burnt up the two captains of the former fifties, with their fifties: therefore [c] let my life now be precious in thy sight.

c 1 Sam. xxvi. 21. 24. Matt. xvi. 25, 26. Acts xx. 24.

15 And the angel of the LORD said unto Elijah, Go down with him; [d] be not afraid of him. And he arose, and went down with him unto the king.

d Gen. xv. 1. 1 Kings xviii. 15. Ps. xxvii. 1. Is. li. 12, 13. Jer. i. 17 xv. 19. Ez. ii. 6. Matt. x. 28. Heb. xi. 27.

16 And he said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, [e] Forasmuch as thou hast sent messengers to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron, *is it* not because *there is* no God in Israel to inquire of his word? therefore thou shalt not come down off that bed, on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die.

e 3, 4. Ex. iv. 22, 23. 1 Kings xiv. 6—13. xxi. 21—24. xxii. 28

17 So he died, according to the word of the LORD which Elijah had spoken: and Jehoram reigned in his stead, [f] in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah; because he had no son.

f iii. 1. 1 Kings xxii. 51.

18 Now the rest of the acts of Ahaziah which he did, *are* they not written [g] in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

g 2 Kings xxii. 39.

'that moment, slew the captain and his fifty men: but 'they were by no means convinced that JEHOVAH had 'sent it for that purpose, in answer to the words of 'Elijah.'

V. 13, 14. This officer had not courage to refuse obedience to the infatuated tyrant, that ordered him on this desperate service, and yet he dared not attempt any thing against Elijah: he therefore employed humble entreaties with every expression of respect and submission; and in this manner his life and the lives of his soldiers were preserved.

V. 15—17. Elijah, by putting the prophets of Baal to death, had so exasperated Jezebel and her party, that in general he lay concealed, and only went to court when specially commissioned, as he was on this occasion.—His presence, however, and authoritative boldness in delivering the solemn message, so dismayed the king, that he did not attempt any thing against him: and shortly after, Ahaziah died, according to his word, for attempting to consult a heathen oracle.—Jehoshaphat lived some time after this: it is therefore supposed that he admitted his son Jehoram to reign with him, eight or nine years before his death: and Jehoram the son of Ahab began to reign in the second year of that term, or in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

Man's revolt from God is often punished by the rebellion of those who owe subjection to him. Death meets men in the most unexpected places and forms, but always under the direction of the all-wise and righteous God. If reconciled to him by faith in the Saviour, and walking in his ways, "death is ours," and can never come in a wrong time or manner; but to the impenitent and unbelieving he is and must be "the king of terrors."—False religion amuses men's minds, and gratifies a vain curiosity: but the Bible declares the way of acceptance, and the path of duty; and without attempting to inform us of the events of our future lives, or the time and manner of our death, it teaches us to be always ready; and instructs us how to behave under every dispensation of Providence, and thus to find comfort under all of them and derive benefit from all.—With such instructions, and access to the mercy-seat of our God and Father, we have no occasion to consult any of those oracles which pretend to unfold what God has been pleased to conceal. The believer, assured by the word of God that all things shall work together for his good, may rejoice in hope, and look forward with comfort: but the foreknowledge of the afflictions of future life, joined to the terror of final misery, would mar the little enjoyment which the unbeliever has in this world, and torment him before his time.—Men are prone to act as if there were no God; as if they were left to take care of themselves, as well as to spend their lives in following their own inclinations: hence they are so readily induced to yield to every temptation, and to make rapid progress in wickedness, when in pursuit of the objects which they idolize, or when afraid of losing them.—The conduct of some persons, as impartially recorded in the word of God, appears so infatuated, that we should scarcely be able to credit the account, did we not sometimes witness actions equally unaccountable. Often has it been observed that men upon a death-bed, and aware that they could not recover, have appeared more trifling, profane, avaricious, morose, fierce, or cruel, than at any former period: so that those around them have been tempted by their intolerable conduct, to wish them dead before the hour arrived! Some have even seemed to regret with their dying lips, that they could do no more mischief in the world before they left it! And in many other ways men are continually acting in a manner inexplicable, except upon the principles of the wise man; "The heart of the sons of men is full of "evil, and madness is in their heart whilst they live, and "after that they go to the dead."

V. 9—18.

Haughty persecutors will always meet with wretches, ready to execute their most impious and desperate man-

CHAP. II.

Elijah in vain persuades Elisha to leave him, 1—7. *With his mantle he divides Jordan, and they pass over,* 8. *Elijah allows conditionally of Elisha's request, and is taken to heaven in a fiery chariot,* 9—11. *Elisha takes up Elijah's mantle; again divides Jordan, and passes over; and is received as Elijah's successor,* 12—15. *The sons of the prophets in vain seek for Elijah,* 16—18. *Elisha heals with salt the bad waters of Jericho,* 19—22. *Bears destroy the children that mock him,* 23—25.

AND it came to pass, when the LORD would [a] take up Elijah into heaven [b] by a whirlwind that Elijah went with [c] Elisha from [d] Gilgal.

2 And Elijah said unto Elisha, [e] Tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Beth-el. And [f] Elisha said *unto him,* [g] *As* the LORD liveth, and *as* thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they went down to [h] Beth-el.

3 And [i] the sons of the prophets that *were* at Beth-el came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master [k] from thy head to-day? And he said, Yea, I know *it;* hold ye your peace.

a Gen. v. 24. Acts i. 9. Heb. xi. 5. Rev xi. 12
b 1 Kings xviii 12. xix. 4. 11. Job xxxviii. 1.
c 1 Kings xix. 16. 21.
d Josh. iv 19. v. 9.
e Ruth i. 15. John vi. 67, 68.
f Ruth i. 16—18. 2 Sam. xv. 21. 1 Chr. xii. 18.
g 4. 6. iv. 30. 1 Sam. i. 26. xvii. 55 xxv 26.
h Gen xxviii. 19. 1 Kings xii. 29. 33. xiii. 1, 2.
i 5. 7 12. 15. iv. 1. 38. ix. 1. 1 Sam. x 12. xix. 20. 1 Kings xviii 4. xx. 35. Is. viii 18
k Deut xxxiii. 3. Acts xxii. 3.

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dates; and when providential mercies, means of grace, warnings and corrections leave them thus desperate in enmity against God and his servants, we may be confident that vengeance slumbereth not. If the wicked face death in its most tremendous forms, to obtain or preserve the favour of an earthly prince, whose "breath goeth forth, "and he returneth to his dust, and all his thoughts perish:" what danger and hardship ought not we to welcome in the service of the everlasting God, who can give us the gracious recompense of eternal life? But they that would be valiant for the truth before the great ones of the earth, must learn temperance and frugality; and evince, that they neither envy nor covet their luxuries or embellishments, but are indifferent about all other things, in comparison of the glory of God, and the salvation of immortal souls. There are proper seasons for different methods of behaving towards sinners, and we must ask wisdom of God to direct us: and, as the same action may be either right or wrong, according to the principle from which it springs, we should look well to our own spirits, and be candid in judging our brethren. It is, however, our general rule, "not to be "overcome of evil, but to overcome evil with good."—The judgments of God under the Christian dispensation are commonly *spiritual:* and the more mildly we behave to those who insult and injure us for the Lord's sake, the more terrible punishment will he at length inflict upon them. But our God is ever ready to forgive the humble supplicant, however rebellious he has been: and the way to prevail with him is to bow before him. We therefore should be followers of him, and be ready to favour and pray for our bitterest enemies, especially when, under any alarm of conscience, they entreat us so to do. We may safely venture into the presence of our most enraged foes, when he requires us, who hath all hearts in his hand: the courage of faith hath often struck terror into the heart of the proudest sinner; how then shall any be able to stand before God, when he ariseth to execute judgment? His words will surely take effect: and whilst some sinners being long spared, increase their own condemnation; others are cut off speedily and hurried into destruction. Both are intended to warn others to seek the Lord whilst he may be found: and his servants will, one way or other, survive and witness the destruction of all his enemies.

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1. None, Enoch alone excepted, had ever been favoured with exemption from the general sentence denounced against sinful man, "Dust thou art, and "to dust shalt thou return." But the Lord had given Elijah some intimations, that he intended thus to distinguish him, and that the day was at hand. At that time he and Elisha were at Gilgal. (*Marg. Ref.*) And thence Elijah went in circuit to several of the schools of the prophets in different places, to give them his parting exhortations and blessing. Doubtless most of them were established, and all of them were superintended, by him. It is not known how long Elijah lived before his translation.

V. 2. Elijah might intend by this proposal to make trial of the strength of Elisha's attachment; or perhaps he longed for retirement, and shunned ostentation. But Elisha expressed his determination to enjoy the pleasure, and reap the benefit, of his company to the last; and, if it might be, to witness his translation: and this he confirmed with a most solemn asseveration. As the life and soul of man entirely depend on God, to mention them in a solemn oath, either alone or along with him, was deemed equivalent to swearing by the name of the LORD. (*Matt.* v. 33—37. xxiii. 16—22.)

V. 3. 'In that place where the golden calves were 'worshipped, God continued the schools of the prophets! '—This was a great testimony of his love to an apostate 'people. And it is still more remarkable, that prophets 'of greater excellency for miracles were raised up in 'Israel, than were in Judah; because they needed them 'more. It seems to me very probable, that these *sons of* '*the prophets* were such ministers to the prophets, as the 'evangelists were to the apostles; whom the prophets sent 'to publish their prophecies and instructions to the people, 'where they could not go themselves.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)—The sons of the prophets had received a divine intimation that Elijah was on that day to be taken from them: and as Elisha was next in precedency after Elijah, sitting nearest *under him,* or at his feet, while he delivered his instructions; he would be considered as their superintendent, when his master was taken *from his head,* or from above him. —Elisha would not allow them to interrupt the compo-

4 And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to [l] Jericho. And he said, *As* the LORD liveth, and *as* thy soul liveth, [m] I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho.

5 And the sons of the prophets that *were* at Jericho came to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away [n] thy master from thy head to-day? And he answered, [o] Yea, I know *it;* hold ye your peace.

6 And Elijah said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here; for the LORD hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, *As* the LORD liveth, and *as* thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on.

7 And [p] fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood * to view afar off; and they two stood by Jordan.

8 And Elijah took [q] his mantle, and wrapped *it* together, and smote the waters, and they [r] were divided hither and thither; so that they two went over on dry ground.

9 And it came to pass when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, [s] Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, [t] I pray thee, let [u] a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.

10 And he said, Thou † hast asked a hard thing: *nevertheless,* [x] if thou see me *when I am* taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be *so.*

11 ¶ And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, *there appeared* [y] a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up [z] by a whirlwind [a] into heaven.

12 And Elisha [b] saw *it,* and he cried, [c] My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And [d] he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and [e] rent them in two pieces.

l 1 Kings xvi. 34.
m 12. Acts ii. 42. xi. 23.
n Josh. xxii. 14. Judg. xi. 9. 1 Chr. xxix. 11. 1 Cor. xi. 3. Eph. v. 23.
o Josh. i. 1, 2. Luke xxiv. 52. John xvi. 7. Acts i. 2. 11.
p 17. 1 Kings xviii. 4.
* Heb. *in sight,* or *over against.*
q 1 Kings xix. 13. 19.
r 14. Ex. xiv. 21, 22. Josh iii. 16, 17. Ps. cxiv. 5—7.
s xiii. 14—19. Num. xxvii. 16—23. Deut. xxxiv. 9. 1 Chr. xxix. 18, 19. Ps. lxxii. 1, 20. Luke xxiv. 45—51. John xvii. 9—13. Acts i 8. viii. 17. xx. 25 36.
t Num. xi. 17, 25. 1 Kings iii. 9. Zech xii. 8. Luke xii 28. John xiv. 12—14. xvi. 7. 1 Cor. xii. 31.
u Deut. xxi 17. Jer. xvi. 18. Zech. ix. 12. 1 Tim. v. 17. Rev. xviii. 6.
† Heb. *done hard in asking.* Mark xi. 22—24. John xvi. 24.
x Acts i. 9, 10.
y vi. 17. Ps lxviii. 17. civ. 3, 4. Ez. i. 4, &c. x. 8, &c. Hab iii. 8. Zech. vi. 5—8. Heb. i. 14.
z 1.
a Mark xvi. 19.
b 10.
c xiii. 14. Job xxii. 30 Prov. xi. 11. Ec. vii. 19. ix. 16—18. Is. xxxvii. 4, 15. 21. Acts xxvii. 24.
d Acts i. 9.
e Job i. 20, 21. Acts viii. 2.

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sure of Elijah's mindat this solemn season, by any lamentations: it is probable, that he forbade them publicly to speak of it, lest multitudes should be collected to witness the event; and he counselled them to be calm, and not to disquiet themselves, for the Lord would make up the loss.

V. 7, 8. These fifty prophets seem to have hoped to witness Elijah's translation, but this favour was granted only to Elisha. They, however, saw Jordan twice divided, first before Elijah and Elisha, and then afterwards before Elisha alone, by smiting the waters with Elijah's mantle.

V. 9, 10. Elisha was thus reminded to make his request *before Elijah was taken from him:* for the prophet gave not the least intimation of being prayed to, as an intercessor, after he was gone to heaven. Elisha therefore, knowing the efficacy of Elijah's prayer, desired him to ask for him a double portion of his spirit. (*Notes,* 1 *Kings* iii. 5—13.) He seems only to have meant a double portion of the Spirit of prophecy, and of wisdom, courage, faith, and grace, to what was ordinarily bestowed upon the prophets: but as he was to succeed so eminent a person, in so important a work, and in such arduous times, his desires and expectations might be enlarged by zeal for the honour of God, and for the revival of true religion; so that he was led to use words, which may signify even double the portion that Elijah had possessed: and Elijah's answer seems to imply, that this was the import of them. It appears from the history that Elisha wrought twice as many miracles as Elijah had done: and being more constantly among the people, as their example and instructor, for above sixty years from his first calling by Elijah, he seems to have been favoured with more extensive usefulness than he: though in other respects he may be considered as his inferior. Thus our Lord said to his apostles, (referring to the extensive usefulness of their labours, compared with that of his personal ministry, and to the number and variety, and long continuance, of the miracles wrought by them,) "Greater works than these shall ye do:" yet was he infinitely greater than they.

V. 11. Elijah's translation was doubtless performed by the ministration of Angels, who caused the appearances and effects here described. The event was a distinguished honour put upon one, who had been peculiarly zealous for the honour of God, and had ventured all consequences in his cause, by opposing the idolatry of an apostate and persecuting age and nation. It was a public attestation of the doctrine of a future state of retributions, for the encouragement of God's suffering people; and a prefiguration of the Redeemer's ascension.—The prophet had once passionately wished to die; but the Lord was graciously pleased to deal with him better than his wishes. He had passed over Jordan to his native country, and was conferring with Elisha, perhaps about the joys of heaven, or the interests of true religion in Israel, when they were thus suddenly interrupted and separated.

V. 12. The manner in which Elijah was taken away, amidst his most interesting discourse, must have been exceedingly affecting to Elisha, who could not but congratulate his felicity. He had, however, lost one whom he loved and revered as a father; and Israel had lost a reformer, whose labours and prayers did more to preserve the nation from ruin, than chariots and horsemen, however numerous, could have done: and on these accounts he grieved, and expressed his regret by rending his clothes.—

13 He took up also [f] the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the * bank of Jordan;

14 And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and [g] smote the waters, and said, Where *is* the LORD God of Elijah? And when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither; and Elisha went over.

15 And when the sons of the prophets, which *were* [h] to view at Jericho, saw him, they said, [i] The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they came to meet him, and [k] bowed themselves to the ground before him.

16 And they said unto him, Behold now, there be with thy servants fifty † strong men, let them go, we pray thee, and seek thy master; lest peradventure [l] the Spirit of the LORD hath taken him up, and cast him upon ‡ some mountain, or into some valley. And he said, Ye shall not send.

17 And when [m] they urged him till he was ashamed, he said, Send. They sent therefore fifty men; and they sought three days, but [n] found him not.

18 And when they came again to him, (for he tarried at Jericho,) he said unto them, Did I not say unto you, Go not?

19 ¶ And the men of the city said unto Elisha, Behold, I pray thee, the situation of the city *is* pleasant, as my lord seeth: but [o] the water *is* naught, and the ground § barren.

20 And he said, Bring me a new cruse, and put [p] salt therein: and they brought *it* to him.

21 And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and [q] cast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the LORD, [r] I have healed these waters; [s] there shall not be from thence any more death or barren *land*.

22 So the waters were healed unto this day, according to the saying of Elisha which he spake.

23 ¶ And he went up from thence unto [t] Beth-el: and as he was going up by the way, there came forth [u] little children out of the city, and [x] mocked him, and said unto him, [y] Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head.

24 And he turned back, and looked on them, and [z] cursed them in the name of the LORD: and there came forth [a] two she-bears out of the wood, and

f 8. 1 Kings xix. 19.
* Heb. *lip.*
g 8—10. Josh. i. 1—9. Mark xvi. 20. John xiv. 12. Acts ii. 33. 12, 13.
h 7.
i Num. xi. 25—29. xxvii. 20. John xv. 26, 27. Acts i 8.
k 19. iv. 1—4. 37. vi. 1—7.
† Heb. *sons of strength.*
l 1 Kings xviii. 12. Ez. iii. 14. viii 3. Acts viii. 39.
‡ Heb *one of the mountains.*
m Rom. x. 2.
n Heb. xi. 5.
o Ex. vii. 19. xv. 23. Josh vi. 17 26. 1 Kings xvi. 34.
§ Heb. *causing to miscarry.* Deut xxviii. 2—4. 11 15—18.
p Judg. ix. 45. Ez. xlvii. 11 Zeph. ii. 9.
q iv. 41. vi. 6. Ex. xv. 25, 26. John ix. 6.
r Josh. vi. 2—16. 1 Cor. i. 18—28. ii. 4, 5. James v. 14, 15.
s Ps. cvii. 34—39.
t 1 Kings xii. 28—32. Hos. iv. 15. x. 5. 15. Am. iii. 14. iv. 4. v. 5. vii. 13.
u Prov. xx. 11. xxii. 6. 15. Jer. vii 18.
x Gen. xxi. 9. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 13. Gal. iv. 29. Heb. xi. 36.
y 11. Mat. xxvii. 29—31. 40—43.
z i. 10—12. Gen. ix. 25. Deut. xxviii. 15—26. Jer. xxviii. 16. xxix. 21—23. Am. vii. 17. Mark xi. 14. 21. Acts v. 5. 9. viii. 20. xiii. 9—11. 2 Cor. x. 6.
a 1 Kings xiii. 24. xix. 17. xx. 36. Prov. xxx. 17.

Nor was he reconciled to his own and the public loss, by being left president of all the schools of the prophets, or by being assured of a double portion of Elijah's spirit.

V. 13. Though the prophet went to heaven in the body; yet as a token of the different state into which he was entered, and the change that had taken place, he dropped his mantle or upper garment. Elisha had been first called to attend Elijah, by the casting of his mantle over him: and he now received and valued this mantle, as a token of his receiving a double portion of his Spirit.

V. 14. Elisha was inwardly moved to make trial, whether Elijah's words were indeed fulfilled to him; and whether the LORD God, who had wrought such miracles by Elijah, and had just before divided the waters of Jericho, when he smote them with his mantle, was with him in like manner. The original is more expressive than the translation, and may be rendered, "Where is JEHOVAH, "the God of Elijah? Even He," is still with me.—Though Elijah be not here, the God of Elijah is.

V. 15. These sons of the prophets had probably witnessed the two-fold division of Jordan, from whence they concluded, that the spirit of Elijah rested on Elisha; and by bowing to the ground before him, they gave him honour as their future superintendent.

V. 16—18. These young prophets might think, that even in case Elijah was finally taken from them, his soul alone was gone to heaven; and that his body might be found, and buried with due honour: but perhaps they also doubted, whether he was really removed; or had only been carried to some other place in a supernatural manner, as he seems to have been on former occasions. Elisha, however, might fear lest they would suspect, if he persisted in refusing their request, that he was influenced by an undue desire of filling Elijah's honourable place: and the event tended to establish his authority.

V. 19—22. Jericho had not long before been rebuilt, in defiance of the curse which Joshua had denounced against him who did this: and it is probable, that the pleasantness of the situation had been the inducement. But, as an evidence of God's displeasure, the water was unwholesome; and perhaps in consequence, the ground, (though it does not seem to have been otherwise deficient in fertility,) had the property of causing the cattle to cast their young; and as some think, the immature fruit to fall from the trees.—It is not unlikely that similar effects were produced on the inhabitants also. But as these had admitted a seminary of prophets among them, these tokens of the divine displeasure were miraculously removed. The new cruse, and the salt, could have no natural efficacy to heal the water, and remove the bad property of the land, but might rather have been thought likely to produce contrary effects: they were, however, mere tokens of the Lord's operation.—(*Marg. Ref.*)

b Ex. xx. 5.
c iv. 25. 1 Kings xviii. 19.

b tare forty and two children of them.
25 And he went from thence to c mount Carmel; and from thence he returned to Samaria.

V. 23, 24. Several learned men have endeavoured to show, that these offenders were not children, but grown up persons: and, no doubt the word rendered *children* is often used in that sense. The addition, however, of the word rendered *little*, seems clearly to prove, that they were not men, but young boys, who had been trained up in idolatry, and taught to despise the prophets of the Lord. They had heard that Elijah was *gone up* to heaven, and they insultingly bade Elisha follow him, that they might be rid of him too; and they reviled him for the baldness of his head. Thus they united the crimes of abusing him for a supposed bodily infirmity, a contemptuous behaviour towards a venerable and aged person, and enmity against him as the servant of God. The sin therefore even of these children was very heinous; yet the greater guilt was chargeable upon their parents; and their fate was a severe rebuke and awful warning to them. If the Spirit of God had not dictated Elisha's solemn curse of them, Providence would not have followed it with so terrible a judgment. Most of the children of the city seem to have been present, and the insult was perhaps the effect of a pre-concerted plan, to drive the sons of the prophets from Beth-el by ill-treatment. The forty-two children which were devoured, might be only a small part of the whole company, and perhaps they were the most guilty. However, the Judge of all the earth surely did right. Had he cut them off by a fever, no one would have objected: but, while the dispensation would have been as severe towards them, it would in no proportion have been suited to make the same useful impression on the minds of the survivors, or to inculcate the same important instructions to other ages and nations, as this solemn sentence and immediate execution were. It seems that the inhabitants of Beth-el were so over-awed, that they no more ventured to molest Elisha or the sons of the prophets.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

The Lord always acts with perfect wisdom, justice, goodness, and truth; but he doth not always deign to explain to us the reasons of his conduct. In exempting sinners from *merited* condemnation, and in conferring *unmerited* blessings, he divideth to every man severally as he will. We are assured, that they who repent and believe the gospel, shall be saved; that the Lord will honour those who honour him: and if we obtain eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord, we need not greatly regret that we do not pass the same way to it, that Enoch and Elijah did; being comfortably assured, that we shall be more than conquerors in the last conflict, through him that hath loved us, and at last death will be swallowed up in victory. (Pr. Ob. *Gen.* v.) As we know not the time of our departure, we should endeavour to be habitually ready: and we ought to mind our proper work with greater assiduity, (if we are able,) when we perceive that the time approaches. Whether ministers or private Christians, we are called to serve our generation; and should aim to leave all around us deeply convinced of the nearness and reality of eternal things, and animated with the desire of glorifying God and doing good: and our example, exhortations, and prayers, should especially be directed to these important objects, when we approach the solemn closing scene. On the other hand, we should gladly embrace opportunities of visiting the death-beds of eminent believers, that we may learn heavenly wisdom, and catch holy fire, as it were, from their converse and behaviour. But such occasions require seriousness, calmness, and submission to the will of God; and we should learn even to repress our own feelings, rather than distract the minds, or interrupt the devotions and discourse of the departing Christian. As long as such persons are with us, we should beg an interest in their prayers; that by the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Chirst, we may be enabled to tread in their steps, and be serviceable to the church as they have been. And if, from zeal for the glory of God, and love to the souls of men, we should covet earnestly to abound still more in grace, wisdom, and usefulness; neither God, nor his dying saints, will blame the largeness of our desires. Nor is this hard in itself, however it may appear to us; for that fulness, whence prophets and apostles derived all their endowments, still remains, and we are invited to ask large supplies from it: and they, who are called to succeed eminent men in arduous and important stations, and are conscious of their own insufficiency, are peculiarly encouraged to expect a double portion of the Spirit of God, that they may not disgrace their situations, or remain useless in them.

V. 11—18.

Angels delight to be employed in removing the saints to their glorious rest, in any way that the Lord pleases: yet the event, which is so joyful to them, causes painful separations to those that are left behind: many on these occasions are bereft of such, as have been more dear and useful to them than the tenderest parent: yea, even the public has been deprived of some of its strongest bulwarks, though most men are insensible to the loss. On these accounts, it is allowable to grieve: but believers should be warned "not to sorrow as men without hope:" the separation will at length issue in a more joyful meeting, and the loss shall be made up to them. Though Elijah be removed, the LORD God of Elijah liveth. Thus, when the Saviour ascended into heaven, he left not his disciples comfortless; but he bequeathed to them his precious gospel, like Elijah's mantle, as the token of the divine power being exerted to subvert the empire of Satan, and to set up the kingdom of God in the world: and he poured out upon them his holy Spirit, both to qualify them for their work, and to render their labours abundantly successful. The same gospel still remains with us, and though the miraculous powers are withdrawn, it still is attended with a divine energy for the conversion and salvation of sinners. Oh may that energy be more abundantly experienced, wherever the word of God is truly preached! And may we all seriously inquire whether it be not suspended, retarded, or removed, through

CHAP. III.

Jehoram's wicked reign, 1—3. *Mesha king of Moab revolts,* 4, 5. *Jehoram, Jehoshaphat, and the king of Edom, march against him; and being distressed for water, they apply to Elisha, who sharply reproves Jehoram, but shows respect to Jehoshaphat,* 6—14. *He promises them water, and victory,* 15—19. *Plenty of water is sent; the Moabites are deceived by the appearance, and are entirely defeated,* 20—24. *The allied kings destroy the cities, spoil the country, and besiege Kir-haraseth,* 25. *The king of Moab, by sacrificing his eldest son, causes them to raise the siege,* 26, 27.

NOW Jehoram the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria [a] the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned twelve years.

2 And he [b] wrought evil in the sight of the LORD, [c] but not like his father, and [d] like his mother; for he put away the * image of Baal [e] that his father had made.

3 Nevertheless [f] he cleaved unto the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, [g] which made Israel to sin; [h] he departed not therefrom.

a i. 17. viii. 16. 1 Kings xxii. 51.
b vi. 31.
c 1 Kings xvi 33. xxi. 20. 25.
d ix. 22. 34.
* Heb *statue.*
e x. 18. 26—28. 1 Kings xvi. 31, 32.
f x. 29—31. 1 Kings xii. 28—33.
g 1 Kings xiv. 9. 16 xv. 26. 34. xvi. 31.
h 1 Kings xii. 26. 27. 1 Cor. i. 19, 20.

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some criminal cause in us? Having, however, the same exceeding great and precious promises as the primitive Christians, the same throne of grace, the same Mediator, the same powerful God and Father, as they had; if we have also the same precious faith, we need not fear breaking through all difficulties, opposing enemies, and at last passing comfortably through the Jordan of death, as on dry ground. —When we perceive men averse to conviction, and bent upon their own schemes, though vain and empty; it is sometimes best to leave them to take their own course: and their fruitless labours and inquiries often most effectually discover to them their mistakes.

V. 19—25.

The nature of man, in its best estate, and adorned with all the embellishments of which it is capable, resembles the unwholesome water and soil of Jericho. It is throughout infected with sin, and barren of real good; and man's best actions, *till renewed by grace,* proceed from worthless motives, are directed to unworthy purposes, and measured by a false rule. But when that remedy is applied, a blessed change takes place through all the powers of the soul: and repentance, faith, and love of God and man, produce good works, performed from the purest principles, and for the most important ends; and regulated according to the holy law of God, and the example of the Redeemer. In this way sometimes whole towns and cities have assumed a new appearance, through the preaching of the Gospel; and the curse of sin and ungodliness has been converted into the blessing of "fruitfulness in the works of righteousness, "which are through Jesus Christ to the praise and glory "of God." But whilst the divine blessing evidently rests on those places where his gospel is welcomed; his heaviest wrath will light on those who reject the gracious message, and insult and abuse his ministers. The words and actions even of children, yea, of little children, are noticed by him. Let then the youngest who read or hear these observations, "stand in awe, and sin not:" let them think of the terror and anguish of the children of Beth-el, when they are tempted to deride the deformed, the lame, or the infirm; when they are induced to show contempt to the aged; but especially when they are about to join those who revile or ridicule such as are in reputation for sanctity: for this is to despise the holiness of God in them. And if any have the misfortune to have parents so wicked, as to set them an example of such profaneness, or to instruct, or encourage them to behave in such a manner; let them remember that they should obey God rather than man, and that they must answer to him for their offence, whoever commands them to commit it. But words cannot express what strikes the imagination on this awful subject! We can scarcely conceive the horror which seized the parents of Beth-el, on the view of the mangled bodies of their children, whom they had taught that impiety which brought the dreadful judgment upon them! What then will be the anguish at the great decisive day, of those parents, who witness the everlasting condemnation of their offspring, occasioned by their negligence and wickedness! Let us turn from the dreadful meditation, and take warning to train up our families, with increasing earnestness, "in the nurture "and admonition of the Lord," hoping and praying that we should be enabled, at that important season, to appear before God, and to adopt the language of the prophet, "Behold, I and the children whom thou hast given me."—Indeed the ministers of Christ must and will continue to bless, and not curse: but the Lord is still glorious in holiness, and all creatures serve him; and whilst he protects his people, even among their enraged foes, he can soon call for instruments of his vengeance on those whom he sees to be ripe for destruction.

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 2, 3. Jehoram *threw aside,* but did not *destroy* the image of Baal: and if he suppressed his worship for a time, in order to please Jehoshaphat, and secure his alliance, or through terror at the awful end of his father, and brother; it was soon allowed to revive. (*Marg. Ref.*) But he was not so eager upon that idolatry, or so vehement a persecutor of God's worshippers, as his predecessors, preferring the more politic measures of Jeroboam. Yet it seems Jezebel retained her influence, and promoted her favourite idolatry; though for reasons of state,

4 ¶ And Mesha king of Moab was [i] a sheep-master, and [k] rendered unto the king of Israel an hundred thousand lambs, and an hundred thousand rams, with the wool.

5 But it came to pass, [l] when Ahab was dead, that the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel.

6 And king Jehoram went out of Samaria the same time, and [m] numbered all Israel.

7 And he went and sent to Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, saying, The king of Moab hath rebelled against me: [n] wilt thou go with me against Moab to battle? And he said, I will go up; I *am* as thou *art*, my people as thy people, *and* my horses as thy horses.

8 And he said, Which way shall we go up? And he answered, The way through [o] the wilderness of Edom.

9 So the king of Israel went, and the king of Judah, and [p] the king of Edom; and they fetched a compass of seven days journey; and there was [q] no water for the host, and for the cattle * that followed them.

10 And the king of Israel said, Alas! that [r] the LORD hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab!

11 But Jehoshaphat said, [s] *Is there* not here a prophet of the LORD, [t] that we may inquire of the LORD by him? And one of the king of Israel's servants answered and said, Here *is* Elisha the son of Shaphat, which [u] poured water on the hands of Elijah.

12 And Jehoshaphat said, [x] The word of the LORD is with him. So [y] the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom went down to him.

13 And Elisha said unto the king of Israel, [z] What have I to do with thee? [a] get thee to [b] the prophets of thy father, and to the prophets of thy mother. And the king of Israel said unto him, [c] Nay: for the LORD hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab.

14 And Elisha said, [d] *As* the LORD of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, surely, were it not that [e] I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, [f] I would not look toward thee, nor see thee.

15 But now [g] bring me a minstrel. And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that [h] the hand of the LORD came upon him.

i Gen. xiii. 2. xxvi. 12, 14. 2 Chr. xxvi. 10. Job i. 3. xlii. 12.
k 2 Sam. viii. 2. Is. xvi. 1.
l i. 1.
m 1 Sam. xi. 8. xv. 4. 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. 1 Kings xx. 26.
n 1 Kings xxii. 4. 32, 33. 2 Chr xviii. 3. 29—32 xix. 2. xxi. 4—7. xxii. 3, 4. 10—12.
o Num. xxi. 4, 5. Mat. i. 2, 3.
p 1 Kings xxii. 47.
q Ex. xvii. 1. Num. xx. 2. 4. xxi. 5.
* Heb. *at their feet.* Ex. xi. 8. Judg iv. 10.
r vi. 33. Gen. iv. 13. Ps lxxviii. 34—46. Prov. xix. 3. Is. viii. 21. li. 20.
s 1 Kings xxii 7. Am. iii. 7.
t Josh. ix. 14. Judg xx. 8—11. 18. 23 26—28.
u Gen. xviii. 4. 1 Kings xix. 21. Luke xxii. 27. John xiii. 4, 5. 13, 14.
x ii. 14, 15. 21. 24. 1 Sam. iii. 19—21.
y v. 8, 9. 15. Is xlix. 23. lx. 14 Rev. iii. 9.
z Ez. xiv. 3—5. Matt viii. 29. John ii. 4. 2 Cor v. 16. vi. 15
a Judg. x. 14. Ruth i. 15. Jer. ii. 27, 28.
b 1 Kings xviii. 19.
c Deut xxxii. 37—39. Hos. vi. 1.
d v. 16. 1 Kings xvii. 1. xviii. 15.
e 2 Chr. xvii. 3—9. xix. 3, 4. Ps. xv. 4
f 1 Sam. xv. 26—31. 1 Kings xiv. 5, &c. xxi. 20. Jer. i. 18. Dan. v. 17—23. Matt. xxii. 16.
g 1 Sam. x. 5. xvi. 23 xviii. 10. 1 Chr xxv. 2, 3. Eph. v. 18, 19.
h 1 Kings xviii. 46. Ez. i. 3. iii. 14. 22. viii. 1. Acts xi. 21.

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or being daunted by various calamities, she acquiesced in her son's measures at the beginning of his reign.

V. 7. Jehoshaphat used exactly the same words in this answer to Jehoram, as he had done to his father Ahab. But the ill success of Ahab's expedition, his own extreme danger, and the sharp reproof given him by the prophet, should have taught him a different conduct. (*Marg. Ref.*) —As Jehoram had renounced Baal, Jehoshaphat perhaps was in hopes of effecting a more complete reformation in Israel, by this compliance: but he thus almost entirely ruined his own family.

V. 8, 9. This way was far about, and through a part of the desert in which Israel had wanted water, when they came out of Egypt: and the same difficulty might reasonably have been expected. Jehoshaphat seems to have intended to prevent the revolt, and secure the assistance, of the deputy-king of Edom, and to attack the Moabites by surprise: but he neglected to inquire of the Lord, for which he was speedily rebuked. It is probable that the army either missed the direct road, or was hindered in its march by unforeseen impediments.

V. 10. *Alas!* &c. Jehoram had planned this expedition, without any divine direction, for his own interest, and had drawn the other two kings into it. Had they succeeded, he would not have given God the glory; but when calamities came upon him, through his own inadvertency, "his heart fretted against the LORD:" but he expressed neither repentance, nor faith, nor submission to the will of God.

V. 11, 12. Doubtless the prophet was divinely directed to follow the camp on this occasion. The servant of Jehoram was better acquainted with him than his master was: and he was known as having been the servant of Elijah, to assist him in washing his hands and such menial offices; yet, as appointed to be his successor. Jehoshaphat was now made sensible of his fault in neglecting to inquire of the Lord: and the three kings concurred in respect for Elisha, not ordering his attendance, but waiting upon him. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 13, 14. It is probable that Elisha meant to show Jehoshaphat the partiality and hypocrisy of Jehoram's reformation; as his heart still went after the prophets and worship of Baal; and he had no true regard for the prophets of God, though he consulted him in his distress. He would not therefore show him any honour, that he might understand how the Lord detested his iniquity: but he treated Jehoshaphat with respect, though he too was faulty.—Doubtless he was directed to act in his *public character*, differently from what he would have done as *a private subject* of Jehoram's kingdom.

V. 15. This *minstrel* was one skilful in playing on a harp, or some other musical instrument: and it is probable, that he sang the praises of God, accompanied with soft and sweet music. This was intended to calm the

16 And he said, Thus saith the LORD, [i] Make this valley full of ditches:

17 For thus saith the LORD, [k] Ye shall not see wind, neither shall ye see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water, [l] that ye may drink, both ye, and your cattle, and your beasts.

18 And [m] this is *but* [n] a light thing in the sight of the LORD: [o] he will deliver the Moabites also into your hand.

19 And [p] ye shall smite every fenced city, and every choice city, and shall [q] fell every good tree, and stop all wells of water, and * mar every good piece of land with stones.

20 And it came to pass in the morning, [r] when the meat-offering was offered, that, behold, there came water by the way of Edom; and the country was [s] filled with water.

21 ¶ And when all the Moabites heard that the kings were come up to fight against them, they † gathered all that were able to ‡ put on armour, and upward, and stood in the border.

22 And they arose up early in the morning, and the sun shone upon the water, and the Moabites saw the water on the other side, *as* red as blood:

23 And they said, [t] This *is* blood: the kings have surely ◊ slain, and they have smitten one another; [u] now therefore Moab to the spoil.

24 And when they came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites rose up, and [x] smote the Moabites, so that they fled before them: but they ‖ went forward

i iv. 3. Num. xxii. 16—18.
k 1 Kings xviii. 36—39. Ps. lxxxiv. 6. Is. xli. 17, 18.
l Num. xx. 8—11.
m 1 Kings iii. 13. Eph. iii. 20.
n xx. 10. 1 Kings xvi. 31. Is. vii. 13. xlix. 6. Ez. viii. 17.
o 1 Kings xx. 13, 28. Is. vii. 1—9.
p 1 Sam. xv. 3.
q Deut. xix. 20.
* Heb. *grieve.* 25.
r Ex. xxix. 39, 40. 1 Kings xviii. 36. Dan. ix. 21.
s Ps. lxxviii. 15, 16. 20. Is. xxxv. 6, 7. xli. 17, 18.
† Heb. *were cried together.*
‡ Heb. *girdhimself with a girdle.* 1 Kings xx. 11. Eph. vi. 14.
t vi. 13—20. vii. 6.
◊ Heb. *destroyed.*
u Ex. xv. 9. Judg. 5. 30. 2 Chr. xx. 25.
x Josh. viii. 20—22. Judg. xx. 46—46. 1 Thes. v. 3. 14.
‖ Or, *smote in it even smiting.*

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prophet's mind, which had been discomposed with a holy indignation by recollecting the abominations of Ahab's family; and so to prepare him for those illapses of the holy Spirit, which he assuredly expected.

V. 16, 17. With this prophetical promise, a commandment was given that required considerable labour, and was a trial of the faith and obedience of the persons concerned. We need not inquire whence this water came; He that caused the rock to pour forth rivers, could never want resources. The supply, however, was evidently considered as miraculous; and those who have insinuated the contrary, must suppose that the prophet had more sagacity in matters of this kind, than these three kings and all their officers!

V. 19. Providence put it in Jehoram's power to execute that severe vengeance upon the revolted Moabites, which he meditated. But it is not certain, whether this implied a *permission* to do so, or was merely *prophetic* of the event. It is probable that the land could not be cultivated till the stones were gathered off: and these, lying in heaps upon the corners of their fields, would speedily be dispersed by a numerous army, and occasion great hinderance and difficulty in the future cultivation of the country.

V. 20. The time of the morning-sacrifice at Jerusalem was chosen by the Lord for this miracle, to intimate to the whole company that their deliverance was vouchsafed them through the sacrifices and the worship there performed. It may here very properly be noted, that neither Elijah nor Elisha seem ever to have resorted to the temple-worship, or to have required the people under the government of the Israelitish kings to do so; though that worship was appointed by God himself, and it is evident his spiritual worshippers had respect to it. The peculiar circumstances of Israel were such, that without uninterrupted miracles, or subverting the foundation of the civil establishment, the people could not exactly observe the ritual law. The prophets were therefore directed by God himself to accommodate their conduct to these circumstances, and to spend their lives in recovering, or preserving the people from idolatry, and in teaching them the grand essentials of acceptable religion. In every age hitherto, considerate and faithful ministers have found it impracticable *for them to rectify every external deviation from what to them appeared most scriptural:* but having adverted to the distinction betwixt what is *desirable* and what is *attainable;* and betwixt the essentials of true religion in every age, and matters more circumstantial; they have accommodated themselves to that state of things which they could not alter, and endeavoured to bring men to repentance, faith in Christ, and holiness of life, and to as scriptural and external worship as they could. And though some of their brethren have censured them, the Lord God of Elijah and Elisha has evidently pleaded their cause, by making them the instruments of numerous conversions, and great revivals of religion: whilst others scrupulously exact in external forms, and earnest to magnify them, have worn out their lives in vainly attempting to new model the church and the world, and have missed their opportunity of more essential usefulness. In due time the Lord will regulate every thing externally, as well as internally, in the best manner: meanwhile we must make the best of things: we must aim to be satisfied respecting our own conduct as in the sight of God; to be moderate in our judgment concerning those who differ from us, and patient under their censures of us; and, learning what that meaneth, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice," to be careful not to lose sight of the great end of all religion, for the sake of some of the *disputable* means of attaining it.—For at last, nothing availeth in Christ Jesus, but "faith "which worketh by love," and "a new creature" manifested in "newness of life."

V. 22, 23. The sun shining upon the water, in ditches probably in a red soil, caused this appearance, and deceived the Moabites who knew it to be a dry valley: and as combined armies have often quarrelled, and destroyed each other, they hastily concluded this to be the case; God permitting them to be thus infatuated for their destruction.

smiting the Moabites, even in *their* country.

y 19. 2 Sam. viii. 2. Is. xxxvii. 26, 27.

25 And they [y] beat down the cities, and on every good piece of land cast every man his stone, and filled it; and they stopped all the wells of water, and felled all the good trees: * only in [z] Kir-haraseth left they the stones thereof; howbeit the slingers went about *it* and smote it.

* Heb. *until he left the stones thereof in Kir-haraseth.*

z Is. xvi. 7—11.

26 And when the king of Moab saw that the battle was too sore for him, he took with him seven hundred men that drew swords to break through *even* unto the king of Edom: but they could not.

27 Then he took [a] his eldest son, that should have reigned in his stead, and [b] offered him *for* a burnt-offering upon the wall. And there was great indignation against Israel: and [c] they departed from him, and returned to *their own* land.

a Am. ii. 1.

b Gen. xxii. 2. 13. Deut. xii 13. Judg. xi. 31. 39. Ps cvi. 37, 38. Ez xvi 20 Mic. vi. 7.

c 1 Sam. xiv. 36.—46. 1 Kings xx. 13. 28. 43.

V. 26. The camp of the vice-roy of Edom seems not to have been so well fortified as the camps of the other kings: and therefore the king of Moab, in his extreme danger, thought to have forced his way through in this direction; but he was not able.

V. 27. It has been imagined, that the king of Moab offered in sacrifice the eldest son of the king of Edom, whom he had taken prisoner: but the narrative does not admit of this interpretation. It is evident that he offered his own eldest son, and the heir apparent of his crown, to procure the assistance of his idols, or to avert their indignation. It has been thought, that a tradition of Abraham's offering his son Isaac; nay, that even a distorted tradition concerning the sacrifice of the Redeemer, gave occasion to those horrid human sacrifices, which have been very common in the Gentile world. But this *at most* could only be *the occasion: the cause* was two-fold; the depravity and blindness of the human heart, and the subtlety and malignity of Satan; in whose worship, as directed by him, it must be a first principle, that the more costly, painful, unnatural, and cruel the oblation is, the more acceptable the sacrifice; because it best gratifies his pride, envy, and malice. This horrid sacrifice the king of Moab offered in the sight of the combined armies, that they might see his desperate determination to endure and inflict all extremities, rather than be reduced: his remaining forces were thus fired with indignation against Israel; and perhaps Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom expressed their disapprobation of those severities, which occasioned the dreadful deed. Thus the minds of the assailants being filled with horror, and their measures disconcerted, they retired without completing their design.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

Partial reformations often originate from the hope of advantage in *temporal things* by the favour of godly men: and even the selfish will sometimes renounce those sins which occasion them loss and trouble; and then detect their own hypocrisy by adhering to those which promise present advantage. True piety, however, disposes men to judge favourably, and this candour is apt to carry them too far; while they indulge the hope of drawing half-converts further into the ways of God, by complying with their inclinations, and cultivating their acquaintance. We should indeed endeavour by kindness both to win upon the affections of our neighbours, and to evidence the tendency of our religion; yet our conduct in all things should be regulated by the word of God; and it is there declared that "evil communications corrupt good manners;" and we are commanded "to come out, and be separate from the "ungodly." Worldly men are quick-sighted to their temporal interests, but they seek nothing further; and often seduce pious persons to forget their own principles, and to lean to their own understandings, instead of acknowledging the Lord in all their ways. But whilst the wicked in their difficulties are ready to quarrel with the Lord; the believer will be humbled before him for neglected duties, and disposed to inquire his will and seek his help. And when corrections have brought men to this temper, relief will be afforded them; and their ungodly connexions will often succeed the better on their account. They who would be eminent in the Church of the living God, must readily stoop to the meanest service and the hardest labour: for such as have thus distinguished themselves, have generally attained to singular honour and usefulness.

V. 13—27.

Many show respect unto the ministers of God under heavy trials, who despise them at other times. In that case, they might be justly left to seek help from the worldly idols, the vicious companions, the worthless forms, or infidel principles, which they have preferred to the favour and truth of God: and they should be shown, that with him there is no respect of persons. The minister may also properly let them know, that he is no stranger to their characters, and will pay no court to them, whatever he would do or suffer for their good: and he, who in private life, is the allowed inferior, and willing to be the servant of all, when speaking in the name of the Lord, is commissioned to "rebuke with all authority." In *all ordinary cases*, however, it should be with evident affection and respect; and it is proper so to change the voice, and regulate the conduct, as decisively to mark the difference betwixt the offending believer and the mere hypocrite.—Composure of mind favours the reception of heavenly communications: when the wickedness and misery of man have ruffled us, meditation on the glorious perfections and wonderful works of God is suited to restore the calm: and it is well when the sweet, but much abused, arts of poetry and music, are used with such caution and propriety, as to favour communion with him. The Lord will take occasion from the distresses of his offending servants to manifest the glory of his power, truth, and love:

CHAP. IV.

Elisha increases the oil of a poor prophet's widow, to enable her to pay her debts, 1—7. *He is hospitably entertained by a woman of Shunem, who is rewarded by having a son in her old age,* 8—17. *The child dies, but it is restored to life in answer to Elisha's prayer,* 18—37. *Elisha heals the pottage made with poisonous herbs,* 38—41. *And feeds an hundred men with twenty barley-loaves,* 42—44.

NOW there cried a certain woman of the wives of the [a] sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying, Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest that [b] thy servant did fear the LORD: and [c] the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen.

a 2 Kings ii. 3. 5. 1 Kings xx 35.
b Gen. xxii. 12. 1 Kings xviii. 3. Neh. vii. 2. Ec. xii. 13. Mal iii. 16. iv. 2. Acts xiii. 26.
c Lev. xxv. 39, 40. Neh v 2—5. Jer. xxxiv. 14. Matt. xviii. 25. 35. James ii. 13.

2 And Elisha said unto her, [d] What shall I do for thee? tell me: what hast thou in the house? And she said, Thine handmaid hath not any thing in the house [e] save a pot of oil.

3 Then he said, Go, borrow the vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, *even* [f] empty vessels; * borrow not a few.

4 And when thou art come in, [g] thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full.

5 So [h] she went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons, who brought *the vessels* to her, and she poured out.

6 And it came to pass when [i] the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, *There is* not a vessel more. [k] And the oil stayed.

d ii. 9. vi 26, 27. Matt. xvii. 27. John vi 5—7. Acts iii. 6. 2 Cor. vi. 10.
e 1 Kings xvii. 12. Jam. ii. 5.
f iii. 16 John ii. 7.
* Heb. *scant not*.
xiii. 18. 19. Ps. lxxxi 10. John xvi. 24.
g 32. 33 1 Kings xvii 19. 20. Matt. vi. 6. Mark v. 40. Acts ix. 40.
h v. 11. 1 Kings xvii. 15, 16. Luke i. 45. Heb. xi. 7, 8.
i 43, 44. Matt. ix. 29. xiii. 58. xiv 20. xv. 37. Luke vi. 19. 2 Cor. vi. 12.
k xiii. 19. Josh. v. 12 1 Kings xvii. 14. John vi. 12.

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and whilst all good gifts are from Him alone, we must show our believing expectation, and prepare for their reception, by observing the directions of his word. It is a light thing for him to preserve his people from becoming a prey to their enemies: he will make them more than conquerors over them all. Our rule is to do good and not evil to *our* adversaries: but we shall hereafter behold and rejoice in the destruction of all the enemies of God. And they, who are expressly commissioned by him, (as the Israelites of old, and magistrates at present,) to execute his vengeance upon the wicked, are authorized in those severities, which in others would be extremely criminal. The Lord will put honour upon his own institutions: and sinners left to themselves are speedily infatuated; for if men could not *believe without proof, and in defiance of demonstration, what they wish to be true,* "the fool would never "have said in his heart, there is no God." When sinners are saying peace, peace, sudden and inevitable destruction will come upon them, desperation will succeed their mad presumption; and in Satan's service, and at his suggestion, such horrid deeds have been perpetrated, as cause even the natural feelings of humanity to recoil. We should, however, be careful not to urge the worst of men to extremities, lest we should occasion blasphemies, murder, or suicide; but ought rather to recede from our right, and leave them to the judgment of God.

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1. The prophets were ministers *by selection*, and not *by entail*, as the priests were; yet they seem in general to have married and brought up families: though Elijah and Elisha are supposed to have continued in a single state. Except the prophets had private fortunes, their incomes must have been very precarious; and would arise either from the donations of pious persons, or from their own manual labour. The people perhaps sometimes gave them the first-fruits, and some other of the oblations, which would have belonged to the priests and Levites, if they had not departed from among them. Many of them, however, seem to have been very scantily provided for: and this servant of God, who was of approved piety, not only left his family destitute, but involved in debt. Yet the creditor paid no more regard to the distress of the widow, than to the character of the deceased; nay, perhaps he was the more severe in his demands, because of his profession of godliness. As therefore the widow had no effects with which to discharge the debt, he proceeded to sell her sons for slaves in order to pay himself. (*Marg. Ref.*) Elisha had no wealth from which to assist the widow; yet it was proper, for the honour of religion, that the creditor should be satisfied: but the Lord directed him to a method of effectually answering this demand, and of supplying her future necessities.

V. 2. The woman had parted with every thing of value, to satisfy other demands, or to supply her urgent necessities. Probably this oil was a present from some friend of her deceased husband, out of the produce of his olive-yard, but it was utterly insufficient to satisfy the creditor.

V. 4. *Shut*, &c. This direction was given in order that she might avoid interruption and ostentation; and that in retirement, she with her sons might the more leisurely consider and adore the goodness of the Lord.

V. 6. The woman was ordered "to borrow empty "vessels not a few;" and as her neighbours were willing to lend her, we may conclude, that she borrowed as many as she thought could be wanted: yet the oil stayed not till all the vessels were filled. Had her expectations been larger, the supply would have been more abundant.

7 Then she came, and told the man of God: and he said, Go, sell the oil, and [l] pay thy * debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest.

8 ¶ And † it fell on a day, that Elisha passed to [m] Shunem, where *was* [n] a great woman: and [o] she ‡ constrained him to eat bread. And *so* it was, *that,* as oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat bread.

9 And [p] she said unto her husband, Behold now, I perceive that this *is* [q] an [r] holy man of God, which passeth by us continually.

10 [s] Let us make [t] a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither.

11 And it fell on a day that he came thither, and he turned into the chamber and lay there.

12 And he said to [u] Gehazi his servant, Call this Shunammite. And when he had called her, she stood before him.

13 And he said unto him, Say now unto her, Behold, [x] thou hast been careful for us with all this care; what *is* to be done for thee? wouldst thou be spoken for [y] to the king, or [z] to the captain of the host? And she answered, [a] I dwell [b] among mine own people.

14 And he said, What then *is* to be done for her? And Gehazi answered, [c] Verily she hath no child, and her husband is old.

15 And he said, Call her. And when he had called her, she stood in the door.

16 And he said, [d] About * this season, according to the time of life, thou shalt embrace a son. And she said, Nay, [e] my lord, *thou* man of God; [f] do not lie unto thine handmaid.

17 And [g] the woman conceived, and bare a son at that season that Elisha had said unto her, according to the time of life.

18 And when the child was grown, it fell on a day that he went out to his father [h] to the reapers.

19 And he said unto his father, [i] My head, my head. And he said to a lad, Carry him to his mother.

20 And when he had taken him, and brought him to [k] his mother, he sat on her knees till noon, [l] and *then* died.

21 And she went up, and laid him

l Ps. xxxvii. 21. Rom xiii. 7, 8. Phil. iv. 8. 1 Thes. ii. 9, 10. iv. 6. 2 Thes. iii. 7—12.
* Or, *creditor.*
† Heb. *there was a day.*
m Josh. xix. 18. 1 Sam. xxviii. 4.
n 2 Sam. xix. 32. Job i. 3. xxxii. 9.
o Gen. xix. 3. Prov. vii. 21. Luke xiv. 23. xxiv. 29. Acts xvi. 15.
‡ Heb. *laid hold on him.*
p Prov. xxxi. 10, 11. 1 Pet. iii. 1.
q Deut. xxxiii. 1. 1 Kings xiii. 1. xvii. 18. 24. 1 Tim. vi. 11.
r 1 Thes. ii. 10.
s Rom. xii. 13. Heb. xiii. 2. 1 Pet. iv. 9, 10.
t 1 Kings xvii. 19.
u v. 20—27. viii. 4, 5.
x Matt x. 40—42. Luke ix. 3—5. Rom. xvi 2. 6. Phil iv. 18, 19. 1 Thes v. 12, 13. 2 Tim i 16—18.
y i ii. 15—18. viii. 3—6. Gen. xiv. 24. 2 Sam. xix. 32—38.
z vi. 22.
a 1 Tim. vi. 6—8 Heb. xiii. 5.
b viii. 1. Ruth i. 1—4. Ps. xxxvii. 3.
c Gen. xv. 2, 3. xvii. 17. xxv. 21. xxx. 1. Judg. xiii. 2. 1 Sam. i. 2. 6. Luke i. 7.
d Gen. xviii. 10. 14.
* Heb. *set time.*
e 9.
f 28. v. 10, 11. Gen. xviii. 12—15. 1 Kings xvii. 18 xviii 9. Ps. cxvi. 11. Luke i. 18—20.
g Gen. xxi. 1. 1 Sam. i. 19, 20. Ps. cxiii 9. Luke i. 24, 25. Heb. xi. 11.
B. C. 889.
h Ruth ii. 4.
i Job xiv. 1, 2 Jer. iv. 19.
k Is. xlix. 15 lxvi. 13. Luke vii. 12.
l Gen. xxii. 2. xxxvii. 3. 35. 1 Kings xvii 17. Ez. xxiv. 16—18. Luke ii. 35. John xi. 3. 5. 14.

V. 7. The woman would not make use of the miraculous supply, till she had received the prophet's direction: and by his orders she *first* discharged her whole debt, and then used the remainder for the subsistence of herself and her children.

V. 8—10. Elisha seems to have generally resided at or near mount Carmel: but he went his circuits through the land, to visit the seminaries of the prophets, and to instruct the people, which was his stated employment, when not sent on some special service. At Shunem there lived a woman of wealth and piety, who invited him to come to her house, and with some difficulty prevailed. But when he became acquainted with her character, he never failed to call upon her when he journeyed that way. Her husband seems to have been a pious person, but not so zealous or active as she was; and as he confided his domestic affairs to her care, she is chiefly noticed. By his approbation she prepared for the prophet a retired lodging, perhaps perceiving that the hurry of a large family did not suit his contemplative mind. The plain simple manner in which the prophet's chamber was furnished, (though he was the patriarch, if I may so speak, of the whole church of Israel,) is worthy of our notice. There was nothing provided for ornament or indulgence, but merely for necessity, for study, and for devotion.

V. 13. Elisha had no doubt acquired considerable influence with Jehoram, or his captains, by the singular deliverance and victory obtained through him: and though he would ask nothing for himself, he was willing to show his gratitude in behalf of his kind hostess, by interposing in her behalf, if she had any petition to present. Perhaps Jehoram's soldiers or tax-gatherers might be oppressive and troublesome in the neighbourhood; and he thought she might desire to seek redress of this, or some other grievance. Or perhaps he made the proposal with an intention of manifesting her indifference to temporal interests. Accordingly she answered, that living safe and contented among her friends and relatives, and those who behaved kindly to her, she had no request to make. Having said this, she seems to have withdrawn, and Elisha talked the business over with Gehazi.

V. 14—17. Gehazi, as having more leisure to observe the affairs of the family than Elisha had, discovered what favour would be most acceptable; and he seems not to have doubted the prevalence of his master's prayers in this respect. In addressing his benefactress, Elisha used words, which, some think, implied not only the time, but the very day, on which she should embrace *a son.* (*Marg. Ref.*) Her answer reminded him of his character, and intimated that she could not suppose he would mock her with delusive expectations: especially as she had expressed no impatience under her trial, and had not so much as mentioned a desire of having children.

m 10. 1 Kings xvii. 19.

[m] on the bed of the man of God, and shut *the door* upon him, and went out.

22 And she called unto her husband, and said, Send me, I pray thee, one of the young men, and one of the asses, that [n] I may run to the man of God, and come again.

n 26.

23 And he said, Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day? *It is* neither [o] new moon nor sabbath. And he said, *It shall be* * well.

o Num. x 10. xxviii. 11. 1 Chr. xxiii. 31. Is. i. 13—15.
* Heb. *peace.* 26.

24 Then [p] she saddled an ass, and said to her servant, [q] Drive, and go forward; † slack not *thy* riding for me, except I bid thee.

p Ex. iv 20. 1 Sam xxv. 20 1 Kings xiii 13. 23
q 1 Sam xxv. 19.
† Heb. *restrain not for me to ride.*

25 So she went and came unto the man of God [r] to mount Carmel. And it came to pass, when the man of God saw her afar off, that he said to Gehazi his servant, Behold, *yonder is* that Shunammite:

r ii. 25 1 Kings xviii. 19. 42.

26 [s] Run now, I pray thee, to meet her; and say unto her, [t] *Is it* well with thee? *is it* well with thy husband? *is it* well with the child? And she answered, *It is* [u] well.

s 13. Zech. ii. 4.
t Gen xxix 6 xxxvii. 14 1 Sam. xvii 18. Matt. x. 12, 13. Acts xv. 36.
u 23. 1 Sam. iii. 18. Job i. 21.

27 And when she came to the man of God to the hill, she caught ‡ him by the feet: but Gehazi came near to [x] thrust her away. And the man of God said, [y] Let her alone; for her soul *is* ◊ vexed within her: and the LORD hath [z] hid *it* from me, and hath not told me.

‡ Heb. *by his feet.* Matt. xxviii. 9. Luke vii 33
x Matt. xv. 23. Mark x. 13. John iv. 27.
y John xii. 7.
◊ Heb. *bitter.* 1 Sam i. 10. Job x. 1. Prov. xiv. 10. xviii. 14.
z vi. 12. Gen. xviii. 17. 2 Sam. vii. 3. Am. iii. 7. John xv. 15.

28 Then she said, [a] Did I desire a son of my lord; did I not say, [b] Do not deceive me?

a Gen. xxx. 1.
b 16.

29 Then he said to Gehazi, [c] Gird up thy loins, and [d] take my staff in thine hand, and go thy way: if thou meet any man, [e] salute him not; and if any salute thee, answer him not again: and [f] lay my staff upon the face of the child.

c ix. 1. 1 Kings xviii. 46.
d ii 14. Ex. iv. 17. Acts xix. 12.
e Luke x. 4.
f Ex. vii. 19, 20. xiv. 16. Josh. vi. 4, 5 Acts iii. 16. xix. 12.

30 And the mother of the child said, [g] *As* the LORD liveth, and *as* thy soul liveth, [h] I will not leave thee. And he arose, and followed her.

g ii. 2. 4.
h Ex. xxxiii. 12—16. Ruth i. 16—18.

31 And Gehazi passed on before them, and laid the staff upon the face of the child; but *there was* [i] neither voice nor ‖ hearing: wherefore he went again to meet him, and told him, saying, The child *is* [k] not awaked.

i Is. xxvi. 18. Matt. xvii 16—21. Mark ix 19—29. Acts xix. 13—17.
‖ Heb *attention.* 1 Kings xviii 26. 29.
k Dan. xii. 2. John xi. 11. 43, 44. Eph. v. 14.

32 And when Elisha was come into the house, behold, [l] the child was dead, *and* laid upon his bed.

l 1 Kings xvii. 19. Luke viii 52, 53. John xi. 17.

33 He went in therefore, and [m] shut

m 4. Matt. vi. 6.

V. 21. *On the bed*, &c. This implied, that the woman had some expectations of her son's being restored to her; as he had at first been given her in so extraordinary a manner; (*Heb.* xi. 19;) yet, this hope was not sufficient to exclude her anguish of spirit under this unexpected and sudden affliction.

V. 23. It appears, that on the sabbaths, new moons, and other solemnities, the people were accustomed to resort to appointed places, to worship God, and to receive instruction from the prophets. It is not certain whether they assembled in synagogues or private houses; but probably it was done in most parts of the land of Israel. In Judah, pious people had the advantage of the temple-worship, and the instructions of the priests and Levites; they were *generally* countenanced and protected by their kings; and they thankfully availed themselves of these advantages. But in Israel, the ruling powers were against them: yet they served God according to their consciences, as their circumstances would admit. The afflicted mother would not needlessly distress her husband, by informing him of the death of the child; but merely said it would be well for her to go: and he had that confidence in her, that he required no further explanation.

V. 26. *It is well.* Some suppose that the woman only meant to put off Gehazi with this answer, as in part true, in respect of herself and her husband, though not the whole of the case: but it is probable that it was the language of her faith; as she was persuaded that the affliction was in mercy, and would terminate well, though her passions conflicted against her better judgment.

V. 27. It is plain, from this verse, that the prophets derived all their knowledge from immediate communication: and not from any power of discerning, habitually inherent in them.

V. 28. Doubtless the acute feelings of the Shunammite mingled some impatience in these expostulations; yet she meant them as arguments, to prevail with the prophet to come to her relief; being satisfied of the prevalency of his prayers. For as she had not impatiently desired children, she could not think that her son had been given her without solicitation, merely to become the occasion of her far deeper distress.

V. 29—31. It is difficult to determine what the prophet meant, by thus sending Gehazi. He had divided Jordan by using Elijah's mantle; and perhaps he thought his own staff in the hands of Gehazi would be as efficacious. Or perhaps he meant to make trial of the Shunammite's faith. Gehazi however was ordered to proceed as a man upon urgent business, who may not be delayed even by attention to ordinary civilities: and he seems to have observed his directions punctually, but in vain; whether through his own unbelief, or because the woman had no expectations from him, or because Elisha was faulty in attempting to perform the miracle by a substitute; or, as some think, because the prophet altered his purpose, at the importunity of the woman, and so did not pray for Gehazi's success.

the door upon them twain, and [n] prayed unto the LORD.

34 And he went up, and [o] lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands, and he stretched himself upon the child, and the flesh of the child waxed warm.

35 Then he returned, and walked in the house * to and fro; and went up, and stretched himself upon him: and [p] the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes.

36 And he called Gehazi, and said, Call this Shunammite. So he called her: and when she was come in unto him, he said, [q] Take up thy son.

37 Then she went in, and [r] fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground, and took up her son, and went out.

38 ¶ And Elisha came again to [s] Gilgal; and *there was* [t] a dearth in the land, and the sons of the prophets *were* [u] sitting before him: and he said unto his servant, [x] Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets.

39 And one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found [y] a wild vine, and gathered thereof wild gourds his lap full, and came and shred *them* into the pot of pottage: for they knew *them* not.

40 So they poured out for the men to eat: and it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out, and said, [z] O *thou* man of God, *there is* [a] death in the pot; and they could not eat *thereof*.

41 But he said, Then bring meal: and [b] he cast *it* into the pot; and he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat: and [c] there was no † harm in the pot.

42 ¶ And there came a man from [d] Baal-shalisha, and brought the man of God [e] bread of the first-fruits, twenty loaves [f] of barley, and full ears of corn in ‡ the husk thereof: and he said, Give unto the people that they may eat.

43 And [g] his servitor said, [h] What! should I set this before an hundred men? He said again, Give the people, that they may eat: for thus saith the LORD, [i] They shall eat, and shall leave *thereof*.

44 So he set *it* before them, and they did eat, and left *thereof*, according to the word of the LORD.

n v. 11. vi. 17, 18. 20. 1 Kings xvii. 20. xviii. 26, 27. Acts ix. 40. Jam. v. 13—18.
o 1 Kings xvii. 21. Acts xx. 10.
* Heb. *once hither and once thither.*
p viii. 1. 5. xiii. 21. 1 Kings xvii. 22. Luke vii. 15. viii. 55. John xi. 44. Acts ix. 40.
q 1 Kings xvii. 23 Heb. xi. 35.
r 27. ii. 15. 1 Kings xviii. 24. John v. 28, 29.
s ii. 1. 1 Sam. vii. 16, 17. Acts x. 38. xv. 36.
t viii. 1. Lev. xxvi. 26. Deut. xxviii. 22—24. 38—40. Jer. xiv. 1—6. Ez. xiv. 13.
u ii. 3 1 Sam. xix. 20. Prov. viii. 34. Luke ii. 46. viii. 35 38. x. 39. Acts xxii. 3.
x Mark vi. 37. viii. 2—6. Luke xii 30. John xxi. 5. 9.
y Is. v. 4 Jer. ii. 21.
z Josh. xiv. 6.
a Ex. x. 17. xv. 23. Mark xvi. 18.
b ii. 21. v. 10. vi. 6. Ex. xv 25. John ix. 6. 1 Cor. i. 25.
c Acts xxviii. 5.
† Heb. *evil thing.*
d 1 Sam. ix. 4.
e 38. Ex. xxiii. 16 Deut. xii. 6. xxvi. 2—10. 1 2 Chr. xi. 13, 14. Prov. iii 9. 10. 1 Cor. ix. 11. Gal. vi. 6
f Deut. viii. 8. xxxii. 14. John vi. 9. 13.
‡ Or, *his scrip*, or, *garment.*
g 12.
h Luke ix. 13. John vi. 9.
i Matt. xiv. 20. xv. 37. xvi. 8—10. Luke ix. 17. John vi. 11—13.

V. 33—35. It is instructive to compare *the manner* in which Elijah and Elisha wrought their miracles, especially in raising the dead, with that of Jesus Christ. Every part of their conduct expressed a consciousness of inability *in themselves*, and an entire dependence on another, and earnest application to him for his interposition: but Jesus wrought by his own power; He spake, and it was done; "Young "man, I say unto thee, arise;" *Talitha cumi;*" "Lazarus, come forth." On this occasion Elisha, by his great attention, showed his earnest desire of restoring the child to his afflicted mother: and the actions he employed were significant expressions of his expectation, that God by communicating life to the body, would enable each part to perform its proper office. The recovery of the child was gradual: life was communicated, and then one symptom of it and another appeared. As his disorder had been in his head, it has been observed that his sneezing might remove the cause of it, and restore him to health also.

V. 37. The joyful mother not only expressed her high respect for the prophet, but worshipped God also, giving him humble thanks for his great goodness to her: for the words may be rendered, '*She fell at his feet, and worshipped.*"

V. 39. *Wild gourds.* These are supposed to have been gathered from the plant called *coloquinteda*, which is of a most nauseous bitter, and, if taken improperly, operates as a fatal poison. The sons of the prophets seem to have fared very hardly; and in this scarcity they were glad to gather what they could find, and thus ignorantly brought this noxious plant.

V. 40, 41. It is probable that these men were alarmed not only by the nauseous taste of their food, but by the effects produced on those who had begun to eat of it. Yet we may take occasion to remark the goodness of God, in giving us the senses of smelling and tasting, to be, as it were, centinels to keep watch, that nothing prejudicial may be received into the stomach. The *meal cast into the pot*, was only a token of the divine operation, in changing the taste and properties of the pottage, that his servants might not want a necessary refreshment.

V. 42—44. This would be a considerable present in a time of famine. 'It is probable, pious persons gave that 'portion to the prophets which was assigned by God to the 'priests, to whom they could not now carry their first-'fruits, they being in the land of Judah. And I suppose 'the schools of the prophets might be partly maintained 'by this means.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The loaves seem to have been small; perhaps each intended to be a meal for one man. The supply, however, was deemed greatly inadequate to the company; but the increase was small, compared with the miracles of this kind wrought by Jesus Christ. The sons of the prophets seem at this time to have become very numerous: but perhaps some of the people, who came from a distance to receive instruction, shared the repast. And this might be one reason of the

CHAP. V.

Naaman, captain of the host of Syria, is leprous, 1. *By the report of a captive maid, he comes to Samaria to be healed,* 2—7. *Elisha sends for him; he goes to him, and is ordered to wash seven times in Jordan,* 8—10. *He is angry; but, persuaded by his servants, he complies and is cleansed,* 11—14. *He acknowledges the true God; offers presents to Elisha, who refuses them; and is sent away in peace, resolving to worship the Lord alone,* 15—19. *Gehazi, by a lie, obtains presents from Naaman, and is punished by leprosy entailed on his descendants,* 20—27.

NOW [a] Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was [b] a great [†] man [*] with his master, and † honour-

a Luke iv. 27.
b iv 8. Ex. xi. 3.
* Heb *before.*
† Or, *gracious.* Heb. *lifted up.* or, *accepted in countenance.*

servant's objection to setting out so little food before such a number of persons.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

It is incumbent upon all Christians, and especially on ministers, to submit to Providence in respect of their temporal provision; and whilst they trust in God for their daily bread, not to tempt him by negligence or extravagance.—They should not contract debts (for things not *absolutely necessary,*) which they have not a reasonable prospect of discharging: for nothing tends more to bring reproach on the Gospel, and excite prejudice against it; nothing more distracts men's minds whilst they live, or more distresses their families when they are dead, than a burden of debt, without effects with which to pay it. Many hardships, therefore should be endured, and many pleasant things renounced, rather than such fatal consequences should be occasioned. Yet, in the mystery of Providence, this may sometimes unavoidably prove the case even of those who are eminent for piety; nor can the strictest prudence avert the calamity: besides, many good men are deficient in worldly sagacity, and their unsuspecting simplicity exposes them to the designs of the artful. But when this is rather a man's misfortune than his fault, he will have a testimony to his integrity in the consciences of all impartial persons; the Lord's people will be inclined to relieve him or his, according to their ability: and God himself will, in some way, interpose to clear up his character and to provide for his wants. He who hath all hearts in his hand, is able without a *miracle,* to procure as effectual a supply, as the increase of the widow's oil: and when the ability is given, the creditor, though unreasonable and severe, must first be satisfied, after which the remainder may be enjoyed with comfort. We should then be careful to perform our present duty, and to commit all our concerns to the Lord! we should study to adorn the Gospel in our life and conversation, and he will take care of us and ours: and if he bring us into distress, he will manifest his power and truth in our deliverance. He generally supplies what is requisite for honesty and charity to his people, by blessing them whilst they are occupying with a little. And the best directed benevolence of man consists in teaching and helping the poor to make the most of what they have by honest industry: but in every way we should show a readiness to relieve those in distress; and to give them our counsel and prayers, when we have nothing else. If our hearts were more prepared to receive spiritual blessings, and if we expected larger supplies, in retirement and fervent prayer, we should be more richly replenished: at length all the vessels of mercy shall be filled with the Lord's goodness; and the Redeemer's all-sufficiency will only be stayed from supplying the wants and saving the souls of sinners, when there are no more inclined to apply to him for salvation.

V. 8—37.

The ministers of religion should not seek great things for themselves, or court the intimacy of the great, except to do good *to them* or *by them:* but they ought to be unwearied in their useful labours, like Him, "who went "about doing good," that all may "perceive that they "are holy men of God," simply dependent on him, walking with him, devoted to his service, and seeking his glory. Though backward to form connexions with their superiors, lest they should be taken off from their work and entangled in the world; they may yet find a few in that sphere, whose acquaintance may be deemed a privilege. But whilst they will not refuse their countenance and friendship, they feel, that "it is more blessed to give than to receive;" and they will endeavour to make such returns of gratitude as are in their power, and especially to seek the blessing of God upon their benefactors: nay, they will go further with man to ask favours in behalf of others, than for themselves. But it is a great happiness to know when we are well, and to be content among our friends and relatives, without coveting the splendour or pleasures of courts and public life; and when we have so learned submission to the will of God, as to express no desire for those objects, which others can perceive are wanting to our comfort. The Lord however sees the secret wish which is suppressed in obedience to his will; and will hear the prayers of his servants in behalf of their benefactors, by communicating unsolicited and unexpected mercies: nor must the promises and engagements of the men of God be deemed fallacious, like those of the men of the world. But, alas! all earthly comforts are sources of uneasiness: anxious fears counterbalance our pleasure from our beloved children when most hopeful: and their sudden sickness and death may turn all our joy into poignant anguish. On such occasions it is right to keep silence, or to say *that all is well:* nor must we think it hard to bring up children for the grave, or for the kingdom of heaven. We may not now expect a present resurrection of our deceased friends: but in many of our troubles we may find relief, in all of them peace and comfort, from

able; because [c] by him the LORD has given * deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man of valour; *but he was* [d] a leper.

2 And the Syrians had gone out [e] by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and [f] she † waited on Naaman's wife.

3 And she said unto her mistress, [g] Would God my lord *were* ‡ with the prophet that *is* in Samaria! for [h] he would § recover him of his leprosy.

4 And *one* went in and told his lord, saying, [i] Thus and thus said the maid that *is* of the land of Israel.

5 And the king of Syria said, Go to, go, and I will send a letter unto the king of Israel. And he departed, [k] and took ‖ with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand *pieces* of gold, and [l] ten changes of raiment.

6 And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, Now when this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have

c Prov. xxi. 31. Is. x. 5, 6. xxvii. 5, 6. Dan. ii. 37, 38. John xix. 11. Rom xv 18.
* Or, *victory.*
d 27. Lev. xiii. 1—8. Num. xii. 12. 2 Cor. xii. 7.
e vi. 23. Judg. ix. 34. 1 Sam. xiii. 17, 18.
f Ps. cxxiii. 2.
† Heb. *was before.*
g Num. xi. 29. Acts xxvi. 29. 1 Cor. iv. 8.
‡ Heb. *before.*
h Matt. viii. 2, 3. xi. 8. Luke xvii. 14.
§ Heb. *gather in.*
i vii. 9—11. Mark v. 19. xvi. 9, 10. John iv. 28, 29. 1 Cor. i. 26, 27.
k viii. 8, 9 Num. xxii. 7. 1 Sam. ix. 8. 1 Kings xiii. 7. xiv. 3
‖ Heb. *in his hand.*
l Gen. xlv. 22. Judg. xiv. 12. Jam. v. 2, 3.

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the counsel and prayers of the Lord's faithful servants, who can put us in a way to turn all our losses into the richest gain. Their company, the ordinances of God, and the throne of grace, should be doubly welcome to the afflicted and bereaved. We should treat those with great tenderness whose souls are vexed in them; making allowance for improprieties in their conduct, and impatience in their expressions, and suffer them to vent their griefs, as well as be ready to attempt their consolation: and in general we should not avoid trouble, or affect state, by doing those things by others which we are able to do ourselves.—When we have used proper means with diligence and earnestness, we may expect the efficacious blessing of God, both in things temporal and spiritual; but not otherwise. The Gospel of salvation will no more effect the sinner's conversion, than the condemning law, without the presence of the Lord: and if the minister be a hypocrite, and destitute of faith, little good can be expected from the most exact external observances; *the sinners are not awaked* will generally be the doleful report. Not so, when the use of appointed means is accompanied by the spirit of fervent believing prayer, and persevering expectation from the Lord: then the change, which takes place in the conduct of many, shall evince that "they are quickened who were dead in "trespasses and sins." As the choicest comforts occasion the severest trials, so our heaviest afflictions make way for the sweetest consolations: and notwithstanding appearances, the Lord will not tantalize his true people, by giving them blessings in order to take them away from them: but it is a comfort under temporal losses to reflect, that we did not inordinately desire the object of which we are bereft. It is happy and comely when harmony prevails in domestic life; when the husband's authority is tempered with affection and unsuspecting confidence; when the wife answers that confidence with deference and submission, as well as fidelity; and when each party consults the other's inclinations, and both unite in attendance on God's ordinances, and supporting his cause.

V. 38—44.

Whilst the servants of the Lord are contented with mean accommodations, and put their trust in him, he can make their coarsest fare pleasant to them. Let them but observe his directions, and he will not only supply their wants, but extract *the death*, the evil, from such things as most alarm them. When he pleases, the scantiest provisions shall suffice; and whilst he communicates to us, we should in faith impart a portion to others: and thus all will be clean and salutary to us. But to them, who feed themselves without fear, their table becomes a snare, and perdition entwines around their sensual enjoyments. Aware of this danger, let us learn to use temporal good things with caution and moderation, in dependence on him, by whose blessing alone our food is made wholesome and nutrimental.

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1. Though the Syrians were idolaters, and often oppressors of Israel, yet the deliverance, of which Naaman had been the instrument, is here ascribed to the operation and goodness of the Lord. Such is the *rational* language of the sacred writers: whilst the arguments and phraseology of those in general, who compose what is justly called *profane* history, too evidently show that God is not in all their thoughts. The leprosy was a loathsome and distressing distemper: and though Naaman was not under the restrictions prescribed for Israel; yet doubtless, he found it a great deduction from the satisfaction he might otherwise have found in his high preferments and honours.

V. 3, 4. This young damsel, though a captive, and a slave to Naaman, having, it is likely, been treated with kindness, entertained a cordial affection for her master, and earnestly desired the removal of his affliction. She had heard of the piety and miracles of Elisha; and though he had not cleansed any lepers, she was persuaded he would be inclined to show such kindness to a heathen as to effect his cure. Nor did Naaman despise the information as coming from such a quarter. He had doubtless tried to the utmost what the physicians could do for him, but in vain; and his earnest desire of a cure prevented him from disdaining an application to the prophet of Israel.

V. 5. Ben-hadad king of Syria, having heard, probably from Naaman himself, that there was such a prophet in Israel, seems to have supposed that he must be at the command of the king of Israel, and perform his miracles for his pleasure and advantage: and if the Israelitish maid knew so much of the prophet, the king must have him continually in his presence, or in his thoughts. He therefore concluded, that he had only to ask it as a favour of Jehoram, that Naaman might be cured, and it would be granted of course; and Naaman would prefer going in state to the king of Israel, to becoming a supplicant to a poor prophet: yet it seems he intended liberally to reward him for curing him.

therewith sent Naaman my servant to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy.

7 And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said [m] *Am* I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? wherefore consider, I pray you, and [n] see how he seeketh a quarrel against me.

8 And it was *so*, when Elisha the man of God had heard that the king of Israel had [o] rent his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? let him come now to me, and he [p] shall know that there is a prophet in Israel.

9 So Naaman [q] came with his horses and with his chariot, and stood at the door of the house of Elisha.

10 And Elisha [r] sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and [s] wash in Jordan [t] seven times, and [u] thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.

11 But Naaman [x] was wroth, and [y] went away, and said, [z] Behold, * I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the LORD his God, and † strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper.

12 *Are* not ‡ Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? so he turned and went away in a rage.

13 And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, [a] My father, [b] *if* the prophet had bid thee *do some* great thing, wouldst thou not have done *it?* how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?

14 Then [c] went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, [d] according to the saying of the man of God: and [e] his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, [f] and he was clean.

m Gen. xxx. 2. Deut. xxxii. 39. 1 Sam. ii. 6. Dan. ii. 11. Hos. vi. 1.
n 1 Kings xx. 7.
o xix. 1. 2 Sam. iii. 31.
p 15. i. 6. 1 Kings xvii. 24. xviii. 36. Hos. xii. 13.
q iii. 12. vi. 32. Is. lx. 14. Acts xvi. 29, 30. 37—39.
r Matt. xv. 23. 26. John iv. 48.
s ii. 21. iii. 16. iv. 41. xiii. 21. John ix. 7. 1 Cor. vi. 11.
t Lev. xiv. 7. 16. 51. xvi. 14. 19. Num. xix. 4. 19. Josh. vi. 4. 13—16.
u 14. Ex. iv. 6, 7.
x Matt. viii. 3. xv. 27. 1 Sam. xiv. 11.
y Prov. [illegible] Heb. xii. 25.
z Prov. iii. 7. Is. lv. 8, 9. 1 Cor. ii. 14—16. i. 18—20.
* Heb. *I said*, or, *I said with myself, he will surely come out*, &c.
† Heb. *move up and down.*
‡ Or, *Amana.*
a ii. 12. vi. 21. xiii. 14. Gen. xli. 43. Mal. i. 6. Matt. xxiii. 9. 1 Cor. iv. 15.
b 3. 1 Sam. xxv. 14—17. 1 Kings xx. 24. 31. Job xxxii. 8, 9. Jer. xxxviii. 7—10.
c Job xxxi. 13. Prov. ix. 9. xxv. 12, 13.
d 2 Chr. xx. 20. John ii. 5. Heb. xi. 7, 8.
e 10. Job xxxiii. 25.
f Luke iv. 27. v. 13. Eph. v. 26, 27. Tit. ii. 14. iii. 3—7.

V. 7. Jehoram construed the ignorant language of the king of Syria into blasphemy against God, as well as malice against himself. Though an idolater, and a very wicked man, he would be thought much concerned about the honour of God, and full of abhorrence of Ben-hadad's supposed crime, and therefore he rent his clothes. He had either for the moment forgot the miracles wrought by Elisha; or he did not wish to see any more of them; or he thought this beyond his power: for it seems it was deemed as impracticable, by human skill, to cleanse a rooted leprosy, as to raise the dead. By this concession, the miracle wrought by Elijah became the more illustrious. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 8. *A prophet in Israel.* Naaman came into the land of Israel, expecting relief from a prophet of the God of Israel: and Elisha would by no means have him go back disappointed, lest he should conclude that JEHOVAH was like the gods of the nations, and as unable to do good or evil as they were. On the contrary he would have it known, that God had a prophet in Israel, who could perform such cures, as none of the heathen prophets, or priests, or physicians could effect; and which were far beyond all the power of the mightiest monarchs.

V. 9—12. The prophet knew how to stoop to the meanest service or person, when it was proper: but Naaman seemed to have come to him with great ideas of his own importance, as if he conferred a favour or honour upon him. Elisha was therefore directed to assume that superiority which really belonged to him; and to show Naaman that he was far from being elated by the presence of so great a man; and that he regarded not his rank, desired not his friendship, and would not accept his presents; though, for the honour of the God of Israel, his leprosy should be cleansed, if he would observe the simple directions which he sent him by a messenger. But Naaman thought that the prophet treated him with rudeness and neglect. He had also formed an idea in his mind of the manner in which the cure would be performed, and this message did not answer his expectations. He wanted to be cured as a man of consequence, who was entitled to regard; and not as a poor pensioner, who is glad of his alms, by whomsoever sent. Abana and Pharpar were larger rivers than Jordan, and Naaman thought more likely to effect a cure: but the rivers of Damascus had not been distinguished by miracles, as Jordan had been; and Naaman in his proud anger forgot that JEHOVAH was to cleanse his leprosy by means of his own appointment, and not in a way of man's devising.

V. 13, 14. This Syrian was favoured with very prudent, respectful, and affectionate servants; and probably he was in general a kind and considerate master, who could bear to be reasoned with by his inferiors. They had, it may be supposed, heard a great deal from the Israelitish maid of Elisha's miracles; and were very desirous that Naaman should make the trial. Being more calm and impartial than he, they perceived that the prophet's directions were simple, easy, and safe. Had the prophet prescribed nauseous medicines, a tedious regimen, or some painful operations, or even some burdensome religious observances; or had he demanded a large sum of money as the price of the cure, they knew that Naaman would have complied without demur: how much more then ought he in reason to go to Jordan, and wash seven times in its waters? This remonstrance was a word spoken in due season, and had its full effect: and his cure immediately followed on his obedience; so that the decayed and loathsome parts of his skin and flesh, became perfectly sound, and assumed the healthful appearance of the flesh of a child.

15 And [g] he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came and stood before him: and he said, Behold, now I know that [h] *there is* no God in all the earth, but in Israel; now therefore, I pray thee, take [i] a blessing of thy servant.

16 But he said, [k] *As* the LORD liveth, before whom I stand, [l] I will receive none. And he urged him to take *it;* but he refused.

17 And Naaman said, Shall there not then, I pray thee, be given to thy servant two mules burden [m] of earth? for thy servant [n] will henceforth offer neither burnt-offering, nor sacrifice, unto other gods, but unto the LORD.

18 In this thing the LORD pardon thy servant, *that* when my master goeth into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he [o] leaneth on my hand, and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon; when I bow down myself in the house of Rimmon, the LORD pardon thy servant in this thing.

19 And [p] he said unto him, [q] Go in peace. So he departed from him a * little way.

20 ¶ But [r] Gehazi the servant of Elisha the man of God said, Behold, [s] my master hath spared Naaman this Syrian, in not receiving at his hands that which he brought: but, [t] *as* the LORD liveth, I will run after him, [u] and take somewhat of him.

21 So Gehazi followed after Naaman: and when Naaman saw *him* running after him, [x] he lighted down from the chariot to meet him, and said, † *Is* all well?

22 And he said, All *is* well. [y] My master hath sent me, saying, Behold, even now there be come to me from mount Ephraim two young men of the sons of the prophets: give them, [z] I pray thee, a [a] talent of silver and two changes of garments.

23 And Naaman said, Be content, take two talents. And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and

g Luke xvii. 15—18.
h Josh ii. 9—11. Is xliii. 10, 11. xliv. 6. 8. xlv. 6. Jer. x. 16, 11. Dan. ii. 47. iii. 29. iv. 34, 35. iv. 26, 27. Rom. x. 10.
i Gen. xxxiii. 11. 1 Sam. xxv. 27. 2 Cor. ix. 5.
k iii. 14. 1 Kings xvii. 1. xviii. 15.
l 26. Gen. xiv. 22, 23. 1 Kings xiii. 8. Dan. v. 17. Matt. x. 8. Acts viii. 18—20. 1 Cor. vi. 12. x. 32, 33. 2 Cor. xi. 9, 10. xii. 14.
m 12. Rom. xiv. 1.
n Acts xxvi. 18. 1 Thes. i. 9. 1 Pet. iv. 3.
o vii. 2. 17.
p Matt. ix. 16, 17. John xvi. 12. 1 Cor. iii. 2. Heb. v. 13, 14.
q Luke vii. 50. viii. 48.
* Heb. *a little piece of ground.* Gen. xxxv. 16.
r iv. 12. 31. 36. Matt. x. 4. John vi. 70. xii. 6. xiii. 2. Acts viii. 18, 19.
s Prov. xxvi. 16. Luke xvi. 8. John xii. 5, 6. Acts v. 2.
t vi. 31. Ex. xx. 7. 1 Sam. xiv. 39.
u Ex. xx. 17. Ps. x. 3. Jer. xxii. 22. Hab. ii. 9. Luke xii. 15. 1 Tim. vi. 9—11. 2 Tim. iv. 10. 2 Pet. ii. 14, 15.
x Luke vii. 6, 7. Acts viii. 31. x. 25, 26.
† Heb. *Is there peace?* iv. 26. ix. 17—22.
y 1 Kings xiii. 18. Is. lix. 3. Jer. ix. 3. 5. John viii. 44. Acts v. 8. Rev. xxi. 8.
z 2 Cor. xii. 16—18.
a 5.

V. 15, 16. Naaman, having received the cure, returned to Elisha, to express his gratitude, and to give glory to God: and now the prophet went out to confer with him. His confession, was very expressive and satisfactory. He not only allowed that JEHOVAH was the true God; but also, that there was "no God in all the earth, but in Israel;" the gods of all other nations being helpless worthless idols. What an awful representation doth this give us of the state of the Gentiles, "without hope, and without God "in the world!"—Naaman therefore urged the prophet to take a present, or *blessing*, of him, as a token of his gratitude; but he most decidedly refused. He did not scruple to receive presents from pious Israelites, and he seems to have accepted Ben-hadad's gift: (viii. 8, 9:) but the case of Naaman was singular. It was of great importance what impressions he at that crisis should receive, concerning the God of Israel and his worshippers. Elisha had sent for him, to confer a benefit on him; and had he taken the present, Naaman might have imbibed prejudices: but perfect disinterestedness would have a contrary tendency.

V. 17—19. Naaman in his first impressions conceived, that there must be a peculiar sanctity in the earth of Israel, having received such benefit from washing in one of its rivers: he therefore asked permission to carry home with him enough to build an altar, on which to offer sacrifices to JEHOVAH, whom alone he was determined in future to worship. Yet, as holding a high station in Ben-hadad's court, it would be expected that he should accompany him to the temple of Rimmon: and whilst the king, leaning on his arm, should bow before his idol, Naaman could not avoid bowing also. But as he meant to do this, not as an act of worship to Rimmon, but of service to his prince; he hoped the Lord would pardon him in it: and some learned men have thought that his conduct in this respect was justifiable; because he was not an Israelite, and so not under the law of Moses. It is, however, evident that the prohibition of every kind and degree of idolatry, belongs to the *moral* law, which is universally obligatory. Our strict rule of duty certainly forbids such a conduct; the gospel itself grants no dispensations; and in similar circumstances a Christian would be absolutely required to renounce every advantage and preferment, that could not be retained without such communion with idolaters, and countenance of idolatry; nay, to endure the utmost effects of the persecutor's rage, rather than make such compliances, however palliated by salvos and mental reserves. The prophet however seems to have perceived, that Naaman was convinced that even bowing with the king in the house of Rimmon was not right, and he left those convictions gradually to produce their effects: if the result of regenerating grace, they would in time bring him to make a more public protest against idolatry, when his faith, judgment, and experience, were matured. But the light must be imparted to a man emerging out of heathen darkness, and circumstanced as he was, in that measure which he was able to bear; and when he had digested, and reduced to practice his present knowledge, he would be prepared for further instructions. Moreover, as the whole work was from God in so extraordinary a manner, it is probable, that the prophet declined interposing his private judgment, when he had no immediate directions from heaven respecting it.—He seems also to have been silent concerning the earth which Naaman requested; and for the same reasons.

laid *them* upon two of his servants, and they bare *them* before him.

24 And when he came to the * tower, [b] he took *them* from their hand, and bestowed *them* in the house; and he let the men go, and they departed.

25 But he went in, and [c] stood before his master: and Elisha said unto him, Whence *comest thou*, Gehazi? And he said, Thy servant went † no whither.

26 And he said unto him, [d] Went not mine heart *with thee*, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? [e] *Is it* a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and olive-yards, and vineyards, and sheep, and

* Or, *secret place.*

b Josh vii. 11, 12. 21. 1 Kings xxi 26. Hab. ii 6. Zech. v. 3, 4.
c Prov. xxx. 20. Ez. xxxiii. 31. Matt. xxvi. 15, 16. 21 — 25. John xiii. 2. 26 —30.

† Heb. *not hither or thither* 22. Acts v. 3, 4.
d vi. 12. Ps lxiii. 11. Prov xii. 19. Acts v. 9 1 Cor. v. 3 Col ii. 5.
e 16. Gen. xiv 23. Ec. iii 2. Jer. xx. 10. Matt. x. 8. Acts sx. 33. 35 1 Cor. ix 12. 18. 2 Cor. xi. 8—12. 2 Thes. iii. 8, 9.

V. 20—25. It is probable that Gehazi was one of the sons of the prophets, and had long enjoyed the society of Elisha; yet he remained an avaricious and ungodly man, much worse than the servants of Naaman the Syrian! He deemed his master very foolish, to miss so fair an opportunity of enriching himself, and thought that Elisha had a right to Naaman's money in return for the cure. He was wiser in his own conceit than to be so scrupulous, and with a solemn oath, (even when speaking to himself, which in this case was peculiarly profane,) declared that he would take somewhat of him. To accomplish his covetous purposes, he soon devised a plausible lie: and Naaman's heart was so affected by the benefit he had obtained; that he treated even the prophet's servant with the greatest respect, and pressed his acceptance of a larger sum than he petitioned for. In this manner Gehazi appropriated several hundred pounds sterling in silver, which he secreted in some convenient place; and he then returned to Elisha with another direct falsehood, as if he could have deceived God, as well as his prophet. But his whole conduct was wicked in a most aggravated degree: he did what he could to disgrace the God of Israel, and to misrepresent his religion: he behaved in a manner most injurious to his master's character: and he not only robbed Naaman of his property, but he took the most effectual method imaginable to prejudice him against the prophet, and to induce him to revert to idolatry.

V. 26, 27. The Spirit of God showed Elisha what had passed, as plainly as if he had witnessed the whole transaction. Considering the distressed state of Israel by reason of the famine, and the low estate of religion, other interests and employments called for Gehazi's attention. The prophets of JEHOVAH were required to show themselves men of another spirit than the false prophets, by a disinterested indifference about the world; and the state of Naaman's mind, and the peculiarity of his case, rendered this action the most *ill-timed* that could be. We may suppose, that Gehazi was scheming how to lay out his money in purchasing an olive-yard, or vineyard, that he might exchange the service of Elisha for a more profitable occupation. And so he might: but it would be under the stigma and misery of a rooted leprosy, entailed upon his posterity in perpetuity, or as long as one of them remained. This was the proper emblem of the polluted state of his soul.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—7.

In whatever manner or degree a man is honoured and preferred by the princes of the earth, or made an instrument in Providence of public benefit to others; he can obtain no exemption from trouble. Some bodily infirmity, or distressing disease, or domestic affliction, will counterbalance his advantages, and embitter his enjoyments: nor can we remedy this vanity and vexation, except by humble submission to the will of God, and believing confidence in his truth, wisdom, and mercy; and by the enjoyment of that peace and consolation, which are communicated by the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. The Lord overrules, to his own glory, those events which originate in man's wickedness: the young, or the poor, are often better acquainted with his servants and service, than the rich or aged: but as he works by mean instruments, so wise men will avail themselves of a useful hint from the lowest of their inferiors. Kind behaviour to domestics generally ensures a valuable recompense: and no injuries or hardships should indispose us to seek the welfare, or to compassionate the sorrows, of those among whom our lot is cast; *especially* when kind to us. We carry our knowledge of God and of true religion with us wherever we are removed; none can deprive us of these true riches and this blessed liberty; and the meanest believer will find opportunities of glorifying God, and being useful to man, if he act consistently with his character and profession: for such a conduct will attract regard from those who are ignorant or careless about religion, and dispose them to attend to his words, particularly in times of affliction.—They who know the Lord's servants, will not doubt their readiness to relieve the distressed; and such as know the Lord, are sensible, that in answer to their prayer of faith, he frequently removes calamities, and imparts temporal benefits to them that serve him not. In these concerns men have keen sensibility, and readily make trial of any *probable* means of relief, though expensive, troublesome, and even *uncertain:* it would be well if they were equally sensible of the power of God's wrath to which they are exposed, the burden of guilt with which they are chargeable, and the loathsome leprosy of unmortified sin with which they are polluted. The great ones of the earth are apt to suppose, that wealth, authority, and influence can command every thing: but when they seek those blessings, which the Lord communicates in answer to the prayers of his faithful servants, they will find that nothing can be done in this way; but that they must stoop to sue *in forma pauperis*, and come as beggars for a free gift, and not as lords to demand, or to purchase. For the ministers of God must obey man only so far as the will of their great Master allows them: and in his work they must not be directed or dictated to by any human authority. The ignorance of many in spiritual things is manifested by every part of their conversation: yet we should not impute that

f Josh. vii 25. Mal. ii 3, 4. 8, 9. Matt. xxvii 3—5. Acts v. 5 10. viii. 20. 1 Tim. vi. 10. 2 Pet. ii 3.

oxen, and men-servants, and maid-servants?

27 [f] The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and [g] unto thy seed for ever. And he went out from his presence a [h] leper *as white* as snow.

g 1 Sam. ii. 30—36. 2 Sam. iii. 29. Prov. xxviii. 22.

h xv. 5. Ex. iv. 6 Num. xii. 10.

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to a blasphemous or malevolent intention, which they utter merely because they know no better. No judges are more severe towards their fellow sinners, than they who themselves have no fear of God before their eyes: and they are especially quick sighted to the atrocious conduct of those whom they suspect of intentions to injure them, and vehement in their declamations against the crimes, of which themselves are not known to be guilty.

V. 8—19.

The minister of God should seize every opportunity to evince the truth and importance of his religious principles, and to display the glorious perfections of the Lord: yet he should not appear pleased with the respect shown him by great men; and ought to be cautious lest, by his language and behaviour, he feed that pride and vanity which need to be mortified. Rather he should aim to convince them of his earnest desire to do them good; and of his indifference about those external distinctions, which others envy, covet, or are delighted with. All God's commands are suited to make trial of men's spirits; especially those which direct a sinner how to apply for the blessings of salvation. These accord not with the self-importance and self-sufficiency, the carnal prejudices and pompous ideas, of an unhumbled heart: nor can they be cordially attended to, except by the poor in spirit, or without that implicit faith which produces as implicit obedience. The way of a sinner's acceptance and sanctification, by the blood and Spirit of Christ, through faith alone in his name, does not sufficiently gratify or employ self, to please the sinner's heart: the method seems to many futile and inadequate: human wisdom and philosophy, (like Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus,) can furnish more rational and eligible methods of cleansing: nay, the operose and austere devices of superstition appear to numbers preferable to "the fountain opened for sin, and "for uncleanness;" and the very proposal shocks and affronts all the sons of pride and self-sufficiency. But the sinner, who is deeply burdened with guilt, and longs to escape the wrath to come and the service of Satan, would do *great things*, if required, for that purpose. If pilgrimages, mortifications, and austerities could avail, they would not be evaded: to torture his body, to part with his wealth, and lay down his life, would be deemed a low price at which to purchase forgiveness of sins and eternal salvation; but none of these things, *in this use of them*, can be accepted. As, however, the fountain is opened, and the access free, he will "much more wash, and be clean," as the Lord hath directed. Salvation is from the love and power of God, in the way of his appointing and revealing, for his own glory, and in the use of those means he hath instituted. In this manner the believer applies for it, not neglecting, altering, or adding to the Saviour's directions; and by repeated washings he is made clean from the guilt and pollution of sin: whilst others, neglecting this great salvation, through proud contempt, sensual indulgence, covetousness, or sloth, live and die in their leprosy; and must for ever be excluded from the presence of a holy God. But when sinners are under serious impressions, and as yet prejudiced against the Lord's method of salvation, they should be reasoned with in meekness and love, and persuaded to make trial of it in simplicity. For he will not cast out the humble supplicant, however enormous his former crimes have been, or however weak and wavering his present application may be. If masters were courteous and condescending, and servants could give salutary advice with modesty and respect, many evils might be prevented, and even the effects of hasty sallies of passion counteracted. When temporal troubles and deliverances bring us acquainted with God, and lead us to his service, they are indeed precious blessings; and gratitude to the Lord will dictate liberality to the instruments of his mercies. But different circumstances will render it necessary to adopt different measures. The man of God will never allow himself to covet any one's gold, or silver, or apparel; but be content with daily bread, and learn to trust for to-morrow. Yet sometimes he will understand that the proffered kindness is the Lord's method of supplying his necessities, that it will be fruit abounding to the benefit of the donor, and that there is a propriety in accepting it as a token of love; but at others, the gift will be looked on as a temptation; and he will perceive that the acceptance of it would degrade his character and office, dishonour God, and tend exceedingly to the injury of the giver. In this case he will refuse it with determination. This is particularly to be adverted to in the case of the great, when they first turn their thoughts to religious subjects. From their knowledge of the world, they are apt to suspect all their inferiors of mercenary designs, and naturally suppose that ministers are but *carrying on a trade like other men;* while the conduct of too many *so called* confirms them in this sentiment. There is but one way of counteracting this prejudice; and that is by evidencing a disinterested spirit, and not asking any thing, and in *some cases* refusing to accept favours from them, until they have attained a further establishment in the faith; and by always persevering in an indifference to every personal interest. It is not adviseable violently to oppose every mistake which unites with men's first convictions, lest we should damp that earnestness which promises good fruit, when matured by experience, and duly regulated by the gradual teaching of the divine Spirit: and we should always fear losing our advantages by prematurely grasping at too much. We cannot bring men forward faster, than the Lord prepares them to receive instruction: and where he works, he will in time lead them to renounce every secular interest, and bear the cross rather than sin against him.

V. 20—27.

No outward religious advantages ensure internal renewing; and better servants are frequently found in ungodly families, than in the houses of the most eminent servants of God. 'Tis true, that the latter must, for the time,

CHAP. VI.

The sons of the prophets prepare to enlarge their dwelling; and Elisha causeth iron to swim, 1—7. *He discloses to Jehoram the counsels of the Syrian king, who sends troops to apprehend him,* 8—14. *Elisha's servant is terrified; but is encouraged by seeing horses and chariots of fire round his master,* 15—17. *The Syrians, at Elisha's prayer, are blinded; and he conducts them into Samaria, where they regain their sight, and are entertained, and dismissed in peace,* 18—23. *Ben-hadad besieges Samaria, and reduces it to extreme famine,* 24, 25. *Women contest about eating their own children, and appeal to the king, who in a rage resolves to kill Elisha,* 26—33.

AND [a] the sons of the prophets said unto Elisha, Behold now, [b] the place where we dwell with thee is [c] too strait for us.

2 Let us go, we pray thee, unto Jordan, and take thence every man a beam, and [d] let us make us a place there, where we may dwell. And he answered, Go ye.

3 And one said, Be content, I pray thee, and [e] go with thy servants. And he answered, I will go.

4 So he went with them. And when they came to Jordan, they cut down wood.

5 But as one was felling a beam, the * axe-head fell into the water: and he cried, and said, [f] Alas, master! [g] for it was borrowed.

6 And the man of God said, Where fell it? And he showed him the place. And he [h] cut down a stick, and cast *it* in thither, and the iron did swim.

7 Therefore said he, [i] Take *it* up to thee. And he put out his hand, and took it.

8 ¶ Then the king of Syria warred against Israel, and [k] took counsel with his servants, saying, In such and such a place *shall be* my † camp.

9 And the man of God sent unto the king of Israel, saying, [l] Beware that thou pass not such a place; for [m] thither the Syrians are come down.

10 And the king of Israel [n] sent to the

a iv. 1.
b iv. 38.
c Is. xlix. 19, 20 liv 2, 3.
d John xxi. 3. Acts xviii. 3 xx. 34, 35. 1 Cor. ix 6. 1 Thes ii 9. 2 Thes iii. 8. 1 Tim vi 6
e Judg iv. 8
* Heb. *iron.*
f 15. iii. 10. Rev. xviii. 10. 16 19.
g iv. 7. Ex. xxii. 14, 15. Ps. xxxvii. 21.
h ii. 21 iv. 41. Ex. xv. 25. Mark vii 33, 34. viii 23 — 25. John ix. 6, 7.
i iv 36.
k Job v. 12, 13. Prov. xxi 30. Is. vii 5—7. viii. 10.
† Or, *encamping.*
l iii. 17—19. 1 Kings xx. 13. 28.
m iv 27. Am. iii. 7. Rev. i. 1.
n v. 14 Ex ix. 20, 21. 1 Kings xx 15.

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wear the hypocrite's cloak; yet under it, the covetous man, the thief, the liar, the traitor may lurk concealed; and a fair occasion will betray the secret, and his profession end in awful apostacy. Such worldly professors deem themselves wiser in their selfishness, than those who shake their hands from unlawful gain: they have the name of God in their mouths, but they have not his glory at heart; nor do they care how many stumble and perish through their wickedness: they make their advantage of those who are under serious impressions: they can never want a plausible story, when Satan is their prompter; and they care not what they say for their filthy lucre's sake. Thus they add sin to sin with rapid progress, deceiving many, but known to the heart-searching God; and they are often detected, exposed, and solemnly warned by his servants. In this world they are sometimes branded with infamy, and made awful examples, to wipe off the disgrace they have brought upon the Gospel: and everlasting misery and contempt will be their portion if they die impenitent. Alas! what a price do men pay for outward advantages, when they are connected with such consequences to themselves, and such misery entailed upon their posterity! Let us beware of hypocrisy and covetousness, and dread above all things the curse of spiritual leprosy, remaining upon our souls, living and dying, and for ever!

NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1—7. Probably this event occurred either at Gilgal, or Jericho, which were near Jordan.—Under Elisha's superintendency the schools of the prophets flourished, and doubtless true religion revived and spread in proportion: but it is not certain, whether the building intended was a place of assembly, where the prophets met for religious exercises with other pious Israelites; or whether they lived together, with their families, as a collected body separate from others. When, however, they were straitened for room, they did not depend on others to prepare them a more convenient or spacious building: but they proposed to fill up the intervals of their time in manual labour, to prepare one for themselves: and probably they were accustomed to work at other times, that the people might not be burdened. But they would not go to hew timber, for this purpose, without Elisha's permission: and they desired his company, to sanction their attempt, and to solace their toil by his edifying conversation; to which he willingly consented. Perhaps they were not very skilful about their work, and some of their tools were borrowed; so that an axe-head falling into the water proved a cause of anxiety to one of them; as it seems he was not well able to make it good, and the owner could not afford to lose it. In so small a matter the Lord was pleased to work a miracle, to compose the young prophet's mind, to put honour upon Elisha, to enable the company to proceed with their work, and to encourage their faith and hope! The stick cast into the water was the token of the Lord's operation; and it is useless to inquire in what way he made the iron to swim.

place, which the man of God told him, and warned him of, and [o] saved himself there, not once nor twice.

11 ¶ Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was [p] sore troubled for this thing; and he called his servants, and said unto them, [q] Will ye not shew me which of us *is* for the king of Israel?

12 And one of his servants said, * None, my lord, O king: but [r] Elisha the prophet, that *is* in Israel, [s] telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in [t] thy bed-chamber.

13 And he said, Go and [u] spy where he *is*, that I may send and fetch him. And it was told him, saying, Behold, *he is* in [x] Dothan.

14 Therefore sent he thither [y] horses, and chariots, and a † great host: and they came by night, and compassed the city about.

15 And when the ‡ servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold an host compassed the city, both with horses and chariots: and his servant said unto him, [z] Alas, my master! how shall we do?

16 And he answered, [a] Fear not, for [b] they that *be* with us *are* more than they that *be* with them.

17 And Elisha [c] prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, [d] open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw: and, behold, the mountain *was* [e] full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.

18 And when they came down to him, Elisha prayed unto the LORD, and said, Smite this people, I pray thee, [f] with blindness. And he smote them with blindness, according to the word of Elisha.

19 And Elisha said unto them, This *is* not the way, neither *is* this the city; ‖ follow me, and [g] I will bring you to the man whom ye seek. But he led them to Samaria.

20 And it came to pass, when they were come into Samaria, that Elisha said, LORD, open the eyes of these *men*, that they may see. And the LORD [h] opened their eyes, and they saw; and [i] behold, *they were* in the midst of Samaria.

21 And the king of Israel said unto Elisha, when he saw them, [k] My father, [l] shall I smite *them?* shall I smite *them?*

22 And he answered, Thou shalt not smite *them:* [m] wouldest thou smite those whom thou hast taken captive with thy sword, and with thy bow? [n] Set

o ii. 12. xiii. 14. Job v. 15. Am. vii. 1—6. Acts xxvii. 24.
p Job xviii. 7—11. Is. lvii. 20, 21. Mat. ii. 3.
q 1 Sam. xxii. 8.
* Heb. *No.*
r v. 3. 8. 13—15.
s Is. xxix 15. Jer xxiii 23, 24. Dan. ii 22, 23 28—30.
t Ec. x. 20.
u 1 Sam. xxiii 22, 23 Ps. x. 8—10 xxxvii. 12—14. 32. Jer. xxxvi. 26 Matt ii. 4—8. John xi. 47—53.
x Gen. xxxvii. 17.
y i 9. 1 Sam xxiii. 26. xxiv 2. Matt. xxvi. 47 55. John xviii. 3—6.
† Heb. *heavy.*
‡ Or, *minister.* iii. 11. v. 20. 27. Ex. xxiv. 13. 1 Kings xix 21. Matt. xx. 26—28.
z 5. 2 Chr xx. 12. Ps. liii. 5. Matt. viii 26.
a Ex. xiv 13. Ps. xxvii. 3. cxviii. 11, 12. Is. xli 10—14. Mark xvi 6. Acts xviii 9, 10.
b 2 Chr. xxxii. 7, 8. Ps. lv. 18 Matt. xxvii. 53. Rom. viii. 31.
c Ps. xci. 15. Jam. v 16—18.
d 18. 20. Acts iv. 29, 30. Eph. i. 18.
e ii. 11. Ps xxxiv. 7. lxviii 17. xci. 11 Zech. i. 8. vi. 1—7. Matt. xxvi. 53. Heb. i. 14.
f Gen. xix. 11. Job v. 14. Mark viii. 24 John ix. 39. Acts xiii. 11.
‖ Heb. *come ye after me.*
g 2 Sam. xvi. 18, 19. Luke xxiv. 16.
h Luke xxiv. 31.
i Judg xx. 40—42. Luke xvi. 23.
k ii. 12. v. 13, viii. 9. xiii. 14
l 1 Sam xxiv. 4. 19. xxvi. 8.
m Deut. xx. 11—16. 2 Chr xxviii. 8—13.
n Prov. xxv. 21. Matt. v. 44. Rom. xii. 20, 21.

V. 11, 12. The Israelites having repeatedly avoided the ambushments which the Syrians had formed against them, Ben-hadad suspected that he had a traitor in his privy-council, though he knew not on whom to fix the charge: and this greatly perplexed his mind. The Syrians, it seems, were generally acquainted with the extraordinary powers given to Elisha by the God of Israel. Naaman's cure could not fail to increase his reputation, and good effects might be thus produced upon the minds of some individuals; though the enmity of the Syrian king against Israel still remained.

V. 13, 14. It was strange, that Ben-hadad should not perceive, that the God of Israel could as easily disclose this design to his prophet, as the plans he had formed! He had perhaps heard how fire from heaven had consumed the small companies who attempted to apprehend Elijah; and therefore he sent a large army, as if he would make sure of Elisha! A small number would have sufficed to take an unarmed man: but no force could prevail against the prophet's omnipotent Defender. The offence however was less heinous in Syrians than in Israelites; and therefore Ben-hadad's army fared better than Ahaziah's captains and soldiers had done.

V. 15—17. Elisha by strong faith perceived the invisible guard that was assigned him: but his servant, (who had newly succeeded Gehazi,) was weak in faith, and needed encouragement: and the Lord was pleased to enable him, with his bodily eyes, to perceive hosts of angels, in the form of chariots and horses of fire, encamped around the prophet, to protect him, and to fight against those who should offer him any violence.

V. 18. Elisha, secure of the divine protection, seems to have gone out to the Syrians, who, in answer to his prayer, were deprived for the time of the proper use of their eyes, so that they could not distinguish one object from another, and yet they were not sensible of their own incapacity! Thus the miracle was reversed in respect of them, from that with which the prophet's servant had been favoured.

V. 19, 20. The prophet meant to impose upon the Syrians, and it might lawfully have been done, even if he had meant to treat them as enemies, in order to his own preservation; but he intended them no harm in the deception. He was no longer in Dothan, and they in reality had no business there: but he truly informed them, that if they would follow him, he would bring them to the man whom they sought: and accordingly, when they were so infatuated as to follow a stranger, and so bewildered as to enter Samaria, he made himself known to them; and the miraculous suspension of their eye-sight being removed, they saw themselves at the mercy of the king of Israel.

bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink, and go to their master.

o 2 Ch. xxviii. 15. 23 And [o] he prepared great provision for them, and when they had eaten and drunk, he sent them away, and they went to their master. [p] So the bands of Syria came no more into the land of Israel.

p 8, 9 v. 2 xxiv. 2.

B. C. 892. 24 ¶ And it came to pass after this, that Ben-hadad king of Syria [q] gathered all his host, and went up, and besieged Samaria.

q xvii. 5 xviii. 9. Deut xxviii. 32. 1 Kings xx. 1. xxii. 31.

25 And there was [r] a great famine in Samaria: and, behold, they besieged it, until an ass's head was *sold* for fourscore *pieces* of silver, and the fourth part of a cab of doves' dung for five *pieces* of silver.

r Lev xxvi. 26. Jer. xiv. 13—15. 18.

26 And as the king of Israel was passing by upon the wall, there cried a woman unto him, saying, [s] Help, my lord, O king!

s Is. x. 3. Luke xviii 3

27 And he said, * If the Lord do not help thee, [t] whence shall I help thee? out of the barn-floor, or out of the wine-press?

* Or, *Let not the LORD save thee*
t Ps lx 11. lxii. 8. cxviii 8, 9 cxxiv. 1 - 3 cxxvii. 1. cxlvi 3. Is ii. 22. Jer. xvii. 5

28 And the king said unto her, [u] What aileth thee? And she answered, This woman said unto me, [x] Give thy son that we may eat him to-day, and we will eat my son to-morrow.

u Gen. xxi. 17. Judg. xviii. 23. 1 Sam i. 8. 2 Sam xiv. 5. Is. xxii 1.

x Lev. xxvi. 29. Deut. xxviii. 53—57. Is ix 20, 21. Lam. iv 10. Ez. v 10. Matt. xxiv. 18—21.

29 So we boiled my son, and did eat him: and I said unto her on the † next day, Give thy son, that we may eat him; and [y] she hath hid her son.

† Heb. *other*.
y 1 Kings iii. 26. Is. xlix 15. lxvi. 13.

30 And it came to pass, when the king heard the words of the woman, that [z] he rent his clothes; and he passed by upon the wall, and the people looked, and behold, *he had* sackcloth within upon his flesh.

z v. 7. xix. 1. 1 Kings xxi. 27. Is. lviii. 5—7.

31 Then he said, [a] God do so, and more also to me, [b] if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat shall stand on him this day.

a Ruth i. 17. 1 Kings xix. 2.
b 1 Kings xviii. 17. xxii 8 Jer. xxxvii 15, 16. xxxviii. 4 John xi 50 Acts xxiii 12, 13

32 But Elisha sat in his house, and [c] the elders sat with him; and *the king* sent a man from before him: but [d] ere the messenger came to him, he said to the elders, [e] See ye how this [f] son of a murderer hath sent to take away mine head? look when the messenger cometh, shut the door, and hold him fast at the door: *is* not [g] the sound of his master's feet behind him?

c Ez viii. 1 xiv. 1 xx. 1. xxxiii. 31.
d 12. v. 26.
e Luke xiii. 32. 1 Kings xviii. 4. xxi. 19.
g 1 Kings xiv. 6.

33 And while he yet talked with them,

V. 21—23. Jehoram was eager to smite the Syrian troops; but he was very respectful to the prophet who had put them in his power, and would not act without his permission. When Elisha therefore had shown him the impropriety of slaughtering prisoners of war whom he had taken captive, and much more that of smiting those whom God had led into that situation; he desisted from his purpose: nay, he obeyed the prophet's orders in entertaining and dismissing the whole army! Yet we soon find this very man determining to murder this same prophet! The Syrians, however, no more attempted to apprehend Elisha; and the soldiers were perhaps so won by his clemency, or afraid of his power, that they ceased from molesting the land by depredations; until Ben-hadad collected his whole force to besiege Samaria some time afterwards.

V. 25. If the pieces of silver here mentioned were shekels, the price of almost ten pounds was, on this occasion, paid for the head of an unclean animal, not generally used in food, and affording very little sustenance; whilst about twelve shillings were given for a small measure of very mean pulse, called dove's dung; or, as some think, of the undigested corn taken from the maw or gizzard of that fowl. However explained, the prices must show the extremity of this famine. It is sufficient to suppose, that each of these bargains was once actually made, in the urgency of hunger.

V. 27. *If*, &c. This may be rendered as the language of passion or desperation: as if Jehoram had said, The Lord will not, and I cannot help thee, but we must all perish together!

V. 28, 29. The truth, and awful justice, of God upon the idolatrous Israelites were displayed in this most horrible transaction. The extremity of hunger inducing rage and madness, and extinguishing humanity and natural affection, prepared the way for such actions as at other times, the persons themselves would have abhorred the thoughts of. But this was repeatedly foretold as the punishment of Israel's apostacy from God; and more instances of it occur in their history, than in the records perhaps of all other nations. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 30. The king mourned his own miseries and those of the people, and he assumed the garment of a penitent: but he did not renounce his idolatries, and he grew more desperate in his rebellion through the extremities to which he was reduced.

V. 31. Either Elisha had denounced this judgment upon Jehoram for his sins, or Jehoram supposed that it was sent in answer to his prayers; or he thought the prophet could help him if he would; or he blamed him for inducing him to dismiss the Syrian army when in his power; or perhaps Elisha had counselled him in the name of the Lord to hold out the siege, and that it should be delivered. His rage however against God vented itself in menacing violence to his faithful servant.

V. 32. Elisha lodged at Samaria at this time, probably in the schools of the prophets, sharing the hardships of that city; and the elders had resorted to him to entreat his prayers, or to desire his counsel. The Lord revealed to him Jehoram's intentions: and Elisha called him *the son of*

h Gen. iv. 13. Ex. xvi. 7. 8. 1 Sam. xxviii. 6 — 8. xxxi. 4. Job i. 11. ii. 5. 9. Is. viii. 21. Jer. ii. 25. Ez. xxxiii. 10. Matt. xxvii. 4, 5. 2 Cor. ii. 7, 11. Rev. xvi. 9—11.

behold, the messenger came down unto him: and he said, Behold, [h] this evil *is* of the LORD; what should I [i] wait for the LORD any longer?

i Ps. xxvii. 14. lxii. 5. Is. xxvi. 3. Lam. iii. 25, 26. Hab. ii. 3. Luke xviii. 1.

a murderer, as proving himself the genuine offspring of Ahab and Jezebel, who slew the Lord's prophets and murdered Naboth. At his desire the messenger of Jehoram was shut out, till his master who followed him, perhaps to countermand his order, was arrived. And when he was entered, and perhaps exhorted to hope for deliverance, he in a blasphemous manner answered, that the calamity was from the LORD, who would not deliver them; and that it was in vain to wait for him any longer. Probably he meant to infer, that he might as well put Elisha to death, and surrender to Ben-hadad without further delay. As the messenger was excluded till the king arrived, we may be sure that the latter was the speaker of these words, and not his servant in his presence.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

God hath often increased his church, by the addition of faithful ministers and true believers, in times of great persecution: for the whole glory is secured to him, when the work is performed without the aid, and notwithstanding the opposition, of human authority, by the preaching of his word and the operation of the Holy Spirit. Religion indeed always appears to advantage under the cross: when poverty and affliction are endured with cheerful meekness and patience; when hard labour and mean fare excite no complaints; and when men, honoured by the Lord as instruments of much good to souls, willingly earn their living by working at some honest calling, rather than burden the people, and yet will not entangle themselves with the affairs of the world to acquire riches for themselves or families: their conduct evidently accords to the spirit of true religion, and seldom fails to attract the attention of numbers, to persons who act upon principles that contradict the general propensities of human nature. In particular, respect to seniors or superiors becomes those who teach others to "render unto Cesar the things which are "Cesar's, and to God the things that are God's:" and contentment with poor accommodations such as inculcate mortification to the things of time and sense. There is that pleasantness in the converse of the eminent servants of God, which can make men forget the pain and weariness of labour: and when condescension to the meanest unites with usefulness to the greatest, and with great eminence in the church of God, it confers a peculiar lustre on a man's character. It gives more pain to a generous mind to injure others, than to suffer personal loss; and peculiar care should be taken of things borrowed. Our heavenly Father cares for his people in their most minute concerns, sympathizes with them in their fears and sorrows; and peculiarly regards them whose tender consciences are afraid of dishonouring religion, through unavoidable poverty, and being unable to render to all their dues.

V. 8—23.

The Lord knows, and can easily defeat, the secret machinations of his enemies. And the mere profession of being his people will sometimes for a season occasion men to fare the better in outward matters, in order to the confusion of his avowed enemies, and for the sake of that remnant of true believers with whom they are connected. Even the wicked are sometimes willing to be counselled by the servants of God in their temporal concerns, and experience the advantage of so doing; but they will not take warning to flee from the wrath to come, or be persuaded to renounce their favourite sins! Waive this subject, do not trouble their consciences, and you may obtain their confidence: nay, they will give up their inclinations in other respects, by way of compromise. As prophets were not without honour save in their own country; so numbers profess to honour those, that have obtained a good report in the word of God, who would treat them with scorn or enmity, if they could again revisit the earth. For distance of time or place breaks the force of their reproofs; and they can suppose that other sinners, and not themselves, are intended: but when near, they direct the word to the conscience, with, "Thou art "the man;" and except this produce repentance, it must exasperate. Such men, however, prove the insincerity of their professed esteem, by living in habitual neglect of the truths and precepts, which were delivered by the persons whom they would be thought to admire. The obstinate rebellion and blindness of fallen man often influence him to strive, and to expect to prevail, against those whom he cannot deny to be the people of God: but as no outward miracles can extirpate the malignity of the heart, so nothing can injure those whom the Lord protects. Were our eyes opened to behold the world of spirits, we should perceive more formidable preparations against us, than those which alarmed the prophet's servant; even legions of malicious, powerful, and sagacious spirits combined for our destruction: but we should also see an innumerable company of holy angels encamped around us for our defence: and the Almighty God himself our Friend and Protector. Strong faith will supply the want of sight: it realizes both the danger, and the security, and, with a clear idea of the force of the enemy, confidently answers, "Fear not, for they "that be with us, are more than they that be with them." May God give us this faith, and especially strengthen it in the time of danger, and in the hour of death! But if we are "strong, we should bear the infirmities of the weak," and both encourage and pray for them. Increasing experience of the Lord's power and love, and those glimpses of heavenly things with which his people are favoured, gradually embolden them to walk by faith, and not by sight: nor is the power of prayer less than it was in those ages of miracles, though the Lord answers it in a different way.—It is a mercy to be kept from sin, even by ignorance and blindness; and we may pray, that our enemies may be so bewildered and confounded, as to fail of accomplishing their malicious purposes: but, though the gospel itself often *occasions* the blindness and obduracy of obstinate unbelievers to increase; yet we must pray for them, and persevere in our endeavours to win them over to be friends to us and to the Lord. We should also watch for opportunities to show our friendly disposition towards them, as well

CHAP. VII.

Elisha predicts great plenty in Samaria, and the doom of an unbelieving lord, 1, 2. *Four lepers venture into the Syrian camp, and bring word that it is entirely deserted; (a terror from God having driven away the army,)* 3—11. *Jehoram fears a stratagem, sends spies, and finds the report true,* 12—15. *The people spoil the Syrian camp; the predicted plenty takes place; and the unbelieving lord, having charge of the gate, is trodden to death,* 16—20.

a vi. 33.

THEN [a] Elisha said, Hear ye the word of the LORD; Thus saith the LORD, [b] To-morrow about this time, *shall* [c] a measure of fine flour *be sold* for a shekel, and two measures [d] of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria.

b 18, 19. Ex. xiv. 13. xiv. 12. Ps. xlvi 5
c vi 25 Rev. vi 6.
d iv 42. John vi. 9.

2 Then * a lord, on whose hand the king leaned, answered the man of God, and said, Behold, [e] *if* the LORD would make [f] windows in heaven, might this thing be? And he said, Behold, [g] thou shalt see *it* with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.

*Or, *a lord which belonged to the king, leaning on his hand.* v. 18.
e Gen. xviii. 12—14. Num. xi. 21—23 Ps. lxxviii. 19—21. 41
f Gen. vii. 11. Mal. iii. 10.
g 17—20 Deut iii. 27 Rom iii. 3. 2 Tim. ii 13. Heb iii. 17—19.

3 And there were [h] four leprous men at the entering in of the gate; and they said one to another, Why sit we here until we die?

h viii. 4 Lev. xiii. 46 Num. v. 2—4. xii. 14.

4 If we say, [i] we will enter into the city, then the famine *is* in the city, and we shall die there: and if we sit still here we die also. Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: [k] if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die.

i Jer. xiv. 18.
k Esth iv. 16. Jer. viii 14. Jon iii. 9. Luke xv. 17—19.

5 And they rose up [l] in the twilight, to go unto the camp of the Syrians: and when they were come to the uttermost part of the camp of Syria, behold, *there was* no man there.

l 7. 9. Lev. xxvi. 8. 36. 1 Sam. xxx. 17.

6 For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to [m] hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, *even* the noise of a great host: and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us [n] the kings of the Hittites, and [o] the kings of the Egyptians to come upon us.

m iii. 23 xix. 7. 2 Sam v. 24. Job xv. 21. Ps. xiv. 5 Jer. xx. 3, 4. Rev. vi. 15, 16.
n 1 Kings x. 29.
o 2 Chr xii. 3 Is. xxxi. 1. xxxvi. 9.

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as to convince them, that they will be ruined by their own iniquities if they persist in them.

V. 24—33.

The regard that wicked men pay to the servants of God, when they seem to favour them, is frequently turned into bitter enmity under their troubles. In extreme distress, if such persons recollect that their affliction is from the Lord, the rage against him, which vents itself in blasphemies, also dictates cruelty against his people. They blame any one as the cause of their calamities, rather than condemn themselves and renounce their sins. If rending their clothes, without a broken and contrite heart; and if wearing sackcloth, without being renewed in the spirit of their mind, would avail, they would not stand out against the Lord; but whilst their own impenitence alone retards the deliverance, they excuse their proceeding to still more desperate measures, by pretending, that it is in vain to "wait for "the LORD any longer!"—Alas, what miseries hath sin entailed upon mankind! Little do we know what extremities we may be called to endure in this world: what then will be the everlasting wrath of God against his enemies in the world to come? But if we are reconciled to him, he will help us when all human help fails; in the time of famine we shall be satisfied, and in peril we shall be safe: whilst all the curses of God's book will fall upon the head of presumptuous transgressors. Let us then seek first the kingdom of God: let us be thankful for our daily bread, and not contract habits of self-indulgence, nor set our affections on earthly objects: and may the whole word of God combine to increase in us reverential fear and holy hope, that we may be "steadfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that our labour "is not in vain in the Lord!"

NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 1. The measure here spoken of is supposed to have contained about a peck; and the prices specified, no doubt, were those of remarkable plenty: but that corn should be sold so cheap in Samaria on the morrow, seemed impossible to any power but that of God. Jehoram, however, notwithstanding his rage and desperation, was induced to wait one day longer, to make trial of the prophet's words.

V. 2. This lord was one of the king's most intimate friends, who waited on his person. It is probable that he was an idolatrous despiser of JEHOVAH and his prophet; and perhaps he wanted to persuade Jehoram, that Elisha amused him with the promise of an impossibility, to preserve himself from immediate death.

V. 3. Whilst the weightier matters of the law were generally neglected, the prescribed rule about the exclusion of lepers, seems to have been rigorously observed. These men resided in tents *without the wall;* but probably they were admitted *within the gate,* at the times when the Syrians made their assaults. Gehazi is by some supposed to have been one of them, by which means he became acquainted with the king. (*Marg. Ref.*)

p Job xviii. 11. Ps. xlviii. 4—6. Prov. xxviii. 1.
q Ps. xx. 7, 8. xxxiii. 17. Am. ii. 14—16.
r Num. xxxv. 11, 12. Prov. vi. 5. Is. ii. 20, 21. Matt. xxiv. 16—18. Heb. vi. 18.

7 Wherefore they [p] arose and fled in the twilight, and left their tents and [q] their horses, and their asses, even the camp as it *was*, [r] and fled for their life.

8 And when these lepers came to the uttermost part of the camp, they went into one tent, and did eat and drink, and carried thence silver, and gold, and raiment, and went and [s] hid *it;* and came again and entered into another tent, and carried thence *also*, and went and hid *it*.

s v. 24. Josh. vii. 21. Jer. xli. 8. Matt. xiii. 44. xxv. 18.

t c. Hag. i. 4, 5.
u Is. lii. 7. Luke ii. 10. Phil. ii. 4.

9 Then [t] they said one to another, We do not well: [u] this day *is* a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning-light * some [x] mischief will come upon us: now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household.

* Heb. *we shall find punishment.*
x. v. 26, 27. Num. xxxii. 23. Prov. v. 22.

y Ps. cxxvii. 1. Mark xiii. 34, 35.

10 So they came and called unto [y] the porter of the city: and they told him, saying, We came to the camp of the Syrians, and, behold, *there was* [z] no man there, neither voice of man, but horses tied, and asses tied, and the tents as they *were*.

z 6, 7.

11 And he called the porters; and they told *it* to the king's house within.

12 ¶ And the king arose in the night, and said [a] unto his servants, [b] I will now shew you what the Syrians have done to us. They know that we *be* [c] hungry; therefore are they gone out of the camp to hide themselves in the field, saying, When they come out of the city, we shall catch them alive, and get into the city.

a vi. 8. Gen. xx. 8. xli. 38. 1 Kings xx. 7. 23.
b v. 7.
c vi. 25—29.

13 And [d] one of his servants answered and said, Let *some* take, I pray thee, five of the horses that remain, which are left † in the city, (behold, they *are* as all the multitude of Israel that are left in it: behold, *I say*, [e] they *are* even as all the multitude of the Israelites that are consumed:) and let us send and see.

d v. 13.
† Heb. *in it.*
e 4. vi. 33.

14 They took therefore two chariot-horses; and the king sent after the host of the Syrians, saying, Go and see.

15 And they went after them unto Jordan: and lo, all the way *was* full of garments and [f] vessels, which the Syrians [g] had cast away in their haste. And the messengers returned, and told the king.

f Esth. i. 7. Is. xxii. 24.
g Is. ii. 20. Ez. xviii. 31. Matt. xvi. 26. Phil. iii. 7, 8. Heb. xii. 1.

16 And the people went out, and [h] spoiled the tents of the Syrians. So a measure of fine flour was *sold* for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, [i] according to the word of the LORD.

h 2 Chr. xiv. 12—15. xx. 25. Job xxvii. 16, 17. Ps. lxviii. 12. Is. xxxiii. 1, 4, 23.
i 1. Is. xliv. 26. Matt. xxiv. 35.

17 And the king appointed [k] the lord, on whose hand he leaned, to have the charge of the gate: and [l] the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died, as the man of God had said, who spake when the king came down to him.

k 2.
l ix. 33. Judg. xx. 42. Is. xxv. 10. Mic. vii. 10. Heb. x. 29.

18 And it came to pass [m] as the man of God had spoken to the king, saying, Two measures of barley for a shekel, and a measure of fine flour for a shekel, shall be to-morrow about this time in the gate of Samaria:

m 1, 2.

19 And that lord answered the man of God, and said, Now, behold, *if* the LORD should make windows in heaven, might such a thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.

20 And [n] so it fell out unto him: for the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died.

n Num. xx. 12. 2 Chr. xx. 20. Job xx. 23. Is. vii. 9. Jer. xvii. 5, 6. Heb. iii. 18, 19.

V. 6, 7. The infatuation, which seized the minds of the whole Syrian army, was equal to the illusion put upon their senses: and both of them were from the Lord; but in what manner he produced them we know not. It is not known who the kings of the Hittites were, or where they reigned: and indeed the whole of the supposition was improbable; and in their trepidation the Syrians left behind them their horses, which might have accelerated their flight!

V. 9. *Mischief*, &c. Either some judgment from God, or some punishment from the magistrates, for prolonging the miseries of the people.

V. 12. If Jehoram had firmly expected that Elisha's words would be verified, he would have concluded that this event was the effect of a miraculous interposition in his favour; though he might properly have taken every prudent precaution against a surprisal.

V. 13, 14. This person urged in favour of his counsel, that these men and their horses would be no more exposed than those that remained in the city. Many had been already consumed, and all the rest must die with hunger in a few days, if no relief were afforded: and they might as well be cut off in examining the real state of the Syrian camp, and discovering what had become of the besiegers, as perish tamely and timidly in the city. It seems, only two horsemen were sent; perhaps no more horses being found fit for the service; or the king would venture no more out of the city.

CHAP. VIII.

The Shunammite, by Elisha's advice, to avoid a famine of seven years, sojourns in Philistia, 1, 2. *On her return she applies to the king, who is conversing with Gehazi on Elisha's miracles; and he restores her land,* 3—6. *Elisha goes to Damascus: Hazael is sent to inquire of him about Ben-hadad's sickness: he predicts Hazael's cruelty to Israel, as destined to be king of Syria: and Hazael murders Ben-hadad and succeeds him,* 7—15. *Jehoram reigns wickedly in Judah,* 16—19. *Edom and Libnah revolt,* 20—22. *Jehoram is succeeded by Ahaziah, who reigns wickedly,* 23—27. *He assists the king of Israel against Syria, and when wounded visits him at Jezreel,* 28, 29.

THEN spake Elisha unto the woman, [a] whose son he had restored to life, a iv. 31–35.
saying, Arise, and go thou and thy house-

V. 17—20. The people being extremely hungry, and vehemently eager for food, thrust down this nobleman, whilst he attempted, perhaps in a harsh manner, to restrain them from rushing out to plunder the Syrian camp: or, as some think to regulate the market, which was held at the gate, and supplied from the camp. Thus he was trodden to death; and the truth and justice of God were clearly seen in that event.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

In extreme distress unexpected relief is often preparing; and, whatever unbelievers may imagine, it is not in vain to wait for the Lord, how long soever he seems to delay his coming. No temporal deliverances and mercies will eventually profit sinners, except they are led to repentance; and in that case, "Where sin hath abounded, grace will "much more abound." We are all prone to judge of the Lord's promises by human probabilities, and to bound his power of performance by our capacity of discerning how it can be done. And whatever tends to increase pride and self-confidence proportionably augments this propensity. Hence the rich, the noble, the wise, and the learned of the world, have generally been the most averse to the implicit crediting of God's testimony, and expecting promised mercies in the way of his appointment, in single dependence on his power, truth, and love, without regarding those *fancied* impossibilities which seem to lie in the way. But all those who persist in despising either his promised blessings, or his method of obtaining them, will see the felicity of believers without partaking of it. For though he will pardon the infirmities of his people's faith, whilst they pray "Lord I believe, help thou mine un-"belief;" yet he will not spare those, who harden themselves and others in rebellion, through their infidel objections and enmity against the truth, however they may enjoy the confidence of earthly princes. Men reason justly in their secular concerns: the distant probability of preserving life is preferred to certain death, and the lowest condition is considered as better than perishing by hunger. Yet, in the concerns of their souls, they will not be so convinced, even by demonstration, as to bestow pains and put themselves to inconveniences, to escape the wrath to come and obtain eternal life. But the awakened sinner fears an evil infinitely worse than death; and under the greatest discouragements, even when tempted to despair, he learns to argue, 'If I go on in sin, or sit down in sloth, or run into worldly dissipation, or have recourse to superstitions, or attempt to establish my own righteousness, I must perish. The mercy of God in Jesus Christ is my only refuge. If I cast myself at his feet and wait his time, who knows but he may save me? And if at last he spurns me, I can but be lost. All else is comparatively worthless: if I then must perish, I will perish under the means of grace, and supplicating his mercy and salvation.' In like manner the believer, exposed to the terrors of persecution, reasons with himself: 'If I am faithful to the Lord I can but die, and he will give me the crown of life: but if I deny Christ through dread of death, he will refuse to acknowledge me another day; and I fear him who is able to destroy body and soul in hell, more than those who can only kill the body.' Thus believers venture themselves into the Saviour's hands, and cleave to him with purpose of heart; whilst others neglect or forsake him. The Lord can effect his designs by various methods: a terror from him can drive men from their purpose as effectually as the destroying sword of vengeance; and we absolutely depend upon him for the due exercise of our senses and faculties, as well as for the continuance of our lives, and the salvation of our souls. Whilst some, when life is at stake, readily relinquish all they before held dear; others, when wearing away by incurable or loathsome disease, are as rapacious of gain as if their lives were secured to them with every other requisite of enjoyment.

V. 9—20.

Natural humanity and fear of punishment are powerful checks upon the selfishness of the ungodly, and tend to preserve some order and regularity in the world. They however, who have found the unsearchable riches of Christ, will not long delay to report the good tidings to others, that they may partake of that blessedness, which is sufficient for all: and from love to him they will gladly communicate their temporal good things to their brethren. True faith consists with prudent precautions: but unbelief suggests endless and unreasonable suspicions, and puts away those blessings which are brought nigh to the soul, in the invitations and promises of God's word. The believer, on the other hand, makes trial of them, and experience confirms his faith: and a change, far more felicitating than that which is here recorded, takes place in his state, prospects, comforts, and character. But every word of God, con-

hold, and [b] sojourn wheresoever thou canst sojourn: for [c] the LORD hath [d] called for a famine; and it shall also come upon the land [e] seven years.

2 And the woman arose, and did after the saying of the man of God: and she went with her [f] household, and sojourned [g] in the land of the Philistines seven years.

3 And it came to pass at the seven years' end, that the woman returned out of the land of the Philistines: and [h] she went forth to cry unto the king for her house and for her land.

4 And the king talked with [i] Gehazi the servant of the man of God, saying, [k] Tell me, I pray thee, [l] all the great things that Elisha hath done.

5 And it came to pass, as he was telling the king how [m] he had restored a dead body to life, that, [n] behold, the woman, whose son he had restored to life, cried to the king for her house and for her land. And Gehazi said, My lord, O king, this *is* the woman, and that *is* her son, whom Elisha restored to life.

6 And when the king asked the woman, she told him. So the king appointed unto her a certain * officer, saying, [o] Restore all that *was* her's, and all the fruits of the field since the day that she left the land even until now.

7 ¶ And Elisha came to [p] Damascus: and [q] Ben-hadad the king of Syria was sick; and it was told him, saying, [r] The man of God is come hither.

8 And the king said unto Hazael, [s] Take a present in thine hand, and go, meet the man of God, and [t] inquire of the LORD by him, saying, Shall I recover of this disease?

9 So [u] Hazael went to meet him, and took a present † with him, even of every good thing of Damascus, forty camels burden, and came and stood before him, and said, [x] Thy son Ben-hadad king of Syria hath sent me to thee, saying, Shall I recover of this disease?

b Gen. xii. 10. xxvi. 1. xlvii. 4. Ruth i. 1.
c Gen. xli. 25—28. 32. Lev. xxvi. 19, 20 26 Deut. xxviii. 22—24. 38—40. 1 Kings xvii. 1. xviii. 2 Ps. cv. 16. cvii. 34. Hag. i. 11. Luke xxi. 11. 22. Acts xi 28
d Jer. xxv 29.
e Gen xli. 27. 2 Sam. xxi. 1. xxiv. 13. Luke iv. 25. 1 Tim. v. 8.
f Judg. iii. 3. 1 Sam. xxvii. 1—5.
B. C. 885.
h 6. iv. 13. vi. 26. 2 Sam. xiv. 4. Ps. lxxxii. 3, 4. Jer. xxii. 16. Luke xviii. 3—5.
i v. 9—11. 27. vii. 3. 10.
k Luke ix 9. xxiii. 8. Acts xxiv. 24.
l ii 14. 20—22. 24. iii. 14—16. iv. 3—6 16, 17. v. 14. 27. vi. 6. 9—12. 17—20. 32. vii 1. 16—20.
m iv. 35
n Ruth ii. 3. Esth. v. 14. vi. 1, 2. Prov. xvi. 9. Ec. ix. 11. Matt. x. 29, 30. Acts viii. 27, &c. Rom. viii. 31.

* Or, *eunuch.*
o Deut. xxii. 8. Judg xi. 13. 2 Sam. ix. 7. Prov. xvi. 7. xxi. 1.
p Gen. xiv. 15. 1 Kings xi. 24. Is. vii 8
q vi. 24. 1 Kings xv. 18. xx. 1. 34. xxii. 31.
r ii. 15. v. 3. 15. vi. 12 vii. 18.
s v. 5. 1 Sam. ix. 7. 1 Kings xiv. 3.
t i. 2 iii. 11—13. 1 Kings xiv. 1—4. Luke xiii. 23. Acts xvi. 30.
u 1 Kings xix. 15.
† Heb. *in his hand.* v. 5.
x vi. 21. xiii. 14.

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cerning judgment as well as mercy, will speedily be accomplished; and earthly honours will accelerate the ruin of the ungodly. May God help us seriously to inquire, whether we are now exposed to his awful threatenings; or interested in his exceedingly great and precious promises; that so we may profit by the warning, or by the encouragement, resulting from that knowledge of our own state and character!

NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1, 2. This famine seems to have been sent in the latter part of Jehoram's reign, as a punishment of the pertinacious idolatry of both king and people, notwithstanding the miracles they had witnessed, and the mercies they had experienced. It continued twice as long as that in the days of Ahab, but perhaps was not so extreme. Elisha was warned of its approach, and counselled his benefactress, (who seems to have been left a widow,) to remove till it was over. There was a measure of plenty in the land of the Philistines, whilst Israel was visited with famine: but either they could spare none to sell to their neighbours, or their old enmity made them unwilling to do it. They did not, however, molest such as went to sojourn among them. Had not Judah felt the effects of the famine, it is likely that this pious woman would have gone thither to sojourn.

V. 3. *To cry*, &c. Either the lands of the Shunammite had been seized, as forfeited to the crown by her emigration; or some of her neighbours or relations had violently seized upon them; or they, to whom she had left the management of her affairs, would neither restore her estate, nor come to any account concerning the profits of it. She had therefore at this time occasion to apply to the king, though not formally; and it was commendable in Jehoram that he was accessible to such a claimant.

V. 4—6. It was not unlawful to speak to a leper, provided it was done without touching him; and Jehoram, from curiosity, was willing to converse with so mean a person, concerning Elisha's miracles, as Gehazi, who likewise bore an infamous character, and was covered with a loathsome disease: yet he did not court the prophet's acquaintance, because he disliked his counsels and admonitions, and dreaded his warnings and rebukes. The Lord, however, thus prepared his mind to do this godly woman justice; and his providence is especially to be noted in the coincidence of such apparently casual events, from which most important consequences frequently follow.

V. 7, 8. The prophet doubtless was divinely directed to go to Damascus. Some suppose that he went to counsel and encourage Naaman; and others, that he retired thither during the famine. And some imagine, that he went to anoint Hazael; but it is probable, that Elijah had performed that service, though Hazael, being young and destitute of power to seize upon the kingdom, seems not to have much regarded the transaction. (*Marg. Ref.*) Ben-hadad, however, was no longer disposed to injure Elisha. The report of the prophet's miracles had excited his veneration, and perhaps his sickness had softened his mind; so that he welcomed him to his capital, and, according to the fashion of the day, sent his chief minister to inquire of him concerning his recovery. He would have done better if he had desired the instruction and prayers of the man of God.

V. 9. We may infer from the silence of the Scripture, that the prophet accepted of this royal present, as the provision which the Lord assigned him in a foreign country,

10 And Elisha said unto him, Go, say unto him, Thou mayest certainly recover: howbeit the LORD hath shewed me that [y] he shall surely die.

11 And he settled his countenance * steadfastly, until he was ashamed: and the man of God [z] wept.

12 And Hazael said, Why [a] weepeth my lord? And he answered, Because I know [b] the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strong-holds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt [c] dash their children, and rip up their women with child.

13 And Hazael said, But what! *is* thy servant a [d] dog, that [e] he should do this great thing? And Elisha answered, [f] The LORD hath shewed me that thou *shalt be* king over Syria.

14 So he departed from Elisha, and came to his master; who said to him, What said Elisha to thee? And he answered, [g] He told me *that* thou shouldest surely recover.

15 And [h] it came to pass [i] on the morrow, that he took a thick cloth, and dipped *it* in water, and [k] spread *it* on his face, so that he died: and [l] Hazael reigned in his stead.

16 ¶ And in the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel, Jehoshaphat *being* then king of Judah, [m] Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah † began to reign.

17 Thirty and two years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem.

18 And he walked [n] in the way of the kings of Israel, as did the house of Ahab: for [o] the daughter of Ahab was [p] his wife: and he did evil in the sight of the LORD.

19 Yet the LORD would not destroy Judah [q] for David his servant's sake, as he promised him to give him always ‡ a light, *and* to his children.

20 In his days Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah, and [r] made a king over themselves.

21 So Joram went over to Zair, and all the chariots with him: and he rose by night, and smote the Edomites which compassed him about, and the captains

y 13.
* Heb. *and set it.*
z Ps. cxix. 136. Jer. iv. 19. ix. 1. 18. xiii. 17. xiv. 17. Luke xix. 41. John xi. 35. Acts xx. 19 31. Phil. iii. 18.
a iv. 28. 1 Kings xviii. 13.
b x. 32,33. xii. 17. xiii. 3. 7. Am. 1. 3, 4.
c xv. 16. Ps. cxxxvii. 9. Is. xiii. 16. 18. Hos. xiii. 16. Am. i. 13.
d 1 Sam. xvii. 43. 2 Sam. ix. 8 Ps. xxii. 16. 20 Is. lvi. 10, 11. Matt. vii. 6. Phil. iii. 2. Rev. xxii. 15.
e Jer. xvii. 9. Matt. xxvi. 33—35
f 1 Kings xix. 15. Mic. ii. 1.
g 10 Matt. xxvi. 16.
h 13. 1 Sam. xvi. 12, 13. xxiv. 4—7. 13. xxvi. 9—11.
i Ps. xxxvi. 4.
k ix. 24. xv. 10—14 xxv. 30. 1 Kings xv. 28. xvi. 10. 18. Is. xxxiii. 1.
l 1 Kings xix. 15.
m i. 17. 1 Kings xxii. 50. 2 Chr. xxi. 1—20.
† Heb. *reigned.*
n iii. 2, 3. 1 Kings xxii. 52, 53.
o 26. 1 Kings xxi. 25. 2 Chr xxi. 6. xxii. 1—4.
p Gen. vi. 1—5. Deut. vii. 3, 4. 1 Kings xi. 1—5. Neh. xiii. 25, 26.
q 2 Sam. vii. 12. 15. 1 Kings xi. 36. xv. 4, 5. 2 Chr. xxi. 7. Is. vii. 14. Luke i 32, 33.
‡ Heb. *candle*, or, *lamp.*
r 2 Sam. viii. 14. 1 Kings xxii. 47. 2 Chr. xxi. 8—10.

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and to enable him to assist the poor Israelites and the sons of the prophets.

V. 10. Ben-hadad's disease was not of itself mortal, though his life was near its end from another cause. But the prophet either did not know, or did not think it proper to inform Hazael, what that cause would be. The reading, however, *in the text*, of the original, is, *Thou shalt not recover; for the*, &c.: though ancient expositors, both Jews and Christians, render it as it stands in our version.

V. 11. The prophet fixed his eyes on Hazael so steadfastly and for so long a time, that Hazael was confounded; and Elisha himself, in the foresight of his wickedness and of the miseries of Israel, burst into tears.

V. 13. Hazael felt at that time no inclination to such brutal ferocity and cruelty, and wondered that the prophet should suppose him capable of tearing and devouring, like some fierce and greedy dog, rather than a rational creature. But Elisha intimated that he would soon be advanced to the throne of Syria; and being engaged in war with Israel, and exasperated by their resistance, he would be tempted to cruelties, of which at present he had no thought. Some indeed think, Hazael only meant, that he was too inconsiderable a person for such *great* exploits: but his high rank under Ben-hadad would have enabled him to perform them, had his passions been sufficiently excited: and he was evidently startled at the mention of the cruelties, which the prophet predicted would be perpetrated by him.

V. 14, 15. Hazael at least misreported Elisha's answer, having already formed the intention of murdering Ben-hadad, and aiming to find an opportunity of effecting his purpose. By the method that he employed, he prevented any alarm, or any marks of violence appearing on his body. Elisha's intimation might give Satan an *occasion* of suggesting this villany to Hazael; but it was not the *cause* of his crime, and formed no *excuse* for it. Had he been of David's disposition, he would have waited in the path of duty, till the Lord had performed his word, in that manner which pleased him. Thus he soon manifested the rapacity and cruelty of the dog, of which he desired to be thought incapable.

V. 16, 17. Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat, began to reign with his father before the death of Ahab, so that Ahaziah the son of Ahab died in the second year of his reign; or in the eighteenth of Jehoshaphat. About five years after he seems to have been more solemnly admitted to the exercise of the royal authority, within two years of his father's death. This took place when Jehoram was thirty-two years old, and from that time he reigned eight years; though he reigned only five or six as sole king, after the death of his father. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 18. *The daughter*, &c. Perhaps Jehoshaphat hoped by this alliance to cement a peace betwixt the two kingdoms, and to bring back the Israelites to the worship of God at Jerusalem: but it was an unhallowed measure, and produced a contrary effect. This affinity gave occasion to the same names in both families. Each had a Jehoram and an Ahaziah: but they all took after the house of Ahab.

of the chariots: and the people fled into their tents.

22 [s] Yet Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah unto this day. Then [t] Libnah revolted at the same time.

23 And the rest of the acts of Joram, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

24 And Joram [x] slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David: and [y] Ahaziah his son reigned in his stead.

25 ¶ In the [z] twelfth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel did Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah begin to reign.

26 [a] Two and twenty years old *was* Ahaziah when he began to reign; and he reigned [b] one year in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Athaliah, the * daughter of Omri king of Israel.

27 And [c] he walked in the way of the house of Ahab, and did evil in the sight of the LORD, as *did* the house of Ahab: for he *was* the son in law of the house of Ahab.

28 And [d] he went with Joram the son of Ahab to the war against [e] Hazael king of Syria in [f] Ramoth-gilead; and the Syrians wounded Joram.

29 And king [g] Joram went back to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds † which the Syrians had given him at ‡ Ramah, when he fought against Hazael king of Syria. And [h] Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah went down to see Joram the son of Ahab in Jezreel, because he was § sick.

s Gen. xxvii. 40.
t xix. 8. Josh. xxi. 13 2 Chr. xxi. 10.
u 2 Chr. xxi. 11—20.
x 1 Kings xi. 43. xiv. 20. 31.
y 2 Chr. xxi 17 xxv. 23. *Jehoahaz.* xxii. 6 *Azariah.*
z 16. 17. ix. 29. 2 Chr. xxi. 20.
a 2 Chr. xxii. 2.
b ix. 27. 1 Chr. xxii 5—8.
* Or *grand-daughter.* 18.
c 2 Chr. xxii. 3. 4. Ec. vii. 26. 2 Cor. vi. 14.
d iii. 7. 1 Kings xxii. 4. 2 Chr. xviii. 2, 3. 31. xix 2 xxii 5.
e 12, 13 1 Kings xix 17.
f Josh. xxi. 38. 1 Kings iv 13. xxii. 3.
g ix. 15.
† Heb *wherewith the Syrians had wounded.*
‡ *Ramath* 26.
h ix. 16 2 Chr. xxii. 6, 7.
§ Heb. *wounded.* 1 Kings xxii.3,4.

V. 20—24. Notwithstanding Jehoram's victory over the Edomites, he could not re-establish his authority over them: perhaps he was hindered by the revolt of Libnah, and by fears of further insurrections in his own kingdom, where he was become extremely odious. Thus the prophecy of Isaac was fulfilled, after Edom had been subject to Israel about an hundred and fifty years: nor did the Jews again acquire the dominion over Edom till long after the Babylonish captivity. (*Marg. Ref.*)—Joram was buried in Jerusalem, but not in the sepulchres of the kings. (*Notes*, 2 *Chr.* xxi.)

V. 26. Perhaps Omri adopted and educated Athaliah, who was his grand-daughter, and the daughter of Ahab.

V. 28, 29. (*Notes*, ix. 2 *Chr.* xxii.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

Temporal deliverances are only respites, and "sin no "more, lest a worse thing come unto thee," is a warning of universal application. When the Lord calls for judgments, famines, pestilences, wars, tempests, or earthquakes, obey his word: and if he contend he will overcome; for he will prolong the affliction, and make it more and more severe, until the sinner be either humbled or destroyed. When he rendereth a fruitful land barren for the wickedness of them that dwell therein, he takes care of the remnant of his people, and abundantly recompenses their kindness to his servants for his sake; and they will also gladly embrace opportunities of requiting their benefactors, especially by their counsels and prayers: but open enemies sometimes escape better, than hypocritical or apostate professors. Where the *moral* law of God is not violated, a real necessity will justify many deviations from the *letter* of ritual appointments: but believers will not choose to reside longer among ignorant and ungodly people than is needful, though they behave kindly to them; but gladly return to the ordinances of God, and the communion of the saints.—We know not what changes await us: we may soon be deceived by those who have hitherto been faithful to us, and need the help of those on whom we have not heretofore had any dependence.—The love of worldly riches induces men to various methods of fraud and oppression, and breaks through the most powerful obligations or the strongest relative ties. Hence the benefit of magistracy, to preserve equity and order among mankind. Even believers may, on important occasions, avail themselves of their privileges as members of the community; provided they are not actuated by covetousness or resentment, do not manifest a contentious spirit, and make no appeal in a doubtful or suspicious cause: and rulers should award justice without respect of persons, and compel the injurious to restitution.—But the Lord himself will plead the cause of the defenceless and the oppressed, of the fatherless and the widow: he often effects his purpose by influencing the hearts of princes in their favour, and the most casual or trivial incident, which conduces to it, may prove an occasion of exciting praise and gratitude for his providential goodness. The gratification of curiosity is more pleasing to the carnal mind, than the mortification of worldly lusts: and the vilest hypocrites, apostates, or profligates, on some occasions, will be pleased with conversing on religious topics, provided they have no reference to their own conscience, character, or conduct. Thus they countenance each other in ungodliness, or buoy up presumptuous hopes; whilst they cannot endure the instructions, and will not imitate the example, of those teachers whom they most profess to admire.

V. 7—15.

The Lord can procure his people a welcome, and spread them a table, even amidst their enemies; who, on some occasions, and especially in affliction, may be inclined to show them great kindness and respect. Yet few, even in

CHAP. IX.

A young prophet, by Elisha's orders, anoints Jehu, at Ramoth-gilead; and directs him to extirpate Ahab's family, 1—10. *Jehu acquaints the captains, is proclaimed king, and marches in haste to Jezreel against Joram,* 11—16. *Joram sends messengers to Jehu, who detains them,* 17—20. *He and Ahaziah meet Jehu; who kills Joram, and casts him into the field of Naboth,* 21—26. *Ahaziah is slain at Gur, and buried at Jerusalem,* 27—30. *Jezebel, by Jehu's orders, is thrown out of the window, and trampled under foot,* 31—33. *She is eaten by dogs, as Elijah had predicted,* 34—37.

AND Elisha the prophet called one of [a] the children of the prophets, and said unto him, [b] Gird up thy loins, and take this [c] box of oil in thine hand, and go to [d] Ramoth-gilead:

2 And when thou comest thither, look out there Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi, and go in, and make him arise up from [e] among his brethren, and carry him to an * inner chamber;

a iv. 1. vi. 1—3. 1 Kings xx. 35.
b iv. 29. 1 Kings xviii. 46. Jer. i. 17. Luke xii. 35—37. 1 Pet. i. 13.
c 1 Sam. x. 1. xvi. 1. 1 Kings i. 39.
d viii. 23, 29.
e 5. 11.
* Heb. *chamber in a chamber.* 1 Kings xx. 30. xxii. 25.

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that case, derive real benefit from their instructions, and disposition to do them good: but some honour redounds to God, and outward advantages accrue to his servants; who may without scruple receive them, as from him, when they are not required to flatter, or in any other way to act inconsistently with their profession. They who love God and man, must often weep upon a survey of the wickedness and misery of mankind: and a particular foresight of the state of the church and of the world, would augment their sorrow. But little are men, when not exposed to temptation, aware of the desperate wickedness of their own hearts! They do not conceive themselves capable of those enormities, to which at present they feel no inducement; and it is deemed an insult upon them to suppose they are. But when the magnetic attraction of great imaginary advantages approaches the carnal mind, the latent depravity begins to move, and they will surely come into contact, unless hindered by external obstructions, or by the power of God upon the heart. Then, the greedy dog, the ravening wolf, the subtle fox, the poisonous serpent, or the filthy swine, form feeble emblems of human depravity: the persons, who before were most inoffensive, become guilty of far greater rapacity, treachery, or cruelty, than the worst of these animals; and in their cooler moments doubtless often reflect with horror and astonishment at their awful progress. Those who, as mortified limbs, are continually cut off the body politic, once no more thought of such criminality and condemnation, than any reader of these observations: and we are any of us capable, if left to ourselves, of the worst crimes perpetrated by the vilest pests and scourges of the world. This should remind us not to be high-minded, but to fear, and to trust only in the Lord to preserve us from the deceitfulness of our own hearts. As the desire of greatness is a dangerous temptation, which has induced many to perpetrate the basest crimes: so power, however obtained, generally alters men's manners for the worse; and their inclinations to vice commonly increase, in proportion as they are able to commit it without control and with impunity. We ought therefore to be content and thankful in more obscure situations; and they who are called to this dangerous pre-eminence, have need of double watchfulness. When iniquity is conceived in the heart, means will be devised for its perpetration; and flattering language often cloaks the most malignant purposes: for sinners in general are satisfied with concealing their crimes from man, regardless of the all-seeing eye of God. But it is an awful cruelty to flatter those with the hope of life, whom we suppose to be near their dissolution: because they ought to be preparing for that important change.

V. 16—29.

When pious men choose wives for themselves, or interfere in the marriage of their children, they should remember that their remote posterity are concerned, and that an improper choice may entail misery upon them. Indulged children seldom prove wise or good men, and it is not often expedient to advance young people needlessly to authority. Our inferiors and dependents are often employed to chastise our rebellion against God, by their ill behaviour to us. He will not however break his promise nor forsake his cause: but whilst wicked men, from generation to generation, perish in their sins, the Son of David, the Light of his church, ever liveth to protect, bless, and comfort his people. May all the changes, troubles, and wickedness of the world, make us more earnest in securing an interest in his great salvation!

NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 1. Elijah, many years before, had been commissioned to anoint Jehu, as a king of a new family, immediately appointed by God to reign over Israel, and to execute vengeance on the family and adherents of Ahab. But a respite having been granted that prince, when he externally humbled himself before God; it seems, the anointing of Jehu was deferred likewise: so that this service now devolved on Elisha, as Elijah's successor and representative. But it required secrecy; and it was not proper he should perform it in person: as one of the sons of the prophets, who was little known, might have a far better opportunity of escaping, if suspected by Jehoram's friends. Elisha lived above forty years after this: and probably was not incapacitated by age or infirmities, for the labour and activity required on this occasion; but was for other reasons induced or directed, to send a deputy. (*Marg. Ref.*) When the ancients used great expedition, they girded up the skirts of their long upper garments with a girdle round their loins.

f 1 Kings xix. 16.

3 Then take the box of oil, and [f] pour *it* on his head, and say, Thus saith the LORD, [g] I have anointed thee king over Israel. Then open the door, [h] and flee, and tarry not.

g Ps. lxxv. 7. Dan ii. 21. iv. 35. v. 18.
h 1 Sam. xvi. 2. Matt. x. 16.

4 So the young man, *even* the young man the prophet, went to Ramoth-gilead.

5 And when he came, behold, the captains of the host *were* sitting; and he said, [i] I have an errand to thee, O captain. And Jehu said, Unto which of all us? And he said, To thee, O captain.

i Judg. iii. 19.

6 And [k] he arose, and went into the house; and he poured the oil on his head, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, [l] I have anointed thee king [m] over the people of the LORD, *even* over Israel.

k Acts xxiii. 16, 19.
l 2 Chr. xxii. 7.
m 1 Kings x. 9. xiv. 7. 16. xvi. 2.

7 And thou shalt smite the house of Ahab thy master, that [n] I may avenge the blood of my servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the LORD, [o] at the hand of Jezebel.

n Deut. xxxii. 35. 43. Ps. xciv. 1—7. Luke xviii. 7. 8. Rom. xii. 19. xxiii. 4. Heb. xi. 30. Rev. vi. 9, 10. xviii. 20. xix. 2.
o 33—37. 1 Kings xviii. 4. xxi. 15. 23.

8 For the whole house of Ahab shall perish: and [p] I will cut off from Ahab him that pisseth against the wall, and [q] him that is shut up and left in Israel:

p 1 Kings xiv. 10, 11. xxi. 21, 22.
q xiv. 26. Deut. xxxii. 36.

9 And I will make the house of Ahab [r] like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like [s] the house of Baasha, the son of Ahijah:

r 1 Kings xiv. 10, 11. xv. 29. xxi. 22.
s 1 Kings xvi. 3, 4. 11, 12.

10 And [t] the dogs shall eat Jezebel in the portion of Jezreel, and *there shall be* none to bury *her*. And [u] he opened the door and fled.

t 35, 36. 1 Kings xxi. 23. Jer. xxii. 19.
u 3. Judg. iii. 26.

11 Then Jehu came forth to the servants of his lord: and *one* said unto him, [x] *Is* all well? wherefore came this [y] mad *fellow* to thee? And he said unto them, Ye know the man, and his communication.

x 17. 19. 22.
y Jer. xxix. 26. Hos. ix. 7. Mark iii. 21. John x. 20. Acts xvii. 18. xxvi. 24. 1 Cor. iv. 10. 2 Cor. v. 13.

12 And they said, *It is* false; tell us now. And he said, Thus and thus spake

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V. 2, 3. Jehoram having retired from the army, Jehu seems to have been left first in command, having been long a retainer to Ahab's family. The directions given this young prophet were explicit; especially as to the secrecy to be observed, and the measures to be adopted for his own safety. The service was indeed peculiarly perilous; and Samuel used caution, in a measure much less offensive. (1 *Sam.* xvi. 2.)

V. 5—10. Jehu was engaged in converse or consultation with the other captains, when thus addressed by a person, it is probable, of mean appearance: yet he readily complied with his desire, and went aside with him to learn his errand. And immediately the prophet anointed him, explained the meaning of that transaction, and gave him an express commission from God. In all this, no doubt he exactly adhered to his instructions. Israel, though generally idolatrous, was still the people of the LORD. They were called by his name, and had a remnant of his worshippers among them: and Jehu was thus warned to use his authority in obedience to God, and to promote true religion. The family and adherents of Ahab were criminals condemned by the supreme Judge; Jehu was appointed to execute this sentence; the kingdom was his recompense for the service; and as far as he acted according to his instructions, he needed not fear contracting guilt, or regard any reproach or opposition to which he might be exposed. The murder of the prophets and worshippers of God was more insisted upon in this indictment, than even the worship of Baal. Jehoram had been spared many years, but he continued impenitent; though not so vile as Ahab, who was punished in his posterity. Jezebel had retained her authority, and persisted in idolatry, and her enmity to JEHOVAH and his servants, though less spoken of in the reigns of her sons, than in that of her husband. Long space had been given her, but she had not repented; and her measure of iniquity was now full. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 11. *This mad fellow.* Some reference might be had in this expression to those vehement actions, which the prophets sometimes used when influenced by the Spirit of prophecy: but it seems rather to have resulted from profane contempt of religion. Without excepting him who "spake as never man spake," they, who have faithfully delivered the Lord's message to sinners, have in all ages been treated as mad men. (*Marg. Ref.*) They are so indifferent about those objects which attract the senses, and which man naturally desires and pursues; and so engaged about those things which are invisible, and therefore generally neglected as if unreal; their judgment, conversation, maxims, and conduct are so contrary to those of other men; and they venture, and endure, so much in pursuit of interests and objects of which others have no conception, that worldly men naturally conclude them to be mad, when they deem them honestly in earnest. The charge however is often brought in *self-defence:* for, admitting the principles and practice of the devoted servants of God to be reasonable, wise, and necessary to happiness, the inference is undeniable; that the ambitious, the sensual, the covetous, the dissipated, the worldly, and ungodly of every description, are fools and mad to all intents and purposes.

Ye know, &c. Perhaps Jehu meant, that the captains knew the man to be a prophet; and must suppose that he came to admonish and instruct him: or he might intend to evade the question, as if the prophet's errand had nothing peculiar in it; but they would not be thus satisfied, knowing that something more was communicated to him. This is the common interpretation.—It may, however, be questioned, whether Jehu did not suspect, that the young prophet acted in concert with the captains; and that they were previously acquainted with the man and his communication.

he to me, saying, Thus saith the LORD, I have anointed thee king over Israel.

13 Then they hasted, and took [z] every man his garment, and put *it* under him on the top of the stairs, and [a] blew with trumpets, saying, Jehu * is king.

14 ¶ So Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi [b] conspired against Joram. (Now Joram had [c] kept Ramoth-gilead, he and all Israel, because of Hazael king of Syria.

15 But king † Joram was [d] returned to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds which the Syrians ‡ had given him, when he fought with Hazael king of Syria.) And Jehu said, If it be your minds, *then* let § none go forth *nor* escape out of the city, to go to tell *it* in Jezreel.

16 So Jehu rode in a chariot, and went to Jezreel; for Joram lay there. And [e] Ahaziah king of Judah was come down to see Joram.

17 And there stood [f] a watchman on the tower in Jezreel, and he spied the company of Jehu as he came, and said, I see a company. And Joram said, [g] Take an horseman, and send to meet them, and let him say, [h] *Is it* peace?

18 So there went one on horseback to meet him, and said, Thus saith the king, *Is it* peace? And Jehu said, [i] What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me. And the watchman told, saying, The messenger came to them, but he cometh not again.

19 Then he sent out a second on horseback, which came to them, and said, Thus saith the king, *Is it* peace? And Jehu answered, What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me.

20 And the watchman told, saying, He came even unto them, and cometh not again: and the * driving *is* like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi; for he driveth † furiously.

21 And Joram said, ‡ Make ready. And his chariot was made ready. And [k] Joram king of Israel and Ahaziah king of Judah went out, each in his chariot, and they went out against Jehu, and § met him in [l] the portion of Naboth the Jezreelite.

22 And it came to pass, when Joram saw Jehu, that he said, [m] *Is it* peace, Jehu? And he answered, [n] What peace, so long as [o] the whoredoms of thy mo-

z Matt. xxi. 7, 8.
a 2 Sam. xv. 10. 1 Kings i. 39. Ps. xcviii. 6.
* Heb. *reigneth.*
b 31. viii. 12—15. 1 Kings xv. 27. xvi. 7. 9 16.
c viii. 28. 1 Kings xxii. 3.
† Heb. *Jehoram.*
d viii 29. 2 Chr. xxii. 6.
‡ Heb. *smote.*
§ Heb. *no escaper* go, &c. 1 Sam. xxvii. 9—11.
e viii. 29. 2. Chr. xxii. 6, 7.
Sam. xiii. 34. xviii. 24. Is. xxi. 6 — 9. 11, 12. lvi. 10. lxii. 6. Ez. xxxiii. 2—9. Acts xx. 26—31.
f vii. 14.
g vii. 14.
h Luke x. 5, 6.
i John xxi. 22.
* Or, *marching*
† Heb. *in madness* x. 16. xix. 11—13. Ec ix. 10. Is. liv. 16.
‡ Heb. *bind.*
i 1 Kings xx. 14 *Marg.*
k 2 Chr. xxii. 7
§ Heb. *found.*
l 1 Kings xxi. 1—7. 15. 18, 19.
m 17.
n Is. lvii. 19—21.
o 1 Kings xvi. 30—33. xviii. 4. xix. 1, 2. xxi. 8—10. 25. Nah. iii. 4. Rev. ii. 20. xvii. 4, 5. xviii. 3. 23.

V. 12, 13. When the captains urged Jehu further, he declared the business of the young prophet with a frankness and boldness which seem to have arisen from a divine energy on his mind; for, if the captains had not coincided with him, the discovery might have proved fatal. Some kind of faith in the word of God spoken by the prophet seems to have animated him to this hazardous undertaking, of which he does not appear to have had any previous intentions: and the minds of his companions also were surprisingly disposed to concur with him, by making him a kind of throne, and proclaiming him king with sound of trumpets. It is probable that this was done on the top of some edifice, from which the people were informed of such public transactions as were proper to be communicated to them. Thus the conspiracy was openly avowed. Perhaps Jehoram was unpopular in the army, through his severity or oppression.

V. 14. It is evident that Ramoth-gilead was at this time in the hands of the Israelites: but it is not certain whether they had just taken it, or whether Hazael had raised the siege of it, having attempted to retake it. Jehoram's absence from the army proved of fatal consequence to him: he escaped the sword of Hazael, but Jehu slew him: (1 *Kings* xix. 17.)

V. 16, 17. Jezreel lay at a considerable distance from Ramoth-gilead, with the river Jordan between. Yet Jehu concerted his plan with such prudence, and executed it with such despatch; his adherents came so cordially into his interests, and so faithfully kept his counsel; and the people in the neighbourhood were either so ignorant about his intentions, or so regardless of them; that Jehoram received no tidings of his march, till his distant approach was perceived by the watchmen! But the matter was of the Lord, and could not miscarry.

V. 18. Perhaps Jehoram feared lest the Syrians had obtained the victory: but Jehu by compelling his messengers to turn behind him, prevented his obtaining information, and increased his perplexity.

V. 20. *Furiously.* Some have rendered this, *He driveth slowly.* But Jehu was a vehement man, a fit instrument for his peculiar work. His approach might be seen at a great distance from a watch-tower, as he came with an armed force: and it is most probable that he travelled with as much celerity as he could. The original word is exactly rendered in the margin, *in madness;* being from the same root as that above translated, *mad fellow.*

V. 21. Jehoram had no sufficient force to oppose Jehu's armament, and he seems to have acted rashly in going out to meet him. But he still dreamed of peace, and was impatient to know, whether Jehu returned defeated by the Syrians, or triumphant over them. Thus Jehu's design was facilitated, and perhaps bloodshed prevented: and, according to the purpose of God, Jehoram was slain in the portion of Naboth, probably near the place, where he and his sons had been put to death.

ther Jezebel, and her witchcrafts *are so* many?

23 And Joram turned his hands and fled, and said to Ahaziah, *There is* [p] treachery, O Ahaziah.

24 And Jehu ‖ drew a bow with his full strength, and [q] smote Jehoram between his arms, and the arrow went out at his heart, and he * sunk down in his chariot.

25 Then said *Jehu* to Bidkar his captain, Take up, *and* cast him in the portion of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite: for remember how that, when I and thou rode together after Ahab his father, [r] the LORD laid this burden upon him;

26 Surely I have seen yesterday the † blood of Naboth, and the blood [s] of his sons, saith the LORD; and [t] I will requite thee in this ‡ plat, saith the LORD. Now therefore take *and* cast him into the plat *of ground*, according to the word of the LORD.

27 But when [u] Ahaziah the king of Judah saw *this*, he fled by the way of the garden-house. And Jehu followed after him, and said, Smite him also in the chariot. *And they did so*, at the going up to Gur, which *is* by [x] Ibleam. And he fled to [y] Megiddo, and died there.

28 And [z] his servants carried him in a chariot to Jerusalem, and buried him in his sepulchre with his fathers in the city of David.

29 And [a] in the eleventh year of Joram the son of Ahab began Ahaziah to reign over Judah.

30 ¶ And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard *of it*, and she * painted her face, and [b] tired her head, and looked out at a window.

31 And as Jehu entered in at the gate [c] she said, *Had* [c] Zimri [d] peace, who slew his master?

32 And he lifted up his face to the window, and said, Who *is* on my side? who? And there looked out to him two *or* three † eunuchs.

33 And he said, Throw her down. So they threw her down: and *some* of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses: and [e] he trode her under foot.

34 And when he was come in, he did eat and drink, and said, Go, see now [f] this cursed *woman*, and bury her: for [g] she *is* a king's daughter.

35 And they went to bury her; [h] but they found no more of her than the scull, and the feet, and the palms of *her* hands.

36 Wherefore they came again, and

p xi. 14. 2 Chr. xxiii. 13.
‖ Heb. *filled his hand with a bow.* 1 Kings xxii. 34.
q Job xx. 23–25. Ps. l. 22. Prov. xxi 30. Ec. viii. 12, 13. 1 Thes. v. 3.
* Heb. *bowed.*
r 1 Kings xxi. 19. 24—29 Is xiii 1. Jer. xxiii. 33—38 Nah i. 1. Matt. xi. 30.
† Heb *bloods.*
s Deut xxiv. 16. 2 Chr xxv 4
t Ex xx 5. Ez. xviii. 19.
‡ Or, *portion.*
u 2 Chr. xxii. 7—9. Prov. xiii. 20.
x Jos. xvii. 11. Judg i. 27.
y xxiii. 29, 30.
z 2 Chr. xxii. 9.
a viii. 16. 24, 25. 2 Chr. xxi 18, 19. xxii. 1, 2.
* Heb. *put her eyes in painting.* Jer iv. 30 Ez. xxiii. 40
b Is iii. 18—24. 1 Tim ii. 9 10. 1 Pet. iii 3
c 1 Kings xvi. 19, 19.
d 22. Prov. xvi. 18.
† Or, *chamberlains.*
e 26. vii. 20. Mal. iv. 3. Heb. x. 29.
f 1 Kings xxi. 25. Prov. x. 7. Is. lxv. 15. Matt. xxv. 41
g 1 Kings xvi. 31.
h Job xxxi. 3. Acts xii. 23.

V. 22. *Idolatry* is in scripture called *whoredom;* and when committed by God's professed people, *adultery*, to denote the Lord's abhorrence of it. Jezebel's idolatries had been manifold and long continued; and, as some think, attended by prostitution, according to the shameless practices of the Gentiles in their worship. The word *witchcrafts* may allude to the fascinating artifices which harlots use to allure men to wickedness; by which her various methods of seducing the Israelites to idolatry seem to be intended. For this purpose she doubtless employed promises, presents, caresses, and flatteries; and on the other hand frowns, threats, and persecutions; by which vast multitudes were induced to conform to her religion, and join in her spiritual whoredom. As Jehu had been long unsuspected in the court of Ahab and his sons, he probably had never before in any way protested against the worship of Baal. Jehoram was answerable for Jezebel's crimes, because he countenanced and imitated them, instead of using his authority to repress them.

V. 25, 26. Here the body of Jehoram was left unburied, to be devoured by dogs, or beasts of prey: and the dogs, in some sense, licked the blood of Ahab, as flowing from the wounds of his son, in the vineyard of Naboth, of which it seems he had continued to keep possession. The words of the prophets were called *burdens*, as predicting a heavy burden of misery to the guilty party, which he could neither endure nor remove. It is probable, that Jehu had seldom reflected on Elisha's words, during the intervening years, till these events brought the substance of them fresh to his recollection.

V. 27, 28. Ahaziah was Ahab's grandson by Athaliah; and being also an idolater, he was within Jehu's commission. So that being found with Jehoram, he shared his punishment; though as son to pious Jehoshaphat, he was allowed an honourable burial. The circumstances elsewhere recorded concerning his death, render it probable that he was not slain till Jehu had inflicted vengeance on Jezebel at Jezreel. (*Note*, 2 *Chr.* xxii. 9.)

V. 29. Jehoram began to reign over Judah, in the fifth year of Jehoram king of Israel; it is probable in the very beginning of it: and he died, and was succeeded by Ahaziah, in the eleventh, or twelfth year of Jehoram; that is, the close of the eleventh, or beginning of the twelfth. This space is called *eight years*, as comprising six whole years, and a portion of two others, computed according to the reigns of the kings of Judah. (*Marg. Ref.*)

i 1 Kings xxi. 23.
* Heb by the hand of.

told him. And he said, [i] This *is* the word of the LORD, which he spake * by his servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, In the portion of Jezreel shall dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel:

37 And [k] the carcase of Jezebel shall be as dung upon the face of the field in the portion of Jezreel; *so* that they shall not say, This *is* Jezebel.

k Ps. lxxxiii. 10. Ec. vi. 3. Is. xiv. 18—20. Jer. viii. 2. xvi. 4. xxii. 19. xxxvi. 30.

V. 30—37. Jezebel had no way of escaping or resisting Jehu: she therefore aimed to out-brave and intimidate him. Instead of assuming the habit of a mourner, or a suppliant, she arrayed herself in all the magnificence of royalty, and stationed herself in a conspicuous place to wait his arrival. She used the method customary in the east, of giving herself a majestic appearance, by a kind of paint, which dilates the eye-lids, and makes the eyes look large and bright. And when Jehu approached the palace, she accosted him by saying, "Had Zimri peace, who slew his "master?" Zimri had destroyed the house of Baasha, and had soon after fallen before Omri the father of Ahab: but he had had no commission for what he did: and Jehu was expressly ordered to take vengeance on the house of Ahab. He was not therefore to be thus intimidated: for finding upon inquiry that her chamberlains were ready to join him; (being either mercenary men who were willing to purchase his favour, or being weary of Jezebel's imperious and haughty disposition;) he ordered her to be thrown from the window, and thus she was dashed to pieces, and trodden under foot by the horses. Afterwards, when he thought of burying her, in honour of her royal extraction, he found himself disappointed; for her mangled body, (having probably been plundered of its costly attire,) was entirely torn in pieces and devoured by dogs. This reminded him of the word of the Lord by Elijah, which he had before forgotten: and he observed that her carcass was to become as dung upon the face of the earth. This was a dreadful and disgraceful end, worthy of one who had been such a curse to Israel and Judah, but had brought the heaviest curse upon herself; and who was a specimen, and a sort of type, of all ringleaders in idolatry, and tempters to that crime. Yet this *cursed woman*, the daughter of a king, was also the wife of a king, the mother of two kings, the mother-in-law of a king, and the grandmother of a king, all in her own life-time! So vain are all earthly honours and distinctions!

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

The long-suffering of God will enhance the condemnation of those who are not led to it by repentance. In his appointed time he will raise up and qualify suitable instruments for performing his purposes, whether of vengeance or of mercy. The faithful servants of God must stand prepared for arduous and perilous undertakings: and obedience to his commandments must have the precedency of all other duties. But as the written word is our only present rule of duty; it seldom happens, that we are required to act even in *apparent* violation of our relative obligations to princes, parents, masters, or other superiors, except in professing those truths, and attending on those ordinances, which they may disapprove, discountenance, or prohibit; or in keeping aloof from those superstitious or worldly places and practices, which they would enjoin. Yet if, after all endeavours "to render honour to whom "honour is due;" we should be reproached or ill-treated for our conscientious obedience to God, we must bear it with meekness and patience: and when in danger of persecution, we are allowed to flee from it. They, who are employed as ministers, will be the most exposed in these respects: for the message of the Lord meeting sinners in the midst of their worldly pursuits, singles them out, by an application to their hearts and conscience, as if they were addressed by name: and whilst some are thus separated from their companions, and by the unction of the Holy Spirit, prepared for the service of God, others are marked out in the midst of their prosperity, as in danger of eternal misery. Whilst, however, we adhere to our instructions, we shall be acccepted and preserved.

V. 11—29.

Every man should well consider to what work the Lord calls him, and in what manner and for what ends he ought to do it. *His special* commission justifies the severest executions of his enemies: but *our general* instructions to do good, and to bless, and to overcome evil with good, point out to us a more delightful service, in which we should thankfully abound from day to day. Yet the vengeance of God will fall with peculiar weight upon the head of those, that oppress and persecute his people and ministers; who may deem themselves highly favoured, if they are only reviled, and reproached as fools and madmen. Satisfied with the testimony of their conscience, and the Lord's gracious acceptance, they may rejoice and be exceedingly glad, at being thus ranked with prophets, apostles, and the Saviour himself: and instead of resenting the opprobrious terms as an intolerable affront, may glory in them as a most honourable distinction. They should however be extremely careful to avoid all ridiculous and unreasonable words and actions, that they may give no just occasion for such malignant and injurious charges; which, when unmerited, cannot possibly injure them, except they make them angry, contentious, discontented, or reluctant to their work. And the Lord often secretly disposes men to concur in his designs, in a manner contrary to their former conduct, and to all human probabilities: and then such events, as would otherwise have been impracticable, are speedily and easily accomplished: and, to ask advice, is often the readiest way of obtaining concurrence and assistance. Prudence, united with vigour and despatch, promises success in the most arduous designs: and a disposition *to drive furiously*, may sometimes fit a man for peculiar services, which would not so well suit the temper of more sedate and amiable persons: yet in general it is no commendation of a man's character, or qualification for the most desirable kinds of usefulness. Whilst sudden destruction is rapidly approaching, sinners are still saying, peace, peace: but what peace can

CHAP. X.

Jehu by letters causes Ahab's seventy sons to be slain at Samaria, and their heads to be brought to Jezreel, 1—7. *He shows this to be a fulfilment of Elijah's prophecy, and destroys all Ahab's kindred in Jezreel,* 8—11. *In his way to Samaria he slays forty-two of Ahaziah's brethren,* 12—14. *Attended by Jehonadab, he slays all that remained to Ahab in Samaria,* 15—17. *He assembles all the worshippers of Baal by stratagem; puts them to death, and breaks down Baal's images and temple,* 18—28. *He follows the sins of Jeroboam; yet the kingdom to the fourth generation is promised him, for destroying the house of Ahab,* 29—31. *Hazael smites Israel,* 32, 33. *Jehu dies, and Jehoahaz succeeds him,* 34—36.

AND Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria. And Jehu wrote letters, and sent to Samaria, unto [a] the rulers of Jezreel, to the elders, and to * them that brought up Ahab's *children*, saying,

a Deut. xvi. 18. 1 Kings xxi. 8—14.

* Heb. nourishers.

2 Now [b] as soon as this letter cometh to you, seeing your master's sons *are* with you, and *there are* with you chariots and horses, a fenced city also, and armour;

b v. 6.

3 [c] Look even out the best and meetest of your master's sons, and set *him* on his father's throne, and [d] fight for your master's house.

c Deut. xvii. 14, 15. 1 Sam. x. 24. xi. 15. 2 Sam. ii. 8, 9. 1 Kings i. 24, 25. xii. 20.
d 2 Sam. ii. 12—17. 1 Kings xii. 21. John xviii. 36.

4 But they were exceedingly afraid, and said, [e] Behold, two kings stood not before him: how then shall we stand?

e ix. 24, 27. Luke xiv. 31.

5 And he that *was* over the house, and he that *was* over the city, the elders also, and the bringers up *of the children*, sent to Jehu, saying, [f] We *are* thy servants, and will do all that thou shalt bid us; we will not make any king: do thou *that which is* good in thine eyes.

f xviii. 14. Josh. ix. 11. 24, 25. 1 Kings xx. 4. Jer. xxvii. 7, 8. 17. John xii. 26.

6 Then he wrote a letter the second time to them, saying, If ye *be* † mine, and *if* ye will hearken unto my voice, [g] take ye

† Heb. *for me.* ix. 32. Matt. xii. 30. Luke ix. 50.
g Deut. v. 9. Josh. vii. 24, 25. Job xxi. 19. Is. xiv. 21, 22. Rev. ii. 20—23.

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there be to the workers of iniquity, and to those who have tempted others to join them in rebellion against God?—Notorious sinners entail judgment on their posterity unto the third and fourth generation, especially when these walk in the steps of their progenitors. The circumstances of temporal judgments are sometimes remarkably calculated to call to remembrance the crimes for which they are inflicted: so that the most superficial observers must perceive the justice of God in them, and acknowledge that the Scriptures are fulfilled. How will it then be in "the day of "wrath, and the revelation of the righteous judgment of "God, who will render unto every one according to his "works?" And if we would escape the destruction of the ungodly, we must avoid their most intimate acquaintance; for "a companion of fools shall be destroyed."

V. 30—37.

Some transgressors have so long domineered and prospered in their crimes, that they suppose they can out-brave all opposition, and defy even the justice of God himself. Their hearts grow more hardened and insolent, when they are evidently upon the brink of destruction: and an unhumbled heart, in alarming and humiliating circumstances, is a distinguishing mark of those that "are appointed "unto wrath." They who carefully adorn their persons by "painting the face," "tiring the hair, and putting on of "apparel," whilst their souls are polluted with the guilt and defilement of innumerable unrepented, unpardoned, unmortified iniquities, should sometimes turn aside to view themselves *in this mirror;* and to contemplate the conduct and fate of Jezebel: especially they who use these arts to seduce others from the ways of truth and righteousness. Such persons, however noble, wealthy, beautiful, or successful, are emphatically *accursed*, under the curse of God themselves, and the cursed instruments of bringing others into the same condemnation. Persons of royal extraction or authority naturally annex the idea of *sacred* to their distinctions: yet they often pay no regard to the *sacred service and honour* of the King of kings: but how can they expect the conscientious obedience of their *subjects*, whilst they are in a state of actual rebellion against their *Sovereign:* and attempting to corrupt the morals and principles of the people? Indeed traitors are justly execrated, and seldom prosper: but the Lord often uses them as the instruments of his righteous vengeance against ungodly princes. Court-favourites are commonly a fickle, time-serving people. For the sake of emolument, they are very assiduous and lavish in their flatteries: but when a revolution takes place, they often betray, or even murder, the same unhappy persons, to secure themselves, or to obtain still greater preferment! This is especially to be feared by those who render themselves odious through insolence and wickedness; and who are only served out of slavish fear or mercenary hope. Let proud tyrants and oppressors study this chapter with fear and trembling: the loftiest will be brought low, and every one of them in his turn must give an account unto God, with whom is no respect of persons. The anguish of Jezebel's death, and the disgrace of her mangled limbs, faintly shadow forth the misery and contempt which, at and after death, will be the portion of those who have been "the terror of the mighty in the land of the living;" whose very memory shall rot in infamy. This the believer will foresee and expect; and at length all the world shall witness it with astonishment. May we flee from that "wrath which is revealed from heaven against all ungodli-"ness and unrighteousness of men;" and seek to secure an interest in those precious promises that will assuredly be performed in due season!

the heads of the men your master's sons, and come to me to Jezreel by to-morrow this time. Now the king's sons, *being* seventy persons, *were* with the great men of the city, which brought them up.

7 And it came to pass, when the letter came to them, that they took the king's sons, and [h] slew seventy persons, and put their heads in baskets, and sent him *them* to Jezreel.

8 And [i] there came a messenger, and told him, saying, They have brought the heads of the king's sons. And he said, Lay ye them in two heaps, at the entering in of the gate, [k] until the morning.

9 And it came to pass in the morning, that he went out, and stood, and said to all the people, [l] Ye *be* righteous: behold, [m] I conspired against my master and slew him: but who slew all these?

10 Know now, that there shall [n] fall unto the earth nothing of the word of the LORD, which the LORD spake concerning the house of Ahab: for [o] the LORD hath done *that* which he spake * by his servant Elijah.

11 So Jehu slew all that remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men, and his † kinsfolks, and [p] his priests, until [q] he left him none remaining.

12 ¶ And he arose and departed, and came to Samaria. *And* as he *was* at the ‡ shearing house in the way,

13 Jehu ∮ met with [r] the brethren of Ahaziah king of Judah, and said, Who *are* ye? And they answered, We *are* the brethren of Ahaziah; and we go down to ‖ salute the children of the king, and the children of the queen.

14 And he said, [s] Take them alive. And they took them alive, and slew them at the pit of the shearing house, *even* two and forty men; [t] neither left he any of them.

h xi. 1. 1 Kings xxi. 21. 2 Chr. xxi. 4. Matt. xiv. 8. 11

i 1 Kings xxi. 14.

k Deut. xxi. 23.

l 1 Sam. xii. 3. Is. v. 3.

m ix. 14. 24.

n 1 Sam. iii. 19. xv. 29. Zech. i. 6. Mark xiii. 31.

o ix. 7—10. 1 Kings xxi. 21—24. 29.

* Heb. *by the hand of.*

† Or, *acquaintance.*

p xxiii. 20. 1 Kings xviii. 19. 40. xxii. 6

q 1 Kings xiv. 10. xv. 29. xvi. 11. xxi. 22.

‡ Heb. *house of shepherds binding sheep*

∮ Heb. *found*

r viii. 29. 2 Chr. xxi. 17. xxii. 1. 8.

‖ Heb. *to the peace of.*

s 6. 10, 11. 1 Kings xx. 18.

t viii. 18. xi. 1. 1 Kings xxii. 4. 2 Chr. xix. 2.

NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1—7. These seventy persons were Ahab's descendants by several wives, probably including the sons of Jehoram. They resided at Samaria, as a more secure situation than Jezreel: or, as some think, they fled thither from Jezreel, when Jehoram was slain; attended by the rulers or elders of Jezreel, who might be supposed most attached to the interests of the family; and by those who had superintended their education. Doubtless many of the elders were the same persons, who had put Naboth and his sons to death in obedience to Jezebel; and their consciences and principles having been debauched by such services, they were equally ready to murder the family of Ahab at Jehu's command. Jehu seems to have been aware of their base disposition; and he wrote letters to them, that he might save trouble, avoid odium, and prevent further bloodshed, by using their ministry in killing the young princes. He was commissioned to destroy all the house of Ahab, and he was not at all scrupulous about the means of doing it: otherwise he would have hesitated at employing men to serve him with such base treachery and murder.—But regardless of this, he by an intimidating challenge assured them, that if they attempted to protect their royal charge, the matter must be decided by the sword. He knew their strength, and he would have them to be aware of his resolution. As, however, they feared not the vengeance and power of God, but the courage and success of Jehu, which they despaired of resisting; they unreservedly submitted to him. Nor did they, when they received his second letter, so much as beg that others might be appointed to slay the young princes; but without reluctancy, at the first word, beheaded them all. Doubtless they had brought them up delicately, repeatedly avowed their attachment to them, and bestowed many flattering encomiums upon them. They probably expected a reward from Jehu, but they seem to have been slain among the other adherents of Ahab's family. Most of these princes were grown men, though some might be minors or children.

V. 8—10. The heads of Ahab's sons, having been laid in a place of public concourse, would occasion much amazement and many inquiries; which gave Jehu an opportunity of addressing the multitude on the subject. He meant to abate the odium of his own conduct towards the family of Ahab, by contrasting it with the atrocious treachery and cruelty of these professed friends. At the same time he reminded them, that the whole was a performance of the word of the Lord by Elijah, which would receive a still more exact completion; instead therefore of condemning the persons employed in this bloody work, they ought to adore the truth and justice, and submit to the will, of God in it. Thus he likewise avowed his purpose of going on with what he had begun: but, as the commission given him by the prophet was not publicly known, he did not mention it.

V. 11. *Priests.* These seem to have been the priests or prophets of Baal and other idols, who had eaten at Jezebel's table, and who presided over all the others. As they were retainers to Ahab's family, Jehu may be supposed to have put them to death from reasons of state, rather than from zeal against idolatry.

V. 13, 14. All the sons of Jehoram, the father of Ahaziah, had been taken captive before this; but these persons seem to have been the sons of Ahaziah's brethren, or his nephews. They belonged however to the family of Ahab, and fell within Jehu's commission. (*Marg. Ref.*) They supposed Jehoram and Jezebel to have been still living, and were going in a company to see them; and thus they met their fate.

15 ¶ And when he was departed thence, he * lighted on [u] Jehonadab the son of [x] Rhechab *coming* to meet him: and he † saluted him, and said to him, [y] Is thine heart right, as my heart *is* with thy heart? And Jehonadab answered, It is. If it be, [z] give *me* thine hand. And he gave *him* his hand; and [a] he took him up to him into the chariot.

16 And he said, [b] Come with me, and see my zeal for the LORD. So they made him ride in his chariot.

17 And when he came to Samaria, he slew all that remained unto Ahab in Samaria, [c] till he had destroyed him, [d] according to the saying of the LORD, which he spake to Elijah.

18 And Jehu gathered all the people together, and said unto them, [e] Ahab served Baal a little; *but* [f] Jehu shall serve him much.

19 Now therefore call unto me [g] all the prophets of Baal, [h] all his servants, and [i] all his priests; let none be wanting: for I have a great sacrifice *to do* to Baal; whosoever shall be wanting, he shall not live. [k] But Jehu did *it* in subtlety to the intent that he might destroy the worshippers of Baal.

20 And Jehu said, ‡ Proclaim a solemn assembly for Baal. And they proclaimed *it*.

21 And Jehu sent through all Israel: and all the worshippers of Baal came, so that there was not a man left that came not. [l] And they came into [m] the house of Baal; and the house of Baal was § full from one end to another.

22 And he said unto him that *was* over the vestry, Bring forth [n] vestments for all the worshippers of Baal. And he brought them forth vestments.

23 And Jehu went, and Jehonadab the son of Rechab, into the house of Baal, and said unto the worshippers of Baal, Search, and look that there be here with you none of the servants of the LORD, but the worshippers of Baal only.

24 And when they went in to offer sacrifices and burnt-offerings, Jehu appointed four score men without, and said, [o] *If* any of the men whom I have brought

* Heb. *found.*
u Jer. xxxv. 6. 8. 14—19.
x 1 Chr. ii. 55.
† Heb. *blessed.* Gen. xxxi. 55. xlvii. 7. 10.
y 1 Chr. xii. 17, 18. Gal. iv. 12.
z Ezra x. 19 Ez. xvii. 18. Gal. ii. 9.
a Acts viii. 31.
b 31. ix. 7—9. 1 Kings xix. 10. 14. 17. Prov. xxvii. 2. Matt. vi. 2. Rom. x. 2.
c ix. 8. Ps. xxi. 8, 9 Mal. iv 1.
d 1 Kings xxi. 21.
e iii. 2. 1 Kings xvi. 31. 32. xviii. 19. 22. 40.
f Job xiii. 7. Rom. iii. 8. Phil. iv. 8.
g iii. 13. 1 Kings xxii 6.
h 21.
i 11.
k 2 Cor. iv. 2. xi. 3. 13—15 xii. 16—19. 1 Thes. ii. 3.
‡ Heb. *Sanctify.* 1 Kings xviii. 19, 20. xxi. 12.
l Joel iii. 2. 11—14. Rev xvi. 16.
m 1 Kings xvi 32.
§ Or. so *full* that they stood *mouth to mouth.*
n Ex. xxviii. ii. Matt. xxii. 11, 12. 2 Cor. xi. 14, 15.
o 1 Kings xx. 39, 40.

V. 15, 16. (*Jer.* xxxv.) Jehonadab was at that time eminent for his cordial attachment to the worship of JEHOVAH, and for a life of strict piety, and deadness to the world. Having therefore heard that Jehu was executing the predicted vengeance upon the house of Ahab, he seems to have entertained hopes of a thorough reformation, and was desirous of giving his cordial support to so good a work: and he went to meet Jehu, who with apparent piety pronounced a blessing upon him, inquiring whether he met his sincere affection with reciprocal cordiality. Indeed some think, that Jehonadab first *blessed* Jehu as Jacob had blessed Pharaoh; and that then Jehu addressed him. Being, however, satisfied with his answers, he took him up into his chariot, secretly elated, as it seems, with the concurrence of so pious a person, and expecting by his influence to acquire the full confidence of the people. But had he intended effectually to reform religion, he would doubtless have sent for Elisha, to counsel and concur with him; and his neglect in that particular was no favourable indication of his designs. He seems to have ostentatiously boasted of *his zeal for the* LORD, and wanted to have it noticed; but in reality he was influenced by *carnal policy*, united with a temporary conviction, and not by true piety.

V. 18, 19. The kings of Israel, who had seized the throne by conspiring against their predecessors, had commonly imitated or exceeded their idolatry: and this gave plausibility to Jehu's stratagem: but it was an unjustifiable measure. It would have been sufficient, if he had destroyed the temples and images of Baal, and put to death the known abettors and ring-leaders of his worship, and every one that should afterwards attempt to revive it. But to draw them into a snare, by a direct falsehood, and to tempt them to commit idolatry that he might slay them in the very act, was "to do evil, that good may come," and resembled the abhorred maxim of those who argue, that *faith is not to be kept with heretics.*

V. 21. Numbers doubtless had been drawn in to bow the knee to Baal, in order to obtain the favour or escape the displeasure of their rulers, that did not cordially approve of that idolatry, though too indifferent about the worship of JEHOVAH. And these would keep away, till Jehu's intentions were more manifest: but the *zealous idolaters* were judicially infatuated, and universally attended. Their number must have been small, compared with the state of things in the first days of Elijah: but Jehoram was not zealous for the worship of Baal, as Ahab had been; and the incessant labours of Elisha, and the sons of the prophets, must have produced very great effects. Some expositors, however, think that by *servants* of Baal, (as in the original,) his worshippers are not meant, but the persons who ministered to the prophets and priests, as the Levites and Nethinims did to the sons of Aaron.

V. 22. *Vestments.* The prophets, priests, and servants of Baal wore distinguishing garments; in which they were accustomed to perform their religious services.

V. 23. *None of,* &c. This was spoken in a pretended zeal to preserve the purity of the worship of Baal: but had not the idolaters been infatuated, they must have suspected some design concealed under such a precaution.

into your hands escape, *he that letteth him go,* his life *shall be* for the life of him.

25 And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt-offering, that Jehu said to the guard, and to the captains, [p] Go in, *and* slay them; [q] let none come forth. And they smote them with the * edge of the sword; and the guard and the captains cast *them* out, and went to the city of the house of Baal.

26 And they brought forth the † images out of the house of Baal, and burned them.

27 And they [r] brake down the image of Baal, and brake down the house of Baal, and made it [s] a draught-house unto this day.

28 Thus Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel.

29 ¶ Howbeit *from* [t] the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, Jehu departed not from after them, *to wit,* [u] the golden calves that *were* [x] in Beth-el, and that *were* in Dan.

30 And the LORD said unto Jehu, [y] Because thou hast done well in executing *that which is* right in mine eyes, *and* hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that *was* in mine heart, [z] thy children of the fourth *generation* shall sit on the throne of Israel.

31 But Jehu ‡ took [a] no heed to [b] walk in the law of the LORD God of Israel with all his heart: *for* [c] he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin.

32 ¶ In those days the LORD began to ϕ cut Israel short: and [d] Hazael smote them in all the coasts of Israel;

33 From Jordan ‖ eastward, all [e] the land of Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer, which *is* by the river Arnon, * even Gilead and Bashan.

34 Now [f] the rest of the acts of Jehu, and all that he did, and all his might, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

35 And Jehu slept with his fathers: and they buried him in Samaria. And Jehoahaz his son reigned in his stead.

36 And † the time that Jehu reigned over Israel in Samaria *was* twenty and eight years.

p Ez. ix. 5, 6.
q Deut. xiii. 9—11. Ez. xxii. 21, 22. Rev. xvi. 6, 7.
* Heb. *mouth.*
† Heb. *statues.* 1 Kings xiv. 23.
r Lev. xxvi. 30. Deut. vii. 5, 25. 1 Kings xvi. 32
s Ezra vi. 11. Dan. ii. 5. iii. 29.
t 1 Kings xii. 28—30 xiii. 34. xiv. 16 Mark vi. 18—20.
u Ex. xxxii. 4. Hos. viii. 5, 6. x. 5. xiii 2.
x 1 Kings xii. 29.
y 1 Kings xxi 29. Ez. xxix. 18—20. Hos i 4. Matt vi. 2. 5.
z 35. xiii. 10. xiv. 23. xv. 8. 10—12.
‡ Heb. *observed not.*
a Deut iv. 13. 23. Ps. xxxix. 1. Prov. iv. 23. Heb. xii 15
b Deut. v. 33 x. 12, 13. Ez. xxxvi 27.
c iii. 3. 1 Kings xiv 16.
B. C. 860.
ϕ Heb. *cut off the ends.*
d viii. 12. 1 Kings xix 17.
‖ Heb *toward the rising of the sun.*
e Num. xxxii. 32—42. Deut. iii. 12—17. Josh. xiii. 9—12.
* Or, *even to Gilead,* &c. Am. i. 3, 4.
f xii. 19. xiii. 2. B. C. 856.
† Heb. *the days were.*

V. 25. Perhaps all the servants of Baal were not collected, nor all others separated, till the sacrifice was placed upon the altar; and therefore they were permitted to go through with their worship. We may suppose that Jehonadab so much approved the substance of Jehu's service, that he was willing to allow for the informality with which it was performed: otherwise he certainly could not approve of his dissimulation, or attendance on an idolatrous sacrifice with apparent satisfaction. It seems that the buildings around the temple of Baal, for the accommodation of his priests and their attendants, were so numerous, as to form a kind of city by themselves.

V. 27. *A draught-house.* The citizens thenceforth made a practice of carrying all the filth and rubbish of Samaria to that place, in contempt and abhorrence of the idolatry which had been there committed.

V. 28. From this time the worship of Baal was never restored in the kingdom of Israel, though other idolatry abounded.

V. 29—31. Had Jehu acted from genuine zeal for the honour of God, in destroying the worship of Baal, he would also have put down the worship of the golden calves; that idolatry being as expressly forbidden by the *second,* as the other was by the *first* commandment. But that was a politic and profitable sin, and it appeared dangerous to attempt any thing against it. In his general conduct he took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord with all his heart; and his *partiality* proved his *hypocrisy.* The Lord, however, sent a prophet to assure him, that he had done right in executing vengeance on Ahab's family, as well as in destroying the worship of Baal; and to promise him a suitable recompense. Accordingly, his family sat on the throne of Israel longer than any other family did, either before or after; as the fourth generation reached to above one hundred years from the time when Jehu ascended the throne. Nevertheless in another respect these very actions of Jehu were deemed deserving of punishment. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 32—36. At this time Hazael committed those barbarities which Elisha had predicted, and we may suppose that the miseries of Israel were very great: but from the period when Jehu ceased to do the work of God, his actions and might are no further noticed in sacred Scripture, and the account of his reign is very compendious.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—14.

How soon are the most flourishing families and kingdoms desolated, when God ariseth to execute his judgments!—Such as bequeath his blessing to their children in answer to their prayers, and as a gracious recompense of their faith and charity, do better for them, than those who leave estates to their descendants, burdened with the indignation of the Lord, for their injustice, oppression, and impiety. The selfishness of the human heart gives peculiar energy to those temptations, which powerfully assail our

CHAP. XI.

Athaliah murders the seed royal of Judah: but Joash, the infant son of Ahaziah, is preserved by Jehosheba in the temple, 1—3. *Jehoiada, the high-priest, in the seventh year, having taken proper measures, anoints and crowns him,* 4—12. *Athaliah, pressing into the temple, is seized and slain,* 13—16. *Jehoiada makes a covenant between the* LORD, *the king, and the people; and destroys the worship of Baal,* 17, 18. *Joash reigns in peace, and the people rejoice,* 19—21.

AND when [a] Athaliah [b] the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose, and destroyed all the * seed royal.

a 2 Chr. xxii. 10.
b viii 26. ix. 27.

*Heb. seed of the kingdom.

hopes and fears. Where this principle has the ascendency, men may be induced to such treachery and cruelty as before they never thought of: and they who influence their inferiors to practise iniquity *for them*, need not to be surprised if they commit similar crimes *against them*. But nothing, except faith, fear of God, and love to his name, and the hope of eternal life, can give a decided victory over all temptations; and enable us to obey the Lord, and venture all consequences in his service. Such as have done things really or apparently evil, are often disposed to draw in others to do worse; and then to conclude, that they shall be acquitted by righteous judges, not being themselves so atrociously criminal. Yet the law of God, and not any conduct of man, is the rule by which our actions are to be judged: and, though tempters generally prove accusers, yet a moiety of the guilt properly belongs to them.—We readily perceive the propriety of submitting where we are unable to withstand, and of taking warning by the examples of those who have in vain opposed the will of earthly princes; at least we are disposed at any price to pacify their displeasure. But are not sinners sensible that they cannot stand against the indignation of the Almighty? And yet they persist in rebellion against him, and will not take proper measures, or make proper submissions, to avert his wrath and recover his favour! If we call ourselves the servants of earthly potentates, they expect that our obedience to their mandates should evince the sincerity of our professions: and if we are the Lord's, we must show that we are devoted to him by doing his will; and he never did, nor can, command any thing unjust or unreasonable. We should dread and abhor the man that had murdered our parents or children, the wife of our bosom, or our beloved friend; and who had aimed a dagger at our hearts, and having repeatedly wounded us, still avowed his purpose of taking away our lives. But when we look back upon our deceased relatives, or forward to our own dissolution: when we reflect on the sufferings that we or ours endure or fear, or on those miseries which render the earth like one great hospital: when we consider the innumerable millions of human bodies, which have been consigned to the tomb, and are reverted to the dust; and the vast multitudes daily following: yea, when our believing thoughts make excursions into the invisible world, and survey the miseries of fallen angels and departed souls, consigned to the place of torment: or when we look forward to the resurrection and the final judgment, and view the immense numbers of the wicked, appalled with horror and despair, attending to the awful sentence, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into "everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:" in short, when the aggregate of all the misery in the whole creation, through eternal ages, hath been considered, and the question occurs, "Who slew all these?" The answer will be, SIN; TRANSGRESSION OF GOD'S LAW has made all this havock, and introduced all this misery into his most perfect creation; and worse than all, that SIN hath crucified the LORD OF GLORY. Shall we then lodge this viper in our bosom, and madly seek for happiness from the cause of all possible misery? Rather we should abhor and dread it with that complete detestation, which would render its distant approach more formidable to us than any temporal pain or affliction. In the most awful transactions, even though attended by the basest villanies, the truth and justice of God ought to be acknowledged; nay, true faith assures us of them, even when to us imperceptible: for no word of God can fall to the ground, but all will be performed, and then his glory will be conspicuous to the whole world.

V. 15—36.

Men of eminent godliness should countenance every work of public reformation; and wise men will value their presence and assistance. But they are frequently too hasty in concurrence, and too sanguine in their expectations, when those in exalted stations stand forth the professed friends of religion: and thus they are drawn in to sanction those wrong measures which they are unable to prevent, to the discredit of the common cause. Unsound professors of religion are often ready to say to godly persons, "Come and "see our zeal for the LORD," when they are only aiming, by the assistance of a party, to establish their own authority and reputation, or other secular interests. And when men's professions are very strong, their progress very rapid, and their zeal tarnished with ostentation, or leavened with subtlety and a fickle or fierce demeanour; they may justly be suspected, and need to be watched and admonished by those who would avoid subsequent painful reflections. Though vehemency and severity were in some measure consistent with the awful executions which a righteous God commanded formerly: yet the manner in which such orders were performed might indicate a very improper spirit. Our zeal however is worthless, except it be tempered with humility, meekness, kindness, and a peaceable frame of mind: as furious contentions and bitter recriminations cannot adorn the Gospel, or meet the divine acceptance; for neither the wrath nor the falsehood of man can "work the "righteousness of God." Hypocrites betray themselves by their earnestness about one part of religion, and their indifference about others: and generally profitable or plau-

2 But [c] Jehosheba, the daughter of king Joram, sister of Ahaziah, took [d] Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him from among the king's sons *which were* slain; and [e] they hid him, *even* him, and his nurse, [f] in the bed-chamber from Athaliah, so that he was not slain.

3 And he was with her hid in the house of the LORD six years. And [g] Athaliah did reign over the land.

4 And [h] the seventh year Jehoiada sent and fetched the [i] rulers over hundreds, with [k] the captains and the guard, and brought them to him into the house of the LORD, and [l] made a covenant with them, and took an oath of them in the house of the LORD, and shewed them the king's son.

5 And he commanded them, saying, This *is* the thing that ye shall do; A third part of you [m] that enter in on the sabbath, shall even be keepers of [n] the watch of the king's house;

6 And a third part *shall be* at [o] the gate of Sur; and a third part at the gate behind the guard: so shall ye keep the

c 2 Chr. xxii. 11. *Jehoshabeath.*
d xii. 1, 2. *Jehoash.*
e viii. 19. Prov. xxi 30. Is. vii. 6, 7. xxxvii 35.
f 1 Kings vi. 6 8. Jer. xxxv. 2. Ez. xl. 45.
g 2 Chr. xxii. 12. Ps. xii. 8. Mal. iii 15
B. C. 878.
h 2 Chr. xxiii. 1.
i 9. 1 Chr. ix. 13.
k Acts v. 24. 36.
l 17. 1 Sam. xviii 3. xxiii. 18. 2 Chr. xv. 12. xxix. 10. xxxiv. 31, 32. Neh. ix 38.
m 1 Chr. ix. 25. xxiii. 3—6. 32. xxiv. 3—6. Luke i. 8, 9.
n 19. xvi. 18. 1 Kings x. 5. Jer. xxvi. 10. Ez. xliv. 2, 3. xlvi 2, 3.
o 1 Chr xxvi. 13—19. 2 Chr. xxiii. 4, 5.

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sible sins are spared, whilst those which would injure them with their party are cast off. Yet the church and the world may often reap advantage from their partial obedience: and God will not remain as it were indebted to them, but will recompense their external services with external rewards, and at the same time visit their sins with deserved punishments. Much more then will he recompense the upright services of his believing people, who may be encouraged to abound in his work. The servants of Satan are often open enough in avowing what master they serve; therefore it is shameful and deplorable, when the servants of the Lord are unwilling men should know that they are employed by him. If the wicked could so separate God's people from their company, as to let none remain in it; we might be sure that destruction was preparing for them: but what blessed ordinances should we have, if no servants of sin and Satan crept in amongst the worshippers of the LORD! generally, if not always, we must say, "Ye are "clean, but not all." Nay, many are useful to the souls of others, who themselves prove apostates and cast-aways. The Lord grant that this may not be the case with the writer, or any of the readers, of these observations!

NOTES.

CHAP. XI. V. 1, 2. It is probable that Athaliah was left in authority, when Ahaziah went to visit Jehoram: and being informed that he was slain, she proceeded to destroy all the *seed royal*, or the *seed of the kingdom;* that is, all who could claim the kingdom, as descended of David's royal race. This seems to include all whom Athaliah knew to belong to that family, especially in the line of Solomon and Rehoboam, without excepting even her own grand-children by Ahaziah. Some think an *impious revenge* actuated her: and that as God had ordered the family of Ahab, (whose daughter she was,) to be destroyed; so she was determined to extirpate that family which he especially favoured. But it is more certain that she was influenced by *ambition*, and desired to reign without a competitor; and to be able to defend herself against Jehu, by whom she might think herself marked for destruction. By this concurrence of events, Jehoshaphat's alliance with the house of Ahab proved almost the total ruin of his family; and of the house of David, from whence the Messiah was to descend! To appearance, and in Athaliah's intention, it was exterminated: and indeed that branch which descended from Jehoshaphat, was so interwoven with Ahab's devoted family, that without a favourable construction of the sentence, none of them could have been spared: for Jehoshaphat's other sons had been slain by Jehoram, as soon as he had gotten possession of the throne; (2 *Chron.* xxi. 4.) But by an act of grace, as it were, Joash, being both a branch of the house of David, and of that of Ahab, was considered as belonging to the former family, and snatched as a brand from the burning. Some think that he was left for dead among the other victims of Athaliah's ambition; but being taken away, he revived and was recovered: or else he was removed when they were slaying the others, and either was not sought for or could not be found. Jehosheba, though the daughter of Jehoram, (whether by Athaliah, or some other wife, is not certain,) had been married some time before to Jehoiada the high-priest; God thus preparing for the protection of Joash, before the danger became apparent.—Jehosheba concealed Joash in some of the chambers set apart for the use of the priests, where he remained in safety; Athaliah not suspecting that any of the family survived.

V. 3. It seems that the degenerate men of Judah did not oppose this usurpation! We are informed of nothing respecting Athaliah's conduct during her continuance in authority; but that she established the worship of Baal, as a genuine daughter of Jezebel.

V. 4. Jehoiada, as high-priest, and as having the lawful heir to the crown under his care, was fully authorized to act on this occasion. Indeed Jehosheba had a far better right to the throne than Athaliah. All the persons whom Jehoiada first employed seem to have been Levites; though others, by their means, were afterwards brought to concur. For the Levites were numbered, and arranged in companies under their several heads, called *captains* or *leaders;* and they attended upon the service of the temple, in rotation, by weekly courses. (*Marg. Ref.*) These were first informed by Jehoiada, that the king's son was in the temple, and that he intended to place him on the throne: and he proposed to make a solemn agreement with them before God, to which they readily acceded, and bound themselves by oath to fidelity. Perhaps Athaliah's government had grown intolerably oppressive; or Jehoiada perceived that its continuance threatened the destruction of religion: and therefore the priests, and the chief of the Levites, as most immediately engaged for the support of that cause, went among their brethren, to prepare their minds to attempt a deliverance.

watch of the house, * that it be not broken down.

7 And two † parts of all you that [p] go forth on the sabbath, *even* they shall keep the watch of the house of the LORD about the king.

8 And ye shall compass the king round about, every man with his weapons in his hand: and [q] he that cometh within the ranges, let him be slain: and be ye with the king as he goeth out, and as he cometh in.

9 And [r] the captains over the hundreds did according to all *things* that Jehoiada the priest commanded: and they took every man his men that were to come in on the sabbath, with them that should go out on the sabbath, and came to Jehoiada the priest.

10 And to the captains over hundreds did the priest give [s] king David's spears and shields, that *were* in the temple of the LORD.

11 And the guard stood, every man with his weapons in his hand, round about the king, from the right ‡ corner of the temple to the left corner of the temple, *along* [t] by the altar and the temple.

12 And he brought forth the king's son, and [x] put the crown upon him, and *gave him* [y] the testimony: and they made him king, and [z] anointed him; and they [a] clapped their hands, and said, ◊ God save the king!

13 ¶ And [b] when Athaliah heard the noise of the guard, *and* of the people, she came to the people into the temple of the LORD.

14 And when she looked, behold, the king stood by [c] a pillar, as the manner *was*, and [d] the princes and the trumpeters by the king; and [e] all the people of the land rejoiced, and blew with trumpets: and Athaliah rent her clothes, and cried, [f] Treason, treason!

15 But Jehoiada the priest commanded the [g] captains of the hundreds, the officers of the host, and said unto them, Have her forth without the ranges; and him that [h] followeth her kill with the sword. For the priest had said, [i] Let her not be slain in the house of the LORD.

16 And they laid hands on her: and she went by the way [k] by the which the horses came into the king's house: and [l] there was she slain.

* Or, *from breaking up.*
† Or, *companies.* Heb. *hands.*
p 5. 2 Chr. xxiii. 6.
q Ex. xxi. 14. 1 Kings ii. 28. — 31. 2 Chr. xxiii. 7.
r 2 Chr. xxiii. 8.
s 1 Sam. xxi. 9 2 Sam viii. 7. 1 Chr xxvi 26. 27. 2 Chr v. 1. xxiii. 9, 10.
‡ Heb. *shoulder.*
t Ex. xl. 6. 2 Chr vi 12 Matt. xxviii 35.
u 4. 2 Chr xxiii. 11.
x 2 Sam. i. 10. xii. 30. Esth. ii. 17. vi. 8 Ps. xxi. 3. lxxxix. 39. Heb. ii. 9. Rev xix. 12.
y Ex. xxv. 16. xxxi 18. Deut. xvii. 18—20 Ps. lxxviii. 5. Is. viii. 16. 20.
z 1 Sam. x. 1 xvi. 13 2 Sam. ii. 4. v 3. 1 Kings i. 39. Lam iv. 20.
a Ps xlvii. 1. xcviii. 8. Is. lv. 12.
◊ Heb. *Let the king live* 1 Sam. x. 24. 2 Sam. xvi. 16. 1 Kings i. 34. Ps. lxxii. 15 — 17. Matt. xxi. 9.
b 2 Chr xxiii. 12 —15.
c xxiii. 3. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 31.
d 10, 11. Num. x. 1—10.
e 1 Kings i 39.40. 1 Chr. xii. 40. Prov xxix. 2.
f 1. 2. ix. 23. 1 Kings xviii 17, 18.
g 4. 9, 10 2 Chr. xxiii. 9. 14.
h 8. x. 25.
i Ex. ix. 7.
k 2 Chr. xxiii. 15.
l 1. Judg. i. 7. Matt. vii. 2. Jam. ii. 13. Rev. xvi. 5—7.

V. 5—9. The Levites attended in their courses every week; one company coming in on the morning of the sabbath, and another going out in the evening. But Jehoiada employed both companies on this occasion; such only excepted as were necessary to perform their ordinary services. By the *king's house* some understand the chamber in which Joash resided; others the royal palace, from which there was an entrance into the court of the temple. This was guarded by one division to prevent a surprise: another was set to guard the gate of *Sur*, or *the foundation;* and another to protect the temple and courts from injury; or, as the original may mean, *to guard the breach*, which had been made in the temple, or its out-buildings. (2 *Chr.* xxiv. 7.) Others of the Levites, who came in on the sabbath, were stationed to guard the king himself, with orders to slay any one who attempted to come within their ranks. These arrangements no doubt were supposed suitable, and sufficient to secure the temple from being polluted by the partisans of Athaliah, whilst Jehoiada and his sons were engaged in crowning and anointing Joash. (2 *Chr.* xxiii.) By employing the Levites almost exclusively, all suspicion was precluded: and as the throne belonged to the family of David, not only by hereditary succession, but by the *special appointment of God;* and as these rights, and all the interests of the kingdom of Judah, and even the worship of God, were basely trampled upon by a murderous idolatrous woman, of the devoted house of Ahab; they were fully justified in these decided measures against her. Perhaps they were likewise assured of the concurrence of the people at large, when matters were ripe for their interposition.

V. 10. It is probable that these were arms which David had taken from his conquered enemies, and dedicated to the Lord, by way of ascribing the honour of his success to him. This tends to confirm the interpretation before given, concerning these *captains;* namely, that they were not military officers, as some suppose; but the leaders of the several courses and companies of the Levites, who had no arms of their own.

V. 12. The ceremony of coronation is not before this expressly mentioned, in the appointment of any king, either in Judah or Israel; but it seems to have become customary. No doubt, *the testimony* signifies the *book of the law;* and Joash was instructed by this significant action, that he received his authority from God, and was accountable to him for it, according to the rule of his word. He was also anointed, in token of his divine appointment to the kingdom; as Athaliah's usurpation had interrupted the succession. (*Marg. Ref.*) When this had been done, not only the priests and Levites, but the people who had witnessed the transaction, shouted for joy, and wished their king life and prosperity.

V. 13—16. Athaliah, after the manner of her mother Jezebel, instead of fleeing with feminine timidity, when she heard the noise and suspected the occasion, went directly into the temple, unattended by a guard, as if she

17 ¶ And Jehoiada [m] made a covenant between the LORD and the king and the people, that they should be the LORD's people; [n] between the king also and the people.

18 And all the people of the land [o] went into the house of Baal, and brake it down; his altars and his images [p] brake they in pieces thoroughly, and [q] slew Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars: and the priest [r] appointed * officers over the house of the LORD.

19 And he took the rulers over hundreds, and the captains, and the guard, and all the people of the land; and they brought down the king from the house of the LORD, and came [s] by the way of the gate of the guard to the king's house: and he sat on the throne of the kings.

20 And all the people of the land [t] rejoiced, and the city was in quiet; and they slew Athaliah with the sword *beside* the king's house.

21 [u] Seven years old *was* Jehoash when he began to reign.

m 4. Deut. v. 2, 3. xxix. 1—15. Josh. xxiv. 25. 2 Chr. xv. 12—14. xxix. 10. xxxiv. 31. Ezra x. 3. Neh. v. 12, 13. ix. 38.
n 1 Sam. x. 25. 2 Sam. v. 3. 2 Chr. xxiii. 10. Rom. xvi. 1—6.
o x. 25—28. xviii. 4. xxiii. 4—6. 10—14. 2 Chr. xxiii. 17. xxxiv. 4. 7.
p Deut. xii. 3. Is. ii. 18. Zech. xiii. 2.
q Deut. xiii. 5. 9. 1 Kings xviii. 40.
r 2 Chr. xxiii. 18—20.
* Heb. *offices*.
s 5. 2 Chr. xxiii. 5. 19.
t 14. 2 Chr. xxiii. 21. Prov. xi. 10.
u 4. xxii. 12. Chr. xxiv. 1.

could by her presence overawe and confound the conspirators: but by this rashness she rushed upon her fate. The people, it seems, were assembled, perhaps to celebrate some of their solemn feasts, and they with their princes or magistrates, cordially united with Jehoiada, and the priests and Levites. When Athaliah saw Joash stand in the place appropriated to the king's use, she was aware of what had taken place; and expressed her abhorrence of the supposed treason by word or deed, in hopes of inducing the people to take her part. But her conduct had been so odious and unnatural, that none favoured her; and at the word of Jehoiada she suffered the punishment due to her complicated crimes. We may be sure, that Jehoiada acted in all this business, by the direction and according to the will of God. The Levites seem to have executed the sentence, and great care was taken not to pollute with blood the court of the temple.

V. 17—20. Jehoiada embraced this opportunity of engaging the young king and the people, in the most solemn manner, to renew their national covenant with the Lord, that they would worship and serve him alone; as well as perform their reciprocal duties to each other in the fear of God. As the protector and near relation of Joash, he was authorized to act for him, and the whole compact was deliberately ratified, as in the presence of God. When this was concluded, they proceeded to destroy the worship of Baal, which Athaliah had established in Judah: but they contented themselves with breaking down the idolatrous temple and images, and slaying the priest of Baal at his altars; without imitating or emulating Jehu's subtlety in detecting his worshippers. The people were greatly rejoiced at this happy revolution, and matters were soon brought to a quiet settlement.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

When the thirst of dominion predominates, it extinguishes both common humanity and natural affections, and steels the hearts of parents, yea, of *mothers*, against their own children or descendants. Nor can the most humane conceive how they should act, if brought within the magnetic influence of powerful temptations, through opening prospects of gratifying a vast ambition, united with fear, envy, resentment, or other vehement passions. We should therefore repress the first emotions of this aspiring temper, and pray without ceasing to be kept out of the way of temptation. And we may also learn to be thankful to God for restraining others and ourselves, from acting forth all the desperate wickedness of our hearts, which otherwise would produce effects unspeakably horrid. What fatal consequences flow from matrimonial connexions, or intimate acquaintance with atrocious sinners! The mischiefs which may thus be entailed upon children and remote posterity, cannot be ascertained; and may extend even to the ruin of the interests of true religion, in those places where before it flourished! These reflections should add energy to the Lord's prohibition of such incongruous alliances. Yet, he mixes his severest judgments upon his professed people and offending servants, with mercy: in the midst of opposition he provides for the performance of his promises: and the extremities to which his cause may be reduced, are permitted, to illustrate the glory of his power and truth, in preserving and recovering it. The most successful villany will be short-lived: and though in that little time dreadful havock may be made in society, and irreligion or false religion may *apparently* be established upon the ruins of true godliness; yet, the cause of God cannot be kept down, but, like the fabled Phenix, it will revive from its ashes with renewed youth and vigour. One pious man may, on some emergencies, become an instrument of most extensive good; especially when regard to the glory and worship of God are united with prudent contrivance and well concerted measures. In urgent cases, general rules of external propriety may be dispensed with: and ministers ought always to lead the way in opposing the prevalence of wickedness, and in promoting equity, and submission to lawful governors, as well as in spreading true religion.—To what peculiar dangers are those in exalted stations exposed, through the ambition, treachery, and cruelty of men! We may therefore be thankful to be placed with our families in an obscure situation, beneath envy or jealousy. Princes should be reminded, when intrusted with authority, of their accountableness to God for the use of it: and every opportunity should be embraced to enforce a conscientious regard to his word.

V. 13—21.

Evil will hunt out the wicked to destroy them; and they are often hardened and infatuated to rush upon their own destruction. The most abandoned will on some occasions

CHAP. XII.

Jehoash reigns well so long as Jehoiada lives, 1—3. *He gives orders that the temple should be repaired; the priests neglect the service; but he provides for the expense and completes the work,* 4—16. *He gives the consecrated treasures to Hazael, to divert him from assaulting Jerusalem,* 17, 18. *He is slain by his servants, and succeeded by his son Amaziah,* 19—21.

a xxi. 3, 4. 21. 2 Cor. xxiv 1.
b xi. 2. 1 Chr. iii. 11. *Joash.*

IN [a] the seventh year of Jehu, [b] Jehoash began to reign; and forty years reigned he in Jerusalem: and his mother's name *was* Zibiah of Beer-sheba.

c 2 Chr. xxiv. 2. 17—22. xxv. 2. xxvi. 4

2 And [c] Jehoash did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD all his days, wherein Jehoiada the priest instructed him.

d xiv. 4. 1 Kings xv. 14. xxii. 43. 2 Chr. xxxi. 1.

3 But [d] the high places were not taken away: the people still sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places.

e xxii 4
* Or, *holy things.* Heb. *holinesses.* Lev. v. 15, 16. xxvii. 12—27. 31.

4 ¶ And Jehoash said to the priests, [e] All the money of the * dedicated things that is brought into the house of the LORD, *even* [f] the money of every one that passeth *the account,* the money † that every man is set at, *and* all the money that ‡ cometh into any man's heart to bring into the house of the LORD,

f Ex. xxx. 12—16. 2 Chr. xxiv. 9, 10.
† Heb. *of the souls of his estimation.* Lev. xxvii 2—8.
‡ Heb *ascendeth upon the heart of a man.* Ex xxv. 1, 2. xxxv. 3 1 Chr. xxix. 8—9. 17. Ezra i. 6 ii. 69. vii. 16. viii. 25—29. Luke xxi. 1—4.

5 Let [g] the priests take *it* to them, every man of his acquaintance; and [h] let them repair the breaches of the house, wheresoever any breach shall be found.

g 2 Chr. xxiv. 5.
h 12. xxii. 5, 6. 1 Kings xi. 27. 2 Chr. xxiv. 7. Is. lviii 12.

6 But it was *so, that* in the § three and twentieth year of king Jehoash [i] the priests had not repaired the breaches of the house.

B. C. 856.
§ Heb. *twentieth year and third year.*
i 1 Sam. ii. 29, 30. 2 Chron. xxix. 34. Is. lvi. 10—12. Mal. i. 10. Phil. ii. 21. 1 Pet v. 2.

7 Then [k] king Jehoash called for [l] Jehoiada the priest, and the *other* priests, and said unto them, Why repair ye not the breaches of the house? now therefore receive no *more* money of your acquaintance, but deliver it for the breaches of the house.

k 2 Chr. xxiv. 5, 6.
l 1 Chr. xxi. 3.

8 And the priests consented to receive no *more* money of the people, neither to repair the breaches of the house.

9 But Jehoiada the priest [m] took a chest, and bored a hole in the lid of it, and set it [n] beside the altar, on the right side as one cometh into the house of the

m 2 Chr. xxiv 8. Mark xii. 41.
n 2 Chr. xxiv. 10.

express abhorrence at the supposed crimes of others, especially when committed against themselves: but it is neither treason nor cruelty to execute vengeance upon usurpers and parricides, and to restore the authority to its rightful possessor. As "one sinner destroyeth much good;" so the removal of one ringleader in iniquity may prepare the way for great reformation. It is our duty to engage ourselves and each other, in as firm and solemn a manner as possible, to be the Lord's people: and when we begin with a due regard to religion, relative duties will be the better understood and performed. Yet they should be plainly declared and enforced, without the exception of those which subsist betwixt the prince and people. The rectifying of scandalous abuses, and the punishment of notorious criminals, form an introduction to the revival of true godliness. External regularity will afterwards more easily be re-established; and the effectual blessing of God may be expected. The way for a people to be joyful and at peace, is to engage cordially in the service of God; for "the "voice of joy and thanksgiving, is in the dwellings of "the righteous:" but "There is no peace, saith my God, "to the wicked."

NOTES.

CHAP. XII. V. 2, 3. Jehoiada acquired such influence over Joash, or Jehoash, by his services and counsels, in his younger years, as retained him in good behaviour, as long as he lived to give him advice. But the latter part of his life, after Jehoiada's death was extremely wicked: and all the good of his best days, was of that kind which hypocrites do to be seen of men. His reign however is not to be numbered with those of the worst kings of Judah: for he repressed idolatry, and maintained the worship at the temple; though he had not influence or zeal sufficient to abolish the irregular worship of God in the high places; which indeed was never done till the days of Hezekiah.

V. 4, 5. The temple had been suffered to go to decay, during the reigns of Jehoram and Ahaziah, and the usurpation of Athaliah: and her sons, doubtless encouraged by her, had impiously broken down some part of the buildings, to adorn the house of Baal with the most costly materials of the temple: as well as spoiled its consecrated treasures to enrich those of their idols. But Jehoash, having had his life preserved in the precincts of the temple, seems to have had a strong desire of seeing it restored to its ancient splendour; whilst Jehoiada perhaps was more intent to promote the *internal* part of true religion. The money which he ordered the priests to collect from the people, seems to have arisen from the sale of such firstlings as were not fit for sacrifice; from the half shekel a-piece levied of all the people; from the redemption of things dedicated; from the redemption of those who were vowed to the Lord by a singular vow; and from voluntary contributions. (*Marg. Ref.*) As some of these were the dues of the priests, whose income must have been greatly diminished by the defection of the ten tribes; that circumstance might render them more disaffected to the business, and negligent in its discharge.

LORD: and the priests that kept the
* Heb. *threshold.* * door put therein all the money *that was*
brought into the house of the LORD.

10 And it was *so*, when they saw that
there was much money in the chest, that
† Or *secretary* the king's † scribe and the high-priest
xix 2 2 Sam. xx. 25 came up, and they ‡ put up in bags,
‡ Heb. *bound up.* and told the money *that was* found in
the house of the LORD;

p 2 Chr. xxiv. 11, 12. xxxiv. 9—11. 11 And they [p] gave the money, being
told, into the hands of them that did the
work, that had the oversight of the house
§ Heb. *brought it forth.* of the LORD: and they § laid it out to
the carpenters and builders, that wrought
upon the house of the LORD;

12 And to masons and hewers of stone,
and to buy timber and hewed stone to
repair the breaches of the house of the
‖ Heb. *went forth.* LORD, and for all that ‖ was laid out,
for the house to repair *it*.

q 2 Chr. xxiv. 14. r Num. vii. 13, 14. 1 Kings vii. 48—50. Ezra i. 9—11. s Num. x. 2. 13 Howbeit [q] there were not made for
the house of the LORD [r] bowls of silver,
snuffers, basons, [s] trumpets, any vessels
of gold, or vessels of silver, of the mo-
ney *that was* brought into the house of
the LORD:

14 But they gave that to the work-
men, and repaired therewith the house
of the LORD.

t xxii. 7. 15 Moreover [t] they reckoned not
with the men, into whose hand they
delivered the money to be bestowed on
workmen: [u] for they dealt faithfully.

u Neh. vii. 2. Matt. xxiv. 45. Luke xvi. 1. 10, 11

16 [x] The trespass-money and sin-
money was not brought into the house
of the LORD: it was the priests'.

x Lev. v. 15—18. vii. 7. Num. v. 3—10. xviii. 8. Hos. iv. 8.

17 ¶ Then [y] Hazael king of Syria
went up, and fought [z] against Gath, and
took it: and Hazael [a] set his face [b] to
go up to Jerusalem.

y viii. 12—15. z 1 Sam. xxvii. 2. 1 Kings ii. 39, 40. 1 Chr. viii. 13. xviii. 1. a Jer. xlii. 15. Luke ix. 51. 53. b 2 Chr. xxiv. 23, 24

18 And Jehoash king of Judah [c] took
all the hallowed things that Jehoshaphat,
and Jehoram, and Ahaziah, his fathers,
kings of Judah, had dedicated, and his
own hallowed things, and all the gold
that was found in the treasures of the
house of the LORD, and in the king's
house, and sent *it* to Hazael king of
Syria: and he * went away from Jeru-
salem.

c xviii. 15 16. 1 Kings xv 18. 2 Chr. xvi. 8. * Heb. *went up.*

19 And [d] the rest of the acts of Joash,
and all that he did, *are* they not written
in the book of the chronicles of the
kings of Judah?

d viii 23. 1 Kings xi. 41.

20 And [e] his servants arose, and made
a conspiracy, and slew Joash, in † the
house of Millo, which goeth down to
Silla.

e xiv. 5. 2 Chr. xxiv. 24 25. xxv. 27. xxxiii. 24 † Or, *Beth-millo.* Judg. ix. 6. 2 Sam. v 9. 1 Kings xi. 27.

21 For [f] Jozachar the son of Shimeath,
and Jehozabad the son of [g] Shomer, his
servants, smote him, and he died; and
they buried him with his fathers in the
city of David: and [h] Amaziah his son
reigned in his stead.

f 2 Chr. xxiv. 26. *Zabad* g 2 Chr. xxiv. 26. *Shimrith.* h 2 Chr. xiv. 27

V. 6—12. Jehoash's orders must have been long neglected; for nothing was done effectually, till the twenty-third year of his reign, or the thirtieth of his life. It is probable that the priests appropriated considerable sums to their own use which they received for the repair of the temple, till the people lost all confidence in them, and would give them no more money on that account. Jehoiada himself appears to have been remiss in this affair; but his great age would necessarily render him less vilgilant and active. The priests, however, readily consented to the alteration proposed by Jehoash; and a proclamation having been made for the collection of a half shekel from each male above twenty years of age; and a chest so placed, that the money might be either put in by those that brought it, or by the priests in their presence; large sums were soon collected, and applied by Jehoiada and the king's secretary to the repairs of the temple. (*Marg. Ref.*)—As the chest is said in Chronicles to have been "set without at the gate" so that the princes and people cast the money into it: it has been thought that the chest was at first placed in the inner court, so that the money still generally passed through the hands of the priests; but that not being satisfactory, it was removed to a situation where all had ready access to it.

V. 13—15. It seems that orders were given to the workmen, that the repairs of the temple should first be completed before any vessels were made; though it is probable they were much wanted: but when the workmen had set the temple "in its state," they punctually brought the surplus of the money to the king and Jehoiada, without requiring to be called to an account; and then such vessels were made as had been taken away by Athaliah and her sons. (2 *Chron.* xxiv. 14.)

V. 16. (*Marg. Ref.*) Besides the money paid as amends to the priests, for trespasses committed in holy things; it is thought that persons, living at a distance, sent money to the priests to purchase and sacrifice for them trespass-offerings and sin-offerings. And as they commonly sent more than the sacrifice cost, the surplus became a perquisite, under the name of trespass-money and sin-money.

V. 17, 18. It is not certain whether the expedition of Hazael, here intended, be the same as that of the Syrians, which is recorded in Chronicles: but if it be, the success of it, and the calamities brought on Judah by it, were vastly greater, than appears from this short account. It however took place after Jehoash's apostacy; and he made no scruple then of spoiling the temple of the remains of its treasures, to purchase Hazael's departure.

V. 20, 21. The Syrians left Jehoash "in great dis-

CHAP. XIII.

Jehoahaz reigns wickedly over Israel, 1, 2. *Israel is oppressed by Hazael, but relieved in answer to Jehoahaz's prayer,* 3—7. *Jehoahaz dies, and is succeeded by his son Joash,* 8, 9; *who reigns wickedly, dies, and is succeeded by his son Jeroboam,* 10—13. *An account of a visit paid by Joash to Elisha on his death-bead, who by a sign assured him of three victories over the Syrians,* 14—19. *Elisha dies; the Moabites invade the land; and a dead man is raised to life, on touching his bones,* 20, 21. *Hazael, who had oppressed Israel, dies, and Joash gains three victories over his son Ben-hadad,* 22—25.

B. C. 836.
* Heb. *twentieth year, and third year* viii 26. x. 36. xi. 4. 21.

IN the * three and twentieth year of Joash, the son of Ahaziah king of Judah, Jehoahaz the son of Jehu began to reign over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned* [a] seventeen years.

2 And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, [b] and † followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom.

3 And [c] the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he delivered them into the hand of [d] Hazael king of Syria, and into the hand of [e] Ben-hadad the son of Hazael, all *their* days.

4 And [f] Jehoahaz besought the LORD, and [g] the LORD hearkened unto him: for [h] he saw the oppression of Israel, [i] because the king of Syria oppressed them.

5 (And the LORD gave Israel [k] a saviour, so that they went out from under the hand of the Syrians: and the children of Israel dwelt in their tents, as ‡ beforetime.

a 10.
b 11. x 29. 1 Kings xii. 26—33. xiv. 16.
† Heb. *walked after*
B. C. 849.
c Lev. xxvi. 17. Deut iv 24—27. xxviiii. 25. Judg. ii. 14. iii 8. x. 7—14. Is. x. 5, 6. Heb. xii 29.
d 22 viii 12. 1 Kings xix. 17.
e 24, 25.
f Num. xxi. 7. Judg. vi 6, 7. x. 10 Ps lxxvii. 34 Is xxvi. 16.
g Gen xxi 17. Ex. iii. 7 Judg. x 15, 16. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 12. 13. 19. Ps. 1 15 cvi. 43, 44. Jer xxxiii. 3.
h Gen xxxi. 42. Ex. iii. 9. Is lxiii 9
i 22. xiv. 26.
k 25. xiv. 25 27. Neh ix 27. Is. xix 20. Ob. 21. Luke ii. 11.
‡ Heb *yesterday* and *third day.*

"eases;" and his servants, (probably some relations or friends of Jehoiada, who deeply resented the murder of his son Zachariah,) took that opportunity of slaying him.—Millo seems to have been a general name of public buildings for convening the people; and this Millo in the way to Sillah, was a distinct place from Millo in the city of David. (*Notes,* 2 *Chron.* xxiv.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Wise and pious instructors and counsellors are a singular benefit to young persons, especially when called to fill up important stations: and it is a happy case, when they acquire a proper influence, and make an unexceptionable use of it. Indeed, restraining men from outward crimes, and inducing them to external good actions, does not imply conversion of the heart to the love of God and delight in his holy service; yet it prevents much mischief, and occasions extensive benefit to the community, and often precedes, and is made the means of, men's internal renovation. —Partiality to customary abuses, and the fear of *consequences in making innovations,* often influence pious men to slip the favourable opportunity of effecting still greater good; nay, mere formalists have frequently exceeded true and eminent believers, in their active earnestness about some of the externals of religion: for, in old age especially, they are apt to yield to the love of ease and peace, or to discouragement through reiterated disappointments, and so to become remiss.—The building or repairing of convenient places for God's worship falls peculiarly within the sphere of princes and nobles; and, if done from a proper principle, it is a good work which will not lose its reward: yet many abound in such useful services, whose hearts are not right in the sight of God.—Too often have *nominal* ministers been convicted of seeking their own interests, rather than those of religion. As a body, they must be suspected; and therefore should carefully avoid the appearance of this evil, lest they lose the confidence of the people, and become useless and contemptible. It is most grievous that the disinterested fidelity and punctuality of tradesmen and mechanics should shame the mercenary conduct of priests! Or that the activity and zeal of lay-men should expose the lukewarmness and indifference of the clergy! These things are not the fault of the ministerial office, but of human nature, which that office will not mend. The collective body is placed in a conspicuous station, and their faults are not easily concealed: and as more is expected from them than from others, they meet with less allowance, and indeed their misconduct admits of less excuse. It is therefore most for their own credit and comfort, and for the honour of their profession, to stand aloof from those concerns in which large sums of money are employed. At least all works of piety and charity should be so managed, that they who contribute to them, may be assured their money is honestly and prudently expended: and they deserve commendation, who are faithful in such matters. —May the Lord preserve us from the disgraceful and wretched doom of the hypocrite and apostate! May our hearts be sound in his statutes; and may our "path shine "more and more unto the perfect day!"

NOTES.

CHAP. XIII. V. 1. Joash of Judah began to reign in the seventh year of Jehu, (xii. 1;) but it was probably in the beginning of that year: and if Jehu reigned a little above twenty eight years, Joash might have entered on his twenty-third year, when Jehu died and was succeeded by Jehoahaz.

V. 3. *All their days.* Or, *all his days;* for the word *their* is not in the original: and Joash the son of Jehoahaz delivered Israel from Ben-hadad, (22—25.)

l xvii. 20—25. Deut. xxxii. 15—18.

6 Nevertheless they [l] departed not from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, who made Israel sin, *but* * walked therein: [m] and there † remained the grove also in Samaria.)

* Heb. *he walked.*

m Deut. vii. 5. 1 Kings xvi. 33.

† Heb. *stood.*

7 Neither did he leave of the people to Jehoahaz, but [n] fifty horsemen, and ten chariots, and ten thousand footmen; for the king of Syria had [o] destroyed them, and had made them [p] like the dust by threshing.

n 1 Sam. xiii. 6, 7. 15. 19—23. 1 Kings xx. 15. 27. Is xxxvi. 8.

o viii. 12. x. 32.

p Is. xli. 15, 16. Am. i. 3.

8 Now [q] the rest of the acts of Jehoahaz, and all that he did, and his might, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

q x. 34, 35,

9 And Jehoahaz slept with his fathers; and they [r] buried him in Samaria: and [s] Joash his son reigned in his stead.

r 1 Kings xiv. 13.

s 10. *Jehoash.*

10 In the thirty and seventh year of Joash king of Judah, began Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz to reign over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned* sixteen years.

11 And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD; [t] he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin: *but* he walked therein.

t 2. iii. 3. x. 29.

12 And [u] the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, and [x] his might wherewith he fought against Amaziah king of Judah, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

u 14. 25.

x xiv. 8—16. 2 Chr. xxv. 17—24.

13 And Joash slept with his fathers; and [y] Jeroboam sat upon his throne: and Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

B. C. 825.

y xiv. 23—29.

14 ¶ Now Elisha was [z] fallen sick of his sickness whereof [a] he died. And Joash the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over his face, and said, [b] O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.

B. C. 839.

z xx. 1. Gen. xlviii. 1. John xi. 3. Phil. ii. 26, 27.

a Ps. xii. 1 Is. lvii. 1. Zech. i. 5. Acts xiii. 36.

b ii. 12. vi 21. Pro. xi. 11. Ez. xiv. 14. xxii. 30. Mark vi. 20.

15 And Elisha said unto him, Take bow and arrows, And he took unto him bow and arrows.

16 And he said to the king of Israel, ‡ Put thine hand upon the bow. And he put his hand *upon it:* and [c] Elisha put his hands upon the king's hands.

‡ Heb. *Make thine hand to ride.*

c iv. 34. Gen. xlix. 24. Ps. cxliv. 1.

17 And he said, [d] Open the window eastward. And he opened *it.* Then Elisha said, Shoot: and he shot. And he said, [e] The arrow of the LORD's deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria: for thou shalt smite the Syrians in [f] Aphek, till thou have consumed *them.*

d v. 10—14. John ii. 5—8. xi. 39—41.

e Ex. v. 2. 17. Judg. vii. 9—20. 2 Sam. v. 24.

f 1 Sam. iv. 1. 1 Kings xx. 26. 30.

18 And he said, Take the arrows. And he took *them.* And he said unto the

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V. 4, 5. Jehoahaz, while he deprecated the wrath of God, and entreated the *removal* of his heavy judgments, seems not to have attempted any reformation; but if this took place towards tha conclusion of his life, his faith and repentance might not have time to produce their genuine fruits: and this is the more probable, as the deliverance, in answer to his prayer, was not granted till the reign of his son Joash, the saviour or deliverer, here spoken of; as appears from the subsequent narration. Yet some think he began to deliver Israel during the life of his father.

V. 6. Either the grove, which Ahab had dedicated to Baal, was still used in that idolatry, or another was planted for that purpose.

V. 8. Jehoahaz seems to have defended himself valiantly against Hazael, though without success: and this might provoke the cruelty that Elisha had foretold; and it eventually increased the miseries of Israel, (viii. 12.)

V. 10. The seventeen years of Jehoahaz reach to the *thirty-ninth* or *fortieth* year of Joash of Judah; but Joash of Israel began to reign in his *thirty-seventh year:* he must therefore have reigned some time along with his father.

V. 12. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 14. If Elisha was called to follow Elijah no more than seven years before the death of Ahab; and if he died as soon as Joash mounted the throne, he prophesied at least sixty-six years! From the beginning of the reign of Jehu to Elisha's sickness and death, that is, for more than forty-five years, his name is never once mentioned: but we may be sure, that he was very usefully employed, especially in superintending the schools of the prophets. Doubtless great numbers were converted to God by his labours; though the bulk of the nation conformed to the idolatry established by authority. Neither Jehu nor Jehoahaz paid any attention to the prophet: yet they were not persecutors; and probably they respected his character. Being, however, employed in state affairs, and determined to maintain the idolatry of the golden calves, they were not disposed to hearken to his admonitions: and he expressed his disapprobation of their conduct by keeping at a distance. But when Joash heard that he was apparently near death, at a time when Israel was brought very low by their iniquity, he seems to have considered the dispensation as a divine rebuke; and under the prevalency of present convictions, he visited and lamented over him, in the words which Elisha had used when Elijah was removed, acknowledging him to be the chief defence of Israel, whose death would more expose them to ruin than all Hazael's successes. Yet we read of nothing in the character or conduct of Joash, to warrant a conclusion, that this was more than a transient impression upon his mind, which soon wore off without producing any abiding good effect.

king of Israel, [g] Smite upon the ground. [h] And he smote thrice, and stayed.

19 And the man of God was wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed *it:* whereas now thou shalt smite Syria *but* [i] thrice.

20 ¶ And Elisha died, and they [k] buried him. [l] And [m] the bands of [n] the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the year.

21 And it came to pass, as they were burying a man, that, behold, they spied a band *of men;* and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha; and when the man * was let down, and [o] touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood up on his feet.

22 ¶ But [p] Hazael king of Syria oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz.

23 And [q] the LORD was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them, and [r] had respect unto them, [s] because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them, neither cast he them from his † presence as yet.

24 So [t] Hazael the king of Syria died; and Ben-hadad his son reigned in his stead.

25 And Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz ‡ took again out of the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael the cities which he had taken out of the hand of Jehoahaz his father by war. [u] Three times did Joash beat him, and recovered the cities of Israel.

g Is. xx. 2—4. Ez. iv 1—10. v. 1—4. xii. 1—7. h Ex. xvii. 11.
i 25. Mark vi. 5.
k Acts viii. 2.
l 14.
m v.2 vi.23. xxiv. 2.
n iii. 5. 24—27. Judg. iii. 12. vi. 3—6.
* Heb. *went* down.
o Ez. xxxvii 1—10. Matt xxvii. 52 53 John v 25. 28 29 xi 44. Acts v. 15. xix. 12. Rev. xi. 11.
p 3—7. viii. 12. Ps. cvi. 40—42.
q xiv. 27. Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. Judg. x. 16. Neh. ix. 31. Ps lxxxvi. 15. Mic vii 18 19.
r Ex ii 24, 25.
s Gen. xiii. 16, 17 Ex. iii. 6, 7. xxxii. 13, 14. Lev. xxvi. 42. Deut xxxii 36. Ps. cv 8. Mic. vii. 20. Luke i. 54. 55. 72, 73. B C 839.
† Heb *face* xvii. 18. Ps. li. 11.
t Ps. cxxv 3. Luke xviii. 7, 8. B C. 839.
‡ Heb. *returned and took.*
u 18, 19.

V. 15—19. In this prophetical transaction, *the use of the bow and arrows* denoted, that Joash was to be the instrument of Israel's deliverance, by military valour and enterprise: the prophet's *directing the king in shooting*, and *laying his hands upon his*, implied that he was to follow the directions of the prophets, and that God would give him success. The *arrow shot eastward*, marked the situation of the place where the deliverance was to be wrought, and intimated that the eastern coasts of the land of Israel would be rescued from the king of Syria; though his dominions, which lay chiefly to the north of Canaan, would not be taken from him: and the *smiting of the arrows upon the ground*, was significant of the use that Joash would make of his first victory, by which his enemies were cast down to the ground before him; whether he would effectually crush their power, or imitate the impolitic lenity of Ahab. (1 *Kings* xx.) Probably Joash was not informed that his victories would equal the times which he smote with the arrows: and perhaps considering the action as trivial and unmeaning, he smote but thrice, which displeased the prophet, and, as it were, limited the king's successes. His conduct expressed the state of his mind, as not firmly believing the words of the prophet, or not duly valuing the promised deliverance.

V. 20, 21. This extraordinary miracle, wrought by the dead body of Elisha, declared that he was as much beloved as Elijah, though he had not been translated, and that the Lord was his God after death as well as before; and thus intimated both the immortality of the soul, and the final resurrection of the body. It might also intimate, that many mercies were reserved for Israel, in answer to Elisha's prayers, and in consequence of his labours for them in his lifetime.

V. 23. The reason here assigned, for the deliverance granted to Israel, seems to imply that there was nothing either in Joash or his subjects, (except their miseries,) to induce the Lord thus to favour them. Nor was the success of Joash any thing more, than a respite for the present from the judgments which impended over them.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Though the Lord is slow to anger and of great mercy, yet he will by no means acquit obstinate transgressors; and his just anger is the cause of all human misery. When deep affliction excites a cry for deliverance, he will hearken; for he is gracious, and compassionate, and delighteth in mercy, and can speedily give a deliverer out of every trouble. But if he answers the *mere cry of distress for temporal relief*, much more will he regard *the prayer of faith for spiritual blessings:* and as he so long remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and spared their posterity for their sakes, notwithstanding their manifold provocations; much more will he remember Jesus and the covenant that he mediated, and for his sake pardon the abundant transgressions of all who by true faith stand in a spiritual relation to him. All other privileges and distinctions can only avail to retard the deserved vengeance; the Lord may not destroy sinners, or cast them from his presence *as yet*, but without an interest in the Saviour they must at length perish. The true believer, though chastened for his transgression, shall not be left to perish for ever: but being "delivered from the hand of his enemies, he shall serve him, "without fear, in righteousness and true holiness, before "him all his days." Wicked men prosper in their schemes, till the Lord's purposes respecting them are accomplished; and then they are removed, or ruined, without any difficulty. There is such excellency in true and eminent godliness, that it often excites the esteem and respect of those who cleave to their sins. Persons even of this character while under convictions, will feel and acknowledge, that the servants of God are their best friends, and the most valuable part of society. But this language of conscience is soon silenced by the clamorous voice of their lusts. Some parts of the lives of eminent believers are more

CHAP. XIV.

Amaziah's good reign, 1—4. *He justly punishes his father's murderers,* 5, 6. *He gains a victory over Edom,* 7. *He rashly challenges Jehoash king of Israel, and, obstinately persisting, is vanquished and taken prisoner by him; the wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and the treasures of the temple spoiled,* 8—14. *Jehoash dies, and is succeeded by Jeroboam,* 15, 16. *Amaziah is slain by conspirators,* 17—20. *His son Azariah is made king, and builds Elath,* 21, 22. *Jeroboam's bad reign,* 23, 24. *He restores the coast of Israel,* 25—27. *He dies and is succeeded by his son Zachariah,* 28, 29.

a xiii. 10. 1 Chr. iii. 12. 2 Chr. xxv. 1.

IN [a] the second year of Joash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel, reigned Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah.

2 He was twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Jehoaddan of Jerusalem.

b xii. 2. 1 Kings xi. 4. xv. 3. 2 Chr. xxv. 2, 3

3 And [b] he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, yet not like David his father: [c] he did according to all things as Joash his father did.

c 2 Chr. xxiv. 2, 17, 18. xxv. 14—16.

d xii. 3. xv. 4, 35

4 Howbeit [d] the high places were not taken away: as yet the people did sacrifice and burnt incense on the high places.

5 And it came to pass, as soon as the kingdom was confirmed in his hand, [e] that he slew [f] his servants which had slain the king his father.

e Gen. ix. 6. Ex. xxi. 12—14. Num. xxxv. 33.
f xii. 20, 21. 2 Chr. xxv. 3, 4.

6 But the children of the murderers he slew not: according unto that which is written in the book of the law of Moses, wherein the LORD commanded, saying, [g] The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, nor the children be put to death for the fathers; but every man shall be put to death for his own sin.

g Deut. xxiv. 16. Ez. xviii. 4, 20

7 He slew of [h] Edom in [i] the valley of salt ten thousand, and took * Selah by war, and called the name of it [k] Joktheel unto this day.

B. C. 825.
h viii. 20—22. 2 Chr. xxv. 11, 12.
i 2 Sam. viii. 13. 1 Chr. xviii. 12. Ps. lx. title.
* Or, *the rock.*
k Josh. xv. 38.

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conspicuous than others, but in the general tenour of them they aim to glorify God and do good to man. Yet the most devoted will be ashamed, that they have not been more in earnest; and the most useful must regret, that the world has received so little benefit from them. Indeed the reflection on the prevalence of wickedness and misery on every side, with the prospect of still worse judgments upon the workers of iniquity, must fill the heart of every pious and benevolent man with deep concern. Yet the good seed which faithful ministers sow in their life-time may spring up after their death; and they may often take encouragement from the prospect of their prayers being answered, after they are removed: and yet their removal is frequently the signal for calamities to break forth; as the recal of an ambassador precedes a declaration of war. However, living or dying, God's true people are blessed, and blessings to others: and they who, like the Saviour, pass through death and the grave to glory, are not less favoured than if they were immediately received up to heaven in the body. But the death and burial of Jesus alone hath efficacy to disarm the king of terrors of his power to harm; and to sanctify the tomb, as a safe repository for the believer's body, till the general resurrection. Through him all blessings come from a reconciled God to believing sinners: if we use his appointed means in the obedience of faith, and be not straitened in our desires and expectations of help from him through unbelief, we shall not be straitened in him, but shall be "able to do all things through Christ strengthening "us." Then shall we beat down our enemies, and trample them as the mire in the streets, till our deliverance be complete, and our rejoicing in the Lord abundant. May he give us strong faith, that our hearts may be established and comforted: and that we may greatly glorify his name, and be serviceable to his people on earth, in our way to the heavenly inheritance!

NOTES.

CHAP. XIV. V. 1. Joash king of Israel began to reign about four years before Amaziah: but Joash is supposed to have reigned part of the time with his father; and Amaziah succeeded to the throne in the second year after the death of Jehoahaz. (*Note*, xiii. 10.) Yet as Amaziah survived Joash only fifteen years (17;) either the sixteen years of Joash's reign must be reckoned from his father's death; or, as some think, Amaziah's reign is computed from the time that his father Joash became incapable of managing public affairs.

V. 3, 4. Amaziah, like his father Joash, began apparently well, and ended very ill. He attended the worship of JEHOVAH, but he did not destroy the high places; where probably priests and Levites officiated in sacrificing and burning incense. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 5, 6. Amaziah did not at first venture to punish the conspirators, who had slain his father: and it seems they continued at court, as if they had done no wrong, and feared no danger; having only avenged the death of Jehoiada's son on Jehoash, without attempting to injure Amaziah, or deprive him of the kingdom. But when he found himself sufficiently established in authority, he very properly punished them. These references to the very words of the law, as they now stand in the books of Moses, should not be unnoticed. Undoubtedly these books were extant and well known when this history was written.

V. 7. (*Notes*, 2 *Chr.* xxv. 5—16.) The name which

B. C. 826.
l 2 Chr. xxv. 17—24.

8 ¶ Then [l] Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash, the son of Jehoahaz, son of Jehu king of Israel, saying, [m] Come, let us look one another in the face.

m 11. 2 Sam. ii. 14—17. Prov. xiii. 10. xvii 14. xviii. 6. xx. 18. xxv. 8.

9 And Jehoash the king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, [n] The thistle that *was* in Lebanon sent to the cedar that *was* in Lebanon, saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife: and there passed by a wild beast that *was* in Lebanon, and trode down the thistle.

n Judg ix. 8—15. 2 Sam. xii. 1—4. 1 Kings iv. 33.

10 Thou hast indeed smitten Edom, and [o] thine heart hath lifted thee up: glory *of this*, and tarry at * home; for [p] why shouldest thou [q] meddle to *thy* hurt, that thou shouldest fall, *even* thou, and Judah with thee?

o Deut. viii. 14. 2 Chr. xxvi. 16. xxxii. 25. Prov. xvi. 18. Ez. xxviii. 2. 5. 17. Dan. v. 20—23. Hab. ii. 4 Jam. iv. 6.
* Heb. *thy house.*
p 2 Chr. xxxv. 21
q Prov. xx. 3. xxvi. 17. Luke xiv. 31.

11 But [r] Amaziah would not hear: therefore Jehoash king of Israel went up; and he and Amaziah king of Judah looked one another in the face at [s] Bethshemesh, which *belongeth* to Judah.

r 2 Chr. xxv. 16. 20.
s Josh. xxi. 16. 1 Sam vi. 9.

12 And Judah was † put to the worse before Israel, and [t] they fled every man to their tents.

† Heb. *smitten.*
t 1 Sam. iv. 10. 2 Sam. xviii. 17. 1 Kings xxii 36

13 And Jehoash king of Israel [u] took Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Jehoash, the son of Ahaziah, at Bethshemesh, and came to Jerusalem, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem from [x] the gate of Ephraim unto [y] the corner-gate, four hundred cubits.

u xxv 6. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11. xxxvi. 6. 10. Job xl. 11, 12. Prov. xvi. 18. xxix. 23. Is ii 11, 12 Dan. iv 37. Luke xiv 11.
x 2 Chr xxv. 23, 24. Neh. viii. 16. xii 39.
y Jer xxxi 38. Zech. xiv. 10.

14 And he took [z] all the gold and silver, and all the vessels *that were* found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house, and hostages, and returned to Samaria.

z xxiv. 13 xxv. 15 1 Kings vii 51. xiv. 26. xv. 18.

15 ¶ Now [a] the rest of the acts of Jehoash which he did, and his might, and how he fought with Amaziah king of Judah, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

a x. 34, 35. 1 Kings xiv. 19, 20. B. C. 825.

16 And Jehoash slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel; and [b] Jeroboam his son reigned in his stead.

b xiii. 13. Hos. i. 1. Am i 1. vii. 9.

17 ¶ And [c] Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah lived, after the death of Jehoash son of Jeohahaz king of Israel fifteen years.

c 1, 2. 23. xiii 10. 2 Chr. xxv. 25. B. C. 810.

18 And the rest of the acts of Amaziah, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

19 Now [d] they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem: and he fled to [e] Lachish; but they sent after him to Lachish, and slew him there.

d xii. 20, 21. xv. 10. 14 25 36. xxi. 23. 2 Chr. xxv. 27, 28.
e Josh x. 31 Mic. i. 13.

20 And they brought him on horses; and [f] he was buried at Jerusalem with his fathers in the city of David.

f viii. 24. ix. 28. xii. 21 1 Kings ii 10. xi 43. 2 Chr xxi. 20. xxvi. 23. xxxiii. 20.

Amaziah gave to Selah, signifies *obedience to God;* in which it is probable, he referred to his conduct in dismissing the auxiliaries of Israel at the Lord's command: but his behaviour, in the whole transaction and afterwards, very little agreed with this name.

V. 8. There had for a long time been peace betwixt Judah and Israel: and though the connexion with the house of Ahab had been of fatal consequence to the royal family of Judah; yet on the whole that peace had been far preferable to the ruinous wars which preceded and ensued.—Perhaps Amaziah bore resentment against the family of Jehu, for the slaughter of his relations: he had also received provocations from some Israelites, whom he had engaged in his service and sent back, having been forbidden to employ them: (2 *Chr.* xxv. 6—10, 13:) and perhaps he hoped to reduce Israel again under the dominion of the family of David. But if he had not been actuated by a vain ambition, he would have made his complaints, and demanded satisfaction, and not have sent this foolish challenge. In effect, he informed Joash, that he scorned to attack him at a disadvantage: but wished him to bring forth all his forces, and make a fair trial of their military skill and valour in a pitched battle.

V. 9, 10. Joash rebuked Amaziah's *pride*, with an *arrogance* equally unreasonable. The thistle, the meanest weed which the mountains produce, but which may by chance wound the foot of the incautious passenger, was made the emblem of the kingdom of Judah, and of the ancient and honourable house of David, whilst the house of Jehu was represented as a stately cedar! Joash intimated, that if Amaziah, upon his casual success against the Edomites, had presumed to solicit an alliance with him, he would have considered his proposals in the same light as if the thistle should aspire to unite families with the cedar; and the meanest of his soldiers should have chastised his insolence, and crushed him, as easily as a wild beast of the forest could trample down the thistle: how much more then, when Amaziah dared to challenge him to battle, would he bring destruction upon himself! There was, however, much good sense in Joash's counsel. Let Amaziah rest satisfied with the reputation he had acquired, and not meddle without occasion with his neighbour, who was disposed to peace, lest it should issue in the ruin and disgrace of himself and his kingdom.

V. 11—14. As Amaziah prepared for war, it became necessary for Joash to oppose him: in consequence Amaziah's army was completely routed, many lives were thrown away, Amaziah was made prisoner, Jerusalem was taken, and its fortification demolished, and the very temple plundered by the rapacious and profane conqueror.

V. 17—20. Joash, it seems, set Amaziah at liberty; and he survived him fifteen years: but the ill success of

21 And all the people of Judah took [g] Azariah, (which *was* sixteen years old) and [h] made him king instead of his father Amaziah.

22 He built [i] Elath, and restored it to Judah, after that the king slept with his fathers.

23 ¶ In [k] the fifteenth year of Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah, Jeroboam, the son of Joash king of Israel, began to reign in Samaria, *and reigned* forty and one years.

24 And he did *that which was* evil [l] in the sight of the LORD: [m] he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin

25 He restored the coast of Israel [n] from the entering of Hamath [o] unto the sea of the plain, according to the word of the LORD God of Israel, which he spake by the hand of his servant [p] Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet, which *was* of [q] Gath-hepher.

26 For the LORD [r] saw the affliction of Israel *that it was* very bitter: for *there was* [s] not any shut up, nor any left, nor any helper for Israel.

27 And the LORD said not that [t] he would [u] blot out the name of Israel from under heaven: but [x] he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash.

28 Now [y] the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, and all that he did, and his might, how he warred, and how he recovered [z] Damascus, and Hamath, *which belonged* to Judah, for Israel, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

29 And Jeroboam slept with his fathers, *even* with the kings of Israel; and [a] Zachariah his son reigned in his stead.

g xv. 13. 2 Chr xxvi. 1. *Uzziah.* Matt 1. 8, 9, *Ozias*
h xxi 24 1 Chr iii 12.
i xvi. 6 Deut ii. 8. 1 Kings ix. 26 2 Chr. xxvi. 2. *Eloth.*
B. C. 825.
k 17.
l xxi. 6. Gen. xxxviii 7. Deut ix. 18 1 Kings xxi. 25.
m xiii. 2. 11.
n Num. xiii. 21. xxxiv. 7, 8. Ez. xlvii. 16,—19. Am vi. 14
o Gen. xiv 3. Deut iii. 17
p Jon. i 1. Matt. xii 39, 40. xvi. 4. *Jonas.*
q Josh xix. 13. *Gittah-hepher.*
r xiii. 4 Ex iii. 7. 9 Judg x 16. Ps. cvi 43—45. Is. lxiii. 9.
s Deut. xxxii. 36.
t xiii. 23. Hos. i 6
u Ex. xxxii. 32, 33. Deut ix. 14 xxv. 19. xxix. 20 Ps. lxix. 28. Rev iii 5.
x v. 1. xiii 5, Hos. i 7. Tit. iii 4—6.
y 15.
z Sam. viii 6. 1 Kings xi. 24. 1 Chr. xviii. 5, 6. 2 Chr. viii. 3, 4.
a xv 8. B. C. 784.

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his rash expedition, rendered his people disaffected to him, which at length produced a conspiracy or open revolt: so that when the insurgents had slain him, either they brought him themselves, or suffered him to be brought to Jerusalem to be buried. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 21. Azariah, or Uzziah, (words of similar meaning, the one signifying *the help of the Lord*, and the other, *the strength of the Lord*;) is thought by some to have been very young, not more than four years of age, when his father was slain; and they suppose that he was not made king till about twelve years afterwards. Thus, he began to reign in the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam; though his father was slain in the fifteenth year of Jeroboam, (23. xv. 1.) But the years of Azariah's reign are reckoned from his father's death: and therefore others suppose, that Jeroboam reigned along with his father Joash eleven or twelve years; so that, reckoning his reign from this time, Azariah began to reign in his twenty-seventh year, though only fifteen or sixteen years after he began to reign alone. (23.)

V. 22. *Elath.* This was a town upon the Red sea, convenient for commerce, which the Edomites, or Syrians, had taken away from the kings of Judah. It is supposed that Amaziah had taken it, when he conquered the Edomites; but had not been able to derive much advantage from it, because of subsequent troubles: and that Azariah, after Amaziah's death, rebuilt and fortified it.

V. 25. The various enemies of Israel had encroached on their borders, from the northern to the southern extremity of the country belonging to the ten tribes; from Lebanon to the dead or salt sea, which had been the plain of Sodom: but, Jeroboam, encouraged by the predictions of Jonah, drove back their enemies, and recovered their country.

V. 26, 27. Joash had been successful, both against the Syrians and Judah. But probably the Syrians, not being totally subdued, still carried on destructive hostilities against Israel: and the neighbouring nations, as the Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites, made continual incursions, and plundered whatever they could seize upon; so that their most valuable treasures were pillaged, they who seemed to have taken refuge in the safest places were destroyed, and there were none to help them. But as the time for their final dispersion was not yet come, the Lord saved them by the hand of Jeroboam, notwithstanding his idolatries.

V. 28. Damascus and Hamath belonged to *Judah* in the reigns of David and Solomon, and Jeroboam so effectually subdued the Syrians, that he obtained possession of them *for Israel;* which is called *recovering* them, because, though divided in government, Judah and Israel were still to be considered as one people.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—14.

Many appear righteous unto men, whose inward parts are very wickedness, and whose conduct at length betrays their hypocrisy. Yet the Lord gives due commendation to the actions, which accord to his law, because *thus far* they honour him. Where his judgments are most evidently righteous, the wickedness of the instruments may deserve punishment by the sword of the magistrate: and the judge of all the earth may do many things consistently with his justice, which would not become short-sighted feeble mortals. It will appear, however, in the day of final retributions, that no one has suffered who did not deserve it, and that none perish but for their own sins. —Unsanctified success increases pride; pride excites contentions; and these are the sources of trouble and iniquity in private life: but when they arise between princes, they become the misery of whole kingdoms; and the blood of thousands is lightly esteemed by vain-glorious mortals

CHAP. XV.

Azariah's good reign, 1—4. *He is smitten with leprosy; and Jotham, his son, governs for him, and succeeds him at his death,* 5—7. *Zachariah reigns ill, and is slain by Shallum; in which events the promise of God to Jehu is fulfilled,* 8—12. *After one month, Shallum is slain, and succeeded by Menahem; who cruelly uses his opposers; reigns wickedly; becomes tributary to Pul, king of Assyria; dies, and is succeeded by his son Pekahiah,* 13—22. *Pekahiah reigns ill, and is slain and succeeded by Pekah,* 23—26. *Pekah imitates the sins of his predecessor; Tiglath-pileser of Assyria carries captive part of Israel; and Hoshea kills and succeeds Pekah,* 27—31. *Jotham reigns well in Judah,* 32—35. *He dies and is succeeded by his son Ahaz,* 36—38.

a 8. xiv. 16, 17. IN [a] the twenty and seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel began Azariah son of Amaziah king of Judah to reign.

2 [b] Sixteen years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned two and fifty years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Jecholiah of Jerusalem.

b xiv. 21. 2 Chr. xxvi. 1. 3.

3 And [c] he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Amaziah had done;

c xii. 2, 3. xiv. 3, 4. 2 Chr. xxvi. 4.

4 Save that [d] the high places were not removed: the people sacrificed and burnt incense still on the high places.

d xiv. 4. xviii. 4.

5 And [e] the LORD smote the king, [f] so that he was a leper unto the day of his death, [g] and dwelt in a several house: and [h] Jotham the king's son *was* over the house, [i] judging the people of the land.

e 2 Chr. xxvi 16.—20 Job xxxiv. 19.
f v. 27. Num. xii. 10.
g vii. 3. Lev. xiii. 46 Num. xii. 14. Deut. xxiv. 8, 9.
h 2 Chr. xxvi. 21. 2 Sam viii. 15. xv. 2—4. 1 Kings iii. 9. 28. Ps. lxxii. 1, 2.
i 2 Chr. xv. 5.

6 And the rest of the acts of Azariah, and all that he did, *are* [k] they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

k xiv. 18. 2 Chr. xxvi. 5—15.

7 So [l] Azariah slept with his fathers; and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David: and Jotham his son reigned in his stead.

l 2 Chr. xxvi. 23, Is vi. 1. B. C. 758.

8 ¶ In [m] the thirty and eighth year of

m 1. xiv. 16, 17. 21. B. C. 772.

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who seek to be admired and extolled by men as foolish and worthless as themselves. The effects of pride in others are often insufferable, even to those who are proud themselves; and all naturally delight in expressing contempt for such, as avowedly aim to outshine their neighbours. We might smile at the ridiculous methods, which proud worms take to vaunt themselves, and to vilify their rivals for fame; did not the fatal effects of such competitions call for our lamentations: and the vain boastings of those who follow peace, are most tolerable, because most harmless. But did men consider from whom, and for what, their talents and successes were given, and how prone they are to abuse them; and did they understand how mean, guilty, and polluted man is, at his best estate, their boastings must needs be excluded. In reality, all the distinctions betwixt one sinful worm and another would not be worth noting, except for the sake of relative obligations, and the peace of society: but what images can shadow forth the absurdity and madness of those, who by their daring crimes seem to challenge the Almighty to the conflict, and to rush upon the thick bosses of his buckler? Or who could have conceived such an amity and union, as the Lord invites us worthless sinners to enter into with himself, through the mysterious union of the divine and human nature in our Emmanuel? In all our undertakings we should previously consider our ability to accomplish them; and rather rest satisfied with moderate advantages, or inferior reputation, than risk the consequences of beginning what we are not able to finish, which is indeed to meddle to our hurt; but caution is especially needful, when if we fail of success, we cannot suffer alone, but must involve many in our calamities: and they who will not take fair warning and good advice, even from an insulting enemy, may too late wish they had.

V. 15—29.

Wicked princes and nations are frequently successful, because opposed by others more guilty than themselves. The proud are often visited with most humiliating providences; and if not humbled by them, their destruction is inevitable. Yet even in those places where ungodliness is generally prevalent, the Lord takes notice of the extreme bitterness under which men groan, and spares them from time to time, that his goodness may lead them to repentance. Especially, is he thus long-suffering to those nations, where he hath a remnant of true believers. But the lives and successes of wicked men are contracted within narrow limits, and they are soon driven away in their wickedness, one after another. And though the Lord will never blot out the name of his true Israel from under heaven, but will always raise them up helpers, that the enemy may never prevail against his cause on earth: yet there is an appointed period to his patience and long-suffering; beyond which he will no longer bear with impenitent sinners, corrupt professing churches, or wicked nations; but will proceed to deal with them according to the most awful denunciations of his holy word.

NOTES.

CHAP. XV. V. 1—7. (*Notes,* xiv. 21. 2 *Chr.* xxvi.)

n xiv. 29. Azariah king of Judah did [n] Zachariah the son of Jeroboam reign over Israel in Samaria six months.

9 And he did *that which was* evil in o x. 29. 31. xiii. 2. 11. xiv. 24. the sight of the LORD, [o] as his fathers had done: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

10 And Shallum the son of Jabesh p Am. vii. 9. conspired against him, and [p] smote him q 14. 25. 30. 1 Kings xv. 28. before the people, and [q] slew him, and xvi. 9, 10. Hos. i. 4, 5. reigned in his stead.

r xiv. 28. 11 And [r] the rest of the acts of Zachariah, behold, they *are* written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

s x. 30. Num. xxiii. 19 t xiii. i. 10. 13. xiv. 29. 12 This *was* [s] the word of the LORD which he spake unto Jehu, saying, [t] Thy sons shall sit on the throne of Israel unto the fourth *generation*. And so it came to pass.

13 ¶ Shallum the son of Jabesh began to reign in the nine and thirtieth year u 1. *Azariah.* Matt. i. 8, 9. *Ozias.* of [u] Uzziah king of Judah; and he reigned * a full [x] month in Samaria.

* Heb. *a month of days* x 1 Kings xvi. 15 Job xx. 15. Ps. lv. 23. Prov. xxviii 2. 17. 14 For Menahem the son of Gadi y 1 Kings xiv. 17. went up from [y] Tirzah, and came to Sa- z xv 21 33. xvi. 8, 9 15. 17. maria, [z] and smote Shallum the son of 10. Jabesh in Samaria, and slew him, and reigned in his stead.

15 And the rest of the acts of Shallum, and his conspiracy which he made, behold, they *are* written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

16 Then Menahem smote [a] Tiphsah, a 1 Kings iv. 24. and all that *were* therein, and the coasts thereof from Tirzah: because they opened not *to him*, therefore he smote *it; and* [b] all the women therein that b viii. 21. Am. i. 13. were with child he ripped up.

17 ¶ In the nine and thirtieth year of Azariah king of Judah, began Menahem the son of Gadi to reign over Israel, *and reigned* ten years in Samaria.

18 And he did *that which was* [c] evil c 9. in the sight of the LORD: he departed not all his days from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

19 *And* [d] Pul the king of Assyria came d 1 Chr. v. 25, 2 Is. ix 1. against the land; and [e] Menahem gave e xii 16 18 xvi. 8. xvii. 3. 4. Pul a thousand talents of silver, that xviii. 16. Hos. iv. 13. viii 9, 10. x. 6. his hand might be with him, [f] to con- f xiv. 5. Jer. xvii. 5. firm the kingdom in his hand.

20 And Menahem † exacted the money † Heb *caused to come forth.* xxiii. 35. of Israel, *even* of all [g] the mighty men of g Ruth ii. 1. wealth, of each man fifty shekels of silver, to give to the king of Assyria: so the king of Assyria turned back, and [h] stayed not there in the land. h 29 xvii. 3, 4. xviii. 14—17.

V. 8. Amaziah reigned *fifteen years* after Jeroboam came to the crown of Israel; so that the death of Jeroboam, who reigned forty-one years, coincided with the *twenty-sixth* or *twenty-seventh* year of Azariah. An interregnum of about eleven years must therefore be allowed for, in the *kingdom of Israel*, between the death of Jeroboam, and the succession of his son; either because of his youth, or through the factious temper of the people.

V. 12. Notwithstanding the wickedness of Israel, and the persevering idolatry of Jehu and his descendants, the Lord would not proceed to execute vengeance upon them until the predicted period: and bad as Jehu's family was, the times during which they reigned were by far the best that Israel experienced, from their separation from the family of David to their final dispersion.

V. 16. This barbarity was exercised by Menahem against such as would not immediately submit to his usurped authority. Things were now hastening to a fatal crisis in the kingdom of the ten tribes. After the death of Elisha true religion evidently began to decline; and neither the labours nor the writings of the succeeding prophets could stop the rapid increase of immorality, idolatry, or profaneness, which inundated that people. This chapter gives such an account of their public affairs, as will afford the attentive reader great assistance in understanding the writings of those prophets, who lived during that period, viz.; Isaiah, Hoshea, Micah, and Amos. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 19. 20. The king of Assyria coming to invade Israel, seems to have found the people much disaffected to Menahem, who must have been odious for his cruelties: but he, having made submission to Pul, and engaged for the payment of one thousand talents of silver, (near four hundred thousand pounds;) obtained his assistance in subjugating the Israelites, and was thus confirmed in the kingdom; and then by force he extorted the money from his richer subjects. Thus the kingdom was impoverished, and the people exasperated; and that powerful prince, having been so well paid for invading the land, left an example to his successors, which they followed until they had totally desolated the country. The kingdom of Assyria is here mentioned, for the first time, after the building of Nineveh by Nimrod. And this shows that the history given by some writers of a very prosperous and vast monarchy lasting for much above a thousand years previous to this time, is in great measure a romance. David and Solomon met with no opposition from the kings of Assyria, in establishing their kingdom to the Euphrates. A small tribe indeed, called Assur, helped the Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites, on some occasion. (*Ps.* lxxxiii. 8.) But it seems that Nineveh had afterwards become a very great city, and

21 And the rest of the acts of Menahem, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

22 And Menahem slept with his fathers: and Pekahiah his son reigned in his stead.

23 ¶ In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekahiah the son of Menahem began to reign over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned* [i] two years.

24 And he did *that which was* [k] evil in the sight of the LORD; he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

25 But [l] Pekah the son of Remaliah, [m] a captain of his, [n] conspired against him, and smote him in Samaria, in the palace of the king's house, with Argob and Arieh, and with him fifty men of the Gileadites: and he killed him, and reigned in his room.

26 And [o] the rest of the acts of Pekahiah, and all that he did, behold, they *are* written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

27 ¶ In the two and fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah, [p] Pekah the son of Remaliah began to reign over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned* twenty years.

28 And he did *that which was* [q] evil in the sight of the LORD; he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

29 In the days of Pekah king of Israel, [r] Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and took [s] Ijon, and [t] Abel-beth-maachah, and Janoah, and [u] Kedesh, and [x] Hazor, and [y] Gilead, and [z] Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and [a] carried them captive to Assyria.

30 And Hosea the son of Elah [b] made a conspiracy against Pekah the son of Remaliah, and smote him, and slew him, and reigned in his stead, [c] in the twentieth year of Jotham the son of Uzziah.

31 And the rest of the acts of Pekah, and all that he did, behold, they *are* written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

32 In the second year of Pekah the son of Remaliah king of Israel, began [d] Jotham the son of [e] Uzziah king of Judah to reign.

33 Five and twenty years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* [f] Jerusha the daughter of Zadok.

34 And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD; he did [g] according to all that his father Uzziah had done.

35 [h] Howbeit the high places were not removed: the people sacrificed and burnt incense still in the high places. [i] He built the higher gate of the house of the LORD.

36 Now [k] the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

i xxi. 19. 1 Kings xv. 25. xvi. 8. xxii. 51. Job xx. 5.
k 18.
B. C. 759. l 2 Chr. xxxvii. 6.
m ix. 5. 1 Kings xvi. 9.
n 10. 30. ix. 14.
o 21.
p Is. vii. 1. 9.
q xxi. 2.
B. C. 740. r 1 Chr. v. 26. *Tiglath-pilneser.* Is. ix. 1.
s 1 Kings xv. 20. 2 Chr. xvi. 4.
t 2 Sam. xx. 14, 15.
u Josh. xix. 36, 37.
x Josh. xi. 1. 10. 13. xii. 19. Judg. iv. 2.
y Num. xxxii. 1. 40. Deut. iii. 15. Am. i. 3. 13.
z Josh. xx. 7. 1 Kings ix. 11. Is. ix. 1, 2. Matt. iv. 15, 16.
a xvii. 6. 23. Lev. xxvi. 32. 38, 39. Deut. iv. 26, 27. xxviii. 25. 64, 65. Is. i. 7. vii. 20.
B. C. 739.
b 25.
c 33. xvii. 1. Hos. x. 3. 7. 15.
d 2 Chr. xxvii. 1. Matt. i. 9. *Joatham.*
e 1 Chr. iii. 12. *Azariah.*
B. C. 758.
f 2 Chr. xxvii. 1. *Jerushah.*
g 3, 4. 2 Chron. xxvi. 4, 5. xxvii. 2.
h 4. xviii. 4. 2 Chr. xxxii. 12.
i 2 Chr. xxvii. 3. &c.
k 6, 7. 2 Chr. xxvii. 4—9.

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no doubt the king of Nineveh had a considerable territory. (*Jon.* i. 2. iii. 3, 4. iv. 11.) And it is not improbably supposed, that Pul was king when Jonah prophesied against Nineveh. It is not however agreed, whether he was one of the ancient line of the Assyrian kings; or whether he was one of those who effected that revolution which all allow took place about this time, and so the father of Tiglath-pileser. The latter indeed seems most probable: but such darkness and uncertainty rest on this part of ancient history, that the most learned men differ exceedingly in their opinions on the subject.

V. 25. It does not clearly appear, whether Argob, Arieh, and the fifty Gileadites, were slain with the king: or whether they were conspirators with Pekah.

V. 27. In the days of Jotham, those designs of Rezin and Pekah were formed, and in some degree carried into effect; which became more formidable during the reign of Ahaz. (*Notes*, 2 *Chron.* xxvii.)

V. 29. Pul seems to have carried captive some of the people that dwelt to the east of Jordan, (1 *Chr.* v. 26:) and Tiglath-pileser, who is, with great probability, thought to have been his son and successor, carried captive a considerable number of the inhabitants of the northern parts of the land, as well as of the districts to the east of Jordan. Thus the prophecies in this respect had a gradual accomplishment.

V. 30. *In the twentieth*, &c. That is, *the twentieth year from Jotham's accession;* for he reigned only sixteen years, and Hoshea succeeded Pekah in *the fourth year of Ahaz;* though he was not established in the kingdom, till the twelfth year of that king. In respect of many of these difficulties in settling the chronology, (which infidels vainly magnify into objections against the sacred history;) it may be proper to observe, that no writer wilfully contradicts himself within a few lines; and therefore some solution of the difficulty should be sought, and *must exist*, whether our information enables us to solve it or not. (xvii. 1.)

l 1 Sam. iii. 12.
m Is. x. 5—7.
n xvi. 5. 2 Chr. xxviii. 6. Is vii. 1. ix. 21. Hos. v. 12, 13.
o 27.

37 (In those days the LORD [l] began [m] to send against Judah [n] Rezin, the king of Syria, and [o] Pekah the son of Remaliah.)

38 And Jotham slept with his fathers, B. C. 742. and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and [p] Ahaz his son reigned in his stead.

p xvi. 1. 1 Chr. iii. 13. 2 Chr. xxviii. 1. Matt. i. 9. *Achaz.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

The study of history has a tendency to render the reflecting person thankful even for a mediocrity of character, in those placed in authority: and to dispose him to bear patiently many evident faults in the administration of public affairs. For as every thing may be estimated *by comparison*, and as the history of the world exhibits by far the greater part of princes desperately wicked, and their people exposed to every kind of misery, in consequence of their ambition, cruelty, and tyranny, or the contests betwixt rivals for power: so, we may repress our murmurs under slighter grievances, by reflecting with grateful satisfaction upon our exemption from flagrant oppressions. In this view, we seem to congratulate Judah under the peaceful reigns of Azariah and Jotham, as that kingdom was very highly favoured, compared with the distracted state of Israel, under so many bloody murderers, usurpers, and tyrants. And if the inhabitants of our land of liberty and peace can read this narration, without forgetting their imaginary or trivial causes for complaint, or without blessing God for their mercies, and praying for their rulers, and the continuance of our distinguishing privileges, they cannot be acquitted from the charge of base ingratitude. But with regret we must observe, that such is the depraved tendency of human nature to evil, that revivals in religion are commonly transient: whereas abuses endure from age to age, and few good men have at once power and courage effectually to remove them. For great defects are found in godly persons: and though they are graciously accepted, as to their eternal state, they are often in this world marked with the tokens of God's displeasure for particular offences, by which they have dishonoured him; nor can any situation prevent these effects of sin. When persons in authority are incapacitated from the duties of their high station, it is peculiarly happy, for them and for the public, when they have children who, like Jotham, are disposed and qualified to fill up their places, and to enter into their views of serving God and doing good to their people; and who can give satisfaction both to them and to the community. The imperfections of true believers are very different from the allowed, habitual, and pertinacious wickedness of ungodly men. In the former the remains indeed of depravity are visible, and occasionally break forth into evident evil: but in the latter case, when restraints of conscience, regard to reputation, fear of human laws, and want of power, are surmounted, the desperate wickedness of the heart, like an impetuous torrent that hath burst its banks, bears down all opposition, and spreads devastation around.

V. 13—38.

The repetition so often made concerning Jeroboam, for ages after his death, that "he made Israel to sin," should impress our minds with dread and horror, at the thought of tempting others to wickedness; as it can never be known how extensively or durably the mischief may spread. For, however ungodly men may disagree in all other things, they perfectly accord in either utterly neglecting religion, or in making it a state-engine, or in some way subservient to their selfish projects: and the most notorious and detestable idolatries and superstitions have, in many kingdoms, been supported by authority from generation to generation, through successive revolutions in the government, by those who in their hearts despised the whole system that they patronized. When the gratification of ambition, avarice, revenge, or lust, requires, there is no conceivable kind or degree of treachery and barbarity, which men may not be tempted to commit; yet the madness of such persons equals their wickedness: for repeated examples of the fatal ends of those who through blood have waded to a throne, will not deter them from pressing forward in the same way, and mounting the slippery pre-eminence, to be thence hurried by a violent death to a premature grave! We should then be thankful for external restraints, and for being kept out of temptation; and beg of God incessantly to "create "in us a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within us:" and may He help us to seek that honour which cometh from him to those who do good in their generation; and to dread that greatness, which is obtained and secured by doing mischief and diffusing misery. Yet in these horrid scenes, the truth and justice of God are manifest: they perfectly accord to the character of human nature given in the Scriptures, and form a confirmation of their divine original. "For the wickedness of the land many are the "princes thereof:" whose crimes and sufferings are the punishment of the sins both of the governors and governed. "He that doth violence to the blood of any man, shall "flee to the pit; let no man stay him." For a time, wicked men may prosper to execute the vengeance of God on other sinners, and then others will be raised up to execute vengeance on them; as criminals, or the refuse of society, have often been employed for public executioners. The most innocent sufferers from man's wickedness must plead guilty before God, and may often read his *just* displeasure in the *injustice* and cruelty of their oppressors. Proud men cannot endure contradiction, and the ambitious are exasperated by opposition: yet often, in aiming at independence and supreme authority, they crouch with the basest submissions, and bring themselves into the most abject dependence on strangers and enemies, who from mercenary motives at first assist and then enslave them. Death in various forms hurries men to God's judgment-seat: the righteous are then taken from the evil to come, and enter into rest; and it is a mercy to be spared the anguish of witnessing the miseries that are coming on corrupted churches and nations. But the wicked are stopped in their career, that they may do no more mischief, and their lamp is put out in utter darkness. May we live the life of faith and holiness, and die the death of the righteous, that "an entrance may be "ministered to us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom "of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!"

CHAP. XVI.

Ahaz reigns very wickedly, 1—4. *Rezin and Pekah war against him; and Rezin takes Elath,* 5, 6. *Ahaz hires Tiglath-pileser against them, who takes Damascus and slays Rezin,* 7—9. *Ahaz sends a pattern of an altar from Damascus; and Urijah, the high-priest, makes one like it for burnt-offerings; reserving the brazen altar for Ahaz to inquire by,* 10—16. *Ahaz spoils the temple for the king of Assyria,* 17, 18. *He dies, and is succeeded by his son Hezekiah,* 19, 20.

a xv. 27—30 32, 33. 38.
b 2 Chr. xxviii. 1.

IN the [a] seventeenth year of Pekah the son of Remaliah, [b] Ahaz the son of Jotham king of Judah began to reign.

2 Twenty years old *was* Ahaz when he began to reign, and reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem, and [c] did not *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD his God, like David his father.

c 1 Kings iii. 14. ix. 4. xi 4—8. xv. 3 2 Chr. xvii. 3.
d viii. 18. 1 Kings xii. 28—30. xvi. 31—33. xxi. 25, 26. xxii. 52, 53. 2 Chr. xxii. 3 xxviii. 2—4.

3 But [d] he walked in the way of the kings of Israel; yea, and [e] made his son to pass through the fire, [f] according to the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out from before the children of Israel.

e 16. xvii. 17. xxiii. 10. Lev. xviii. 21. Deut. xviii. 10. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 6. Ps. cvi. 37, 38. Jer. xxxii 35. Ez. xvi. 21. xx. 26. 31
f xxi. 2. 11. Deut. xii. 31. 1 Kings xiv. 24. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 2. Ps. cvi. 35. Ez. xvi. 47.

4 And he sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places, and [g] on the hills, and under every green tree.

g Deut. xii. 2. 1 Kings xiv. 23. Ez. xx. 28.

5 Then [h] Rezin king of Syria, and Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel, came up to Jerusalem to war: and they besieged Ahaz, [i] but could not overcome *him.*

h xv. 13. 2 Chr. xxviii. 5—15. Is. vii. 1, 2.
i 1 Kings xi. 36. Is. vii. 4—6. 14. viii. 6. 9, 10, ix. 6, 7.

6 At that time Rezin king of Syria [k] recovered Elath to Syria, and drave the Jews from * Elath: and the Syrians came to Elath, and dwelt there unto this day.

k xiv. 22. Deut. ii. 8.
* Heb. *Eloth.* 1 Kings ix. 26. 2 Chr. xxvi. 2.

7 So Ahaz sent messengers [l] to † Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, saying, [m] I *am* thy servant, and thy son: come up and save me out of the hand of the king of Syria, and out of the hand of the king of Israel, which rise up against me.

l xv. 29.
† Heb. *Tilgath-pileser.* 1 Chr. v. 26. 2 Chr. xxviii. 20. *Tilgath-pilneser.*
m 1 Kings xx. 4. 32, 33 Jer. xvii. 5.

8 And Ahaz took [n] the silver and gold that was found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house, and sent *it for* a present to the king of Assyria.

n 17, 18. xii. 17, 18. 2 Chr. xvi. 2. xxviii. 20, 21. Ps. vii. 15, 16. Is. vii. 17. viii. 7. 8.

9 And the king of Assyria hearkened unto him; for the king of Assyria went up against ‡ Damascus, [o] and took it, and carried *the people of* it captive to [p] Kir, and [q] slew Rezin.

‡ Heb. *Dammesek.* 2 Chr. xxviii. 5.
o Am i. 5.
p Is. xxii. 6 Am. ix. 7.
q Is. ix. 11.

10 ¶ And king Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, [r] and saw an altar that *was* at Damascus: and king Ahaz sent to Urijah the priest the fashion of the altar, and [s] the pattern of it, according to all the workmanship thereof.

r 2 Chr. xxviii. 23—25. Ec. xi. 9.
s Ex. xxiv. 4. xxxix. 43. 1 Chr. xxviii. 11, 12. 19. Ps. cvi. 39. Ez. xliii. 8. 11. Mat. xv. 6. 9.

11 And Urijah the priest [t] built an altar according to all that king Ahaz had sent from Damascus: so [u] Urijah the priest made *it* against king Ahaz came from Damascus.

t 2 Chr. xxvi. 17, 18. Jer. xxiii. 11. Ez xxii. 26. Hos. iv. 6. Mal. ii. 7—9. Gal. i. 10.
u Is. viii. 2.

12 And when the king was come from Damascus, the king saw the altar; and

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NOTES.

CHAP. XVI. V. 3, 4. Ahaz imitated the kings of Israel, in worshipping idols, and rebelling against the Lord. It is said in Chronicles that he 'burnt *his children* in the 'fire;' and here that he caused '*his son* to pass through the 'fire,' to consecrate him to the demon that he worshipped. In short, he copied the crimes of the Canaanites, whom God had destroyed by Israel; and not only allowed, but set the people an example, of a variety of idolatrous practices. Hezekiah was born some years before the death of Jotham; if he was the son here intended, he was past his infancy at the time. He however proved an eminently pious prince, and an entire contrast to his most wicked father. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 5. (*Notes,* 2 *Chr.* xxviii. 5—19. *Is.* vii. 1—9.) The Lord brought these enemies against Ahaz for his crimes: their successes, and the miseries of Israel were very great, immense numbers being slain and taken prisoners; and Ahaz was extremely terrified. But they could not take Jerusalem, dethrone Ahaz, and destroy the family of David, as they intended: for this was contrary to the purpose, the promises, and the prophecies of God.

V. 6 (*Note,* xiv. 22.) The word *Jews* is here first used. It is literally the *Judeans;* that is, the men of Judah, as all those who adhered to the family of David, were called, to distinguish them from the subjects of the Israelitish kings.

V. 7—9. As the king of Assyria brought Ahaz into abject dependence on him, and both weakened him and drained his treasury, he is said not to have helped him, though he averted the present storm. From this time, Syria ceased to be a kingdom: and for a long time it formed successively a part of the kingdom of Assyria, of Chaldea, or of Persia.

x 1 Kings xiii. 1. 2 Chr. xxvi. 16—19. xxviii. 23. 25.
y Num. xviii. 4—7.
z Lev. i. ii. iii.

x the king approached to the altar, and y offered thereon.

13 And z he burnt his burnt-offering, and his meat-offering, and poured his drink-offering, and sprinkled the blood * of his peace-offerings upon the altar.

* Heb. which were his.
a Ex. xl. 6. 29. 2 Chr. iv. 1.
b 9—12.

14 And he brought also a the brazen altar which *was* before the LORD, from the forefront of the house, from between the altar and the house of the LORD, and put it on the north side of b the altar.

c 9—12.
d Ex. xxix. 39—41.
e Lev. iv. 22. Ez. xlvi. 4—7. 12—14.

15 And king Ahaz commanded Urijah the priest, saying, Upon c the great altar burn d the morning burnt-offering, and the evening meat-offering, and e the king's burnt-sacrifice, and his meat-offering, with the burnt-offering of all the people of the land, and their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings; and sprinkle upon it all the blood of the burnt-offering, and all the blood of the sacrifice: and the brazen altar shall be for me f to inquire *by*.

f xviii. 4. Gen. xliv. 5. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 6. Is. ii. 6. Hos. iv. 12.

16 g Thus did Urijah the priest, according to all that king Ahaz commanded.

g Acts iv. 19. v. 29. 1 Thes. ii. 4. Jude 11.

17 And king Ahaz h cut off i the borders of the bases, and removed the laver from off them; and took down k the sea from off the brazen oxen that *were* under it, and put it upon a pavement of stones:

h 2 Chr. xxviii. 24.
i 1 Kings vii. 27—39. 2 Chr. xxix. 19.
k 1 Kings vii. 23—26.

18 And l the covert for the sabbath that they had built in the house, and the king's entry without, turned he from the house of the LORD, for the king of Assyria.

l xl. 5. 1 Kings x. 5. Ez. xlvi. 2.

19 Now m the rest of the acts of Ahaz, which he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

B. C. 726.
m xv. 6. 7. 37. 38. xx. 20, 21.

20 And Ahaz slept with his fathers, and n was buried with his fathers in the city of David: and o Hezekiah his son reigned in his stead.

n xxi. 18. 26. 2 Chr. xxviii. 27.
o xviii. 1. 1 Chr. iii. 13. 2 Chr. xxix. 1. Is. i. 1. Hos. i. 1. Mic. i. 1. Matt. i. 9, 10. *Ezekias*

V. 10—16. (2 *Chr.* xxviii. 23—25.) Ahaz sacrificed to the gods of the vanquished Syrians, perhaps when he went to Damascus to congratulate Tiglath-pileser on his success. There he saw an altar, in the temple of some of their idols, which appeared to him more magnificent or convenient, than that which Solomon had made according to the will of God. At the command of Ahaz, with which he sent a model of the altar from Damascus, probably adorned by many figures of idols, the wretched high-priest, without *scruple* or *hesitation*, prepared one like it, with which he profaned the court of the temple; and when Ahab returned, the altar of God was removed to make way for it. It is uncertain whether the gods of Damascus were sacrificed to on this altar, or whether the oblations were presented to JEHOVAH. It seems however that Ahaz pretended to convert the former altar into *an oracle*, at which he might *inquire:* as the church of Rome, *by adoring the host*, have converted the Lord's Supper into the most absurd and detestable idolatry, under the pretence of *honouring* it. Some however think, that Ahaz only meant that he would take advice what to do with the altar: and tradition reports that he demolished it, and made a sun-dial, (called the sun-dial of Ahaz,) of the brass. In the whole business the high-priest was willing to oblige the king by servile compliance; and did not, as far as it appears, need either menaces or promises, or even bribes, to procure his concurrence!

V. 17, 18. Ahaz pillaged and defaced the temple and its courts, and sacred utensils, in various ways, either to supply his necessities with the plunder, or to express his enmity against the worship of the Lord. The covert of the sabbath, and the entry, seem to have been accommodations for the king and his attendants to repair to the temple-service. To please the king of Assyria, who it is probable paid him a visit, he turned these another way, or to other uses.

V. 20. Ahaz died young; and it has been observed that no king of Judah reached David's age of seventy years, though some of them reigned longer than he had done: but the age of Asa is not recorded.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The word of God affords abundant encouragement to pious parents to give their children good instructions, enforced by good examples, and to pray for them: and these means are generally rendered effectual, so as sufficiently to verify the proverb, "train up a child in the way he should "go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Yet there are exceptions recorded in the Scriptures, to remind us, that every man is born in sin, and that the grace of God alone can change the heart; in order that we may expect the blessing from him alone. On the other hand, some who have been, as it were, early dedicated to Satan, and initiated into his service, have, by the victorious grace of God, been made eminent examples of faith and piety: and every accurate observer of mankind, in places favoured with the light of the gospel, has remarked instances of both. The infatuated slaves of sin heedlessly proceed in those paths, whence others have been hurried into destruction. But we need not wonder that men violate the law of God, in the indulgence of their *natural* passions, when they cannot be restrained from disobeying him in the most *unnatural* cruelty to themselves and their own children; nor should the insolence and obstinacy of prosperous sinners excite astonishment; seeing so many sin more and more, whilst severely suffering under the effects of former crimes! Such is man's carnal enmity against God, that he will have recourse to any expedient, or make the most abject submission to his fellow worms, rather than humble himself before him, and seek help from

CHAP. XVII.

Hoshea becomes tributary to Shalmaneser, conspires with the king of Egypt against him, and is shut up in prison, 1—4. *Shalmaneser besieges Samaria, after three years takes it, and carries Israel captive into Assyria and Media,* 5, 6. *The crimes which brought this punishment from God on his people,* 7—23. *The strange nations, planted in Israel are plagued by lions,* 24, 25; *but instructed by a priest of Israel, in the worship of the Lord, they serve him with their own idols,* 26—41.

IN the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah, began [a] Hoshea the son of Elah to reign in Samaria over Israel nine years.

2 And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, [b] but not as the kings of Israel that were before him.

3 Against him came up [c] Shalmaneser [d] king of Assyria; and Hoshea became his servant, and * gave him † presents.

4 And the king of Assyria [e] found conspiracy in Hoshea: for he had sent messengers to So [f] King of Egypt, and [g] brought no present to the king of Assyria, as *he had done* year by year; therefore the king of Assyria shut him up, and [h] bound him in prison.

a xv. 30. xviii. 9.
b iii. 2. x. 31. xiii. 2. 11. xv. 9. 18. 24. 2 Chr. xxx. 5—12.
c xviii. 9. Hos x. 14. *Shalman.*
d xv. 19. 29. xvi. 7. xviii. 13. xix. 36, 37. Is. x. 5, 6.
* Heb. *rendered.*
† Or, *tribute.* 2 Sam. viii. 2, 6.
e xxiv. 2. 20 Ez. xvii. 13—19.
f xviii. 21. Is. xxx. 1—4. xxxi. 1—3. Ez. xvii. 15.
B. C. 725.
g xviii. 14, 15.
h xxv. 7. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11. Ps. cxlix. 7, 8.

him! But the relief thus obtained, tends to enfeeble and enslave men the more; and it often accelerates, as well as increases, that ruin which it seemed to retard. Our natural propensity to some sort of religion is not easily extinguished: but except it be regulated according to the word, and by the Spirit, of God, it produces the most absurd superstitions, or the most detestable idolatries; or at best quiets the sinner's conscience, and amuses his mind with a round of unmeaning ceremonies, frequently connected with the most immoral practices. Even *infidels* have been remarkable for credulity; and the *capacity of believing*, when not exercised on the truth, has often been known to embrace the most ridiculous falsehoods. But whether kings are impious, or superstitious, or infidel, or sacrilegious, they generally meet with priests of their own stamp, who court their favour by assisting their iniquities or idolatries! Yet such mercenary time-servers and men-pleasers, who bear the name and wear the garb of ministers, are guilty of a greater breach of trust, and the prostitution of a more sacred character, than even the wicked princes whom they flatter and embolden in their sins: as their conduct is in the highest degree, dishonourable to God and ruinous to man, they merit the deepest contempt and detestation; and assuredly they will receive the *greater damnation*, except by a miracle of grace they are brought to repentance. The arrogant self-wisdom, which induces men to new-model divine ordinances after their own vain imaginations, is unsufferably provoking to that "God who resisteth the proud:" and that external magnificence, which carnal minds affect in his worship, obscures the real glory of heavenly things, excites false ideas of the divine character, and turns men aside from that spiritual service which alone the Lord accepts and delights in. Thus, new ways of worshipping God very speciously introduce gross idolatries; as the church of Israel, and that of Rome, among other examples, have abundantly evinced. But when men forsake God, they forsake their own mercies: and if they, that have been trained up in the ways of God, forsake his house and ordinances; and, affecting to be wiser than their pious parents, turn things into another channel; associate with more fashionable companies; and seek to acquire the favour, assistance, or commendation of ungodly men; there is reason to fear that sudden destruction is coming upon them, from which they shall by no means escape.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVII. V. 1. (*Note*, xv. 30.) During more than eight years after the slaughter of Pekah, Hoshea was kept out of possession of the kingdom, or was unsettled in it: and the years of his reign are reckoned from his establishment on the throne, and not from the death of his predecessor.

V. 2. We are told by the Jewish writers, that the golden calf had before this been carried away from Dan; that Hoshea did not enforce that idolatry as his predecessors had done; and that he allowed the Israelites, who were so disposed, to go up to Jerusalem to worship. He, however, did evil in the sight of the Lord; though not in all respects so vile as his predecessors. Whether he was an *idolater* or not, he was not a godly man; and his murder of Pekah, and usurpation of the kingdom, merited the punishment he endured: whilst the people were fully ripe for destruction; and the guilt, which had been accumulating for ages, was punished in that generation. In finally destroying the kingdom of Israel, during the time of that king, who was less wicked than the rest; the Lord showed that he punished them for the crimes of the people at large, and not for those of their princes only, as many were ready to imagine.

V. 3. It is most probable that Shalmaneser was the son of Tiglath-pileser. Menahem had given his predecessor Pul footing in the land, and encouragement to come again, by raising a large sum of money for him, and by rendering his kingdom dependent on him. Ahaz king of Judah likewise, by purchasing the help of Tiglath-pileser, had procured the destruction of the kingdom of Syria, which was of small extent and force, compared with that of Assyria: and thus every rampart was broken down, which could exclude the Assyrians from the land of Israel and Judah.

V. 4. So, is supposed to be the same person as is called Sabacus, or Sabacon, in pagan writers. He was king of Ethiopia; but he invaded Egypt, took possession of the kingdom, and reigned there for a long term of years.—About this time, or rather earlier, the rivalship began

5 Then [i] the king of Assyria came up throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria, and besieged it three years.

6 In the ninth year of Hoshea, [k] the king of Assyria took Samaria, and [l] carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in [m] Halah and in Habor *by* the river of Gozan, and in the cities of [n] the Medes.

7 For *so* it was, that the children of Israel had [o] sinned against [p] the LORD their God, which had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had [q] feared other gods,

8 And [r] walked in the statutes of the heathen, (whom the LORD cast out from before the children of Israel,) [s] of the kings of Israel, which they had made.

9 And the children of Israel did [t] secretly *those* things that *were* not right against the LORD their God, and they built them high places in all their cities, [u] from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.

10 [x] And they set them up * images and [y] groves [z] in every high hill, and under every green tree:

11 And there they [a] burnt incense in all the high places, as *did* the heathen whom the LORD carried away before them; and wrought wicked things [b] to provoke the LORD to anger.

12 For they served idols, [c] whereof the LORD had said unto them, [d] Ye shall not do this thing.

13 Yet the LORD [e] testified against Israel, and [f] against Judah, [g] by † all the prophets, *and by* all the [h] seers, say-

i xviii. 9. xxv. 1—3.
k xviii. 10, 11. Hos. i. 6. 9. xiii. 16.
B. C. 721.
l Lev. xxvi. 32, 33. 36. Deut. iv. 25—28. xxviii. 36. 64. xxix. 18. xxx. 18. 1 Kings xiv. 15, 16.
m xix. 12. 1 Chr. v. 26.
n Is. xiii. 17. xxi. 2 Dan. v. 28.
o Deut xxxi. 16, 17. 29. xxxii. 15, &c. Josh. xxiii. 16. Judg. ii. 14—17. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 14—16. Neh. ix. 26. Ps. cvi. 35—41. Ez. xxiii. 2, &c. Hos. iv. 1—3. viii. 5—14.
p Ex. xiv. 30, 31. xx. 2.
q 35. Jer. x 5.
r xvi. 3. xxi. 2. Lev xviii. 3. 27—30. Deut. xii 30, 31. xviii. 9. 1 Kings xii. 28. xvi. 31—33. xxi. 26. Jer. x. 2.
s Hos. v. 11. Mic. vi. 16.

t Deut. xxvii. 15. Ez. viii. 12.
u xviii. 8. Jer. iii. 2. Ez. ix. 9. Hos. xii. 11.
x xvi. 4. Ex. xxxiv. 13. Lev. xxvi. 1. 1 Kings xiv. 23. Is. lvii. 5.
* Heb. *statues.*
y Deut. xvi. 12. Mic. v. 14.
z Deut. xii. 2, 3. a 1 Kings xiii. 1. 2 Chr. xxviii. 25. Jer. xliv. 17.
b xxi. 6. Ps. lxxviii. 56—58.
c Ex. xx. 3—5. xxxiv. 14. Deut. v. 7—9.
d Deut. iv. 15—19. 23—25. xii. 4.
e Deut. viii. 19. xxxi. 21. Neh. ix. 29, 30. Ps. l. 7. lxxxi 8, 9. Jer. xliii. 19. Acts xx. 21.
f 2 Chr xxxvi. 15, 16. Jer. iii. 8—11. Hos. iv. 15.
g Deut. iv. 26. Josh. xxiii. 16. Judg. vi. 10. x. 11—14. 1 Sam. xii. 7—15. Is. i. 5—15. 21—24. Jer. v. 29—31. Zech. i. 3—6.
† Heb. *the hand of.*
h 1 Sam. ix. 9. 1 Chr. xxxix. 29.

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betwixt the kings of Egypt, and the monarchs of different nations, who successively became powerful in Asia, to the north or north-east of Canaan; which, lying betwixt the contending powers, was for many ages brought into dependence on the one or the other of them. But the people, contrary to the commands of God, were more disposed to unite with the Egyptians than with any of their opponents. Had Hoshea endeavoured to effect a thorough reformation in Israel; and then in dependence on God, had he openly attempted to shake off every foreign yoke, he might possibly have succeeded. But the manner in which he attempted to change one yoke for another, without returning to the Lord, or seeking his assistance, formed a mixture of perfidy, impolicy, and ungodliness; and proved the immediate occasion of his ruin and that of his people. It seems probable that Shalmaneser, by some means, took Hoshea prisoner, before he laid siege to Samaria: and that Hoshea ended his days in a prison. His name is the same with that by which Joshua was at first called: so that the settlement of Israel in Canaan, and their expulsion from it, occurred under the government of persons originally of the same name!

V. 5, 6. The inhabitants of Samaria doubtless endured great extremities, in the long siege and terrible destruction of the city: but the brevity of the sacred penman seems significantly to intimate, that the Lord did not now notice their affliction, as he had done before the measure of their iniquities was filled. When Shalmaneser had taken Samaria, and become absolute master of the whole land, he formed the project of changing the inhabitants, and in part accomplished it; but it was more fully completed by Esarhaddon, his grandson, several years afterwards; (*Ezra* iv. 2.) It is, however, here spoken of by anticipation. Yet at the last it seems that some of the poorer Israelites were left in the land, many of whom were incorporated with the new inhabitants. (2 *Chr.* xxxiv. 6, 7.) But as the northern part of the country called Galilee was, in the time of Christ, inhabited by persons acknowledged to be of the seed of Israel, who went up to Jerusalem to worship; whilst the middle of the country was occupied by the Samaritans, who were of another origin and religion; it is probable that the new inhabitants did not so fully occupy the *northern*, as the *middle*, parts of the land. The Israelites, who were carried captive to a great distance, in the dominions of the conqueror, were chiefly incorporated among the nations: yet some of them seem to have retained the knowledge of their original, and of part of their religion; and either to have returned with their brethren after the Babylonish captivity, or to have united with those Jews, who were afterwards dispersed in many different countries of the world.

V. 7—11. The iniquities of Israel were many and aggravated: but their apostacy from God to Idolatry formed their violation of the national covenant. The Lord had, as it were, graciously espoused them to himself; but this spiritual adultery excited his jealousy; and by persisting in it, they provoked him to give them a writing of divorcement, and to put them away. They had, as a nation, experienced his power and love in delivering them from Egypt, and giving them Canaan; and they had witnessed, and executed his vengeance upon the idolatrous Canaanites: yet in disobedience to express and repeated commandments, they had ungratefully and absurdly worshipped their idols. They had also willingly obeyed the orders of idolatrous kings to worship the golden calves and Baalim; they had committed much secret idolatry, in addition to that which was established by law; and especially they had worshipped the sun, moon, and stars, which as the *hosts* or *armies* of God, stationed in the visible heavens, are employed to fulfil his will: and finally they so multiplied their temples, or altars, that they were found in every village, and at every shepherd's cot, as well as in the fenced and more populous cities; so that at length the predicted and denounced judgments came upon them. (*Marg. Ref.*)

ing, [i] Turn ye from your evil ways, and [k] keep my commandments, *and* my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets.

14 Notwithstanding they would not hear, but [l] hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that [m] did not believe in the LORD their God.

15 And they rejected his statutes, and [n] his covenant that he made with their fathers, and [o] his testimonies which he testified against them, and they followed [p] vanity, and became vain, and went after the heathen that *were* round about them, *concerning* [q] whom the LORD had charged them, that they should not do like them.

16 And they left all the commandments of the LORD their God, and made them [r] molten images, *even* two calves, and made [s] a grove, and [t] worshipped all the host of heaven, and served [u] Baal.

17 And [x] they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and [y] used divination and enchantments, and [z] sold themselves to do evil [a] in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.

18 Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel, and [b] removed them out of his sight; there was none left but [c] the tribe of Judah only.

19 Also [d] Judah kept not the commandments of the LORD their God, but [e] walked in the statutes of Israel which they made.

20 And the LORD [f] rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and [g] delivered them into the hand of spoilers, [h] until he had cast them out of his sight.

21 For [i] he rent Israel from the house of David; and [k] they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king: and [l] Jeroboam drave Israel from following the LORD, and made them sin a great sin.

22 For the children of Israel [m] walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did: they departed not from them;

23 Until the LORD removed Israel out of his sight, [n] as he had said by all his servants the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land [o] to Assyria unto this day.

24 ¶ And [p] the king of Assyria brought *men* from [q] Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from [r] Ava, and from [s] Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed *them* in the cities of Samaria, instead of the children of Israel: and they [t] possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof.

25 And *so* it was, at the beginning of

i Is. i. 16—20. lv. 6, 7. Jer. vii. 3—7. xviii. 11. xxv. 4, 5. xxxv. 15. Hos. xiv. 1.
k Jer. vii. 22, 23. xxvi 4—6.
l Deut. xxxi. 27. 2 Chr. xxxvi 13. Prov. xxix. 1. Is. xlviii 4. Jer. vii. 26. Rom. ii. 4, 5. Heb. iii. 7, 8.
m Deut i. 32 Ps. lxxviii. 22, 32 cvi. 24 Heb. iii 12
n Ex. xxiv 6—8. Deut xxiv. 10—15. 25. Jer xxi. 32.
o 2 Chr. xxxi. 15, 16. Neh. x. 25, 29, 30 Jer xliv. 4.
p Deut. xxxii. 31. 1 Sam. xii. 21. 1 Kings xvi 13. Ps cxv. 8 Jer x. 8. 15. Jon ii 8. Rom. i 21 1 Cor viii 4
q 8. 11, 12. 2 Chr. xxxiii 2. 9.
r Ex. xxxii. 8. 1 Kings xii 28. Ps. cvi. 18—20 Is. xlv. 8, 9.
s 1 Kings xiv 15 23 xv. 13. xvi 33.
t Deut iv. 19. Jer viii. 2.
u x. 18 26. xi. 18 1 Kings xvi. 31 xxii 53.
x xvi. 3. xxi 6 Lev. xviii 21 2 Chr. xxviii 3. Ez. xx. 26 31. xxiii 37. 39
y xxi. 6. Deut. xviii 10—12. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 6. Is viii 19. xlvii. 9. 12, 13. Jer. xxvii 9. Mic. v. 12. Acts xvi. 16. Gal v 20.
z 1 Kings xxi 20. 25. Is. l. 1.
a xxi. 6.
b xiii. 23. Deut. xxix. 20—28. xxxii. 21—26. Josh. xxiii. 13. 15. Hos. ix. 3
c 1 Kings xi. 13. 32. 36. xii. 20. Hos. xi. 12.
d Jer iii. 8—11. Ez. xvi 51, 52. xxii. 2—16. xxiii. 4—13.
e viii. 18. 27.
f 15. 1 Sam. xv. 23. 26. xvi. 1. Jer. vi 30 Rom. xi 1, 2. 6
g xiii 3 7. xv 18—20. 29. xviii. 9 2 Chr. xxviii. 5, 6
h 18 Deut xi. 12. Jon. i 3. 10. Matt. xxv 41. 2 Thes i. 9
i 1 Kings xi. 11. 31
k 1 Kings xii 19. 20.
l 1 Kings xii. 28—30. xiv. 16.
m iii. 3. x. 29. 31. xiii. 2 11. xv. 9.
n 6. viii. 10. 1 Kings xiii 2. xiv. 16. Hos. i. 4—9 Am. v. 27. Mic. i. 6.
o 6. xviii. 11, 12.
p Ezra iv. 2—10.
q 30. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11
r 31. xviii. 34. *Ivah.*
s x 13. Is. x. 9. xxxvi. 19.
t 6. Matt. x 5.

V. 14. The people rejected the testimonies of God, which he testified against them, and they did not believe in him, or depend on him for protection, according to his promises. Thus they hoped to sin with impunity, and concluded that the service of the Lord would be unprofitable. "*To harden the neck*," is a metaphor taken from the stiffness of the neck of an ox, when with his full strength he resists the attempts of the husbandman to put the yoke upon him, or to bring him to draw in it: and it aptly represents the self-will, earnestness, and stubbornness, with which the presumptuous sinner sets himself to rebel against God, in the midst of warnings, convictions, judgments, and mercies.

V. 15. By making and worshipping lifeless images, the people became senseless and stupid, like unto them: and by worshipping false and imagined deities under these images, they learned to imitate all the vices ascribed to those demons. Thus among the Greeks and Romans, the worshippers of Bacchus revelled in intemperance, those of Venus rioted in licentiousness, and those of Mars delighted in shedding human blood. Finally, by worshipping Satan under all these names, they were conformed to the very nature, and imbibed all the hateful qualities, of that arch-apostate and rebel.

V. 16. It is evident that the word, rendered *a grove* and *groves*, means some kind of image set up in the temples originally built in groves; and not the trees which formed the grove. (10.)

V. 17. *To provoke*, &c. The people acted, as if their express intention had been to provoke the Lord to anger: they had sold themselves as slaves to Satan, to work evil in the sight of God, that they might in every thing displease him as much as possible.

V. 18. *The tribe*, &c. That is, the tribe of Judah, with the Benjamites, Levites, and others, who were incorporated along with Judah into one people.

V. 24. Shalmaneser seems to have carried away all the chief men, and the bulk of the nation; but to have left some poor remains of the Israelites, who dwelt in the land, during the remainder of his reign and the busy reign of Sennacherib. But Esarhaddon more entirely removed the old inhabitants, and peopled the country from different parts of his dominions: and by that time Babylon, which had formed a distinct kingdom, was brought under the government of the king of Assyria, and some of these new inhabitants were removed from thence. The cities had not been destroyed, but reserved for the new inhabitants which it was meant to place there.

their dwelling there, *that* [u] they feared not the LORD; therefore, [x] the LORD sent lions among them, which slew *some* of them.

26 Wherefore they spake to the king of Assyria, saying, The nations which thou hast removed, and placed in the cities of Samaria, [y] know not the manner of the God of the land; therefore he hath sent lions among them, and behold, they slay them, because they know not the manner of the God of the land.

27 Then the king of Assyria commanded, saying, Carry thither [z] one of the priests whom ye brought from thence, and let them go and dwell there, and let him teach them the manner of the God of the land.

28 Then one of the priests, whom they had carried away from Samaria, came and dwelt [a] in Beth-el, and [b] taught them how they should fear the LORD.

29 Howbeit every nation made [c] gods of their own, and put *them* in the houses of the high places which the Samaritans had made, every nation in their cities wherein they dwelt.

30 And the men of Babylon made Succoth-benoth, and the men of Cuth made Nergal, and the men of Hamath made Ashima,

31 And [d] the Avites made Nibhaz and Tartak, and the Sepharvites [e] burnt their children in fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech the gods of Sepharvaim.

32 So they feared the LORD, and made unto themselves of [f] the lowest of them priests of the high places, which sacrificed for them in the houses of the high places.

33 [g] They feared the LORD, and served their own gods, after the manner of the nations * whom they carried away from thence.

34 Unto this day they do after the former manners: they [h] fear not the LORD, neither do they after their statutes, or after their ordinances, or after the law and commandment which the LORD commanded the children of Jacob, [i] whom he named Israel;

35 [k] With whom the LORD had made a covenant, and [l] charged them, saying, Ye shall not [m] fear other gods, nor bow yourselves to them, nor serve them, nor sacrifice to them:

36 But the LORD who brought you up out of the land of Egypt with great power, and [n] a stretched out arm, [o] him shall ye fear, and him shall ye worship, and to him shall ye do sacrifice.

u 28. 32. 34. 41. Josh. xxii. 25. Jer. x. 7 Dan. vi. 26. Jon. i. 9.
x ii. 24. 1 Kings xiii. 24. xx. 36. Jer. xv. 3. Ez. xiv. 15.
y 1 Sam. viii. 9. x. 25. Am. viii. 14.
z Judg. xvii. 13. 1 Kings xii. 31. xiii. 2. 2 Chr. xi. 15.
a 1 Kings xii. 29—32.
b Is. xxix. 13.
c Ps. cxv. 4—8. Is. xliv. 9—20. Jer. x. 3—5. Hos. viii. 5, 6. Rom. i. 23.
d 24.
e 17.
f 1 Kings xii. 24. xiii. 33.
g Hos. x. 2. Zeph. i. 5. Matt. vi. 24.
* Or, *who carried them away.*
h 25. 27, 28. 36.
i Gen. xxxii. 23. xxxiii. 20. xxxv. 10 1 Kings xviii. 31 Is. xlviii. 1.
k Ex. xix. 5, 6. xxiv. 6—8 Deut. xxix. 10—15. Jer. xxxi. 31—34. Heb. viii. 6.—13.
l Ex. xx. 4, 5. xxxiv. 12—17. Deut. iv. 23—27. xiii. 1, &c. Josh. xxiii. 7—16. Judg. vi. 10.
m Jer. x. 5.
n Ex. vi. 6. ix. 1 5. Deut. v. 15. Jer. xxxii. 21. Acts iv. 30
o Lev. xix. 32. Deut. vi. 13. x. 20. xii. 5, 6. 11, 12.

V. 25. These colonists had met with no remarkable judgments, when they served idols in their own countries: but they now possessed the land which the Lord had called by his own name; and he was pleased to show them, that Israel had not been dispossessed because he was not able to defend them, but because he had given them up to ruin for their sins. It was also proper they should be convinced that they had no right to their new possessions, except by JEHOVAH's allowance; and that he expected that they should do him homage for their estates: and therefore a number of lions were let loose upon them, as soon as they entered the land. The desolations of war would naturally make way for the increase of wild beasts: but these lions assaulted the people after so remarkable a manner, that they concluded, according to truth, they were sent by the God of the land to punish them for not serving him.

V. 27, 28. It is not at all probable that this instructor was a priest of the family of Aaron, or that he taught the people from the book of the law, as some have thought. It can hardly be doubted, but he had been one of the priests, either of the golden calf at Beth-el, or of some high place in that neighbourhood. And accordingly he resorted to Beth-el as his residence, when sent to teach the people to worship the God of the land, having doubtless assistants in the business. It is, however, probable that he did not teach them to worship JEHOVAH by images; though we can only know what he taught by the result: and it is evident, they were led to consider JEHOVAH as the local tutelary god of the land, one among a group of other deities; instead of worshipping him as the one, true, eternal, almighty, and glorious Creator, Governor, and Judge of the world. They probably learned to offer sacrifices, with some external regard to the Mosaic law, but without understanding the meaning and use of that sacred ordinance. Along with these, and such like observances, they were allowed, or they assumed, the liberty of serving their own idols, according to the customs of their several tribes.

V. 29—31. The critics have framed many conjectures concerning the meaning of the names here made use of, and the idols and idolatries signified by them. But such obsolete abominations, with which every thing brutal, cruel, and licentious was connected, are not much worth understanding.

V. 32. After the example of Jeroboam, these men chose the priests of JEHOVAH from the lowest of the people; whilst probably the chief nobles were ambitious of the honour of being priests to their favourite idols!

p Lev. xix 37. Deut. iv. 44, 45. v. 31—33. vi 1. 2. xii. 32. 1 Chr. xxix 19. Ps. xix 8—11. cv. 44, 45.
q Deut. xxxi. 9. 11. Neh. ix. 13, 14.

37 And p the statutes, and the ordinances, and the law, and the commandment, which he q wrote for you, ye shall observe to do for evermore; and ye shall not fear other gods.

r Deut. iv. 23, vi. 12. viii. 14 18.
s 1 Sam. xii 21 Is. viii 12 14. Jer. x. 7. Matt. x. 28. Luke i. 50.

38 And the covenant that I have made with you r ye shall not forget, neither shall ye fear other gods.

39 But the LORD your God s ye shall fear; and t he shall deliver you out of the hand of all your enemies.

t Neh. ix. 27. Luke i. 71. 74, 75.

40 Howbeit they did not hearken, u but they did after their former manner.

u 8. 12. 34. Deut. iv 28.

41 So x these nations feared the LORD, and served their graven images, both their children and their children's children: as did their fathers, so do they y unto this day.

x 32, 33. Josh. xxiv. 14 — 20. 1 Kings xviii.21. Zeph i. 5. Matt. vi. 24. Rev. iii. 15, 16.
y Ezra iv. 1—3.

V. 33—40. The new inhabitants of the land imitated the idolatrous Israelites, by associating their idols with JEHOVAH, as the objects of worship. The remainder, however, of the verses seem to relate to the Israelites after they were carried captive. They still persevered in idolatry and disobedience; and not being purified, were left to be consumed in the furnace. It is said, that the Israelites *did not fear the* LORD (34); yet the heathens, who followed their example, are said, *to have feared the* LORD. The Israelites did not so much as fear the wrath of the almighty God: but on the other hand the poor Pagans feared the power of his wrath, and to avert it paid him some ignorant worship, according to the wretched instructions given them. As this was an external acknowledgment of his power and Godhead, and a homage paid to him, he was pleased in consequence to withdraw his judgments from them.

V. 41. Some ascribe these words to Jeremiah, the supposed penman of this part of the history, others to Ezra after the captivity. However, these *Cutheans*, (as the Jews call them from *Cuthah*,) maintained this mongrel religion till after that latter period, and so were proper successors of idolatrous Israel, the professed people of God. About four hundred years before Christ, a temple was built by them, in competition with the temple at Jerusalem: for, having been joined by a number of apostate Jews, and a priest of Aaron's, they renounced their idols, and became schismatical worshippers of JEHOVAH, receiving some parts and rejecting others of the Jewish scriptures. We need not decide, whether there was any true godliness among them: but, as a people, "they knew not what they "worshipped, for salvation was of the Jews;" (*John* iv. 22.) Christ commanded his disciples, whom he sent forth in his life-time, not to enter into any city of the Samaritans: yet he himself spent two days at Sychar one of their cities; and the apostles after the day of Pentecost do not seem to have regarded the Samaritans as Gentiles; for they preached in their cities before the conversion of Cornelius: (*Acts* viii. 1—25.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

The long-suffering of God, instead of leading sinners to repentance, often renders them more secure: for having long transgressed with impunity, they conclude that there is no danger; and thus they "treasure up wrath against "the day of wrath."—Ungodly men are not all alike abandoned to flagrant enormities: but the least criminal deserves worse than the most severe temporal calamities; and consequently have no right to complain, if a sovereign God shall see good, in their days, to execute upon a guilty people the accumulated vengeance of many generations. For when the appointed measure of iniquity is filled up, the Lord will forbear no longer: then kings and people reciprocally suffer on account of each other's crimes; and their causes and interests are no more separable, in the great concerns of national judgments and mercies, than those of the head, or heart, and the several members of the human body. When the service of God, which is perfect freedom, is renounced, men become slaves to the vilest and most tyrannical of masters: and sinners, left to themselves, never attempt more than a change of one tyrant for another; not having any idea or expectation of complete liberty. The extravagant profligate sometimes in advancing years exchanges the bondage of his sensual lusts, for the yoke of avarice or ambition: and the immoral and profane may commence Pharisees, or hypocrites: but mere nature can advance little further than this. Yet the gospel calls us not only to break our league with every lust, and to renounce every sinful connexion, however formed, confirmed, or palliated by specious pretences; but to refuse obedience to every superior who would require us to sin against God; which, if we would do, we must seek the assistance of his special grace. In all other cases the Lord marks with disapprobation men's violation of agreements, and refusal of obedience to those whom his providence has placed over them: and perfidious attempts for deliverance from trouble or thraldom, commonly issue in deeper misery and ruin.

V. 7—23.

When God arises to judgment, all opposition is fruitless, and only tends to prolong or increase misery. He keeps an exact register of our advantages, as well as of our sins and their aggravations: and when the day of retribution arrives, he will produce the whole account; that all the world may see he hath not done without cause, all that he hath done against the workers of iniquity: for the day of his wrath will be the revelation of his righteous judgment; and indeed his justice in the temporal sufferings of guilty nations is frequently evidenced in the same manner. No authority or example can bear men out in breaking the commandments of God: but the judgment they have known executed upon sinners; the favours conferred on themselves; and the testimony of the Lord's ministers, warning, exhorting, and inviting them to repent and to turn to God, will aggravate the guilt of those who harden their hearts in disobedience. Enormous as the outward wickedness of the world evidently is, the secret crimes, and sinful thoughts, desires, and purposes of mankind are immensely worse

CHAP. XVIII.

Hezekiah reigns well, abolishes idolatry, and prospers, 1—8. *In his time Samaria is taken, and Israel carried captive,* 9—12. *Sennacherib invades Judah, and Hezekiah pays him tribute,* 13—16. *Rabshakeh, sent by Sennacherib, in an insulting and blasphemous speech, aims to induce the people to revolt,* 17—35. *Hezekiah's servants hold their peace, and rend their clothes,* 36, 37.

NOW it came to pass [a] in the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, *that* [b] Hezekiah the son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign.

[a] 9. xvi. 2. xvii. 1.
[b] xvi. 20. 1 Chr. iii. 13. Matt. i. 9, 10.

Murders, rapines, adulteries, and treachery are horrid evils, which, for the good of society, are marked with a black brand of infamy: yet, in the balance of unbiassed reason, as well as in holy writ, ingratitude and enmity to God, proud rebellion against him, and contempt, neglect, or defiance of him; with all the idolatry, or impiety, which result from these propensities, are far more malignant violations of still higher obligations, and spring from the worst state of the heart imaginable. These will therefore be peculiarly considered in the condemnation of the wicked: especially of such as have been favoured with revelation, and the ordinances of God, and been his professed people, outwardly dedicated to him, and in covenant with him.—Without turning from every evil way, and keeping God's commandments and statutes, there can be no true godliness: yet this conversion must spring from a belief of his testimony, both concerning his wrath revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men; and concerning his mercy in Jesus Christ to all who repent and embrace this salvation. The rejection of his statutes and covenant is always the effect of unbelief; through which sinners harden their hearts against the fear of God, exclude the desire of his favour, and obstinately set themselves to break his commandment; and thus following lying vanities, become worthless and vile like unto their worldly idols.—When sinners have resolutely turned away from God, they will not only commit those sins which promise present advantage or gratification; but they transgress without any conceivable temptation, as if they purposely devised to provoke the Lord to anger: and having sold themselves to do evil, they serve Satan, with greater self-denial and violence done to their most rational natural affections, than ever could be required of them in the service of God. He peculiarly abhors those, who seduce or drive others, by any means, from following him, and cause them to sin against him: and generations yet unborn may curse the inventors of any false religion, or plausible system of infidelity, as the occasions of their everlasting perdition; nay, bad examples alone may render men chargeable with this tremendous guilt of murdering the souls of others; for human nature is far more ready to copy the evil than the good, and to listen to tempters than to monitors. How circumspectly should we then walk, seeing such dreadful consequences, for so long a time, may ensue in various ways from our misconduct!

V. 24—41.

When the Lord casts off his professing people, or delivers them into the hands of their enemies, he will take care of his own glory: and he can let their insulting conquerors know, that they have not prevailed against them for their own righteousness, or by their own power; but that he hath been provoked by the sins of those who were called by his name, to give their enemies such power against them.—All rational creatures ought to serve their Creator: and the very heathen who honour not his eternal power and Godhead, and are not thankful for his goodness, are left without excuse: yet that ignorance which springs from a comparative want of the means of instruction, is an alleviation of the sinner's guilt, and will plead effectually for the mitigation of his punishment; and the nearer we approach to "the valley of vision," the more inexcusable shall we be, if we continue irreligious or attached to vile superstitions. The terror of the Almighty sometimes induces unconverted sinners to a forced or a feigned submission: but where instructed by ignorant, formal, or hypocritical teachers, they form very unworthy thoughts of God, expect to please him by an outside form and a lip-labour; and endeavour to reconcile his service with that of Mammon, the love of the world, and the indulgence of their darling lusts. Thus slavish fear, united with ignorance, produces an unwilling worship, with the worthless dregs of their time and spirits, when the prime of them have been spent and exhausted in pursuits and pleasures more agreeable to their carnal minds; and they stop short of true repentance, faith, and devotedness to God. This kind of religion abounds from age to age, being congenial to the human heart, meeting with little disquietude from the natural conscience, and exciting no opposition from the world, or Satan, who willingly compounds to give up a part for a time, that he may at length engross the whole. Yet even such a worthless form of godliness is less dishonourable to the Lord, than the confident presumption of bold hypocrites and apostates. These come short even of this fear of God; and in opposition to the knowledge that they have acquired, they cast his law behind their back, set his threatenings, his power, and justice at defiance, and despise or abuse his mercies and his promises: if severe afflictions fail to bring such men to repentance, (an effect they seldom have,) their ruin is unavoidable, and will be most tremendous. But may that "fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom," possess our hearts and influence our conduct, that we may be ready for every change! Our worldly settlements are precarious; we know not whither we may be driven before we die; and we must soon leave the world: then the wicked will be driven away in his wickedness; but the righteous hath "chosen that good part, which will never be taken from "him."

2 Twenty and five years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also *was* [c] Abi the daughter of Zechariah.

3 And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, [d] according to all that David his father did.

4 [e] He removed the high places, and [f] brake the * images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces [g] the brazen serpent that Moses had made: for [h] unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it; and he called it † Nehushtan.

5 He [i] trusted in the LORD God of Israel; so that [k] after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor *any* that were before him.

6 For [l] he clave to the LORD *and* departed not ‡ from following him, but [m] kept his commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses.

7 And [n] the LORD was with him, *and*

c 2 Chr. xxix. 1. *Abijah.*
d xx. 3. xxii. 2.
i Kings. xv. 5. 11. 2 Chr. xxix. 2. xxxi. 20, 21.
e xii. 3. xiv. 4. xv. 4. 35. Lev xxvi. 30. 1 Kings iii. 2, 3. xv. 14. xxii. 43. Ps. lxxviii. 58. Ez. xx 28, 29.
f xxiii. 4, &c Deut. vii. 5. xii. 2, 3. Judg. vi. 25. 28. 1 Kings xv. 12, 13. 2 Chr. xix. 3. xxxi. 1. xxxiii. 3.
* Heb. *statues.*
g Num. xxi. 8, 9. John iii. 14, 15.
h xvi. 15.

† *a piece of brass*
i xix 10 2 Chr. xxxii. 7, 8 Job. xii 15. Ps. xii. 5. xxvii 1, 2. xlvi. 1, 2
k xix 15 — 19. xxiii. 25 2 Chr. xiv. 11. xv 7—9 xx. 20 35. 1 Deut x. 20. Josh. xxiii. 3. Acts xi. 23.
‡ Heb *from after him*
m xvii. 13. 16. 19. Jer. xi. 4. John xiv. 15. 21. xv. 10. 14. 1 John v. 3.
n Gen. xxi. 22. xxxix. 2. 3. 1 Sam. xviii. 14. 2 Chr xv. 2. Ps. xlvi 11 ix. 12. Matt xxviii 20. Acts vii. 9, 10.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVIII. V. 1. Hoshea seems to have been placed on the throne above four years before the death of Ahaz, (*Marg. Ref.*) but his establishment in quiet possession of the kingdom might take place some time after, from which the third year here mentioned was reckoned. For it is not likely that Hezekiah reigned a year along with his father.

V. 2. *Twenty and five*, &c. If we suppose that Ahaz at his death had nearly completed his thirty-seventh year, and Hezekiah was only entering on his twenty-fifth when he began to reign, Ahaz must have been under thirteen years of age, when his son was born! But there are on record well attested instances, especially in those climates, of men having children at as early a period: and there seems to have been a peculiar wisdom of Providence displayed in this uncommon circumstance; for thus Ahaz had a son of mature age to succeed him, when he had filled up so speedily the measure of his iniquities. And as Hezekiah was about nine years of age at the death of Jotham his grandfather, perhaps some good seed, which that pious prince had sown in his tender mind, might conduce to the excellency of his character.

V. 3. After the example of David, Hezekiah was sincerely and inwardly devoted to God; he delighted in his service, and persevered in promoting the cause of true religion to the end of his days: and, whilst preserved from scandalous offences such as David had been betrayed into, he emulated the strength of his faith, the vigour of his love, and the fervency of his piety.

V. 4. We shall hereafter meet with a fuller account of Hezekiah's reformation; (2 *Chr.* xxix. xxx. xxxi.) His father had set him a very bad example, and probably had given him as bad an education; yet he came to the throne, a confirmed servant of God, full of zeal for his glory, and confidence in his protection and assistance. Perhaps he had previously formed an acquaintance with Isaiah, who was at this time very eminent and useful. The prophet had occasionally been sent to Ahaz; but he was the friend and counsellor of Hezekiah. In this reformation he not only removed the monuments of idolatry, which abounded through the wickedness of Ahaz his predecessor; but he suppressed the irregular worship upon the high places, which had subsisted for many ages: and in doing this he must have risked much opposition from his own subjects. One instance of Judah's idolatry, and of Hezekiah's reformation, is mentioned in this place alone. The brazen serpent had been preserved by Israel, as a monument of the miracles wrought by means of it in behalf of their forefathers; in order to excite their gratitude, and encourage their faith and hope. We are not informed where it was: but it seems that after a time the people stupidly and wickedly made an idol of it, and burnt incense to it; as if *it* had wrought the cures, instead of being the external sign of God's operation. Hezekiah finding this idolatry deeply rooted, destroyed the brazen serpent, and called it *Nehushtan, or the piece of brass;* by way of exposing the folly of those who worshipped it, when it was of no more value or efficacy than any other piece of brass. The superstitious veneration paid to sacred relics in the Christian church, and especially the adoration paid to the form of the cross, and even in express words to the wood and nails of the cross, with all the impostures that have arisen from that absurd idolatry, have been exactly parallel to the worship of the brazen serpent; and Hezekiah's example fully authorizes the total abolition or disuse of every thing of that kind in religious worship. There were no relics under the Old Testament-church, except the pot of manna, Aaron's rod, and this brazen serpent. The two former were preserved by God's own appointment, but they were concealed in the holy of holies from popular inspection: the other was preserved by human contrivance, and it became an occasion of idolatry; until a pious king, who doubtless recollected with reverence and gratitude the event commemorated by it, destroyed it with decided abhorrence. And there never were any relicks preserved in the Christian church, however good the intention of the preserver might be, that did not issue in abuses, superstitions, and impositions, which must cause all *judicious* friends to the gospel to unite in wishing their extirpation. Yet true piety, and fervent affection for holy things and holy men, naturally lead this way; unless sound judgment, and considerable acquaintance with human nature and the history of superstition, counteract the tendency.

V. 5, 6. None of the kings of Judah, from the time of the division of the kingdom, equalled Hezekiah, in the vigour and simplicity of his dependence upon the Lord; in which he aspired to an equality with his progenitor David, who had reigned over the whole land. Even Asa, through weakness of faith, sought the assistance of a heathen prince; and Jehoshaphat formed an alliance with idolatrous Ahab: but Hezekiah clave to the Lord in entire confidence to the end of his life.

o 1 Sam. xviii. 5. 2 Sam. viii. 6. 14. p 20. xvi. 7.

o he prospered whithersoever he went forth: and he rebelled against the king of Assyria, and served him not.

q 2 Chr. xxviii. 18. Is. xiv. 29. * Heb. *Azzah.* r xvii. 9.

8 He smote q the Philistines, *even* unto * Gaza, and the borders thereof, r from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.

s xvii. 3.

9 ¶ And it came to pass in s the fourth year of king Hezekiah, which *was* the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, *that* Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria, and besieged it.

B. C. 720. t xvii. 6. Hos. xiii. 16. Am. iii. 11—15. iv. 1—3. vi. 7. ix. 1—4. Mic. i. 6—9. vi. 16. vii. 13.

10 And at the end of three years they took it, *even* in the sixth year of Hezekiah, (that *is* the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel,) Samaria was taken.

u xix. 11. 1 Chr. v. 26. Is. vii. 8. viii. 4. ix. 9—21. x. 5 11. Hos. viii. 3, 9. ix. 3. Am. v. 1—3. 6. 25—27. Acts vii. 43. x xvii. 7-23. Dan. ix. 6—11. Mic. iii. 4.

11 And the king of Assyria did carry away Israel unto Assyria, and u put them in Halah, and in Habor *by* the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes;

12 x Because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD their God, but transgressed his covenant, *and* all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded, and would not hear *them*, nor do *them*.

B. C. 713. y 2 Chr. xxxii. 1. Is. xxxvi. 1. ‡ Heb. *Sanherib.*

13 ¶ Now in y the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah did ‡ Sennacherib king of Assyria z come up against all the fenced cities of Judah, and took them.

z Is. vii. 17, &c. viii. 7, 8 x 5 Hos. xii. 1, 2

14 And Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to Lachish, saying, a I have offended; return from me: that which thou puttest on me I will bear. And the king of Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver, and thirty talents of gold.

a 7. Prov. xxix 25.

15 And Hezekiah b gave *him* all the silver *that was* found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house.

b xii. 18. xvi. 8. 2 Chr. xvi. 2.

16 At that time did Hezekiah cut off *the* c *gold from* the doors of the temple of the LORD, and *from* the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it § to the king of Assyria.

c 1 Kings. vi. 21—25. 2 Chr. xxix. 3.

§ Heb. *them.* B. C. 710.

17 ¶ And d the king of Assyria sent Tartan and Rabsaris and Rabshakeh from Lachish to king Hezekiah, with a ‖ great host against Jerusalem. And they went up and came to Jerusalem. And when they were come up, they came and stood by e the conduit of the upper pool, which *is* in the highway of the fuller's field.

d 2 Chr. xxxii. 9. Is. xx. 1. xxxvi. 2.

‖ Heb. *heavy.*

e Is. vii. 3. xxii. 9—11.

V. 7. (*Note*, xvii. 4.) Ahaz had basely made the land tributary to the king of Assyria, to purchase his assistance against the Israelites and Syrians: but Hezekiah, who was under no personal engagements to that prince, would not stand to the agreement that his father had formed. Having set about a thorough reformation, and confiding in the Lord's assistance, he refused submission to any foreign potentate: and, as the king of Assyria would call this *rebelling* against him, that term is here used. But it does not appear that Hezekiah violated any treaties: and the king of Assyria could have no just claim to domineer over the king of Judah. Some however think, that he was too precipitate in this measure; being rather elated by his prosperity in his other transactions.

V. 8. The Philistines seem to have recovered strength, in the late unsettled state of affairs in Israel and Judah; but Hezekiah again reduced them to subjection. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 9, 10. Shalmaneser began the siege of Samaria, in the beginning of the fourth year of Hezekiah, and the seventh of Hoshea; so that the *three years siege* was concluded by the end of the sixth of the former, and the ninth of the latter prince. The desolations of Israel would dispose the Jews to concur with Hezekiah, and thus facilitate his endeavours for reformation, as well as quicken him in them.

V. 13. A few years after the reduction of Samaria, Shalmaneser died, and was succeeded by his son Sennacherib. Shalmaneser doubtless would have attempted to subjugate Hezekiah, but he was otherwise employed, and thus leisure was given Hezekiah to effect his reformation without interruption. Sennacherib, as soon as he mounted the throne, emulated his father's military honours, and imitated his example. He therefore purposed to treat Jerusalem and Judah, as Shalmaneser had done Samaria and Israel: and it pleased God to chastise the lukewarmness, hypocrisy, or reluctancy, with which many of the Jews concurred in Hezekiah's reformation, and to try his faith, and that of other believers, by permitting this potent monarch to reduce all the other strong holds, and to threaten Jerusalem with a siege.

V. 14—16. Some expositors charge Hezekiah with criminality in revolting from the king of Assyria; but he seems rather to have sinned by yielding to him in so timid a manner. He evidently distrusted God's protection: and by confessing to the haughty conqueror, that he had offended, and was ready to submit to any imposition that he laid upon him; and by hiring his departure with his own treasures, and the gold of the temple, he invited and encouraged his further impositions. The event shows, that if he had boldly stood out, and committed his cause to God, he would have been protected. But though Hezekiah's conduct might perhaps be reprehensible; yet it served to render Sennacherib's subsequent violence more inexcusable. Ahaz had cut off the gold from the doors and pillars of the temple, and Hezekiah had replaced it: yet he too in this emergency cut it off to purchase peace.

18 And when they had called to the king, there came out to them [f] Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, which *was* over the household, and [g] Shebna the * scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder.

19 And Rabshakeh said unto them, Speak ye now to Hezekiah, [h] Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, [i] What confidence *is* this wherein thou trustest?

20 Thou † sayest, (but *they are but* ‡ vain words,) § *I have* counsel and strength for the war. Now on whom dost thou trust, that thou [k] rebellest against me?

21 Now, behold, thou ‖ trustest upon [l] the staff of this bruised reed, *even* [m] upon Egypt, on which if a man lean, it will go into his hand and pierce it: [n] so *is* Pharaoh king of Egypt unto all that trust on him.

22 But if ye say unto me, [o] We trust in the LORD our God: *is* not that he, [p] whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and hath said to Judah and Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem?

23 Now therefore, I pray thee, give * pledges to my lord the king of Assyria, and [q] I will deliver thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them.

24 [r] How then wilt thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master's servants, and [s] put thy trust on Egypt for [t] chariots, and for horsemen!

25 [u] Am I now come up without the LORD against this place to destroy it? The LORD said to me, Go up against this land, and destroy it.

f Is. xxii. 20—24. xxxvi. 3. 22.
g Is. xxii 15—19.
* Or, *secretary.*
h 2 Chr. xxxii 10. Is. x 8—14. xxxvi. 4. xxxvii. 13. Dan. iv 30.
i xix. 10. 2 Chr. xxxii. 7, 8. 10, 11, 14—16.
† Or, *talkest.*
‡ Heb. *word of the lips.*
§ Or, *but counsel and strength* are *for the war.* Prov. xxi. 30, 31.
k 14.
‖ Heb. *trustest thee.*
l Is. xxxvi 6. Ez. xxix. 6, 7.
m Is xxx. 2, 7. xxxi. 1—3.
n xvii. 4.
o 5.
p 4. 2 Chr. xxxi. 1. xxxii. 12. Is. xxxvi. 7.
* Heb *hostages.*
q 1 Sam. xvii. 42. — 44 1 Kings xx. 10. 18. Neh. iv. 2—5. Ps. cxxiii 3, 4. Is. x. 13, 14. xxxvi. 8, 9
r Is x. 8. Dan. ii 37, 38. iv. 22. 37.
s 21. Deut xvii. 16. Is xxxi. 1. 3. xxxvi 6, 9. Jer. xxxvii. 7. xlii. 14—18. Ez. xvii. 15. 17.
t Ps. xx 7, 8.
u xix 6. 22, &c. 1 Kings xiii 18. 2 Chr. xxxv. 21. Is. x. 5, 6.

V. 17. This second invasion is computed by some learned men to have been three years after the former agreement; during which time Sennacherib was occupied, and victorious, in other wars. But it seems more probable from the narrative, that he returned the ensuing year. Having, however, accomplished his other projects, and being lifted up with pride, he was determined, without any provocation, to reduce Jerusalem, and to treat its inhabitants as his father had done those of Samaria. He therefore sent his commanders with a large army to encamp against that city; being himself engaged in besieging Lachish; (2 *Chr.* xxxii. 9:) and they were instructed to summons Hezekiah to surrender at discretion, having doubtless particular orders what to say to him or his envoys, on that subject.

V. 18. Hezekiah, though summoned to a personal conference, did not choose to trust himself with his perfidious and domineering invaders; and therefore he appointed commissioners, or deputies, to attend in his name. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 19. *Rabshakeh*, &c. This man is reported by tradition to have been an apostate Jew; which supposition, if well grounded, may account both for his fluency in speaking in the Hebrew tongue and about the God of Israel, and for his embittered enmity against true religion.

V. 20, 21. It does not appear that Hezekiah, after the preceding agreement, had refused to pay tribute to the king of Assyria, or had attempted to shake off his yoke: but when he found him determined to destroy Jerusalem and enslave its inhabitants, he refused to surrender at discretion, and prepared to stand a siege; and this was rebellion, and the most unreasonable presumption! Rabshakeh supposed that Hezekiah had neither counsel nor strength, for such a war; and indeed he did not place his dependence on his own wisdom, or on the number and valour of his troops. Hoshea had indeed confided in the king of Egypt, and had been deceived and ruined by that confidence: and if Hezekiah had done the same, he might have proved to him like a bruised cane, which deceives those who lean on it, and not only lets them fall, but runs into their hands. But he had not put his trust in Egypt for chariots and horsemen: though probably many of his nobles were disposed to that measure, and some engagements of that kind had before been attempted. (*Isaiah* xxx. 1—7.)

V. 22. The Assyrians had learned that Hezekiah professed to confide in God: and Rabshakeh combated that confidence, by inquiring how he could presume to expect assistance from him, whose altars and high places he had destroyed? For he ignorantly supposed that the Lord would be pleased, and deem himself honoured, in proportion to the number of the temples and altars dedicated to him, though erected in direct contradiction to his command; and therefore he concluded that Hezekiah had forfeited God's protection by that very reformation which ensured it.

V. 23, 24. If Hezekiah would give security, that he would submit in case of failure, Rabshakeh vaunted that he would send him two thousand horses, provided he could find men to ride them. By this he meant to insult and expose Hezekiah's inability to resist the immense army of Sennacherib; or even a small detachment of it, under the command of the least of his captains. But the Israelites were forbidden to multiply chariots and horses, and Hezekiah, had learned to depend upon a firmer support.

V. 25. Rabshakeh intended to discourage the people, and to induce them to a revolt. Samaria had been destroyed according to the denunciations of God's word, and Shalmaneser had been considered as his instrument in that destruction. The Jews also were menaced with judgments for their sins, and Rabshakeh affected to believe, that Sennacherib was commissioned to execute similar vengeance on

26 Then said Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, and Shebna, and Joah, unto Rabshakeh, Speak, I pray thee, to thy servants [x] in the Syrian language; for we understand *it:* and talk not with us in the Jews' language in the ears of the people that *are* on the wall.

27 But Rabshakeh said unto them, Hath my master sent me to thy master, and to thee, to speak these words? *hath he* not *sent me* to the men which sit on the wall, that they may [y] eat their own dung, and drink * their own piss with you?

28 Then [z] Rabshakeh stood and cried with a loud voice in the Jews' language, and spake, saying, Hear the word of [a] the great king, the king of Assyria:

29 Thus saith the king, [b] Let not Hezekiah deceive you: for he shall not be able to deliver you out of his hand:

30 Neither let Hezekiah [c] make you trust in the LORD, saying, The LORD will surely deliver us, and [d] this city shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria.

31 Hearken not unto Hezekiah: for thus saith the king of Assyria, † Make *an agreement* with me by a present, and come out to me, and *then* [e] eat ye every man of his own vine, and every one of his fig-tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his ‡ cistern:

32 Until [f] I come and take you away to a land [g] like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of oil-olive and of honey, that ye may live, and not die: and hearken not unto Hezekiah, when he ∮ persuadeth you, saying, The LORD will deliver us.

33 [h] Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered at all his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria?

34 Where *are* [i] the gods of Hamath, and of Arpad? where *are* the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and [k] Ivah? [l] have they delivered Samaria out of mine hand?

35 Who *are* they, among all the gods of the countries, that have delivered their country out of mine hand, [m] that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of mine hand?

36 But the people [n] held their peace, and answered him not a word: for the

x Ezra iv. 7. Is. xxxvi. 11, 12.
y vi. 25. Deut. xxviii. 53—57. Ps. lxxiii 8.
* Heb. *the water of their feet.*
z 2 Chr. xxxii 18. Is. xxxvi. 13—18.
a 19 Is. x. 8—13 Ez. xxix 3. xxxi 3—10.
b 2 Chr xxxii. 11. 15 Dan. iii. 15. —17. vi 16. John xix 10, 11. 2 Thes. ii. 4.
c 22. xix. 10. 22. Ps iv. 2 x 12 xxii. 7. 8 lxxii 9. 11 Matt. xxvii. 43.
d xix 32—34.
† Or, *Seek my favour.* Heb. *Make with me a blessing* Gen. xxxii 20. xxxiii. 11 Prov. xviii. 16.
e 1 Kings iv. 20. 25. Zech iii. 10.
‡ Or, *pit.*
f 11. xvii. 6. 23. xxiv. 14—16. xxv. 11.
g Ex. iii. 8. Deut. viii 7—9 xi. 12. xxxii. 13, 14.
∮ Or, *deceiveth.* 29.
h xix. 12 17, 18. 2 Chr. xxxii. 14. —17 19 Is x. 10, 11. xxxvi. 18 —20
i xix 13 Num. xiii. 21 2 Sam. viii. 9 Jer xlix. 23
k xvii. 24. *Ava.*
l xvii 6. 23, 24. 30, 31. xix. 12, 13.
m Ex. v. 2. 2 Chr. xxxii. 15. Job xv. 25, 26. Is. x. 15 xxxvii. 23—29. Dan. iii. 15.
n Ps xxxviii. 13, 14 xxxix. 1. Prov. ix. 7. xxvi 4. Am v. 13 Matt vii. 6.

Jerusalem. But there was no truth in his assertion, which the late effectual reformation might inspire the people with confidence to disregard; and the impiety of pretending that Sennacherib came by God's command, when he was entirely instigated by ambition, resentment, and rapacity, and when he treated God himself in the most blasphemous manner, was very horrible.

V. 26. The ambassadors understood the drift of Rabshakeh's discourse, and reasonably and mildly required him to make his proposals to them in the Syrian language; and not to address himself to the people, who were not proper judges in such matters.

V. 27. These were hyperbolical expressions, denoting the utmost extremities of famine, which the people must expect to endure, in case they dared to resist the king of Assyria.

V. 29—35. Rabshakeh supposed the Assyrian monarchs had overpowered the gods, as well as the kings, of all the nations which they had subjugated; and that JEHOVAH was no more powerful than the rest of them: and therefore, if the Jews regarded Hezekiah's persuasions, and expected help from the LORD, they would certainly be deceived, for he would never be able to deliver them. What mean thoughts of the infinite God, and what arrogant thoughts of himself, must have possessed the mind of Sennacherib, who doubtless had instructed his servant to speak of him in this style! The gods of Hamath, &c. were mere idols, not able to do good or evil. The people of Samaria had provoked the Lord to sell them into the hands of their enemies; and the idols, which they had chosen were indeed unable to defend them; but, soon after, the new inhabitants experienced to their loss, that the God of the land could, if he had so pleased, have delivered Samaria out of the hand of the king of Assyria. Surely, if this proud worm had not been intoxicated with success, he must have admitted, that somewhere in the universe there was a power superior to that of mortal man! and if so, it must be highly irrational to set thus at defiance all that was called God, or worshipped! But by this blasphemy the Lord was expressly engaged in the cause; and his honour required him to crush the self-important wretch that dared to exalt himself against him: and the greatest kindness imaginable was done to the king and people of Judah, by this language of impiety and defiance. The proposal made to the people was not very alluring, unless they could be previously terrified with the dread of impending destruction: but Rabshakeh avowed the intention of extorting more money from them; and only of permitting them to continue in their own land till the king had leisure to remove them to another; and the fertility of that other country was not likely to be very useful to those, who were to be captives and slaves in it. But who could have depended upon the word of such a man, if he had made more equitable proposals?

king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not.

37 Then came Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, which *was* over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder, to Hezekiah, [o] with *their* clothes rent, and told him the words of Rabshakeh.

[o] Is. xxxiii. 7. xxxvi. 21, 22.

V. 36, 37. Hezekiah was aware what language Rabshakeh would employ, and had wisely counselled his envoys, and commanded the people, to hold their peace; lest they should get engaged in a reviling contention, or provoke him to further impiety. In abhorrence, however, of his blasphemy, and in grief for the afflicted estate of the nation, they rent their clothes, and returned to the king.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

In times of increasing impiety we should not despond, as if things must necessarily proceed from bad to worse; for the Lord is able to give them an unexpected and effectual turn. From the most abandoned families he sometimes raises up the brightest ornaments and most useful friends of true religion, to illustrate the sovereignty and power of his grace: and when parents have been notoriously profane and wicked, their children ought not to hesitate to express, *by an opposite conduct*, a decided disapprobation of their crimes, and to counteract to the utmost the effects of them upon others; whether they have occupied a public or a more private station in society: for when the honour of God is concerned, the reputation of the nearest relatives is entitled to a very subordinate regard. It is not enough, that we do not imitate the conduct of atrocious offenders, or that we tread in the steps of those who have upon the whole served God sincerely: but we should aim high; and in aspiring at that eminency which the Scripture proposes, we should set before our eyes the most approved patterns, whose actions are there recorded; that we may follow those who have most nearly followed Christ, and most effectually served God and their generation; and thus become good examples for others to copy. (1 *Thes.* i. 6, 7.) In attempting personal or public reformation, those things should be removed or avoided, which have proved *occasions of evil*, though not sinful in themselves. Human depravity is prone to pervert the bounty of Providence into fuel for sinful lusts; and in some circumstances, is equally propense to abuse the peculiar mercies of God into occasions of superstition and idolatry. It is natural to fallen man to put the creature in the place of the Creator, and to regard the *instrument* rather than the *author*, of our comforts: and though this is more absurd when the instrument is irrational or inanimate; it is equally idolatrous, when the most exalted of intelligent agents are thus unduly honoured. However excellent or useful, or deserving of honour such creatures have been: when they are thus idolized, their comparative meanness and worthlessness ought to be exposed, and the abuse of them treated with the deepest indignation and abhorrence: nay, it were better that the most exalted creature should perish, than that God should be dishonoured by having the least of his glory given unto another. Much more then should every monument of his former mercies be extirpated, when it becomes the occasion of such fatal delusions; and the abuse cannot otherwise effectually be prevented: but the propriety of such a measure is still more conspicuous, when the relic, or the custom, was originally the creature of superstition, a mere human invention, perhaps the result of fraud and imposture. True faith needs not such aids to devotion: the word of God, daily meditated upon, leads the mind to realize past, future, and invisible things, as if present; and thus every good end proposed by other expedients is answered, without the danger to which they expose us: and the simple scriptural use of the sacramental signs and pledges of heavenly things, may effectually be preserved from such abuse, and answer every purpose, which can be obtained by presenting the objects of our faith to our bodily senses, in any way not warranted by the word of God; which only tends to distract the mind, to interrupt the simple exercise of faith, to excite spurious affections, to deprave the imagination with gross and false notions of heavenly things, and to introduce either absurd superstition or wild enthusiasm. They who most entirely trust in God, will feel themselves most effectually emancipated from other dependences, and from the dominion of every other master; and will be encouraged to resist every enemy and rival, "that they may cleave to the LORD, and not depart from "following him, and keeping his commandments."

V. 9—16.

Whilst the interests of religion decline or are run down in one place, the Lord takes care that they shall revive and flourish in another: the judgments which desolate degenerate churches and nations, instead of injuring his cause, tend to warn, animate, and embolden others in personal religion, and in attempting public reformation; nay, they often facilitate the work of active instruments in religious revivals, by intimidating opposers, and stirring up those who were indifferent, or reluctant to assist. Yet the believer, when pursuing heavenly things, and seeking the glory of God with the greatest simplicity and most vigorous affections, must stand prepared for trouble. For a time he may enjoy the sunshine of peace and prosperity to encourage him in his work, and to enable him to bring it to some establishment; and whatsoever he doeth shall eventually prosper. But when the Almighty is pleased to remove his restraining hand, Satan and wicked men will assault him with rancour and vehemency proportioned to his zeal and success: and the Lord will often permit them to do this; for he regards not so much the present feelings of his beloved servants, as the final happy and glorious event of their trials and conflicts. Nations also may meet with public calamities, when true religion is most vigorously and successfully promoted by the general concurrence of all orders of men. The secret dislike, the hypocrisy, and the lukewarmness of numbers require correction: and such trials tend to purify the faith and hope of upright persons; to bring them to greater simplicity in their zeal for the honour of God, and dependence on his help; and to increase

CHAP. XIX.

Hezekiah in distress sends to desire Isaiah's prayers, and receives an encouraging answer, 1—7. *Sennacherib, going to oppose the king of Ethiopia, sends a blasphemous letter to Hezekiah,* 8—13. *His prayer on the receipt of it,* 14—19. *Isaiah, in the name of God, rebuking the proud blasphemies of Sennacherib, foretels his overthrow, and the prosperity of Zion,* 20—34. *An angel destroys the Assyrian army,* 35. *Sennacherib is slain by his own sons, in the temple of his idol,* 36, 37.

AND it came to pass, [a] when king Hezekiah heard *it*, that [b] he rent his clothes, and [c] covered himself with sack-

a Is. xxxvii. 1.
b v. 7. xviii 37. 1 Sam iv. 12. Ezra ix. 3. Jer. xxxvi. 24. Matt. xxvi 65.
c vi 30. Gen. xxxvii. 34. 1 Kings xxi. 27. 29 Esth. iv 1—4. Is. xxxv. 13. Jon. iii. 8. Matt xi. 21.

the fervency of their addresses at the throne of grace: and thus they make way for the fuller display of his glory in their deliverance. Yet in such trying situations the strongest believers are apt to waver or make improper concessions, and to speak and act unadvisedly. Whatever is withheld or withdrawn from God, that has been or ought to be devoted to him, in order to purchase exemption from trouble, or peace with the enemies of his church, will eventually occasion our shame, and involve us in greater difficulties.

V. 17—37.

No dependence can be placed upon the engagements of the covetous or ambitious: all attempts to purchase their favour, or to soothe them into peace, are vain. When it is in their power, they will find some pretence for seizing upon those possessions which they covet: while every acquisition increases their insatiable rapacity. Success in wickedness swells them with pride and insolence; they forget that they are men, or have any superior: and treat all as enemies or rebels, who do not implicitly comply with their exorbitant demands. Our only safety then consists in committing our persons, property, connexions, reputations, liberty, and every thing that we value, into God's powerful keeping, in the exercise of faith, and in adhering to the path of duty. "The tongue, is an unruly "evil, full of deadly poison; it setteth on fire the whole "course of nature, and is set on fire of hell!" What pride, reproaches, lies, impiety, atheism, and blasphemy have, in all ages, been vented by it, to the dishonour of God, and the unutterable prejudice of mankind! And we may form some estimate of the desperate wickedness of the human heart, from the horrible language which is uttered by the lips of men; "for out of the abundance of the "heart the mouth speaketh." May the Lord replenish our hearts with his grace, that out of that good treasure we may speak such things, and such only, as may "minister "grace unto the hearers." If indeed, "as the fool hath "said in his heart, there were no God," it would in general be vain and presumptuous for the weaker to resist the stronger: but as "the LORD doeth what he will in the "armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the "earth;" so "the race is not always to the swift, nor the "battle to the strong." All confidence in man may indeed justly be exploded, as leaning upon a broken staff, which will not only fail, but also wound: and dependence on our own counsel and might, whatever proportion they may bear to those of our opponents, is equally vain and fallacious. But our God never faileth those who trust in him: in this confidence the believer, when more conscious of his own extreme debility than his insulting foes can conceive, may boldly defy the most potent of them; and if they deride this dependence on the omnipotent God, they only engage him, for his own name's sake, the more decisively to fight against them; and to turn their vauntings and threatenings into confusion, dismay, and ruin. When they who have lorded it over their fellow worms presume to assault those whom the God of heaven protects, they will soon feel their inability to resist his power, or to endure the weight of his indignation. Yet many, who atheistically or impiously deny his existence, blaspheme his truths, or contemn his authority; inconsistently, upon other occasions, advance claims to his favour, and express their expectations that he will prosper their wicked devices! Because they have succeeded in exposing or seducing hypocritical and degenerate professors of Christianity; they triumph as if they had, or soon should, run down the cause of vital godliness, and prevail against the house of David and his kingdom, which is founded upon an immoveable foundation. Numbers also ignorantly and absurdly suppose those things to be pleasing to God which he most abhors; because they form their judgment upon the deductions of their own understandings, and not upon the plain testimonies of his word: "For the things of the spirit of God are foolish-"ness to the natural man." Hence they embolden themselves, and endeavour to discourage the scriptural worshipper, upon the most false and prepostarous grounds. Such cavils, objections, and arguments have no weight with the established believer: and therefore these men pretend to despise them, that they may address the prejudices and passions of the ignorant, unstable, and unthinking multitude, with whom their specious declamations go further than either solid arguments or scriptural testimonies. They endeavour to insinuate, that the persons who labour to prevail with them to trust and serve God, according *to the plain meaning of his holy word*, are deceivers, to whom they cannot safely attend: and whilst they are only aiming at the gratification of their own ambition or avarice, they pretend great compassion and kindness for them, are lavish of good words, and set before them alluring prospects of felicity. But it is often best to leave such persons to rail and blaspheme, without directly answering: because such attempts ordinarily increase their self-importance, and tend to disseminate still wider the effect of their poisonous tenets; while a decided expression of abhorrence of their guilt generally forms the best testimony against them. The matter must be left to the Lord, who hath all hearts in his hands: he will plead his own cause, and that of his truth

cloth and [d] went into the house of the LORD.

2 And [e] he sent Eliakim, which *was* over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, [f] to Isaiah the prophet [g] the son of Amoz.

3 And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, [h] This day *is* a day of trouble, and of rebuke, * and blasphemy: [i] for the children are come to the birth, and *there is* not strength to bring forth.

4 [k] It may be the LORD thy God will hear all the words of Rabshakeh, [l] whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach the living God; and will [m] reprove the words which the LORD thy God hath heard: wherefore [n] lift up *thy* prayer for [o] the remnant *that are* † left.

5 So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah.

6 And [p] Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say to your master, Thus saith the LORD, [q] Be not afraid of the words which thou hast heard, with which [r] the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me.

7 Behold, I will send [s] a blast upon him, and he shall [t] hear a rumour, and shall return to his own land; and [u] I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.

8 ¶ So Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against [x] Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed [y] from Lachish.

d iii. 11. 2 Chr. vii. 15, 16.
e xviii 18. xxii 13. 14. Is. xxxvii. 2—5.
f Matt. iv. 14. Luke iii. 4. *Esaias.*
g Is. i. 1.
h xviii 29. Ps xxxix. 11. cxxiii. 3, 4. Jer. xxx. 5—7. Hos. v. 15. vi. 1.
* Or, *provocation.* Ps. xcv. 8. Heb. iii. 15, 16.
i Is. xxvi. 17, 18. lxvi. 9. Hos. xiii. 13.
k Gen. xxii 14. Deut. xxxii. 36. Josh. xiv. 12. 1 Sam. xiv. 6. 2 Sam. xvi. 12.
l xviii 17. 35.
m 22. Ps. 1. 21.
n 2 Chr. xxxii 20. Ps. l. 15. Jer. xxxiii. 3. Ez. xxxvi 37. Jam. v. 16, 17.
o xvii. 5, 6. xviii. 13. 2 Chr. xxviii. 5, 6. Is. viii. 7, 8. x. 6.
† Heb. *found.*
p Is. xxxvii. 6, 7.
q vi 16. Ex. xiv. 13. Lev xxvi 8. Deut. xx. 1, 3, 4. Josh xi. 6. 2 Chr. xx. 15. 17. Is xxxvii. 6, 7 xli. 10—14. li. 7. 12, 13.
r xviii. 35. Ps. lxxiv. 18. 23. Rev. xiii. 6.
s 35. 37. Job iv. 9. Ps xi. 6. xviii. 14, 15. l. 3. Is. x. 16—18. xi. 4. Jer. li. 1.
t vii. 6. Job xv. 21. Jer xlix. 14. li. 46. Ob 1.
u 36, 37. 2 Chr. xxxii. 21
x viii. 22. Jos. x. 29. xii. 15.
y xviii. 14. Is. xxxvii. 8, 9. Mic. i. 13.

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and people; and our business is to commit ourselves into his hands, in the exercise of humble submission, believing hope, and fervent prayer.

NOTES.

CHAP. XIX. V. 1. By these actions Hezekiah expressed his abhorrence of Rabshakeh's blasphemy, his grief for the afflictions of his people; and his humble consciousness of his own and his people's unworthiness, and need of pardoning mercy; whilst he wholly depended upon God for protection.

V. 2. *Isaiah*, &c. Isaiah had at this time prophesied almost fifty years, if he entered upon that office only a short time before the death of Uzziah; (*Is.* vi. 1.) We must suppose that Hezekiah had often consulted him: and the nature of this message implies a previous acquaintance, and a mutual confidence. Isaiah's visits to Hezekiah, at and after his sickness, are thought by some to have taken place before this, though recorded afterwards: (xx:) and many parts of his prophecy evidently refer to these events. In this emergency therefore Hezekiah sent to Isaiah the prophet, rather than to the high-priest; though he had employed the priests and Levites in his reformation. Perhaps Urijah was still living, or some other too much resembling him in character: there seems however to have been an intended slight upon the high-priest. Some learned men indeed think, that the appointed method of inquiring of God by the high-priests, was disused from the time that the temple was built: but this can only be collected from the silence of Scripture, as no express declaration to that effect is recorded. Shebna, who was employed on this occasion, as well as in receiving the message of Rabshakeh, is elsewhere represented in an unfavourable light. (*Is.* xxii. 15—19.) For pious princes cannot always employ such persons, and such only as they approve. The elders of the priests accompanied the chief officers of the king, in going to the prophet.

V. 3. It was not only a season of great distress to Israel: but the confidence of the king, in the protection of God, was rebuked as a groundless presumption, and the name of JEHOVAH was blasphemed on that account. Indeed matters were come to a crisis: every thing valuable was at stake: as the woman in travail, who hath not strength to bring forth, must die, if she be not speedily assisted; so Hezekiah and his people, in their pressing necessity, were utterly unable to do any thing effectual to extricate themselves, and must perish without immediate help from God.

V. 4. *Will hear*, &c. Hezekiah's confidence in God was in some respect encouraged by the blasphemy of the Assyrians. For though he and his people were unworthy of the divine favour; yet it was proper for the Lord to rebuke and silence the reproachful words that had been spoken. In this hope therefore he entreated the prophet to lift up his prayer, with earnestness and importunity, for the remnant that was left, that the whole professing people of God might not be swallowed up and extirpated. Israel had been carried into captivity and dispersed; and Judah was reduced to extremities: and would God suffer his blasphemers finally to pravail against his worshippers, and entirely to destroy his holy religion?

V. 7. *A blast*, &c. Some have supposed that this expression related to the manner in which the Assyrian army was destroyed: viz. by exciting one of those scorching winds, which in those countries have been known to destroy great numbers in a moment. But this is uncertain: and perhaps it only means, that the Lord would destroy all his prosperity, as easily as the pinching gale of wind blastst the tender vegetables: whilst the death of his numerous forces, perhaps attended by a report that Tirhakah and the Ethiopians were marching to assault him, as a terrifying rumour in his ears, would hurry him home with dismay and disgrace. As the word, rendered *blast*, is often translated *spirit;* some explain this expression to mean, that God would send an *angel*, or *spirit*, to destroy Sennacherib's army; but others think it signifies, that God would fill his heart with terror by some supernatural agent. "I will "infuse a spirit into him." 'The words never signify 'any thing but putting a spirit into a person. This was a 'spirit of fear.' (*Bp. Lowth.*)

9 And [z] when he heard say of Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, Behold, he is come out to fight against thee: [a] he sent messengers again unto Hezekiah saying,

10 Thus shall ye speak to Hezekiah, king of Judah, saying, [b] Let not thy God in whom thou trustest deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria.

11 Behold, [c] thou hast heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands, by destroying them utterly: and shalt thou be delivered?

12 Have the gods of the nations delivered them which my fathers have destroyed; *as* [d] Gozan, and [e] Haran, and Rezeph, and the children of [f] Eden which *were* in Thelasar?

13 [g] Where *is* the king of Hamath, and the king of [h] Arpad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, of Hena, and Ivah?

14 And [i] Hezekiah received the letter of the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up into the house of the LORD, and [k] spread it before the LORD.

z 1 Sam. xxiii. 27, 28.
a xviii. 17.
b xviii. 5, 29, 30. 2 Chr. xxxii. 15—19. Is. xxxvii. 10—14.
c 17, 18. xviii. 33, 34. 2 Chr. xxxii. 13, 14.
d xvii. 6. 1 Chr. v. 26.
e Gen. xi. 31. xxix. 4.
f Gen. ii. 8. Ez. xxvii. 23.
g xviii. 34.
h Is. xxxvii. 13 *Arphad.*
i Is. xxxvii. 14.
k 1 Kings viii. 28—30. Ps. lxxiv. 10, 11. xci. 1, 2. cxxiii. 1—4.

15 And Hezekiah [l] prayed before the LORD, and said, [m] O LORD God of Israel, which [n] dwellest *between* the cherubims, [o] thou art the God, *even* thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; [p] thou hast made heaven and earth.

16 LORD, [q] bow down thine ear, and hear: [r] open, LORD, thine eyes, and see; and hear the words of Sennacherib, [s] which hath sent him to reproach the living God.

17 Of a truth, LORD, [t] the kings of Assyria have destroyed [u] the nations and their lands.

18 And have * cast their gods into the fire: [x] for they *were* no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them.

19 Now therefore, [y] O LORD our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou *art* the LORD God, *even* thou only.

20 ¶ Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, *That* which thou hast prayed to me, [z] against Sennache-

l 2 Sam. vii. 18, &c. 2 Chr. xiv. 11. xx. 6. Dan. ix. 3, 4.
m Gen. xxxii. 28. xxxiii. 20.
n Ex. xxv. 22. 1 Sam. iv. 4. Ps. lxxx. 1.
o v. 15. 1 Kings viii. 39. Is. xliii. 10. xliv. 6, 8. xlv. 22. Dan. iv. 34, 35.
p Gen. i. 1. ii. 4. Ps. xxxiii. 9. cxlvi. 6. Jer. x. 10—12. John i. 3.
q Ps. xxxi. 2. Is. xxxvii. 17.
r 2 Chr. vi. 40.
s 4.
t xvi. 9. xvii. 6. 24. 1 Chr. v. 26. Is. vii. 17, 18. x. 9—11.
u 2 Sam. v. 21. Is. xlvi. 1, 2.
* Heb. *given.*
x Ps. cxv. 4—8. Is. xxxvii. 18, 19. xliv. 9—20. Jer. x. 3—9. 14—16.
y Ex. ix. 15, 16. Josh. vii. 9. 1 Sam. xvii. 45—47. 1 Kings viii. 43. xviii. 36, 37. Ps. lxvii. 1, 2. lxxxiii. 18. Dan. iv. 34, 35.
z 2 Sam. xv. 31.

V. 8. It seems probable that Rabshakeh marched the army back from Jerusalem to join Sennacherib, when he found that Hezekiah would neither surrender, nor return any answer to his insulting message. For Jerusalem was so advantageously situated, and so well fortified, that with a moderate garrison it might have made a stout resistance against the Assyrian army: though it must probably at length have shared the fate of Samaria, if the Lord had not effectually interposed. The siege however was postponed, or not carried on with vigour, till Sennacherib had leisure to come against it in person. In the mean time he had withdrawn from Lachish, (it is not known whether he had taken it or not;) and was besieging Libnah, another city which refused to open its gates to the conqueror.

V. 9. When Sennacherib had the first time levied contributions upon Hezekiah, he marched his army into Egypt; probably in resentment against the king, for forming alliances with the vassals of the Assyrians, as he regarded the Jews and the Samaritans to be. After several successes there, whilst he was besieging Pelusium, an important fortress in that country, he heard that Tirhakah king of Ethiopia was marching against him with a great army: and not choosing to wait his approach, he raised the siege; and, returning into Judea, began to commit hostilities there, as hath been before related. But finding that Tirhakah pursued him as a fugitive, he marched back to encounter him; and having totally routed his army, he returned to wreak his vengeance on Hezekiah and Jerusalem. This gave the Jews some respite for preparation, and for prayer: and afforded Sennacherib an occasion of more deliberately uttering his blasphemies, by a letter sent to Hezekiah, when detained for a time from marching against him. Learned men differ in opinion concerning Tirhakah; whether he was king of Ethiopia, or *Cush*, to the south of Egypt in Africa, or of the Cushites in Asia. He was however an ally of the king of Egypt.

V. 14. *And spread it*, &c. By this action Hezekiah referred the matter entirely to God, intimating that as His honour was immediately assaulted, he was chiefly concerned to defend it: and that by this appeal, he meant to shelter himself and his people under the shadow of the Almighty, that whilst the Lord pleaded his own cause, he might also deliver them from *their* enraged enemies.

V. 16. *Him*, &c. That is, Rabshakeh, who perhaps was sent with this letter also.

V. 19. It would have been comparatively a small matter for Hezekiah and his people to perish: but it would be an evil of infinite magnitude, for all the nations to conclude, that JEHOVAH was no more powerful than their worthless idols: and it would be unspeakably honourable to the name of God, to show the difference betwixt the Creator of the world, and these his puny rivals; and to prove that he only was the LORD, able to save and to destroy. Sennacherib's blasphemous challenge gave a fair opportunity of publicly demonstrating this most important truth: and a plea grounded so directly on the honour of God could not but prevail. (*Marg. Ref.*)

rib king of Assyria, [a] I have heard.

21 This *is* the word that the LORD hath spoken concerning him; [b] The virgin [c] the daughter of Zion hath despised thee, *and* laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath [d] shaken her head at thee.

22 [e] Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou [f] exalted *thy* voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? *even* against [g] the Holy *One* of Israel.

23 By * thy [h] messengers thou hast reproached the Lord, and hast said, [i] With the multitude of my chariots I am come up to the height of the mountains, to the sides of Lebanon, and will cut down the † tall cedar-trees thereof, *and* the choice fir-trees thereof: and I will enter into the lodgings of his borders, *and into* ‡ the forest of his Carmel.

24 I have digged and drunk strange waters, and [k] with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of § besieged places.

25 ‖ Hast thou not heard long ago *how* [l] I have done, it, *and* of ancient times that I have formed it? now have I brought it to pass, that thou shouldest be to lay waste fenced cities *into* ruinous heaps.

a xx. 5. 2 Chr. xxxii. 20, 21. Job xxii. 27 Ps. 1. 15 lxv. 2. Is lviii. 9. lxv. 24. Jer. xxxiii 3. Dan. ix. 20—23 John xi. 42. Acts x. 4. 31. 1 John v. 14, 15.
b Is. xxiii. 12. xxxvii. 22 xlvii. 1. Jer. xiv. 17. xviii. 13 xxxi. 4. Lam. i. 15. ii. 13. Am. v. 2.
c Ps ix. 14. cxxxvii. 8. Is i 8. xxiii. 10. xlvii. 5. Jer xlvi. 11. Lam. ii 13 iv. 21. Mic. iv. 8. Zech. ix. 9.
d Job xvi. 4 Ps. xxii 7, 8. Is. xxxvii. 22 Lam ii. 15. Matt xxvii 39.——e xviii. 28—35 Ex. v. 2 Ps. lxiii 9. lxxiv. 22, 23 ——f Ex. ix. 17. Prov. xxx 13. Is x. 15. xiv. 13, 14. Ez. xxviii. 2—9. Dan v. 20—23. Luke xiv. 11. 2 Cor. x 5. 2 Thes ii. 4 ——g Ps. lxxi. 22. Is. v 24. xxx 11, 12. 15. Jer. li. 5.——* Heb. *the hand of.*
h xviii. 17.——i xviii. 23 33, 34. Ps. xx. 7. Is. x. 7—11. 14. xxxvii. 24, 25 Ez. xxxi. 3, &c.

† Heb. *tallness*, &c.
‡ Or, *the forest*, and *his fruitful field* Is. x. 18
k Ex. xv. 9 2 Sam. xvii. 13 1 Kings xx 10 Dan. iv. 30.
§ Or, *fenced.*
‖ Or, *Hast thou not heard* how *I have made it long ago, and formed it of ancient times? Should I now bring it to be laid waste*, and *fenced cities* to *be ruinous heaps?*
l Is. x. 5, 6 15. xxxviii 26, 27. xlv. 7. xlvi. 10, 11. liv. 16. Acts iv. 27, 28.

V. 21. *The virgin*, &c The inhabitants of Jerusalem, as forming or representing the visible church of God, having his temple and instituted worship among them, are called in one body the daughter of Zion, or of Jerusalem. They were safe under his protection and care, as a virgin-daughter in the house of her wise and tender parent: and though now the Assyrian attempted brutal violence, they might treat his efforts with disdain and defiance; might despise them and laugh them to scorn, and menace his destruction by shaking their heads at him. Perhaps the term *virgin*, might refer to the state of Jerusalem, as free from idolatry, and reserved for the Lord alone; (2 *Cor.* xi. 1, 2;) or as having never been exposed to the ravages of an enraged victor. The city of David, or Zion, seems never to have been taken by any assailant, from the time when David got possession of it, till the Babylonish captivity. The former part of this message is addressed, not to Hezekiah, but to Sennacherib, as if present; first by the daughter of Zion, and then by the Lord himself.

V. 22. Sennacherib had not only exalted his voice, in reproach and blasphemy against God; but he had lifted up his eyes in pride and ambition, as if he even aspired to his throne, and affected an equality with him, or even superiority above him. But he did not consider whom he had thus affronted: not the idols of the heathens, which being wood and stone he had easily cast into the fire; but Israel's holy Protector, who would execute vengeance upon him for his bold presumption; and being the Creator of heaven and earth, he could crush as a moth the feeble worm that had set him at defiance.

V. 23. The Assyrian monarch, elated by his successes, and on account of the number and valour of his troops, his chariots, and other military preparations, supposed that nothing would be too hard for him to accomplish. He is here introduced as glorying in what he had done, and would do. No mountain so inaccessible but he could drive his chariots over it; no forest so impervious, but he could level it with the ground; no place so fortified, but he would force his way into it! Some suppose he meant that he had marched his army through the defiles, or over the craggy summits, of mount Lebanon: but others think that by these expressions, the temple on mount Zion is intended; and that he gloried, as already indisputably master of the whole land, and as if he had marched his army, and driven his chariots, into the mountain of the Lord's house, and dispossessed him of his habitation. The temple may be called Lebanon, either because difficult of access, or because it was built with cedars of Lebanon: the removal of all obstructions by slaying the bravest of Hezekiah's captains, may be denoted, by cutting down the cedars and choice fir-trees: and "the lodgings of his borders, and the "forest of his Carmel," may mean the strong-holds upon the borders of the land: and the fruitful fields, which would come into the possession of the conqueror. For Carmel being situated in a very fruitful part of the land, every fruitful spot seems to have been called by that name.

V. 24. Hezekiah had before taken measures to prevent the Assyrians from finding water near Jerusalem, (2 *Chron.* xxxii. 2—4:) But this haughty conqueror boasted, that wherever his army marched to besiege cities, they dried up all the rivers by which they were defended, either by the numbers that drank of them, or by diverting their course into other channels: also that by digging wells, he found water where none was ever found before: as if he had been capable of dividing the rivers, that his army might march over; and of bringing waters from the rock as JEHOVAH had done for his people! The cities of Egypt, where Sennacherib had been very successful, were chiefly defended by rivers or deep moats.

V. 25. When the Lord had declared the vain-glorious thoughts of Sennacherib's heart, who affected to be thought invincible and omnipotent; he addressed him as in person, and interrogated him, whether he had never heard that these were the peculiar works of Israel's God? In ancient times, long before Sennacherib, or the ancestors of whom he boasted, were born, JEHOVAH (for the deliverance of his people, and to *form* them into a nation worshipping him,) had, as it were, levelled mountains, and literally dried up rivers and seas to afford them a passage, and caused them to drink strange waters flowing from the rock of flint. Nay, Sennacherib, in what he had done, had only fulfilled the purposes and predictions of JEHOVAH, as his instrument in his least honourable work of executing ven-

26 Therefore their inhabitants [m] were
* of small power, they were dismayed and
confounded; [n] they were *as* the grass of
the field, and *as* the green herb, *as* [o] the
grass on the house-tops, and *as corn*
blasted before it be grown up.

27 But [p] I know thy † abode, and
[q] thy going out, and thy coming in, and
thy rage against me.

28 Because [r] thy rage against me, and
[s] thy tumult is come up into mine ears,
therefore I will put [t] my hook in thy
nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I
will turn thee back [u] by the way by
which thou camest.

29 And this *shall be* [x] a sign unto thee,
[y] Ye shall eat this year such things as
grow of themselves, and in the second
year that which springeth of the same;
and in the third year sow ye and reap,
and plant vineyards, and eat the fruits
thereof.

30 [z] And ‡ the remnant that is escaped
of the house of Judah [a] shall yet again take
root downward, and bear fruit upward.

31 For [b] out of Jerusalem shall go
forth a remnant, and § they that escape
out of mount Zion; [c] the zeal of the
LORD *of hosts* shall do this.

32 Therefore thus saith the LORD,
concerning the king of Assyria, [d] He
shall not come into this city, nor shoot
an arrow there, nor come before it with
a shield, [e] nor cast a bank against it.

33 By the way that he came, by the
same shall he return, and shall not come
into this city, saith the LORD.

34 For [f] I will defend this city, to
save it, [g] for mine own sake, and for
[h] my servant David's sake.

35 ¶ And it came to pass [i] that night,
that [k] the angel of the LORD went out,
[l] and smote in the camp of the Assyrians
an hundred fourscore and five thousand:
and [m] when they arose early in the morn-
ing, behold, they *were* all dead corpses.

m Num. xiv. 9. Ps. cxxvii. 1. Jer. xxxvii. 10.
* Heb. *short of hand.*
n Ps. xcii. 7. cii. 11. Is. xl. 6—8. James i. 10, 11. 1 Pet. i. 24.
o Ps. cxxix. 6—8.
p Ps. cxxxix. 2—11. Jer. xxiii. 23, 24.
† Or, *sitting.*
q Deut. xxviii. 6. 19. Ps. cxxi. 8. Is. xxxvii. 28, 29.
r Ps. ii. 1, 2. vii. 6. x. 13, 14. xlvi. 6. xciii. 3, 4. Luke vi. 11. John xv. 18, 23, 24. Acts vii. 54.
s Ps. lxv. 7. lxxiv. 4, 23. lxxxiii. 2.
t Job xli. 2. Ps. xxxii. 9. Ez. xxix. 4. xxxviii. 4. Am. iv. 2.
u 33. 36, 37.
x 21. 31—34. xx. 3, 9. Ex. iii. 12. Is. vii. 11—14. Luke ii. 12.
y Lev. xxv. 4, 5. 20—22. Is. xxxvii. 30.
z 4. 2 Chr. xxxii. 22, 23. Is. i. 9. x. 20—22.
‡ Heb. *the escaping of the house of Judah that remaineth.*
a Ps. lxxx. 9. Is. xxvii. 6. xxxvii. 31, 32.
b Jer. xliv. 14. Rom. ix. 27. xi. 5.
§ Heb. *the escaping.*
c Is. ix. 7. Ez. xx. 9. Zech. i. 14.
d Is. viii. 7—10. x. 24, 25. 28—32. xxxvii. 33—35.
e Ez. xxi. 22. Luke xix. 43, 44.
f Is. xxxi. 5. xxxviii. 6.
g Deut. xxxii. 27. Is. xliii. 25. xlviii. 9, 11. Ez. xxxvi. 22. Eph. i. 6, 14.
h 1 Kings xi. 12, 13. xv. 4. Is. ix. 7. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. xxxiii. 21, 26.
i Ex. xii. 29. Dan. v. 30. 1 Thes. v. 2, 3.
k Ex. xii. 23. 2 Sam. xxiv. 16. 1 Chr. xxi. 12, 16. 2 Chr. xxxii. 21, 22. Ps. xxxv. 5, 6. Acts xii. 23.
l Is. x. 16—19, 33. xxx. 30—33. xxxvii. 36. Hos. i. 7.
m Ex. xii. 30. Ps. lxxvi. 5—7, 10.

geance: and this without intending it, and instigated only by his own ambition, rage, and insatiable rapacity. God in righteousness had allotted him the service of "laying "waste fenced cities into ruinous heaps," which he performed in a most iniquitous manner. Isaiah's prophecies concerning the Assyrians may also be intended. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 26. The Lord had been pleased to enfeeble and intimidate all the enemies with whom Sennacherib had hitherto encountered; so that they fell before him as the grass before the scythe; nay, they withered of themselves, "as "grass on the house-tops, or as corn blasted before it be "grown up." So that his success was no decided proof that he possessed any extraordinary power, courage, or conduct; and he had no reason thus to vaunt, as if he only had done wonderful things.

V. 27, 28. The Lord knew Sennacherib's secret thoughts, as well as his undertakings; and that he was actuated by implacable enmity against his perfections, authority, worship, and worshippers; especially since Hezekiah, trusting in the Lord, had dared to disregard his menaces and resist his will. This rage had vented itself in blasphemies and reproaches against God; and had also occasioned insolent threatenings and tumultuous preparations against Jerusalem. But the Lord was about to deal with him by force, as with some savage beast, or untractable horse or mule: he would fasten an hook in his nose, and a bridle in his mouth, and let him know his master, and send him home baffled and disgraced.

V. 29. The Lord here addressed Hezekiah. The devastations of the Assyrians had probably prevented the land from being sown that year; and the next is supposed to have been the sabbatical year; (though this is the only intimation, in all the history of Israel, that any regard was paid to that institution:) but the Lord here engaged, that the spontaneous produce of the land, from the corn shaken out in gathering in the preceding harvest, should be sufficient for the support of the people, during those two years, and till a supply was obtained in the ordinary way. As the performance of this promise was evidently subsequent to the destruction of Sennacherib's army, it was a sign to Hezekiah's faith, that the present deliverance would be an earnest of the Lord's persevering care of the kingdom of Judah; and of the accomplishment of that part of the promise which related to events still more remote. (*Note, Exod.* iii. 12.)

V. 30, 31. The ten tribes were already carried captive; Judah was brought very low; Jerusalem alone withstood the victor's arms, and it was menaced with a siege. The professed worshippers of God were a very small remnant, and seemed devoted to ruin. But that remnant would be as *seed-corn;* which, striking root in a fruitful soil, springs up and yields a large increase. They were destined to go forth from mount Zion, to possess the land, and to spread into distant countries; and were a typical resemblance of the apostles and primitive Christians, who from Jerusalem carried the Gospel into all the nations of the earth, in order to produce an immense increase of true believers, who are all the children of Abraham, and heirs according to the promise. This the Lord himself undertook to perform; not because of their righteousness, but out of zeal for his own glory; to make known his perfections, to magnify his law and authority, and to promote his worship.

V. 34. *For my servant,* &c. That is, from a gracious regard to David's faith and piety, to perform the promises made to his family, and to make way for the coming of the Messiah who was to descend from him.

V. 35. Rabshakeh seems to have rejoined the king

n 7. 23. 38.
o Gen. x. 11, 12. Jon. i. 2. Nah. i. 1. ii. 8. Matt. xii. 41.
B. C. 709
p 10. xviii. 5. 30. 2Chr. xxxii. 14. 19 Is. xxxvii. 37, 33.

36 So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and [n] returned, and dwelt at [o] Nineveh.

37 And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of [p] Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer [q] his sons smote him with the sword: and they escaped into the land of * Armenia. And [r] Esar-haddon his son reigned in his stead.

q 2 Chr. xxxii. 21.
* Heb. *Ararad.* Gen. viii. 4. Jer. li. 27.
r Ezra iv. 2.

with his detachment; and after the victory gained over Tirhakah, Sennacherib marched directly to besiege Jerusalem: and was just arrived and encamped near that city, but had not made any assault upon it. And this happened the very night after Hezekiah had spread the letter before God, and sought his help by prayer. The devastation was made with such profound silence, that the survivors were not aware of the blow, till they arose in the morning, and found one hundred and eighty-five thousand of their comrades dead in the camp. Probably Rabshakeh perished among the rest; but Sennacherib was preserved to still deeper disgrace, and a more dreadful end. The angels excel in strength; and this angel was commissioned by divine authority, and armed with proportionable power; and it is not requisite for us to determine in what manner he effected this tremendous slaughter.—'Herodotus reports from 'the Egyptians, that their king, being also a priest, by his 'prayers to his God, brought this destruction on the Assyrians, 'as they lay before Pelusium: a great army of rats coming in 'the night, and gnawing all their bowstrings in pieces, so that 'they could not fight. So studious were they to pervert the 'truth and corrupt the sacred story!' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 36, 37. Sennacherib is supposed to have survived this catastrophe for some time; and to have lived in great contempt, but exercising the most odious cruelty towards his subjects. And though he had had such awful demonstration of the power of JEHOVAH, and the impotence of his own idols; yet he adhered to the latter, and died in an act of idolatrous worship; a striking example of the difference between the God in whom Hezekiah trusted, to whom he prayed, and by whom he was miraculously delivered in the most urgent extremity; and the god of Sennacherib, who could not defend him in his own capital, during profound peace, from the sword of his sons, even while employed in acts of religious worship!—Some have conjectured, that Sennacherib had vowed to sacrifice his sons to his idol; and that they murdered him in self-defence. Esar-haddon seems to have been a man of much better character than his father. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14.

In times of great distress and prevailing impiety, strong expressions of poignant sorrow and deep humiliation are peculiarly seasonable: for "the LORD calls to weeping "and mourning, and girding with sackcloth," and the contrary spirit and conduct are irrational, offensive, and tokens of a profane, sensual, and selfish heart. They who best know the efficacy of fervent believing prayer, will most desire the supplications of others for them; and especially of those who have long been eminent for piety and simplicity. Alas! few kings are very earnest to form such alliances against their hostile invaders; yet they are of more real utility, than increasing numbers of brave and disciplined troops; and whenever princes, prophets, and people unite in prayer, in real dependence upon God, and a disposition to give him the praise, a prosperous event may be confidently expected, notwithstanding their own weakness, and the rebukes and insults of haughty enemies.—The Lord resisteth the proud, and will vindicate his own cause against those who reproach, defy, or blaspheme his name; or who rival him and rob him of his glory. The more we are humbly conscious that we cannot help ourselves, but must be miserable and perish without his aid; the more simple will be our dependence, and the more fervent our applications to him, whether in temporal or spiritual exigencies. Man's extremity is therefore God's opportunity: and whilst his servants can speak nothing but terror to the proud, the profane, and the hypocritical; they have comfortable words to say to the discouraged believer. 'Be not afraid, thine enemies are God's ene-'mies, and thy cause is his cause; in glorifying himself 'he must protect and save those who trust in him. He 'delighteth in giving the very blessings for which thy soul 'is athirst: and with the breath of his mouth he can slay 'the wicked, and blast all the machinations of earth and 'hell against his church.' The Lord finds wicked men other work, when he would give his servants a respite from conflict and persecution: and even those projects that are in themselves most trifling or most detestable, often so engross the minds, occupy the time, and fill the hands of the ungodly, as to detain them from attempting that mischief to the cause of God, to which otherwise they would be disposed. But their pursuits of wealth, of honour, of pleasure, or of learning, do not prevent their discovering the enmity of their hearts, or filling up the measure of their sins: and when this is done, they are taken away, and their place knoweth them no more. The blasphemies, which many utter, are not unmeaning words as they pretend, but the natural produce of their depraved hearts; and therefore they reiterate them, and grow more outrageous in them, when recent occasions are afforded. Absurd as it appears, men really think that they who trust in God will be deceived; and presume upon success, whilst they despise him, and set him at defiance! Impunity and prosperity inspire confidence and arrogance; and they expect to prevail against all that resist them, because in some instances they have been successful!

V. 15—22.

We can easily say, "If God be for us, who can be "against us?" but in the crisis of danger, when the eye of sense perceives no way of escape without removing mountains, and effecting apparent impossibilities, faith is constrained to maintain a severe conflict against unbelief, even in the experience of the most established believers. But

CHAP. XX.

Hezekiah, when sick, is warned by Isaiah to prepare for death; but praying, receives the promise of fifteen years added to his life, and of deliverance from the Assyrians, 1—7. *In confirmation, the shadow on Ahaz's dial goes back ten degrees,* 8—11. *The king of Babylon sends to congratulate Hezekiah, who shows the ambassadors all his treasures,* 12, 13. *Isaiah reproves this, and foretels the Babylonish captivity,* 14—19. *Hezekiah dies, and is succeeded by Manasseh,* 20, 21.

IN those days [a] was Hezekiah sick unto death. And [b] the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, * Set thine house in order; for [c] thou shalt die, and not live.

a 2 Chr. xxxii. 24. Is. xxxviii. 1. John xi. 1—5. Phil. ii. 27. 30.
b xix. 2. 20.
* Heb. *Give charge concerning thy house.*
c 2 Sam. xvii. 23. Jer. xviii. 7—10. Jon. iii. 4—10

prayer is the never failing resource of the tempted Christian; whether he be called to struggle with outward difficulties, or to engage in the more distressing warfare with his inward enemies. At the mercy-seat of his Almighty Friend he opens his heart, before him he particularly spreads the case, to him he makes his appeal; and when he can discern, that the glory of God is engaged on his side, his faith gains the victory, and he again exults in the assurance that he never shall be moved. He knows the difference betwixt JEHOVAH, whose mysterious nature and harmonious perfections are revealed in the sacred Scriptures; and all those idols which are the work of men's hands, or the creatures of their imaginations. Infidels may indeed triumph over superstition, hypocrisy, and every form of worthless profession: and they may vaunt and boast, as if they could, with equal ease and certainty, prevail against the truths and spiritual worship of God our Saviour. But whether they employ the terrors of persecution, or the more specious armour of blasphemous reproaches, sarcastic wit, or proud reasonings; their assaults are vain against the faith, and prayers, and holy lives, and scriptural preaching of the Lord's true servants. The weapons of our warfare are mighty through God, not only to repel the assaults of Satan and his ministers, whether they assume the form of the roaring lion, the subtle serpent, or the angel of light; but to subvert his strong holds, and "to cast down "imaginations," *or reasonings*, "and every high thing, "that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and the "obedience of Christ:" (2 *Cor.* x. 3—5.) No weapons that is formed against the church can prosper: and the daughter of Zion, whilst untainted with idolatry or hypocrisy, and faithfully reserving herself for him who hath espoused her in righteousness, and faithfulness, and loving kindness, may despise and defy the puny efforts of all assailants, and confidently predict their speedy and terrible destruction. Oh, that such persons would consider, whom they have reproached and blasphemed! Whom they have opposed and attempted to run down: against whom they have exalted their voice, and lifted up their eyes on high! They may think, that he is only a man like themselves: but they will find, that he is "the Holy One of Israel." He sees their inmost thoughts; he discerns the rage and enmity of their hearts, as well as hears the stout and arrogant words, which they instigate each other to speak against him: and what will they do, when from his awful tribunal he shall give the mandate, "These mine enemies, which "would not that I should reign over them, bring forth, "and slay before me?"

V. 23—37.

In reality the greatest exploits of men are unworthy of notice, compared with the most ordinary works of God: they all undesignedly accomplish his secret purposes, or express predictions: and the most successful only prosper, till they have filled up their part of his universal plan. Some the Lord employs, contrary to their own intentions, as executioners of his vengeance, "to lay waste fenced "cities into ruinous heaps;" and therefore their opposers have proved weak, timid, or infatuated: but when they have accomplished their work, (perhaps with hearts full of rage against him, who had exalted and prospered them;) their turn comes next, and others execute vengeance upon them: or he deals with them by his own hand, as with some great Behemoth, and restrains, confines, or enfeebles them as he sees good. But his believing people, safe under his protection, and living upon his grace and providential bounty, are employed as willing instruments to perform his works of goodness and mercy, which when finished shall meet a sure reward. Whilst all creatures here below subserve their good, and nature itself is made to transcend her usual limits, or alter her settled course, to supply their wants; and whilst his mighty angels are all ministering spirits, sent forth to protect them, or avenge them on their enemies; they, in their places, would imitate that prompt obedience, and delight to do his command-"ments, hearkening unto the voice of his words." But all creatures, yea, the holy angels, and the Lord of angels himself, fight against those who fight against his church: nay, those objects on which they chiefly depend, and those persons from whom they expect the greatest kindness, will concur in effecting their destruction, and every respite will finally add to their infamy and misery. The cause of God, however reduced, will surely revive: the remnant of every generation will yield an increase to that which succeeds; and at length "Israel shall blossom, and bud, and "fill the face of the earth with fruit." The zeal of the Lord of hosts, which appointed and sent the mighty Saviour, is engaged to apply and spread his salvation, and to fill the earth with the knowledge of his glory: not now for his servant David's sake, but for the sake of his beloved Son, in whom he is well pleased. May our hearts be prepared as good ground, that his word may strike root in them, and bring forth fruit in our lives! then we shall witness the full completion of all those prophecies, of which he hath already given us so many signs and earnests, whilst with exulting millions we shall sing,

2 Then [d] he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, saying,

3 I beseech thee, O LORD, [e] remember now how [f] I have walked before thee [g] in truth, and with [h] a perfect heart, and have done *that which is* good in thy sight. And Hezekiah [i] wept * sore.

4 And it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle † court, that the word of the LORD came to him, saying,

5 [k] Turn again, and tell Hezekiah, [l] the captain of my people, Thus saith the LORD, [m] the God of David thy father, [n] I have heard thy prayer, [o] I have seen thy tears: behold, [p] I will heal thee; on the third day [q] thou shalt go up unto the house of the LORD,

6 And [r] I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and [s] I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

d 1 Kings viii.30. Ps. l. 15. Is. xxxviii 2, 3. Matt vi. 6.
e Gen. viii. 1. Neh. v 19. xiii. 14 22 31. Ps. xxv. 7. lxxxix 47. 50 cxix. 49. Is lxiii 11.
f Gen v. 22. 24. xvii. 1 1 Kings ii. 4. iii. 6. Job i. 1. 8. Luke i 6.
g 2 Chr. xxxi. 20, 21. Ps. xxxii 2. cxlv. 18 Jer. iv. 2. John i. 47. 2 Cor. i. 12. 1 John iii. 21, 22
h 1 Kings viii 61. xi. 4. xv. 14. 2 Chr. xvi. 9.
i 2 Sam. xii. 21, 22. Ps. vi. 6. cii. 9. Is. xxxviii. 14. Heb. v. 7.——* Heb. *with a great weeping.*
† Or, *city.*

k 2 Sam vii.3—5. 1 Chr.xvii. 2—4.
l Josh. v. 14, 15. 1 Sam. ix. 16. x. 1. 2 Sam. v. 2. 2 Chr. xiii. 12. Heb. ii. 10.
m 2 Chr.xxxiv 3. Is. xxxviii 5.lv. 3 Matt.xxii. 32.
n xiv. 20. Ps. lxv. 2. Luke i. 13.
o Ps xxxix. 12. lvi. 8 cxlvii. 3. Rev. vii. 17.
p 7. Ex. xv. 26. Job xxxiii. 19—26. Jam v. 14, 15.
q 8 Ps. lxvi. 13—15. 19, 20. cxvi. 12—14. Is. xxxviii. 22. John v. 14.
r Ps. cxvi. 15. Acts xxvii. 24.
s xix. 34. 2 Chr. xxxii. 22. Is. x. 24.

"Hallelujah, the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, and the "kingdoms of the earth are become the kingdoms of the "Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and "ever. Amen, and amen."

NOTES.

CHAP. XX. V. 1. Hezekiah reigned twenty-nine years, and he lived fifteen after this sickness: therefore it must have happened in the fourteenth year of his reign; about, or perhaps before, Sennacherib's first invasion of Judea. It is not likely that all the events recorded in the two preceding chapters were crouded within a part of one year; yet this must have been the case, if Hezekiah's sickness was subsequent the destruction of the Assyrian army. The expression, "Set thine house in order," or, *command concerning thine house*, was a direction to Hezekiah, to make without delay a full and final settlement of his domestic and civil concerns, that nothing might interrupt his mind, or take it off from the exercises of devotion, in the nearer approaches of death; and yet that nothing might be neglected, which related to the interests of survivors. Hezekiah's disorder was in itself mortal, and must have terminated in death, without a miracle: and the prophet spoke according to the *natural* tendency of the disorder; and not according to the Lord's *secret purposes*. Hezekiah's prayer showed, that he did not consider the sentence to be irreversible.

V. 2. It is probable, that Hezekiah turned his face to the wall of his chamber, (which might perhaps be towards the temple,) merely that he might have more freedom and privacy in pouring out his heart before God.

V. 3. The grand purport of Hezekiah's prayer was, that he might recover, though he expressed himself with submission to the will of God: for it is evident that he was very unwilling to die at that time. To account for this, it has been said that believers under the Old Testament, having darker views of the eternal world, might be expected to die with more regret, than those under the New: but facts do not support this supposition; for Abraham, Jacob, Aaron, Moses, Joshua, David, and others, seem to have left the world with as much joyfulness as Paul himself. We must therefore ascribe Hezekiah's reluctancy to die, either to the state of his mind, or to the circumstances of his family, and the nation. Nothing appears peculiarly to have distressed him, in the view of immediate death, as to the state of his own soul. But the state of affairs in Israel seems to solve all the difficulty. Probably at that time Hezekiah had no son; for Manasseh, who succeeded him, was not born till three years after, (xxi. 1.) By his death therefore that branch of David's family would have been extinct, and the succession must have been continued in a more remote and obscure branch of that family: and this would have been a discouraging rebuke to him, as if he had forfeited the covenant of royalty. It is a general and probable opinion, that the nation was at this time threatened with an assault by the whole force of the king of Assyria; they therefore needed a commander, who united wisdom, courage, and faith, to head them in such an emergency: and if he were removed, and they were left to a disputed succession, and the weakness of an usurped or opposed government, there could be little prospect but that Jerusalem would share the fate of Samaria. With great earnestness and perseverance Hezekiah had brought his reformation to a hopeful establishment: but he foresaw, or feared, that the instability of the people, and the dissensions of the nobles, would subvert all if he were taken away. He therefore desired to live, not for his own sake so much as for that of his family and people; and especially for the interests of true religion, and he prayed to that effect, with many tears, as well as with great fervency. He pleaded that the Lord knew, and he could appeal to him, that he had walked before him in sincerity and uprightness of heart; having used his authority to suppress idolatry and wickedness, and by every means to promote the worship and service of God; and that he had done what was good in his sight, being an example to his people. The consciousness of his integrity gave him confidence; and he begged the Lord to remember the fruits of grace that had been produced, and to spare him, that he might be yet more fruitful and useful. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 5. *The captain*, &c. This title implies that Hezekiah was spared, that he might lead the people to victory, by the prevailing weapons of faith and prayer. The Lord knew his heart, and saw that he would be disposed, in the first place after his recovery, to go up to his courts to return thanks for the mercy; and therefore he suited the message to his secret desires and intentions, (8.)

V. 6. Hezekiah was the only person, that we read of, who was previously informed exactly how long he was to live. Such information would be of very bad tendency to ungodly men; and it would not be either comfortable or useful to a believer, unless animated with a vigorous faith,

7 And Isaiah said, [t] take a lump of figs: and they took and laid *it* on the boil, and he recovered.

8 And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah, [u] What *shall be* the sign that the LORD will heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of the LORD the third day?

9 And Isaiah said, [x] This sign shalt thou have of the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing that he hath spoken: [y] Shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees?

10 And Hezekiah answered, [z] It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees.

11 And Isaiah the prophet [a] cried unto the LORD; and [b] he brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the * dial of Ahaz.

12 ¶ At that time [c] Berodach-baladan, the son of Baladan, [d] king of [e] Babylon, [f] sent letters and a present unto Hezekiah: for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick.

13 And Hezekiah hearkened unto them, and [g] shewed them all the house of his † precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and *all* the house of his ‡ armour, and all that was found in his treasures: [h] there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not.

14 Then [i] came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, [k] What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from [l] a far country, *even* from Babylon.

15 And he said, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, [m] All *the things* that *are* in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed them.

16 And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, Hear the word of the LORD.

17 Behold, the days come, that all that *is* in thine house, and that which thy

t iv. 41. Is. xxxviii 21.
u xix. 29. Judg vi. 17 37—40. Is vii. 11. 14 xxxviii. 22
x Is. xxxviii. 7, 8.
y Matt. xvi. 1.
z ii. 10 iii. 13. Mark ix. 28, 29. John xiv. 12.
a Ex. xiv. 15. 1 Kings xvii. 20, 21. xviii. 36—38. Acts ix. 40.
b Josh. x 12—14 2Chr. xxxii. 24. 31
* Heb *degrees*
c Is. xxxix. 1. *Merodach-baladan*
d 2 Chr. xxxii. 31
e Gen x. 10 xi. 9. Is xiii 1. 19. xiv. 4
f 2 Sam. viii. 10. x. 2.
g 2 Chr. xxxii 27. Is. xxxix. 2.
† Or, *spicery*. 1 Kings x. 2. 10. 15. 25.
‡ Or, *jewels*. Heb *vessels*
h 2 Chr xxxii. 25. 26. Ec. vii 20.
i Is. xxxix. 3—8.
k v. 25, 26. 2Chr. xvi. 7—10 xxv. 7—9. 15, 16.
l Josh. ix 6. 9. 15.
m 13. Josh. vii. 19. Job xxxi. 33. Prov. xxviii. 13. 1 John i. 8—10.

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and glowing zeal for the honour of God. Doubtless this good king made a good use of this knowledge, and waited the appointed period of his days with calm resignation: but we need not envy him this peculiar privilege. He was not more than fifty-four years old when he died.

V. 7. It seems that Hezekiah's sickness was a species of the plague, accompanied with a boil of fatal tendency: whether this application were *medicinally* proper, or not, we may be sure it was supernaturally prospered beyond its ordinary efficacy, and was a token of the divine operation by which he was healed.

V. 8. *What*, &c.? As the Lord was graciously pleased, frequently to confirm his promises by signs, Hezekiah desired one in this case; not in unbelief, but for the confirmation of his wavering faith.

V. 9—11. We suppose the dial to have been placed full in Hezekiah's view, and the sun shining upon it: and he was allowed to choose, whether the shadow should go forward or backward ten degrees; (that is, half our lines, as it is conjectured.) The progression of the shadow with accelerated speed, though evidently miraculous, seemed not so extraordinary as its retrograde motion, which Hezekiah preferred, and which accordingly took place. We are not concerned to determine how God produced this effect; if he saw good, he was able to cause a temporary change in the motion of the earth and heavenly bodies; (*Note, Josh.* x. 12—14:) and some think that the same effect was produced in other places, especially at Babylon; (2 *Chron.* xxxii. 31.) It appears from Herodotus, that the Egyptians had observed some few instances in which the course of the sun and moon was very different from what was usual; though their traditions of them were greatly distorted, and unlike the real facts, as recorded in Scripture.

V. 12, 13. The king of Babylon seems at this time to have reigned independent; but he was in danger of being reduced under the power of the Assyrian monarch: yet, in process of time, Babylon acquired the pre-eminence, and swallowed up the Assyrian empire. This prince, having heard of Hezekiah's sickness and the miraculous circumstances of his recovery, and knowing that he had refused submission to the Assyrians, seems to have wished to enter into a confederacy with him against that potent nation. Hezekiah was *too well* pleased with the flattering embassy; and in order to convince the ambassadors who brought the letters, that he was a desirable ally, he showed them all his treasures, and armour of every kind. This resulted from pride and ostentation, and might have led to an alliance with an idolatrous prince. He seems likewise to have missed the opportunity of instructing the Chaldeans, concerning the perfections of JEHOVAH, who had wrought the miracles which had excited their attention, and concerning his authority, law, and worship; and of showing them the absurdity and evil of idolatry, especially their worship of the sun, which was evidently the creature and servant of the God of Israel. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V 14, 15. Hezekiah, though faulty, did not resent the prophet's interference in state-affairs: for he reverenced his person, confided in his prudence and affection, and desired to hear the will of God from him. In his answer, he intimated, that he counted it an honour to receive ambassadors from a far country. Perhaps he was not at first conscious of having done wrong: yet in reviewing and relating his conduct, he seems to have been made sensible of his sin and folly.

fathers have laid up in store unto this day, [n] shall be carried into Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the LORD.

18 And of [o] thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and [p] they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.

19 Then said Hezekiah unto Isaiah, [q] Good *is* the word of the LORD which thou hast spoken. And he said, * *Is it not good, if* peace and truth be in my days?

20 And the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how [r] he made a pool, and a conduit, and brought water into the city, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

21 And Hezekiah slept with his fathers: and Manasseh his son reigned in his stead. B. C. 699.

n xxiv 13. xxxv. 13—15. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 10. 18 Jer. xxvii. 21, 22. lii. 17—19.
o xxiv. 12 xxv. 6. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11.
p Dan. i. 3—7.
p Lev. x. 3 1 Sam. iii. 18. Job i 21. Ps. xxxix. 9. Lam. iii 29 39.
q Or, *shall there not be peace and truth*, &c.
r 2 Chr. xxxii. 4. 30. 32. Neh. iii. 16. Is. xxii. 9—11.

V. 17, 18. Considering the small power of the king of Babylon, at this time, compared with that of the Assyrian kings, who seemed about to establish a permanent dominion over all the adjacent countries; nothing could well be more unlikely than the accomplishment of this prediction: yet in somewhat more than a hundred years it was exactly fulfilled!—All the remaining treasures of the temple, palace, and city were carried to Babylon: and Daniel and his companions, some of whom were descended from Hezekiah, became eunuchs, in the king of Babylon's palace! (*Marg. Ref.*)—It seems to have been soon after this that Hezekiah exhausted his treasuries, hoping to pacify Sennacherib. He dreaded his power: but he was more disposed to expect help than to fear ruin from the king of Babylon.

V. 19. Hezekiah humbly and submissively allowed the justice of the sentence, and the goodness of God in the respite: and gratefully acknowledged his unmerited kindness, in the peace, prosperity, and continuance of true religion in his days. Yet the prospect respecting his family and nation, must have occasioned him many painful sensations.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—11.

'In the midst of life we are in death:'—happy then are they, and they alone, who are habitually prepared for that event. Yet even to them it is desirable to be apprised of its immediate approach, that they may settle all their temporal concerns for the peace and benefit of their survivors: and then meet the separating stroke with that calmness, and in that frame of spirit, which may most impress and edify surrounding friends.—If the Lord seem to bid us "set our house in order, for we must die, and not live;" and yet afterwards unexpectedly prolong our days; our preparation in that case will neither mar the comfort, nor lessen the usefulness, of our future lives.—It is sometimes required of ministers to intimate to sick persons the probability of their approaching dissolution: as well as to assist them in improving the visitation, and preparing for the event: and should such intimations afterwards prove erroneous, they ought not to be censured; for they can only speak according to their judgment, and deliver that message from God, which *appears to them* suited to the case of those whom they address.—Though miracles, properly so called, are ceased: yet the Lord hears the prayer of faith for the sick, and sometimes remarkably prospers simple means, used in dependence on his blessing. And though physicians, (for prophets are not now sent from God to inform us in these matters;) should give little encouragement respecting the recovery of beloved and useful persons; we may still continue to pray for them: for "with God all "things are possible;" and the most sagacious are often found mistaken. In respect of ourselves, it is generally best to be willing to depart; and to pray especially for spiritual blessings in behalf of ourselves and others. Yet there may be cases in which men may with propriety be importunate for the continuance of life and health, to complete designs of public and allowed utility, and which appear likely to be frustrated if they should be removed: or when in any way the important interests of families, churches, or nations *appear to them* connected with their lives. Yet as we are all liable to mistake in these concerns, submission to the divine will should invariably unite with such petitions: and nothing else should make him desire to live in this wretched world, who knows that he is ready for a better. The mercy of our God, and the merits of our heavenly Advocate, form the sinner's never-failing plea at the throne of grace: yet the consciousness of sincerity in our professed faith and piety, gives confidence in times of trial; and may, on some occasions, be pleaded before him without the imputation of pride or self-righteousness.—Secret earnest prayer is the approved and never-failing method of obtaining relief and comfort in seasons of the deepest distress: and sometimes the Lord immediately turns the mourning of the humble supplicant into joy and thanksgiving. He always hears the prayers and sees the tears of the broken in heart; and will give health, length of days, and temporal deliverances, as much, and as long as they are truly beneficial. The minister of Christ *must* deliver his Lord's message, when it contains alarms and rebukes; but he delights to be the vehicle of joy and consolation to those whom his word hath previously wounded. If we would have promised mercies, we must observe the *instituted means;* for these being connected with the end by the express promises of God, are far more certainly efficacious, when used properly, than any of those means which produce their effect in the ordinary course of Providence: and yet the latter ought not to be neglected, lest we tempt rather than trust the Lord. Recovery from sickness should always be publicly acknowledged, by first going up to the house of the Lord, to render the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving if it can be done: yet, alas! few observe this rule, and many of those few do it as a formal task; whilst re-established health is employed in scenes of diversion or

CHAP. XXI.

Manasseh reigns very wickedly and idolatrously, 1—9. *Prophecies against Judah because of his wickedness,* 10—16. *He dies, and is succeeded by Amon,* 17, 18. *Amon reigns wickedly,* 19—22. *He is slain by his servants; the people put the conspirators to death; and make his son Josiah king,* 23, 24. *Amon's acts and burial,* 25, 26.

a 1 Chr. iii. 13. 2 Chr xxxiii. 1. Matt. i. 10. *Manasses.*

MANASSEH *was* [a] twelve years old when he began to reign, and reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* [b] Hephzi-bah.

b Is. lxii. 4.

2 And [c] he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, [d] after the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.

c 7. 16 xvi. 2-4. xxii. 17. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 2-4.
d Lev. xviii. 24—29. Deut. xii. 31.

3 For he built up again [e] the high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed; and [f] he reared up altars for Baal, and made a grove, as did Ahab king of Israel; [g] and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them.

e xviii. 4.
f viii. 18. 27. 1 Kings xvi. 31—33.
g xvii. 16. Deut. iv. 19. xvii. 3. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 3—5.

4 And [h] he built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD said, [i] In Jerusalem will I put my name.

h xvi. 10—16. Jer. xxxiii. 34.
i Ex. xx 24 Deut. xii 5. 2 Sam. vii. 13. 1 Kings viii 29. ix. 3. Ps. lxxviii. 68, 69. cxxxii. 13, 14.

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business, if not more directly devoted to the service of Satan by licentious pleasures. But the true believer values the ability and opportunity of attending on God's ordinances, and will go up with a glad and thankful heart. (*Psalm* cxviii. 17—19;) and value that more than any other privilege of health.—True faith is not without its misgivings, so that the strongest believers desire to have their's more strengthened: and in their experience, the Lord is pleased sometimes to give those evidences of his power, truth, and love to them, which establish their hearts as effectually as miraculous signs did of old. All creatures are his servants, to minister to the good of his children: and in answer to their prayers he can, in innumerable ways, render them subservient even to their spiritual benefit.

V. 12—21.

Alas! how seldom do we make suitable returns to the Lord for his condescending mercies to us! Ambition and ostentation too generally intrude, where thankfulness alone should occupy the heart; and we are often chargeable with pride, vanity, and carnal confidence, when we do not suspect ourselves. It is very difficult to possess distinctions in rank, wealth, elegant furniture, or any thing valued by men, without a secret self-preference, and a desire that others should admire the possessor's ingenuity, taste, magnificence, or felicity! This foolish pride the Lord will rebuke and correct in those whom he loves; and especially when they idolize the opinion of ungodly men, and court their acquaintance, because they profess to esteem and admire them. But it is hopeful, when persons in superior rank will endure to be reasoned with and reproved by those who, in outward circumstances, are greatly their inferiors; for generally such interference, however well meant and prudently conducted, excites resentment.—If we could look into futurity, it would damp our joy in present prosperity: and we may expect vexation from every object, in proportion as we have been inordinately pleased with it.—Our regard to posterity, and our grief for the gloomy prospects before us in the church or the world, must not render us unmindful of our present mercies, or induce impatient murmurs. Our God hath wise and righteous reasons for all he doeth, or permitteth to be done; and if we enjoy peace and the advantages of true religion in our days, we should be very thankful. Shortly our trials and services will end together. Our space is limited, though its limits are unknown to us, and then we shall sleep with our fathers. And "blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; for "they rest from their labours, and their works do follow "them!"

NOTES.

CHAP. XXI. V. 1, 2. It is uncertain whether Hezekiah had any other children than Manasseh, or any other wives than Hephzi-bah, (whose name signifies, *my delight is in her.*) Doubtless Manasseh had been properly educated during the lifetime of his father; and the rudiments of religious knowledge which he then imbibed, though they aggravated the guilt of his enormous impiety, might prove the seeds of his subsequent repentance; at least we may be sure that his pious father offered many prayers for him, which at length were answered. It would be pleasing to his youthful mind to inherit a prosperous kingdom so early in life; but this circumstance proved extremely prejudicial to him, and was still more ruinous to his people. The event, as well as the testimony of the prophets, evinces, that Hezekiah's reformation had been complied with in a reluctant and hypocritical manner, especially by the chief men; and that the nation was ripening fast for destruction: the nobles, upon whom the regency, or the counselling of the young king, must necessarily devolve, seem to have been disposed to idolatry; and by humouring and flattering Manasseh, they trained him up to concur with their wishes, and probably to go beyond them; (*Matt.* xxiii. 15.) Soon after Hezekiah's death, his reformation seems to have been subverted; and the king proceeded from bad to worse, till he was carried captive to Babylon. Thus Hezekiah, though a prince of eminent piety and excellency, was the son of a very wicked father, and the father of a more wicked son! (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 3. It is probable that Manasseh was taught to consider his father's attachment to the temple as the effect of a weak and bigoted mind. It appeared to the nobles more convenient, liberal, and magnificent, to have a variety of temples and altars, than to be confined to meet with the poorest of the people, from all parts of the land, at Solomon's temple. In contempt therefore of his father's memory, the king rebuilt the high places, which had been piously destroyed. Yet this seemed but a light thing, and he soon proceeded to copy Ahab's idolatry, and even to exceed it.

CHAP. XXII.

Josiah reigns well, 1, 2. *He provides for the repairs of the temple,* 3—7. *Hilkiah finds the book of the law, which is read to the king; who is alarmed, and sends to inquire of God, by Huldah the prophetess,* 8—14. *She foretels the destruction of Jerusalem, but speaks peace to Josiah,* 15—20.

[a] JOSIAH *was* [b] eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned thirty and one years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Jedidah, the daughter of Adaiah of [c] Boscath.

2 And he did *that which was* [d] right in the sight of the LORD, and [e] walked in all the way of David his father, and [f] turned not aside to the right hand or to the left.

a 1 Kings xiii. 2. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 1, 2. Jer. i. 2. Zeph. i. 1. Matt. i. 10. *Josias.*
b xi. 21. xxi. 1. Ps. viii. 2. Ec. x. 16. Is. iii. 4.
c Josh. xv. 39. *Bozkath.*
d xvi. 2. xviii. 3. 2 Chr. xvii. 3. xxix. 2. Prov. xx. 11.
e 1 Kings iii. 6. xi. 38. xv. 5.
f Deut. v. 32. Josh. i. 7. Prov. iv. 27. Ez. xviii. 14—17.

cannot have quietness in vice, till by desperate courses they have effectually stupified their consciences: and in every case, the greater the obstacles which are surmounted, before men attain to the undisturbed indulgence of their lusts, the more lost they are afterwards to all sense of shame or decency. But the Lord will put his fear into the hearts of his true people, that they shall not finally depart from him: yet in the reformation of collective bodies, numbers are mere time-servers, who in temptation fall away. And as the mind of man is disposed to vibrate from one extreme to another; as the descending stone falls with a force proportioned to the height to which it was raised; so, times of remarkable revival in religion have often been succeeded by those of as notorious infidelity, impiety, and profligacy. The ambition of excelling prompts sinners to aspire after pre-eminence even in crimes; and men are capable of glorying in having gone beyond all their predecessors in iniquity, and in refining upon the blasphemy and sensuality of former times, or of contemporary rivals in vice! An infidel neglect of true religion is often connected with the most absurd credulity, and ridiculous superstitions! Some daring sinners not only seek to gratify their lusts, but seem desirous of forcing their crimes upon the notice of the Almighty: as if ambitious of provoking his indignation by every token of contempt and defiance! and they peculiarly delight in seducing others to commit the same wickedness, as if ambitious also of promoting the ruin of their souls! The vain-glory of young persons often appears, in affecting to be wiser than their prudent and pious parents, by reversing all their plans, and especially by treating with contempt their religious singularities, as they suppose them to be. But these are the ways in which men expose their own folly, and bring ruin upon themselves: thus they forfeit the Lord's favour and protection, and fall under his dreadful indignation; and all the mischief they have done to others, will recoil upon themselves, to their increasing guilt and condemnation, except a timely repentance prevent the fatal consequences.

V. 10—26.

If temporal judgments are so dreadful when foreseen or reported; what will be the horror of that day, when "the "earth shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover "her slain?" Yet in the severest vengeance, the Lord proceeds by rule and measure, and does not punish either nations or individuals beyond their deserts. External privileges, instead of benefiting those who neglect the obedience of faith, will immensely enhance their guilt and punishment. The Lord will cast off any professing people, who dishonour him by their crimes, and who persecute his servants: but he will never desert his cause on earth. When sinners disregard the invitations and exhortations of God's ministers, they are constrained to denounce his awful vengeance. Then will resentment be awakened in the hearts of the proud and rebellious; and faith and patience will be peculiarly requisite: but the servants of the Lord will overcome all, by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony. It is inconceivable what wickedness some men have lived to commit, who yet have not only been spared, but pardoned: such transgressors cannot forgive themselves, but would live and die covered with shame and self-abhorrence for all their crimes. Whether the Lord bear long with presumptuous offenders, or whether he more speedily cut them off in their sins: all those who persist in forsaking him, and in refusing to walk in his ways, must perish: and the parent's wickedness often occasions the children's destruction. It is well, however, when the removal of the ungodly makes way for better characters: yet they who, *instigated by their lusts,* execute deserved vengeance upon wicked men, will bring deserved vengeance upon themselves also.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXII. V. 1, 2. Josiah was seated on the throne by those who brought his father's murderers to justice, and who doubtless were friends to the family of David. We may therefore suppose that the persons, intrusted with his education, were at least averse to idolatry, and favourable to the worship of JEHOVAH. Perhaps his mother was a pious person, and instilled good principles into his tender mind. By the blessing of God, however, on the means used, he was very early brought under religious impressions, and set about the work of public reformation: and the event of his early succession was widely different from that of Manasseh. For his character was most excellent: he copied the faith, zeal, and piety of his ancestor David, and kept the middle path, without diverging to any of those extremes to which human nature is prone. And had the people as cordially concurred in his reformation, as he entered upon and persevered in it, blessed effects would have followed: but they were given up to the most infatuated idolatry and wickedness, and his efforts only served to evince the incurable degeneracy of that generation, (*Jer.* vi. 28—30. *Ez.* xxiv. 13.) We can obtain but a superficial knowledge of the state of Judah from

a B. C. 624.
f 2 Chr. xxxiv. 3—8

3 ¶ And it came to pass in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, *that* the king sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, the scribe, to the house of the LORD, saying,

g 1 Chr. vi. 13. ix. 11. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 9—13.
h xii. 4. 9—11.
i 2 Chr. viii. 14. Ps. lxxxiv. 10.
* Heb. *threshold*

4 Go up to [g] Hilkiah the high-priest, that he may sum the silver which is [h] brought into the house of the LORD, which [i] the keepers of the * door have gathered of the people:

k xii. 12—14.

5 And let them [k] deliver it into the hand of the doers of the work, that have the oversight of the house of the LORD: and let them give it to the doers of the work, which *is* in the house of the LORD, [l] to repair the breaches of the house,

l xii. 5. 2 Chr. xxiv. 7. 12, 13. 17.

6 Unto carpenters, and builders, and masons, and to buy timber and hewn stone to repair the house.

m xii. 15.

7 Howbeit [m] there was no reckoning made with them of the money that was delivered into their hand, because [n] they dealt faithfully.

n Ex. xxxvi. 5, 6. Neh. vii. 2. Prov. xxviii. 20. Luke xvi. 10—12. 1 Cor. iv. 2. 2 Cor. viii. 20, 21. 2 Tim. ii. 2. 3 John 5.

8 ¶ And Hilkiah the high-priest said unto Shaphan the scribe, [o] I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD. And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it.

o Deut. xxxi. 24—26. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 14, 15.

9 And Shaphan the scribe came to the king, and brought the king word again, and said, Thy servants have † gathered the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of them that do the work, that have the oversight of the house of the LORD.

† Heb. *melted*

10 And Shaphan the scribe shewed the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest hath delivered me a book. And [p] Shaphan read it before [q] the king.

p Deut. xxxi. 9—13. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 18. Jer. xxxvi. 20.
q Deut. xvii. 18—20.

11 And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, [r] that he rent his clothes.

r 2 Chr. xxxiv. 19. Jer. xxxvi. 24. Joel ii. 13.

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these compendious historical records, unless we compare them with the writings of the contemporary prophets.

V. 3—7. Josiah began to seek the LORD in the eighth year of his reign, and to attempt a public reformation in the twelfth; so that considerable progress had been already made in destroying the idols which filled Judah and Jerusalem to an almost inconceivable degree: but in his eighteenth year he proceeded to reinstate the temple and its worship in their former splendour, and the principal reformation in his reign was effected at this time. The money was collected by voluntary contributions, as in the time of Jehoash: but the Levites proved more active and faithful, than the priests had then done; and the workmen were no less worthy of confidence. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 8—11. The inquiries and controversies, which this account of finding the book of the law has occasioned, seem to have been quite unnecessary. If it were conceded, that no complete copy existed in all the world, at the time this book was found, it would not *in the smallest degree* invalidate the authenticity of that part of holy writ: because all the succeeding penmen of the Scriptures, with Christ himself and his apostles, have given the sanction of their testimony to its divine original. All the cavils and objections therefore of infidels grounded upon this circumstance, mean nothing; except they are intended to demonstrate their embittered enmity to the sacred Scriptures.—It is very probable that copies of the law were at that time very scarce, through the idolatry of the former reigns and the lamentable ungodliness of the people. It may also be reasonably conjectured, that the priests had made abstracts from it of the outlines of their worship, without specifying particulars, or inserting the solemn sanctions annexed to each of them. This would spare them the trouble of transcribing, or studying, or reading to the people, the whole book; and as these abstracts would come into common use, few people would look any further. But had not an universal traditional recollection of the law, and in general of its contents, prevailed in the nation; how could the book, when found, have obtained prompt and implicit credit as the word of God by Moses? In the dark ages of popery this was precisely the case: the liturgies and rituals contained a few selected portions of Scripture; and not only were *the people* kept in the dark as to its entire contents, but few even *of the priests* had ever read the Bible through, and numbers had never seen a complete copy of it. The same naturally becomes the case still, (notwithstanding the multiplication of copies of the Bible by the art of printing, and its public allowance in the vulgar tongue, and the commendable pains bestowed by pious persons to disperse them;) whenever any set of men become strenuous for one part of religion in preference to the rest. They who are the oracles of each party, insert in their writings those portions of Scripture which are supposed to inculcate the doctrines for which they contend; but keep out of sight, *perhaps without design*, those passages that as strongly declare, what they undervalue, overlook, or are prejudiced against. And these writings form the religion of the zealous friends of that party, and the rest of the Scripture is comparatively neglected or forgotten. Indeed we all, without great care, are disposed to have our favourite passages of Scripture, to which we are more attentive than to the rest. And may it not be hinted with propriety, that some text-books which were well designed, are yet capable of a dangerous abuse? I mean those books which give a text of Scripture for every day, with pious observations upon it. Many read these in family-worship, instead of the Bible itself; and others, it is likely, do the same in their closets: but some will thus undesignedly be led to substitute a part for the whole; the abstract with an exposition, instead of the book of the law: whereas "all Scripture is given by in-

xix. 2. 3.
t Jer. xxvi. 22. 24.
u 2 Chr. xxxiv. 20. *Abdon.*
* Or, *Micah.*

12 And [s] the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, and [t] Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and [u] Achbor the son of * Michaiah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asahiah a servant of the king's, saying,

x iii. 11. 1 Kings xxii. 7, 8. Ps. xxv. 14. Prov. iii. 6. Jer. xxi. 1, 2. xxvii. 17. Ez. xiv. 3, 4 x x. 1—3. Am iii 7.
y Ex. xx 5 Deut iv. 23—27. xxix. 23—28. xxxi. 17, 18. Neh. viii. 8, 9. ix. 3. Dan. ix. 5, 6. Rom. iii. 20. iv. 15. 1 Cor. xi. 30.

13 Go ye, [x] inquire of the LORD for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for [y] great *is* the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all *that which is* written concerning us.

z Ex. xv. 20 Judg. iv. 4. Mic. vi. 4 Luke i 41, &c. ii. 36. Acts xxi. 9. 1 Cor xi 5.
a 2 Chr. xxxiv 22. *Tikvath-Hasrah.*
† Heb. *garments* Neh. vii 72
‡ Or, *second part.*

14 So Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and Asahiah, went unto Huldah [z] the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of [a] Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the † wardrobe; (Now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the ‡ college;) and they communed with her.

i. 6. 16 Jer xxiii. 23.

15 And she said unto them, [b] Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Tell the man that sent you to me,

16 Thus saith the LORD, [c] Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, *even* [d] all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read:

c xx. 17. xxi. 12, 13 2 Chr xxxiv. 24, 25.
d xxv 1—4 Lev. xxvi 15, &c. Deut. xxviii. 15, &c xxix. 18—23. xxx 17, 18. xxxi. 16—18. xxxii 15 26. Josh xxiii. 13, 15 Dan. ix 11.—14.
e Ex xxxii. 34. Deut. xxix 24—28 xxxii. 15—19. Judg. ii 12—14 iii 7, 8. x 6, 7. 10—14. 1 Kings ix 6—9. Ps cv i. 35—42. Jer ii. 11—13. 27, 28
f Ps. cxv 4—3. Is. ii. 8, 9 xliv. 17—20 xlvi 5—8. Mic. v. 13.
g Deut. xxxii. 22. 2 Chr xxxvi. 16. Is. xxxiii. 14. Jer. vii. 20 xvii. 27. Ez. xx. 47, 48. Zeph. i. 18.

17 [e] Because they have forsaken me, and have burnt incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all [f] the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and [g] shall not be quenched.

18 But to [h] the king of Judah, which sent you to inquire of the LORD, [i] thus shall ye say to him, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, *As touching* the words which thou hast heard;

h 2 Chr. xxxiv. 26—28.
i Is. iii. 10. Mal. iii. 16.
k 1 Sam. xxiv. 5. Ps. li. 17 cxix. 120. Is. xlvi. 12. lvii 15. lxvi. 2. 5 Jer xxxvi. 24. 29—32. Ez. ix. 4. Rom. ii. 4, 5. Lam. iv 6—10.
l Ex. x 3. Lev. xxvi. 40, 41. 1 Kings xxi 29.

19 Because [k] thine heart was tender, and thou hast [l] humbled thyself before the LORD, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become [m] a desolation, and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before

2 Chr. xxxiii. 12. 19 23. Mic. vi. 8. 1 Pet v 5, 6 —— m Lev. xxvi 31, 32 Deut. xxix. 23. Jer. xxvi 5. xliv. 22. —— n Num. xxv. 6. Judg. ii. 4, 5 xx 26. Ezra ix 3, 4. x. 1. Neh. viii. 9. Ps. cxix. 136. Jer. ix. 1. xiii. 17. xiv. 17. Luke xix. 41. Rom. ix. 2, 3.

"spiration of God, and is profitable to furnish the "man of God for every good work." The proper use of such books is to suggest subjects for pious meditations and ejaculations, in the intervals of conversation and business. The book, which Hilkiah found, seems to have been the original book of the law, deposited by Moses at the side of the ark: but which in those distracted times had been removed, either for concealment lest it should be destroyed by the idolaters, or in contempt by those who were turning every thing into confusion. Some argue that this circumstance occasioned Josiah's consternation: but he certainly acted like a man that had never seen the law before; and this most likely was the case, though there might be copies dispersed among his subjects. It is probable his reformation had hitherto been conducted by such abstracts as have been mentioned, or by traditional knowledge. If the kings of Judah had observed the rule of transcribing the law with their own hands, very salutary effects might have been produced; but it seems to have been entirely neglected, as well as the command to read the law publicly to the people, every year at the feast of tabernacles. It is supposed that the portion, which was first read to Josiah, was the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth chapters of Deuteronomy: and these were doubtless well suited to convince him, that the guilt and danger of his people was much greater than he had apprehended, and to induce the expressions of fear, sorrow, and humiliation, which he showed. We may conclude, that he afterwards conducted his reformation with more exactness; as he now wrought by rule, and was aware of the imminent danger to which he and his subjects were exposed. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 12, 13. Very little is recorded concerning the high-priests, as active instruments in reformation, and reviving true religion. Hilkiah indeed seems to have been a man of good character; though it is likely not well acquainted with the divine law. Josiah, however, never proposed inquiring of the Lord by him and the breast-plate of judgment; nor did Hilkiah object, when sent with others to inquire of a prophetess. Either he was ignorant, that to inquire of God was one distinguishing part of his office; or he humbly thought himself unworthy to perform it: or this method of inquiry was considered as obsolete; having fallen into disuse, perhaps from the too general want of true piety in the high priests, who had been superseded in this respect by the prophets raised up in constant succession.

V. 14. *Huldah*, &c. Jeremiah and Zephaniah prophesied at this time; but perhaps being young, and newly entered on their work, they were of inferior note; or they were elsewhere employed. The ordinary ministry, both under the Old and New Testament, is confined *to men:* but the Lord is not bound by those restrictions which he imposes upon us; and he has often conferred on *women* the Spirit of prophecy. (*Marg. Ref.*) Huldah was doubtless a person of eminent piety, and well known to be a prophetess. She was a married woman, and her husband being keeper of the wardrobe, might make her better known to Josiah, who perhaps had before this consulted her.—Whether the word rendered *the college* means an institution at Jerusalem, in some respects similar to the schools of the prophets in Israel; or whether it only denotes, according to the marginal reading, the part of the city in which she lived, is not agreed. The latter opinion, however, seems most probable, as the same word is in the next chapter translated *of the second order.* (xxiii. 4.)

• xix 20. xx 5 me; • I also have heard *thee*, saith the LORD.

p Gen. xxv. 8. q xxiii. 29,30. Ps. xxxvii. 37. Is. lvii. 1, 2. Jer. xxii. 10 15, 16.

20 Behold therefore, p I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt q be gathered into thy grave in peace; and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place. And they brought the king word again.

V. 15—20. The sentence denounced concerning the desolations of Jerusalem was irrevocable: but as Josiah was proved to be of a broken heart and a tender conscience, a true penitent, and a real believer, he was spared the anguish of witnessing those dire calamities. Though he was slain in battle, yet he died in peace with God, and went to glory. As he was not forty years old when he died, and the total destruction of Jerusalem took place within twenty-three years after, he might have lived to that time, according to the ordinary course of nature. But as his piety and zeal could not avail to prevent that catastrophe, he was mercifully taken away from the evil to come.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

They who have been favoured, in their tender years, with prudent and pious instructors, have very great cause for gratitude: for that circumstance is immediately ordered in Providence, without their even *appearing* to choose it for themselves, and frequently in opposition to their inclinations; yet it commonly proves the means of determining both the comfort and usefulness of their future lives. The Lord frequently demonstrates the sovereignty of his grace, by raising up the brightest ornaments of his church from the most degenerate families. It is a peculiar favour to be brought to seek and serve God in early *life*, and to be led to copy closely the best examples. It is incumbent on us to keep the narrow way, and to avoid the extremes, which are found on the right and on the left: and great watchfulness is requisite so to shun self-righteous pride, as to keep clear of antinomian abuse of the gospel. In escaping from superstition, we are in danger of running into inexpedient indulgence, or irreverence to things sacred. Fierce and contentious zeal in some men leads others to soothe themselves in lukewarmness, indolence, and timidity: and in numberless ways, when avoiding one evil, we are prone to run into another; or so to attend to one part of religion, as to neglect others, and thus to mar that proportion and symmetry which is its peculiar ornament. But if, with all our circumspection, we are kept from such mistakes and dangers, we must give all the praise to him who leads his people "in the midst of the paths of judgment."—The interests and passions of men raise up so many obstructions, that public reformations commonly move heavily; and can only be effected by perseverance, gradually, and as the zealous reformers obtain influence, and establish their characters by patient continuance in well-doing. Yet, in the worst of times, we meet with examples of liberality, fidelity, and integrity, which are worthy of praise and imitation. The prevalence of impiety, infidelity, superstition, or licentiousness, renders the word of God a neglected book; and that neglect reciprocally augments these evils. And when *professed* ministers grow careless, selfish, or superstitious, the people of course become generally ignorant of the sacred oracles. But whenever the clergy make it their great business, to call the attention of the people to the Scriptures, and to bring them acquainted with the whole of them; their conduct will have a most extensive effect, in preventing the influx of vice, and in promoting true knowledge and genuine piety. "For the word of God is quick and powerful;" and, being "sharper than any two-edged sword," penetrates the heart and conscience with irresistible energy. By the holy law is the knowledge of sin, and by the blessed gospel is the knowledge of salvation. When the former is understood in its strictness, extent, excellency, and awful sanction, the sinner perceives his guilt, is convinced that the great wrath of the Lord is kindled against him for his transgressions; and begins to inquire, "What must I do to "be saved?" This excites his attentive regard to the ministry, and ministers of the gospel; who point out to him "Jesus Christ as the end of the law for righteousness, "unto every one that believeth." And when the sinner has been taught to trust and love the Saviour, he will thenceforth walk in newness of life. The scarcity of the written word did not *excuse* Israel's degeneracy and idolatry; because it was the *effect* of it; "the people loved "to have it so:" but the abundance of Bibles, with which this land is favoured, will exceedingly aggravate the guilt of our national impiety, infidelity, and licentiousness; for what greater contempt of God can we show, than to refuse to read his word, when put into our hands; or reading it, to refuse to believe and obey it?

V. 12—20.

The ministers of religion must communicate to the people whatever they have learned respecting the will of God, whether alarming or encouraging: otherwise they do not declare his whole counsel, nor keep themselves pure from the blood of all men. Kings and rulers, being personally as much concerned as their subjects to humble themselves before God, to know his will, and to seek his salvation; and their conduct being of still greater importance to others, they who minister before them in sacred things, should instruct them in the whole of divine revelation: and they are guilty of the basest and most cruel unfaithfulness to them, and to millions, if, from regard to their own safety or emolument, they keep back offensive truths. Those princes who are acquainted with able and faithful servants of God, and who are not deterred by evil counsel from consulting them, and encouraging them without needless ceremony to speak the whole truth, best consult their own good and that of their subjects. It is also becoming, when superior stated pastors and rulers of the church discard prejudice and jealousy, respecting those among their inferiors, or of other orders in society, whom God endows with peculiar spiritual gifts for the edifying of his people; when, instead of standing upon character and precedency, and hindering others from regarding their

CHAP. XXIII.

Josiah causes the law to be read in a solemn assembly, 1, 2. *He enters into covenant with God; and abolishes idolatry in Judah,* 3—14. *He burns men's bones on the altar of Bethel; fulfils the prediction of the prophet sent to Jeroboam: destroys the high places in Samaria, and slays the priests,* 15—20. *He celebrates a solemn passover,* 21—23. *He puts away wizards, &c.; and excels all his predecessors,* 24, 25. *The wrath of God against Judah is yet unappeased,* 26. 28. *Josiah is slain in battle by Pharaoh-necho, and succeeded by Jehoahaz,* 29, 30. *He reigns wickedly three months, is led away prisoner by Pharaoh into Egypt, and succeeded by Jehoiakim,* 31—34; *who taxes the land for Pharaoh's tribute, and reigns wickedly,* 35—37.

AND [a] the king sent, and they gathered unto him all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem.

2 And the king went up into the house of the LORD, and all the men of Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the people, * both small and great: and [b] he read in their ears all the words of [c] the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the LORD,

3 And the king [d] stood by a pillar, and [e] made a covenant before the LORD, [f] to walk after the LORD, and to keep [g] his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, [h] with all *their* heart and all *their* soul, to perform the words of this covenant *that were* written in this book. [i] And all the people stood to the covenant.

4 And the king commanded Hilkiah the high-priest, and the [k] priests of the

a Deut. xxxi. 28. 2 Sam. vi. 1. 2 Chr. xxix. 20. xxx. 2 xxxiv. 29, 30.
* Heb. *from small even unto great.* Gen. xix. 11. 1 Sam. v 9. xxx. 2. 2 Chr. xv. 13. Esth i. 5. Job iii. 19. Ps. cxv. 13. Acts xxvi. 22. Rev. xx. 12.
b Deut xxxi. 10—13. 2 Chr. xvii. 9. Neh. viii. 1—3. ix. 3 xiii. 1.
c xxii. 8 Deut. xxxi. 26. 1 Kings viii 9.
d xi. 14—17. 2 Chr. xxiii. 13. xxxiv. 31, 32.
e Ex. xxiv. 7, 8. Deut. v 1—3. xxix. 1. 10—15. Josh. xxiv. 25. 2 Chr xv. 12—14. xxiii 16. xxix 10. Ezra x. 3 Neh. ix. 38. x. 23 &c. Jer l. 5. Heb. viii 8—13. xii. 24. xiii. 20.
f Deut. viii. 19
g Deut. iv. 45. v. 1. vi. 1 Ps. xix 7—9.
h Deut vi 5. x. 12. xi 13. Matt. xxii. 36. 37.
i Ex. xxiv 3. Josh xxiv. 24. 2 Chr xxxiv. 32, 33. Ec vi. 2.
Jer. iv. 2.——k 1 Chr. xxiv. 4—26. Matt. xxvi. 3. xxvii. 1.

advice, they take the lead in honouring the grace of God in them, and gladly receive their profitable instructions. Such are wise men, and will daily grow wiser; because they are conscious that they have not attained, but need continual accessions to their measure of divine knowledge and grace: but they who are too great or too proud to learn even from their inferiors, are likely to live and to die without true wisdom. In communicating his special blessings, the Lord does not restrict himself to age, or sex, or order, or condition in society; but "divideth severally to "every one, as he will:" and true sanctity consists in separation from sin, and devotedness to God; and not in seclusion from society, or from that state which he hath pronounced honourable. There are kinds and degrees of guilt which the Lord will not pardon, either in individuals or nations; and the discovery of men's iniquities will fully demonstrate the justice of his most tremendous vengeance on them. But a tender, broken, and contrite heart; a humble consciousness of having deserved wrath, and an earnest application for mercy, are things which accompany salvation, and will never be rejected by our gracious God. Whatever persons of this character fear, or suffer, or witness, or in what way soever they are removed out of the world, they shall be gathered to the grave in peace, and shall enter into the rest reserved for his people.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIII. V. 2. *The Prophets.* We may suppose that Jeremiah, Zephaniah, Huldah, and others, were present on this occasion, encouraging and assisting the king in his pious undertaking: yet it is probable that the king neither employed them nor the priests in reading the law to the elders of the people, at least not exclusively; but that he performed the service personally. The opinion that he only engaged others to read the law, seems to be taken from modern refinements and sentiments of royal dignity, and not from facts, good sense, or the examples of pious princes in those days: (2 *Sam.* vi. 12—22. 1 *Kings* viii. 12—61.) For such is human nature, that so trivial a circumstance, as the rank of the reader or speaker, will frequently excite greater attention, than matters of acknowledged superior importance. Though Josiah was assured that no reformation could prevent the desolations of Jerusalem; yet he would do what he could to prolong her state, to rescue a remnant as brands out of the burning, and to sow good seed, which might afterwards produce a reformation even among dispersed captives.

V. 3. The prophets, priests, and elders, and through them the whole nation by their representatives, bound themselves in the most solemn manner, to renounce and abolish every species of idolatry, to re-establish the worship of God according to the law, and to serve him in righteousness and true holiness. We learn from the event, that the most of those present who "stood to the covenant," were hypocritical in this transaction; being induced to concur, to please the king, or to avoid his displeasure, and the reproach of singularity, or by some transient impression upon their minds. Yet Josiah did well in requiring them thus to engage, as far as they could be prevailed on without compulsion. A great deal of outward wickedness would be prevented; many individuals would receive essential benefit; and in every way the name, worship, and law of God were honoured: whilst they who acted hypocritically, and violated their engagements by apostacy, were accountable to God for their conduct. Indeed no effectual means can be used of doing extensive good, which will not eventually prove an occasion of deeper guilt and condemnation to many. (2 *Cor.* ii. 15, 16.)

second order, and [l] the keepers of the door [m] to bring forth out of the temple of the LORD all the vessels *that were* made for [n] Baal, and for the grove, and for all the host of heaven: and he burnt them without Jerusalem in [o] the fields of Kidron, and carried the ashes of them unto [p] Beth-el.

5 And he * put down † the idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places, in the cities of Judah, and in the places round about Jerusalem; them also that burnt incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the ‡ planets, and to [q] all the host of heaven.

6 And he brought out [r] the grove from the house of the LORD, without Jerusalem, unto the brook Kidron, and [s] burned it at the brook Kidron, and stamped *it* small to powder, and cast the powder thereof upon [t] the graves of the children of the people.

7 And he brake down the houses of [u] the Sodomites, that *were* by the house of the LORD, [x] where the women wove § hangings for the grove.

8 And he brought all the priests out of the cities of Judah, and defiled the high places where the priests had burnt incense, from [y] Geba to [z] Beer-sheba, and brake down the high places of the gates that *were* in the entering in of the gate of Joshua the governor of the city, which *were* on a man's left hand at the gate of the city.

9 Nevertheless [a] the priests of the high places came not up to the altar of the LORD in Jerusalem, [b] but they did eat of the unleavened bread among their brethren.

10 And he defiled [c] Topheth, which *is* in [d] the valley of the children of Hinnom, that no man [e] might make his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to Molech.

11 And he took away the horses that the kings of Judah had given to [f] the sun, at the entering in at the house of the LORD, by the chamber of Nathan-melech ‖ the chamberlain, which *was* in the suburbs, and burnt the chariots of the sun with fire.

12 And the altars that *were* [g] on the

[l] 1 Chr. xxvi. 1—19.
[m] xxi. 3—7. 2 Ch. xxxiii. 3. 7. xxxiv. 3, 4.
[n] xxi. 3. 7.
[o] 2 Sam. xv 23. John xviii 1. *Cedron.*
[p] 1 Kings xii. 29. Hos. iv. 15. Am. iv. 4.
* Heb *caused to cease*
† Heb. *Chemarim.* Hos. x. 5. Zeph. i. 4, 5.
‡ Or *twelve signs*, or, *constellations*
[q] xxi. 3 Jer. viii. 1, 2. xliv 17—19.
[r] xxi. 7.
[s] Ex. xxxii. 20
[t] 2 Chr. xxxiv. 4.
[u] 1 Kings. xiv. 24. xv. 12. xxii. 46. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 33. Rom. i. 26. 27.
[x] Ex. xxxv. 25, 26. Ez. xvi. 16. Hos. ii. 13.
§ Heb. *houses.*
[y] 1 Kings xv. 22.
[z] Gen. xxi. 21.
[a] Ez. xliv. 10—14. Mal. ii. 8, 9.
[b] 1 Sam ii. 36. Ez xliv. 29—31.
[c] Is. xxx. 33. Jer. vii. 31, 32 xix. 6. 11—13. *Tophet.*
[d] Josh xv. 8.
[e] xvi. 3 xxi. 6. Lev. xviii. 21. Deut. xviii. 10. Ez. xxiii. 37—39.
[f] 5 Ez. viii. 16.
‖ Or, *eunuch*, or, *officer.*
[g] Deut. xxii. 8. Jer xix. 13. Zeph i. 5.

V. 4. "The priests of the second order," seem to have been the heads of the several courses, which served in rotation under the person next in succession to the high-priesthood; who acted upon emergencies as deputy to the high-priest. These were the chief priests mentioned so often in the New Testament. (*Marg. Ref.*) Josiah, in his former well-meant attempts for reformation, had probably removed the idols, and abolished the worship of them in Jerusalem: but perhaps, through ignorance, he had supposed that the vessels and other valuables might be reserved for the use of the temple. Being, however, now more fully instructed in the law of God, he destroyed all these by fire: and in his progress through the land, he carried the ashes to Beth-el, the beginning of idolatry to Israel, as established by public authority; in order to render both the place and these ashes contemptible or abominable to the people.

V. 5. *Chemarim*, the name of these priests of Baal and other idols, is supposed to be derived from the *black* garments which they wore, and by which they were distinguished from the Lord's priests, who wore garments of white linen. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 6. *The graves*, &c. Perhaps the graves of the worshippers of these idols are meant: this was another expedient to render them and the idolaters alike vile and abominable to the spectators.

V. 7. *Hangings*, &c. It is supposed that these hangings were intended for tents, in which the devotees of the demons perpetrated the most detestable species of lewdness, as a part of their religion, and as near as possible to the house of the Lord itself! This was far worse than making that holy place a den of thieves.

V. 8. It is probable, that these high places were defiled by casting the bones, or dead bodies of men into them. Thus the people in general would be preserved from going thither, when they had so expressly been declared abominable; though presumptuous persons should rebuild them. Josiah showed his impartiality, when he destroyed the high places at the gates of the city, which seem to have been erected under the patronage of a considerable person, entitled the governor of the city.

V. 9. These priests do not seem to have been guilty of idolatry, but of irregularly and illegally worshipping JEHOVAH in the high places, instead of at the temple. To deter others from this inveterate practice, they were excluded from their sacred functions; but not put to death, or deprived of their maintenance, though it is uncertain what portions were allotted them.

V. 10. *Topheth*, &c. This place is said to have derived its name from a word which signifies *a drum:* because they used to drown the cries of the children, that there passed through the fire, or were burnt in it, by the sound of beating drums.

V. 11. The worshippers of the sun represented that luminary by a man seated in a chariot drawn by swift and furious horses; and therefore they dedicated to him horses and chariots. The kings of Judah had imitated this custom, and kept the horses of the sun at the entrance of the temple: and a person who, as it seems, was very honourably provided for, was employed to take care of them!

top of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars [h] which Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the LORD, did the king beat down, and * brake *them* down from thence, and cast the dust of them into the brook Kidron.

13 And the high places that *were* before Jerusalem, which *were* on the right hand of the mount of corruption, which [i] Solomon the king of Israel had builded for [k] Ashtoreth the abomination of the Zidonians, and for [l] Chemosh the abomination of the Moabites, and for [m] Milcom the abomination of the children of Ammon, did the king defile.

14 And [n] he brake in pieces the † images, and cut down the groves, and filled their places with [o] the bones of men.

15 ¶ Moreover [p] the altar that *was* at Beth-el, *and* the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had made, both that altar and the high place he brake down, and burnt the high place, *and* [q] stamped *it* small to powder, and burnt the grove.

16 And as Josiah turned himself, he spied the sepulchres that *were* there in the mount, and sent, and took the bones out of the sepulchres, and [r] burnt *them* upon the altar, and polluted it, according to the word of the LORD, which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words.

17 Then he said, What title *is* that that I see? And the men of the city told him, [s] *it is* the sepulchre of the man of God which came from Judah, and proclaimed these things that thou hast done against the altar of Beth-el.

18 And he said, Let him alone; let no man move his bones. So they let his bones ‡ alone, with the bones of [t] the prophet that came out of Samaria.

19 And all [u] the houses also of the high places that *were* in [x] the cities of Samaria; which the kings of Israel had made [y] to provoke *the* LORD to anger, Josiah took away, and did to them according to all the acts that he had done in Beth-el.

20 And [z] he § slew all the priests of the high places that *were* there upon the altars, and burnt men's bones upon them, and returned to Jerusalem.

21 ¶ And the king commanded all the people, saying, [a] Keep the passover unto the LORD your God, [b] as *it is* written in the book of this covenant.

22 Surely [c] there was not holden such a passover from the days of the judges that judged Israel, nor in all the days [d] of the kings of Israel, nor of the kings of Judah;

23 But in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, *wherein* this passover was holden to the LORD in Jerusalem.

h xxi. 5. 21. 22. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 5. 15.
* Or, *ran from thence.*
i 1 Kings xi. 7, 8. Neh. xiii. 26
k Judg. ii. 13. x. 6. 1 Sam. vii. 4. xii. 10. 1 Kings xi. 5. 33.
l Num. xxi. 29. Judg. xi. 24. Jer. xlviii. 7. 13. 46.
m Zeph. i. 5. *Malcham.*
n Ex. xxiii. 24. Num. xxxiii. 52. Deut. vii. 5. 25, 26.
† Heb. *statues.*
o Num. xix. 16. 18. Jer. viii. 1, 2. Ez. xxxix. 12—16. Matt. xxiii. 27, 28.
p 1 Kings xii. 28—30.
q 6.
r 1 Kings xiii. 1, 2.
s 1 Kings xiii. 1, 30.
‡ Heb. *escape.*
t 1 Kings xiii. 11—22. 31.
u xvii. 9. 1 Kings xii. 31. xiii. 32.
x 2 Chr. xxxiv. 6, 7.
y xvii. 16—18. xxi. 6. Ps. lxxviii. 58. Jer. vii. 13, 19. Ez. viii. 17, 18.
z x. 25. xi. 18. Ex. xxii. 20. Deut. xiii. 5. 1 Kings xviii. 40. Zech. xiii. 2, 3.
§ Or, *sacrificed.* 1 Kings xiii. 2. Is. xxxiv. 6.
a 2 Chr. xxxv. 1, &c.
b Ex. xii. 3, &c. Lev. xxiii. 5—8. Num. ix. 2—5. xxviii. 16—25. Deut. xvi. 1—8.
c 2 Chr. xxxv. 18, 19.
d 2 Chr. xxx. 1—3. 13—20. xxxv. 3—17.

V. 12, 13. Manasseh, after his repentance, had removed the altars from the courts of the Lord: but it is probable that Amon had replaced or rebuilt them, and they retained the name of their original deviser. The high places which Solomon had built, had doubtless been in part at least demolished: but the idolatrous kings had rebuilt or repaired them, and dedicated them to the same idols, and called them by Solomon's name; perhaps glorying that they copied so illustrious a prince's example. The sacred writer seems to call the hill on which these high places were erected, and which is supposed to have been the mount of Olives, *the mount of corruption*, because of the abominations there committed.

V. 15—20. Josiah had evidently some authority in the country which the ten tribes had occupied; (2 *Chron.* xxxiv. 6;) but it is not certain whether this was by grant from the king of Assyria, or by the willing subjection of the inhabitants: the former however appears the more probable. On this occasion he exactly accomplished the prediction of the man of God concerning him about three hundred and sixty years before; and though *he* may be supposed to have designed that accomplishment; yet so wicked a man as his father could have had no such intentions, in giving his son the name of *Josiah*. It seems that many Israelites had collected together in several parts of the land; and especially that the idolatrous priests had resorted to Beth-el to renew their old idolatry. These Josiah put to death, perhaps with others from the land of Judah that were notoriously guilty. By burning men's bones upon their altars he endeavoured to render their idolatry detestable to all the inhabitants; that they might be induced to join themselves to the Jews in the worship of God at Jerusalem: for nothing was so polluting by the ceremonial law, as a dead human body, or any part of one. (*Marg. Ref.*) It has been justly observed, that if Josiah had entertained the same notions of the sanctity of relics, which have so long prevailed among professed christians; he would have bestowed at least as much pains in honouring the bones of the old prophet from Judah, as he did in disgracing those of the idolatrous priests. But he thought it enough to let the bones of the man of God lie still in his grave.

V. 21—23. Having made all necessary preparation,

e xxi. 3. 6. xxii. 8. 1 Sam xxviii. 3—7. Is. viii. 19. xix. 3. Acts xvi. 16—18.
* Or. *teraphim*. Gen. xxxi. 19. Judg. xvii. 5. xviii. 17, 18.
f Lev.xix. 31.xx. 27. Deut. xviii. 10—12. Rom. xxx 2. Jam. i. 25.
g xxii. 8—13.
h xviii. 5.
i 3. Deut. iv 29. 1 Kings ii. 4. xv. 5. Jer. xxix. 13.
k Mal iv. 4.
l xxi. 11—13. xxii 16, 17. xxiv. 3, 4. 2 Chr. xxxvi 16 Jer. iii 7—10. xv. 1—4.
† Heb. *angers*
m xvii. 18. 20. xviii. 11. xxiv. 3 xxv. 11. Deut. xxix. 27, 28. Ez. xxiii. 32—35.

24 Moreover [e] the *workers with* familiar spirits, and the wizards, and * the images, and the idols, and all the abominations that were spied in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, did Josiah put away, [f] that he might perform the words of the law, which were written in [g] the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the LORD.

25 And [h] like unto him was there no king before him, [i] that turned to the LORD with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, [k] according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there *any* like him.

26 [l] Notwithstanding the LORD turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the † provocations that Manasseh had provoked him withal.

27 And the LORD said, [m] I will remove Judah also [n] out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, [o] My name shall be there.

n Ps. li. 11.
o xxi.4.7. 1 Kings viii. 29. ix 3.

B. C. 610.

28 Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

29 ¶ In his days [p] Pharaoh-nechoh king of Egypt went up against the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates: and king Josiah went against him: and he [q] slew him at [r] Megiddo when [s] he had seen him.

p 2 Chr. xxxv. 20—24.
q Ec. viii. 14. ix. 1, 2. Is. lvii. 1, 2. Rom. xi. 33.
r Zech. xii. 11. *Megiddon.*
s xiv. 8. 11.

30 And [t] his servants carried him in a chariot dead from Megiddo, and brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own sepulchre. And [u] the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and anointed him, and made him king in his father's stead.

t ix 28.
u xiv. 21. xxi.24. 2 Chr. xxxvi 1, 2.

Josiah proceeded to lead the attention of the people to their solemn feasts: and this first passover was celebrated with extraordinary zeal and exactness, and by immense multitudes. (*Notes*, 2 *Chron.* xxxv.)

V. 24. The whole narrative marks the care with which this pious prince had studied the book of the law, after it was found; the diligent investigation which he made to detect and destroy every thing forbidden in it; and the exactness, as well as earnestness, with which his reformation was conducted. Had the princes and people been as sincere and zealous as their king, the happiest effects would have followed.

V. 25. Hezekiah excelled all the kings of Judah for *entire confidence in God*: and Josiah surpassed all others *in zeal for reformation, and in an unblemished life*, being attentive to obey the precepts, and promote the glory of God, with his whole heart and soul.

V. 26, 27. Josiah lived above thirteen years after this great reformation, and to the end retained the people in the external worship of God, (2 *Chron.* xxxiv. 33:) but we may be sure that in general they relapsed *secretly* into many of their former idolatries and iniquities; and as a collective body they were not much amended in the sight of a heart-searching God. They had *heartily* concurred in the idolatries and crimes of Manasseh, but they had not imitated his repentance: on the other hand, they had *hypocritically* joined in Josiah's reformation, and were ripe, upon his removal, to join the apostacy of his sons. Manasseh's wickedness therefore was accounted national, and filled up their measure of iniquity; whereas Josiah's piety was personal, and the hypocrisy and apostacy of the people aggravated their guilt and hastened their ruin. We need not wonder that the righteousness of Josiah, and of the small remnant of pious persons amongst them, would not prevent the punishment of an impenitent nation: for even the Saviour's obedience unto death will not profit one *finally impenitent sinner*. But though the Lord turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath, so as to spare Jerusalem from desolation, and the Jews from captivity: yet this event proved a kind of crisis to their disease, and whilst the wicked perished in vast numbers, the remnant was purified; and Josiah's reformation probably had a happy effect in raising up many persons to join this small remnant, which proved the precious seed of their future church and nation.

V. 29, 30. Nabopollazar king of Babylon, assisted by the Medes, is supposed, before this time, to have conquered the Assyrians and destroyed Nineveh. Thus he became king of Assyria also: and some learned men are of opinion, that after Manasseh was freed from captivity, the kings of Judah reigned over the country formerly possessed by the ten tribes, as tributaries and allies to the kings of Babylon. Josiah might therefore consider himself as under engagements to the king of Assyria, as well as unwilling that the contending parties should march their armies through his country: he however lost his life in the attempt. Megiddo was situated in the northern part of the land of Israel, but at this time it seems to have been under Josiah's government. It is probable that Josiah disguised himself, that the king of Egypt might not know him; but he, having discovered him, singled him out for slaughter. When he had received his mortal wound, he was carried out of the battle, and he died by the way to Jerusalem. (*Note*, 2 *Chr.* xxxv. 20—24.) It has commonly been observed that our young king Edward VI. greatly resembled Josiah. He gave indeed singular evidence of wisdom and piety far beyond his years: but he was taken away at the age when Josiah first began to seek the Lord, and we can only conjecture what he would have been and done, if he had been spared to

31 ¶ [u] Jehoahaz *was* twenty and three years old when he began to reign; and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* [x] Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.

32 And [y] he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done.

33 And Pharaoh-nechoh [z] put him in bands at [a] Riblah, in the land of Hamath, † that he might not reign in Jerusalem; and ‡ put the land to a tribute of an hundred talents of silver, and a talent of gold.

34 And Pharaoh-nechoh made Eliakim the son of Josiah king, in the room of Josiah his father, and [b] turned his name to [c] Jehoiakim, and took Jehoahaz away: and [d] he came to Egypt, and died there.

35 And Jehoiakim gave the silver and the gold to Pharaoh; but [e] he taxed the land to give the money according to the commandment of Pharaoh: he exacted the silver and the gold of the people of the land, of every one according to his taxation, to give *it* unto Pharaoh-nechoh.

36 [f] Jehoiakim *was* twenty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Zebudah, the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah.

37 And [g] he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, according to [h] all that his fathers had done.

u 1 Chr. iii. 15. Jer. xxii. 11. *Shallum.*
x xxiv. 18.
y xxi.2—7 21, 22.
z 2 Chr. xxxvi.3, 4. Ez. xix. 3, 4.
a xxv. 6. Jer. lii. 11.
† Or, *because he reigned.*
‡ Heb *set a mulct upon the land.* xviii. 14.
b xxiv. 17. Dan. i. 7.
c Matt i. 11 *Jakim,* some copies.
d Jer xxii.11,12. Ez. xix. 3, 4.
e xv. 19, 20.
f 1 Chr. iii. 15. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 5. Jer. i. 8.
g Jer.xxii.13—17. xxvi. 20—26. xxxvi. 23—26. 31. Ez. xix. 5—9.
h Chr. xxviii. 22—25. xxxiii. 1—10. 22, 23.

have reached the age at which Josiah was slain. The people of the land placed the second son of Josiah on the throne in preference to his elder brother; probably because he was deemed to be of a more active and martial temper. And to confirm their irregular proceedings, they anointed him, as if he had been immediately appointed of God: but, alas! the season of the Lord's graciously giving them pious kings to reign over them was elapsed, and all Josiah's sons proved wicked, impolitic, and unsuccessful.

V. 33. Jehoahaz had assumed the regal authority without Pharaoh's consent, and perhaps attempted to continue the war against him: but by some means he took him prisoner, deposed him, and sent him bound into Egypt, where he ended his days; and the land was put under tribute, in token of its subjection to Pharaoh. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 34. *Jehoiakim* means the same as *Eliakim;* except that the latter is compounded with the word translated GOD, the former with a part of the name JEHOVAH. Pharaoh seems not to have wished Jehoiakim to renounce his religion; but chose to distinguish him as the ruler of that people who professed to worship JEHOVAH. Hitherto the kingdom had descended in a direct line from father to son; and this is the first instance of one brother succeeding another.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—14.

Nothing ought to discourage our endeavours to promote a revival of true religion. If declining churches and nations cannot be rescued from impending judgments, a few individuals may be snatched as brands from the burning: and if ministers, in their several stations, fail of general or abiding usefulness, and have continually the prospect of being removed; many a one may, in the mean time, receive important benefit, and prove the seed of a future revival, even in that very place. As sinners cannot be preserved from eternal destruction, without repentance; so degenerate nations cannot be rescued from public calamities, without general reformation. To effect this, it is the interest of princes to promote the knowledge of God in their dominions: and it is no degradation of their dignity, personally to take an active part in such attempts; which will induce numbers of every order in the community to concur. All external obligations to the service of God may be entered into with a hypocritical, or self-righteous spirit: yet this should not make us object to such engagements ourselves, or averse to propose them; but only make us cautious in what manner we do it, and careful to inculcate this upon others. It is safe to bind ourselves solemnly to walk after the Lord, and to keep his commandments; because these are previous indispensable duties; (*Notes, Num.* xxx.;) and some are thus rendered more earnest in attending to them; but the word of God must be the rule and standard in every thing; not only as to the duty itself, but also as to the motive and manner of doing it. In those nations which profess to worship God, and are favoured with the light of revelation, we need only to investigate with diligence, and compare our observations with the word of truth, to discover such enormous and multiplied abominations, as could never have been conceived upon a distant and superficial view, or a judgment formed by other rules. Even in worshipping congregations, an exact scrutiny would commonly bring to light such evils as before were never suspected: but the most humiliating discoveries will be made, by an exact inquiry into our own hearts and conduct. That man, who previously deemed his behaviour unexceptionable and his heart good, if he can be engaged in diligent self-examination and watchfulness, daily beholding himself in the mirror of God's word, and for a long time comparing with it his thoughts, intentions, dispositions, words, and actions; will experience increasing convictions of the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of his heart, and of the exceeding sinfulness of his whole life. And if he set about amendment, in dependence on the mercy and grace of God in Jesus Christ, and according to the rule of the Bible, he will, as he proceeds, find still more and more to be done; and to the end of his life per-

CHAP. XXIV.

Jehoiakim submits to Nebuchadnezzar, but afterwards rebels, 1. *God hastens the fulfilment of his predictions against Judah,* 2—4. *Jehoiakim dies, and is succeeded by Jehoiachin,* 5, 6. *The king of Babylon prevails against the king of Egypt,* 7. *Jehoiachin reigns wickedly,* 8, 9. *Jerusalem is taken; and the king, (with his family and treasures, and the sacred vessels, and chief persons of Judah,) is carried captive to Babylon,* 10—16. *Zedekiah is made king, reigns wickedly, and rebels against the king of Babylon,* 17—20.

IN [a] his days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant three years; then he turned and rebelled against him.

[a] xvii. 5. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 6. Jer. xxv. 1. 9. xlvi. 2. Dan. i. 1. B. C. 603.

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ceive, that he is very far off from the perfect righteousness of the holy law. Nor are *any* persons disposed to object to this unfavourable statement, but such as are either unacquainted with the rule, or strangers to a serious examination of their conduct by it. Imperfection is stamped upon all human goodness, and the greatest reformations hitherto seen on earth, have left many things unreformed. The scriptural history may well excite the hatred and disgust of the proud admirers of the human heart and understanding; as it presents to our view a very mortifying picture of the blindness of man's mind, as well as of the perverseness of his will and the depravity of his affections. But suppose the appeal made to other histories, or to universal observation and experience: if the records of Greece and Rome were presented to our view, as a detail of facts, without the varnish of declamation and panegyric; if the conduct of these celebrated nations, in public and private life, throughout their term of notoriety, were impartially compared with the just and holy law of God; would not their idolatries and immoralities be found to exceed even those of Israel? Would they not picture human nature as blind and depraved as the Bible does? And do not all the encomiums bestowed on them, arise from man's disposition to "call good evil, and evil good, "to put darkness for light, and light for darkness?" Pride, ambition, rapacity, cruelty, and revenge, have even been canonized by poets and historians: and idolatry, impiety, brutal excess, and unnatural lusts, have been called by soft names, and excused, if not vindicated, by these elegant and ingenious ancients. Otherwise the conclusion is as irrefragable from the study of profane history, as from the records of God's word, that "the imagination "of man's heart is only evil from his youth:" and that *all the real godliness or goodness which hath ever been found on earth, hath been derived from the new creating Spirit of Jesus Christ.* Persons of eminency, of whatever kind, have need to be very careful what they sanction; for numbers, in distant ages or nations, may be emboldened to transgress, by acceding to their sentiments, or by imitating their examples: and the reflection, of doing extensive mischief for generations to come, would, in that case, be a painful prerogative of superior talents, rank, or reputation. In using all our influence decidedly to suppress abuses, and to oppose iniquity, we should show all allowable tenderness to the persons of men: yet man must not pretend to more mercy than his Maker, by sparing those whom he orders to be punished. In reducing our conduct, or that of others, to the standard of Scripture in evident and important matters, no allowance must be made for customary, reputable, ancient, or fashionable abuses: difficulties also must be encountered, hardships endured, self-denial exercised, and opposition and every worldly interest disregarded: no man must be known after the flesh; nor any attention paid to persuasions, complaints, remonstrances, or reproaches; nor even to prejudices, except in matters of subordinate consequence. Therefore courage, constancy, and patience, are requisite for such attempts; and these, when genuine, can only spring from faith, and be given in answer to prayer, without which every undertaking of this kind will be fruitless. Not only should gross abominations be precluded; but every temptation or occasion of sin should be removed, whatever be the secular loss or expense, if we would effectually glorify God, and do good: and every method should be adopted to fill men's minds with abhorrence of iniquity, and to show plausible abuses in a contemptible and detestable light: especially where godly people are liable to be seduced into pernicious compliances.

V. 15—37.

The predictions of Scripture may be so long ere they are accomplished, that the expectation of such events may seem to expire; but they will all be punctually fulfilled in their seasons: and it must give singular encouragement to the pious, when they find themselves evidently employed in bringing about that accomplishment. Ungodly persons may, even after death, be more respected for their connexion with the servants of God: but the Judge of all will not regard such distinctions. When gross iniquities are renounced, and a credible profession of faith, repentance, and devotedness to God are made, men may be deemed prepared for the most solemn ordinances of his worship; though no human care or penetration can exclude formal hypocrites: such attendance on the worship of God is externally honourable to him, and useful to numbers: and as he will know how at last to separate betwixt the tares and the wheat, we must leave them to grow together till the harvest. The scrutinizing eye of the zealous servant of God will continually find many abuses to be rectified; and we must still press forward both in personal and public reformation. They who attempt this with their whole heart, in humility and simplicity, may hope to be useful to others, and shall certainly be accepted themselves: and as there are degrees of excellency amongst true believers, so they will receive a proportionable recompense. But when the sins of a collective body are come to a crisis, no human

c Deut xxviii 49, 50 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11. Is. vii. 17. xiii. 5 Jer. xxxv. 11

2 And [c] the LORD sent against him bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah, to destroy it, [d] according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by * his servants the prophets.

d xx 17. xxi.12—14. Is. vi. 11, 12. Jer.xxv.9.xxvi. 6 20. xxxii. 28. Mic. iii. 12,

* Heb. *the hand of.*

3 Surely [e] at the commandment of the LORD came *this* upon Judah, to [f] remove *them* out of his sight, [g] for the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he did;

e xviii. 25, 2 Chr. xxiv.24 xxv 16. Is x. 5, 6 xlv. 7. Am iii 6.

f xxiii 26, 27. Lev xxvi 33—35. Deut. iv. 26, 27. xxviii. 63. xxix. 28. Josh. xxiii.15.Jer xv. 1—4. Mic ii 10.

g xxi. 2—11.

4 And also [h] for the innocent blood that he shed: for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, which the LORD would not pardon.

h xxi 16 Num. xxxv. 33.

5 Now [i] the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

i 2 Chr.xxxvi. 8. Jer. xxii. 13—17.

B. C. 599.

6 So Jehoiakim [k] slept with his fathers: and Jehoiachin his son reigned in his stead.

k Jer. xxii 18, 19. xxxvi. 30

7 And [l] the king of Egypt came not again any more out of his land: for the king of Babylon had taken, from the river of Egypt unto the river Euphrates, all that pertained to the king of Egypt.

l Jer. xxxvii.5—7. xlvi. 2.

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endeavours can avert the wrath of God: and when eminent and useful persons are prematurely taken away, it forebodes public calamities. The best of men may be misled into unadvised meddling with matters not properly belonging to them: but if we are habitually living by faith, and walking with God, even should we be taken away in consequence of any indiscretion, it will not prevent our dying in peace, and being received to glory. Piety is *personal.* The children even of the most pious parents inherit original depravity; nor can education, instruction, or example prevent its effects, without converting grace. When they that have stood in the gap are removed, judgments often follow like an inundation: and a little time and slender abilities will often suffice to undo all the external good, which pious men of excellent capacities, have been labouring with unremitting endeavours, for a course of years to effect. Blessed be God, that good work, which he begins by his regenerating Spirit, cannot be disannulled; but, notwithstanding all changes and temptations, shall be perfected unto the day of Jesus Christ.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIV. V. 1. Pharaoh-nechoh, after Josiah's death, obtained a victory over the king of Babylon, and for some time retained Judea and Syria in subjection.—But not long after Nabopollazar seems to have associated his son Nebuchadnezzar with him in the kingdom, that by him the war with the Egyptians might be conducted with greater vigour: (*Dan.* i. 1. 5. ii. 1.) For when Daniel had been *three years* under tuition at Babylon, and had afterwards been introduced to Nebuchadnezzar, he interpreted his dream in *the second* year of his reign: yet Daniel had been carried captive by Nebuchadnezzar the king. Two distinct dates respecting the beginning of his reign must be admitted; and it appears that he was made king two or three years before his father died. Nebuchadnezzar, having obtained decisive advantages against the Egyptians, attacked Jehoiakim as an ally of Nechoh, and having taken him prisoner, he "put him in chains to "carry him to Babylon;" but upon his submission he released him, and carried away some of the gold and silver vessels of the temple, and some of the most considerable persons of the land: among the latter were Daniel and his companions: (*Dan.* i. 1—7.) This is the first epoch of the seventy years of the Babylonish captivity. Nebuchadnezzar left Babylon in the third year of Jehoiakim, and he reduced that prince in his fourth year. After this Jehoiakim served the king of Babylon three years, and then in his eighth year he rebelled against him, about three years before his death. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 2. These nations seem to have all been subject to the king of Babylon; and they were probably encouraged by him to attack the revolted Jews, whilst he was otherwise employed. But the Lord's secret disposal of their hearts to these attempts is alone noticed. It is probable, that Jehoiakim was harassed by them the remainder of his days; and perhaps he was at last slain in some sally against them, when they approached Jerusalem; and so left unburied, or otherwise very disgracefully treated: (*Marg. Ref.*) But some think, that *after* the transactions here recorded, Nebuchadnezzar carried him to Babylon, and at length put him to death, and treated his dead body most ignominiously.

V. 3, 4. Manasseh's idolatry became a national sin, as publicly enforced by persecution, which filled Jerusalem with the innocent blood of those who refused compliance. The chief men of Judah were involved in this guilt, and had neither repented nor been brought to justice for it: thus, accumulated and atrocious murders remained unpunished, as a load of guilt upon the land; and both the princes and people were in general more disposed to imitate Manasseh's idolatries and persecutions, than his repentance. Therefore, though the Lord had pardoned the personal wickedness of penitent Manasseh, he would not pardon the unrepented national guilt of which he had been the occasion, and in some sense the author: (*Note*, xxiii. 26—28.)

V. 6. As Jehoiakim was "buried with the burial of an "ass;" the expression, "slept with his fathers," can only mean that he died; without determining what became either of his soul or body. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 7. The king of Egypt having been driven back into his own land, and confined there; the kings of Judah were left entirely at the mercy of Nebuchadnezzar: so that policy, as well as their most solemn engagements, demanded their peaceable submission, and their resignation to the correcting hand of God in that dipensation: (*Ezekiel* xvii. 1—20.)

8 ¶ [m] Jehoiachin *was* [n] eighteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. And his mother's name *was* Nehushta, the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem.

9 And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father had done.

10 At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city * was besieged.

11 And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city, and his servants did besiege it.

12 And [o] Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his † officers: and the king of Babylon [p] took him in the eighth year of ‡ his reign.

13 And [q] he carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and [r] cut in pieces all the vessels of gold [s] which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the LORD, as the LORD had said.

14 And he carried away all [t] Jerusalem and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, *even* ten thousand captives, and all the [u] craftsmen and smiths: none remained save [x] the poorest sort of the people of the land.

15 And [y] he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, and the king's mother, and the king's wives, and his ‖ officers, and the mighty of the land, *those* carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon.

16 And all the men of might, *even* [z] seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths a thousand, all *that were* strong *and* apt for war, even them the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon.

17 ¶ And [a] the king of Babylon made Mattaniah [b] his father's brother king in his stead, and [c] changed his name to Zedekiah.

18 Zedekiah *was* twenty and one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* [d] Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.

19 And [e] he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had done.

20 For [f] through the anger of the LORD it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, until he had cast them out from his presence, that [g] Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

m 1 Chr. iii. 16. Jer. xxiv. 1. *Jeconiah.* Jer. xxii. 24 28 xxxvii 1. *Coniah.* Matt i. 11, 12. *Jechonias*
n 2 Chr xxxvi. 9.
* Heb. *came into siege.* xxv. 2.
o 2 Chr. xxxvi. 10. Jer. xxiv. 1. xxix. 1, 2. xxxviii. 17. 18 Ez. xvii 12.
† Or, *eunuchs.*
p xxv. 27 Jer lii. 31.
‡ *Nebuchadnezzar's.* Jer xxv. 1 lii. 28.
q xx 17 Is xxxix. 6. Jer. xx. 5.
r xxv. 13 — 15 Ezra i. 7—11. Jer xxvii. 16—21 xxviii 3, 4. 6. Dan v. 2, 3
s 1 Kings vii. 48—56.
t Jer. xxiv. 1—5. lii. 28. Ez. i. 1, 2.
u 1 Sam. xiii. 19. —22
x xxv. 12 Jer. xxxix. 10. xl. 7. lii. 16. Ez. xvii. 14.
y Esth. ii. 6. Jer. xxii. 24—28.
‖ Or, *eunuchs.*
z Jer. xxix. 2. lii 28. 1 Sam. xiii. 19—21.
a 2 Chr. xxxvi. 10, 11. Jer. xxxvii. 1 lii. 1.
b 1 Chr. iii. 15.
c xxiii. 34. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 4.
d xxiii. 31.
e xxiii. 37. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 12. Jer. xxiv. 8. xxxviii. 5, 6. Ez. xxi. 21.
f xxii. 17. Ex. ix. 14 — 17. Deut. ii. 30. Is. xix. 11—14. ‖ Cor. i. 20. 2 Thes. ii. 9—11.
g 2 Chr xxxvi. 13. Jer. xxvii. 12—15. xxxviii. 17—21. Ez. xvii. 15.

V 8—16. Jehoiachin, or Jeconiah, seems to have mounted the throne on the death of his father, without waiting for the king of Babylon's consent: but it was like going on board a sinking ship. He had just time enough to discover his evil disposition, and was then attacked by the king of Babylon: and either by surrender, or upon some deceitful engagement, he went forth to him, and was carried captive to Babylon. After all the depredations to which the temple had been exposed, some of the vessels that Solomon had made, remained in the treasuries of the temple: but all, except what were in immediate use, seem to have been seized, cut in pieces, and sent to Babylon. And those, which we shall hereafter read of, might be such as had been before this carried away, or such as were found at the total destruction of the temple and city. This event took place in the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, (12,) and forms a second epoch to be regarded in computing the duration of the captivity. The chief and the most useful of the people were carried to Babylon, that the land might be reduced to an absolute dependence on Nebuchadnezzar. Seven thousand soldiers, one thousand craftsmen and smiths, and two thousand persons of superior rank, may make up the sum total ten thousand. Some learned men, however, suppose, that there were ten thousand carried captive from Jerusalem alone, besides a thousand craftsmen and smiths; and also seven thousand from the rest of the land. Jeremiah speaks of three thousand and twenty-three, who seem to have been carried away the year before out of the open country. Amongst the rest Ezekiel seems to have been at this time a made captive. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 17. Jehoiachin was succeeded by his uncle, the youngest son of Josiah. *Mattaniah* signifies, *the gift of* JEHOVAH: *Zedekiah, the righteousness of* JEHOVAH: and the king of Babylon, by giving him this name, seems either to have intended an appeal to the justice of God against him, if he violated his engagement; or to have referred to the judgments which he might have heard were denounced against Jerusalem by a righteous God.

V. 20. 'God was so highly displeased with this 'wicked people, that he permitted Zedekiah to break his 'faith with Nebuchadnezzar, and to rebel against him, 'forgetting for what cause he had changed his name.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS
V. 1—9.

When the Lord leaves men to the blindness of their own minds, and the lusts of their own hearts; some are infatuated to adopt and obstinately persist in the most destructive

CHAP. XXV.

Jerusalem is besieged and taken, Zedekiah flees, and is made prisoner; his sons are slain, his eyes are put out, and he is carried in chains to Babylon, 1—7. *The temple, palaces, and city are burned, the walls are broken down, and the remnant of the people led captive, except a small number of the poor,* 8—12. *The residue of the sacred vessels and treasures are spoiled,* 13—17. *The nobles are slain at Riblah,* 18—21. *Gedaliah, who is left governor, being treacherously slain, the rest flee into Egypt,* 22—26. *Evil-merodach is kind to Jehoiachin,* 27—30.

a 2 Chr. xxxvi. 17. Jer. xxxiv. 2, 3. xxxix. 1. lii. 4, 5. Ez. xxiv. 1, 2.

AND it came to pass [a] in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth *day* of the month, *that* Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he, and all his host, against Jerusalem, and [b] pitched against it; and they built forts against it round about.

b Jer. xxxii. 24. Ez. iv. 1—5. xxi. 22—24.

B. C. 533.

2 And the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah.

3 And on [c] the ninth *day* of the *fourth* month [d] the famine prevailed in the city, and [e] there was no bread for the people of the land.

c Jer. xxxix. 2. lii. 6. Zech. viii. 19
d Lev. xxvi. 26. Deut. xxviii. 52, 53. Lam. iv. 4—10. Ez. iv. 9—17. v. 10. 12. vii. 15. xiv. 21.
e Jer. xxxvii. 21. xxxviii. 2.

4 And [f] the city was broken up, and all the men of war [g] *fled* by night, by the way of the gate, between two walls, which *is* by the king's garden: now the Chaldees *were* against the city round about; [h] and *the king* went the way toward the plain.

f Jer. v. 10. xxxix. 2, 3. lii. 6, 7. Ez. xxxiii. 21
g Lev. xxvi. 17. 36. Deut. xxviii. 25. xxxii. 24, 25. 30. Jer. xxxix. 4—7.
h 1 Sam. xii. 25. Ez. xii. 12.

5 And the army of the Chaldees pursued after the king [i] and overtook him in the plains of Jericho: and all his army were scattered from him.

i Is. xxx. 16. Jer. xxiv. 8. lii. 8. Am. ii. 14—16

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measures, and others are hurried on by ambition, avarice, or resentment, to execute upon them the vengeance which had been predicted. Multiplied murders, sanctioned by authority, and persevered in with impunity, form a species of national wickedness which the Lord will not pardon: especially when false religion is established by law, and persecuting statutes are enacted or revived and executed against his true worshippers: and when this is not merely the act of a few oppressors, but the people in general love to have it so. Yet even this may be endured by the long-suffering of the Lord for many generations; till the whole accumulated load fall upon a devoted people, with direful destruction. Blessed be God, there is no degree or kind of personal guilt, which he will not pardon to the true penitent: for it is impossible to renew unto repentance such as have committed the sin unto death. But it is very distressing for those who have obtained forgiveness of their own transgressions, to reflect that they have been the guilty occasions to others, by their examples, influence, or persuasions, of those sins which, being continued in, the Lord will not pardon; and of which they have no power to bring them to repent. The good Lord preserve us from sin and temptation, and above all from being tempters to others! And may this reflection stir up young persons to seek and serve God without delay, lest they should do that mischief which, if they themselves should live to repent, they will never be able to undo. When God arises to judgment, all resistance will be ineffectual; and the folly, as well as the wickedness, of every worldly dependence will be manifest: but his justice will never appear in its full glory, till that day when "he will bring to light the hidden things of "darkness, and make known the secrets of all hearts." In the mean time, we are incompetent judges of the divine procedure; and ought to wait with silent patience.—Wicked men soon discover the temper of their hearts, and give evidence of what they would do if they were spared: therefore the Lord often cuts them off, to prevent their further mischief; and thus hinders them from "treasuring up "wrath against the day of wrath." But when their power is taken away, and their lives are spared, though in poverty and misery, it may be an infinite mercy to their souls: (*Jer.* xxiv. 5—7.)

V. 10—20.

The gradual approach of divine judgment affords sinners space for repentance, and believers leisure to prepare for properly meeting the calamity; but it only evinces the desperate obduracy and obstinacy of those who are not deterred from their sins by all they witness or experience.—God delighteth in his ordinances, whilst they prove means of grace to those who are favoured with them; but he abhors them when they degenerate unto a lifeless form: and that which to the carnal eye appears most glorious in religious worship, is often in God's account a vile abomination.—Wicked men become curses to each other; and the nearer their intimacy or relation, the greater will be the anguish of those that sin and perish together.—External preeminence in times of public calamity often gives the precedency in suffering; but riches, dignity, authority, and superior abilities, will assuredly increase the sinner's condemnation: for to whom much is given, of him will the more be required. Let us then neither envy nor covet such precarious advantages, but be warned to improve every talent intrusted to us. Let us in these awful events contemplate the truth of God's word, and flee from the wrath to come; embrace and plead his precious promises; and by patient continuance in well doing, wait for the Saviour's mercy unto eternal life!

NOTES.

CHAP. XXV. V. 1—5. Jerusalem was so fortified by nature and art, that notwithstanding the enfeebled state

6 So [k] they took the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon to [l] Riblah; and they * gave judgment upon him.

7 And [m] they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, [n] and † put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and [o] bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon.

8 ¶ And [p] in the fifth month, on the seventh *day* of the month, which *is* [q] the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, came [r] Nebuzar-adan ‡ captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem:

9 And [s] he burnt the house of the LORD, and [t] the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great *man's* house burnt he with fire.

10 And all the army of the Chaldees, that *were* with the captain of the guard, [u] brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about.

11 Now [x] the rest of the people *that were* left in the city, and the ◊ fugitives that fell away to the king of Babylon, with the remnant of the multitude, did Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard carry away.

12 But the captain of the guard left [y] of the poor of the land *to be* vine-dressers and husbandmen.

13 ¶ And [z] the [a] pillars of brass that *were* in the house of the LORD, and the bases, and the brazen sea that *was* in the house of the LORD, did the Chaldees break in pieces, and carried the brass of them to Babylon.

14 And [b] the pots, and the shovels, and the snuffers, and the spoons, and all the vessels of brass, wherewith they ministered, took they away.

15 And the fire-pans, and the bowls, [c] *and* such things as *were* of gold, *in* gold, and of silver, *in* silver, the captain of the guard took away.

16 The two pillars, one ‖ sea, and the bases, which Solomon had made for the house of the LORD; [d] the brass of all these vessels was without weight.

17 The height of the [e] one pillar *was* eighteen cubits, and the chapiter upon it *was* brass; and the height of the chapiter three cubits; and the wreathen work, and pomegranates upon the chapiter round about, all of brass: and like unto these had the second pillar with wreathen work.

18 ¶ And the captain of the guard took [f] Seraiah the chief priest, and [g] Zephaniah the second priest, and the three keepers of the * door.

19 And out of the city he took an † officer that was set over the men of war, and [h] five men of them that ‡ were in the king's presence, which were found in the city, and the ◊ principal scribe of the host, which mustered the people of the land, and threescore men of the people

k 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11. Jer. xxi 7. xxxiv. 21, 22. xxxviii. 23. Lam iv. 19, 20. Ez. xvii. 20, 21. xxi. 25—27
l xxiii 33.
* Heb. *spake judgment with him.*
m Gen. xxi. 16. xliv 34. Deut. xxviii 34. Jer. xxii. 30. xxxix. 6, 7 lii 10, 11
n Jer xxxii 4, 5. xxxiv. 3. Ez xii 13.
† Heb. *made blind*
o Ps. cvii. 10, 11. Ez vii. 27. xvii. 16 20
p Jer. lii 12—14 Zech viii. 19.
q xxiv 12.
r Jer. xxxix. 9 Lam iv. 12.
‡ Or, *chief marshal.*
s 2 Chr. xxxvi. 19. Ps lxxiv. 3—7. lxxix. 1 Jer vii 14. xxvi 9 Lam. i 10. ii. 7. Mic iii. 12.
t Jer. xxxiv. 22. xxxvii. 8. 10. xxxix. 8. lii. 13. Am. i. 5.
u Neh. ii. 3. Jer. lii. 14.
x Jer. xv. 1, 2. xxxix. 9. lii. 15. Ez. v. 2. xii. 15, 16. xxii. 15, 16.
◊ Heb. *fallen away.*
y xxiv. 14. Jer. xxxix. 10. xl. 7. Ez. xxxiii. 24.
z xx. 17. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 18. Jer. xxvii. 19—22. lii. 17—20. Lam. i. 10.
a 1 Kings vii. 15, &c.
b Ex. xxvii. 3. xxviii 3.
c Ex. xxxvii. 22 Num. vii 13, 14. 1 Kings vii 48—51. 2. Chr xxiv. 14 Ezra i. 9—11. Dan. v. 2, 3
‖ Heb. *the one sea.*
d 1 Kings vii. 47.
e 1 Kings vii. 15. Jer. lii. 21—23.
f 1 Chr. vi. 4. Ezra vii. 1. Jer. lii. 24.
g Jer. xxi. 1. xxix. 25. 29.
* Heb. *threshold.*
† Or, *eunuch.*
h Jer. lii. 25.
‡ Heb. *saw the king's face.* Esth i. 14.
◊ Or, *scribe of the captain of the host.*

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of the inhabitants, of Nebuchadnezzar's great power and military skill, it could not be taken, till the besieged were incapacitated by famine to make any further resistance. In the Prophecy and Lamentations of Jeremiah, we shall have an opportunity of more fully considering the circumstances of this catastrophe, and indeed the whole of this compendious history: it suffices in this place to observe, that the obstinacy, impiety, and misery of the besieged were alike great, and almost unparalleled.—The king and his remaining forces endeavoured to escape by some private gate, which the enemy had not observed, or did not guard: but his attendants were dispersed and he was taken prisoner.

V. 6, 7. Nebuchadnezzar, having placed Zedekiah on the throne, and made him engage to be faithful to him, tried and condemned him as a traitor in the presence of his ministers and counsellors: and having slain his children before him, as the last sight he should behold, and which might ever after haunt his affrighted imagination, he put out his eyes, and sent him in chains to Babylon. Here he ended his life, probably not long after; for we read no more of him. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 8—10. Nebuzar-adan seems to have arrived at Jerusalem on the seventh day of the month, but he began to execute his commission on the *tenth*. (*Jer.* lii. 12.) The king of Babylon, enraged at the long and obstinate defence which the Jews had made, determined that this city should be no more inhabited, to cause him or his successors so much trouble and expense in future. He therefore gave orders to level the city with the ground, without sparing even the temple, either for its sanctity, antiquity, or magnificence. Thus he performed the words both of the later prophets, and likewise the predictions of Moses. This is computed to have been four hundred and twenty-four years, from the time when Solomon laid the foundations of the temple. Josephus informs us that the second temple was destroyed by the Romans on the same day of the same month. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 16. *Without weight.* The quantity of brass was so great, that its weight was not ascertained: (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* vii.) It is not known what became of the ark at this time: but it was not afterwards found.

of the land *that were* found in the city:

20 And Nebuzar-adan captain of the guard took these, and brought them to the king of Babylon to Riblah.

21 And the king of Babylon [i] smote them, and slew them at Riblah in the land of Hamath. [k] So Judah was carried away out of their land.

22 ¶ And *as for* [l] the people that remained in the land of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had left, even over them he made [m] Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, ruler.

23 And when all the captains of the armies, they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah governor, there came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, even Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan the son of Careah, and Seriah the son Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaanaziah the son of a Maachathite, they and their men.

24 And Gedaliah [n] sware to them, and to their men, and said unto them, Fear not to be the servants of the Chaldees: dwell in the land, and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you.

25 But it came to pass [o] in the seventh month, that [p] Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the seed * royal, came, and ten men with him, and smote Gedaliah, that he died, and the Jews and the Chaldees that were with him at Mizpah.

26 And all the people, both small and great, and the captains of the armies, arose, and [q] came to Egypt: for they were afraid of the Chaldees.

27 ¶ And [r] it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the seven and twentieth *day* of the month, *that* Evil-merodach [s] king of Babylon, in the year that he began to reign, did [t] lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah out of prison;

28 And he spake † kindly to him, and set his throne above [u] the throne of the kings that *were* with him in Babylon;

29 And [x] changed his prison-garments: and [y] he did eat bread continually before him all the days of his life.

i Jer. lii. 27.
k xvii. 20. xxiii. 27. Lev. xxvi 33—35. Deut iv. 26. xxviii. 36 64. Jer. xxiv 9, 10. xxv 9—11. Am v 27.
l Jer xl. 5-9.
m Jer. xxxix. 14.
n 2 Sam. xiv. 11. xix. 23.
o Zech. vii. 5. viii. 19
p Jer xli. 1—4.
* Heb *of the kingdom.* xi. 1.
q Jer xli. 17, 18. xlii 14-16. xliii .—7.
r Jer. lii. 31—34.
s Prov. xxi. 1.
t Gen. xl. 13. 20.
† Heb *good things with him*
u Jer. xxvii. 6—11 Dan. ii. 37. v. 18, 19
x xxxiv. 12 Gen. xli. 14 42 Esth iv. 4 viii 15 Is lxi. 3. Zech. iii. 4.
y 2 Sam. ix. 7.

V. 19—21. *Seven* men are mentioned in the parallel passage by Jeremiah: but perhaps five were of superior rank to the others; or were more distinguished as the favourites and counsellors of Zedekiah. All these persons were put to death as accessaries to his rebellion.

V. 22—26. (*Notes, Jer.* xxxix.—xliii.) Nebuchadnezzar intended to preserve some inhabitants in the land; but it was the Lord's purpose that it should be desolated.—Ishmael, being of the royal family, could not endure to see any shadow of authority possessed by another, while he was excluded; and therefore he murdered Gedaliah, who seems to have been a wise and good man. His father Ahikam had been Jeremiah's protector; and the prophet had by choice joined his company.—After this event the Jews, rejecting the word of the Lord by Jeremiah, fled into Egypt, for fear of the resentment of the king of Babylon; and there they either miserably perished, or were lost among the natives: and thus God performed his purpose and predictions of desolating the country, contrary to the intentions of the instruments which he had hitherto employed. The small numbers, mentioned in all the accounts of these events, lead the mind to a melancholy reflection on the multitudes which must have perished, and been driven into other lands, by the distresses of the Jews, previous to this catastrophe. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 27—30. It is related, that Nebuchadnezzar, after his recovery from the miraculous insanity he had endured, committed his son to prison for mal-administration during period; and that there he contracted an acquaintance with Jehoiachin. Many captive or tributary kings abode at Babylon, but Jehoiachin was treated with greater kindness and respect than any of them, either out of personal affection, or from regard to the ancient race of the kings of Judah. As Evil-merodach reigned but two years; it is probable Jehoiachin did not live long after this.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—21.

If repeated warnings and afflictions leave the sinner's heart more obdurate, it is an evidence that his ruin is at hand. (*Prov.* xxix. 1.) Those advantages, which inspire confidence in the ways of wickedness, will eventually aggravate the possessor's misery: for no power can resist, no craftiness can elude, those whom God appoints to be the executioners of his vengeance. If rebellion against earthly princes deserve such severe penalties as by common consent have, in all ages and nations, been inflicted upon those who were guilty of that crime; who can estimate what or how much punishment is due to rebellion against our Creator, Benefactor, and Sovereign?—Precious as our eyes are to us, they may possibly be reserved to witness such scenes, as may make us wish, they had been previously closed in darkness or in death. But surely no sight can be so distressing, as the misery of our children, when occasioned by our own misconduct.—God over-rules, and imperceptibly guides, the resentment of men, to execute his righteous purposes for his own glory. In the day of his indigna-

z Matt vi. 11.

30 And his allowance *was* a continual allowance given him of the king, [z] a daily rate for every day, all the days of his life.

nation he utterly disregards populous cities, magnificent palaces, and fertile countries: nay, he permits his avowed enemies to destroy his sanctuaries, to prevent the administration of his ordinances, and even to extinguish the very light of his Gospel, in those places where these inestimable advantages have long been despised, neglected, and abused. But he will still preserve his true religion, though perhaps among the poor and despised alone. As the Lord "spared not the angels, that sinned;" as he hath doomed the whole race of fallen men to the grave, and all unbelievers to hell; and as "he spared not his "own Son, but delivered him up for us all:" we need not wonder at any desolation or miseries, which for sin he may see good to bring upon guilty nations and churches.

V. 22—30.

The secret working of God's providence disappoints the politic or humane purposes of his instruments, to spare those that he intends to destroy: and while some are left to their vile passions, and others to their groundless fears and infatuated devices, "his counsel shall stand, and he "will do all his pleasure."—No state of misery on earth can be called absolutely hopeless or comfortless. In hell alone this blackness of darkness is to be found for ever.—During our most dismal and tedious nights of adversity, we may hope for the cheerful dawning of prosperous days; especially if our afflictions lead us to repentance: for God hath all hearts in his hands, and, as he sees good, can incline them to kindness. The believer in this world is, as it were, imprisoned with sins, temptations, and tribulations, sometimes for many a tedious year: but death, as the servant of Jesus Christ, comes for his enlargement.—Then, the prison-door is opened, his fetters are loosed, his prison-garments changed for robes of salvation and glory: his head is lifted up, and his throne advanced above the chief of the kings of the earth; and he shall be eternally feasted upon the fulness of joy, which is to be found in the presence and favour of the Almighty. Indeed, even here, the Saviour brings to the trembling, distressed, and enslaved sinner, that comes and trusts in him, a blessed release from condemnation and bondage: he bestows on him liberty, change of raiment, royal immunities, and heavenly provisions, day by day; and these are intended as earnests and foretastes of those pleasures, which are at his right hand for evermore. In short, sin alone can hurt us, and Jesus alone can do good to sinners. May God help us to believe; and to wait, in patient hope, for the blessed season, when, being made more than conquerors by his grace, we shall "sit down with the Saviour "upon his throne, even as he hath overcome, and hath sat "down with the Father upon his throne!"

THE FIRST BOOK

OF THE

CHRONICLES.

IT is generally agreed that the books of the Chronicles were compiled by Ezra, after the Babylonish captivity; and that they consist of extracts from the public records of the Jews, and the writings of preceding prophets. Some passages appear to have been inserted in the very words of the original record, which was penned before the captivity; and a few names seem to have been added to the genealogies, after the death of Ezra. The original name is, The words of days, *which signifies* journals, *or* annals; *and it is not improperly rendered the* chronicles, *or* records of the times. *Anciently, the whole formed but one book in the Hebrew Bible: but the Septuagint divides it into two, and calls them* The Books of things which had been left out: *but this is less proper than the original name; for there are many* repetitions *of facts before recorded, as well as further historical information. These repetitions however, must not be deemed superfluous; for most of them in some degree, and some of them exceedingly, elucidate the preceding history: and the few, that seem not wanted in this respect, are suited to connect the whole into one narration, without referring to other books; which would be peculiarly useful, when copies of the whole Scriptures were both scarce and expensive. In the genealogies there are several* literal *or* verbal *variations, from those found in other parts of Scripture; but it is evident that many persons had more than one name, and were called by one or another indiscriminately; and the spelling and pronunciation, in most languages, change considerably in a course of years. Some variations in the numerals have already been noted; and we are sometimes constrained to allow, that, probably, a trivial error of the transcriber had taken place: but there is no variation which in the least interferes with our faith or practice, or weakens the external or internal evidence of the divine inspiration of the Scripture in general, or of these books in particular.— It was evidently one design of the sacred writer, in these records, to bring into one view, and comprise in a narrow compass, whatever immediately related to the nation of Israel, to each of the twelve tribes, and to the family of David, with reference to the settlement in the land after the captivity; and to ascertain the descent of the promised Messiah; and in both these respects, the genealogies would be very useful. Until Christ came, all the genealogies of that nation were preserved correct and authentic: but since that period, they have none that can be depended on. The types were then fulfilled in the great Antitype; the kingdom and priesthood were permanently united in his person; and the nation soon forfeited their peculiar temporal advantages, by rejecting their king: and so their genealogies were no further needful, and were left to be involved in oblivion and uncertainty.—Many things might be very plain and useful to the ancient Jews, which appear obscure and uninteresting to us: if any part of the Scripture were profitable to the church only in some ages, and places, and not at all to others, it would be no impeachment of the divine wisdom and goodness: and if we could not understand, or get any benefit from, certain portions, it would be more reasonable to blame our own dulness, than so much as in thought to censure them as useless.—The first book commences with genealogies from Adam, till long after the captivity; many of which are collected from other parts of Scripture. The advancement of David to the throne, upon Saul's death, is next related: and a much fuller account is given of his internal government of the kingdom; especially, in the regulation of the priests and Levites, in the service of the sanctuary; in the preparation that he made for the building of the temple; and in the exhortations to Solomon his successor and to the elders of Israel, with which he closed his days. And the sacred writer seems to have dwelt on these subjects the more fully, in order to stir up a holy emulation in his contemporaries, in restoring the worship at the temple to its ancient order and purity. So that in this book the man after God's own heart shines much brighter, than in the second book of Samuel, and the beginning of the first of Kings.—The genealogies, given by St. Matthew and St. Luke, may be supposed to refer in many respects to those in this book. And when it is said that Zacharias was "of the course of Abia," the reference is still more indisputable.* (xxiv. 10. Luke i. 5.)—*The prophecies contained in it coincide indeed with those in the second of Samuel and in the Psalms; and therefore cannot be adduced as full proofs of its divine inspiration: but the sentiments which pervade it are perfectly scriptural; and we are sure it formed a part of the Jewish Scriptures, when our Saviour and his apostles appealed to them, as "The oracles of God."*

CHAP. I.

The genealogy from Adam to Noah and his sons, 1—4. *The sons of Japheth,* 5—7. *Of Ham,* 8—16. *Of Shem,* 17—23. *A genealogy from Shem to Abraham and his sons,* 24—28. *The sons of Ishmael,* 29—31. *And of Keturah,* 32, 33. *The posterity of Abraham by Esau,* 34—37. *The sons of Seir,* 38—42. *The kings and dukes of Edom,* 43—54.

ADAM, [a] Sheth, [b] Enosh,
2 [c] Kenan, [d] Mahalaleel, [e] Jered,
3 [f] Henoch, [g] Methuselah, [h] Lamech,
4 [i] Noah, [k] Shem, Ham, and Japheth.
5 ¶ The sons of [l] Japheth; Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras.
6 And the sons of Gomer; [m] Ashchenaz, and * Riphath, and Togarmah.
7 And the sons of Javan; Elishah, and [n] Tarshish, [o] Kittim, and † Dodanim.
8 ¶ The [p] sons of Ham; Cush, and Mizraim, [q] Put, and Canaan.
9 And the sons of Cush; Seba, and Havilah, and Sabta, and Raamah, and Sabtecha. And the sons of Raamah; Sheba, and Dedan.
10 And [r] Cush begat Nimrod; he began to be mighty upon the earth.
11 And [s] Mizraim begat Ludim, and Anamim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim,
12 And Pathrusim, and Casluhim, (of whom came the Philistines,) and [t] Caphthorim.
13 And [u] Canaan begat Zidon his first-born, and [x] Heth,
14 The [y] Jebusite also, and [z] the Amorite, and [a] the Girgashite,
15 And [b] the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite,
16 And the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the [c] Hamathite.
17 ¶ The [d] sons of Shem; [e] Elam, and [f] Ashur, and Arphaxad, and [g] Lud, and [h] Aram, and Uz, and Hul, and Gether, and [i] Meshech.
18 And Arphaxad begat [k] Shelah, and Shelah begat Eber.
19 And unto Eber were born two sons: the name of the one *was* ‡ Peleg, (because in his days the earth was divided,) and his brother's name *was* Joktan.
20 And Joktan begat Almodad, and Sheleph, and [l] Hazermaveth, and Jerah,
21 Hadoram also, and Uzal, and Diklah,
22 And [m] Ebal, and Abimael, and Sheba,
23 And [n] Ophir, and [o] Havilah, and Jobab. All these *were* the sons of Joktan.
24 ¶ [p] Shem, Arphaxad, [q] Shelah,
25 [r] Eber, [s] Peleg, [t] Reu,
26 [u] Serug, [x] Nahor, [y] Terah,
27 [z] Abram, the same *is* Abraham.
28 ¶ The sons of Abraham; [a] Isaac, and [b] Ishmael.
29 ¶ These *are* their generations: [c] The first-born of Ishmael, [d] Nebaioth; then [e] Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam,
30 Mishma, and Dumah, Massa, § Hadad, and Tema,
31 Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. These are the sons of Ishmael.
32 ¶ Now [f] the sons of Keturah, Abraham's concubine: she bare Zimran, and Jockshan, and Medan, and [g] Midian, and Ishbak, and Shua. And the sons of Jokshan; [h] Sheba, and [i] Dedan.
33 And the sons of Midian; [k] Ephah, and Epher, and Henoch, and Abida, and Eldaah. All these *are* the sons of Keturah.
34 ¶ And [l] Abraham begat Isaac. [m] The sons of Isaac; Esau, and [n] Israel.
35 The sons of Esau; [o] Eliphaz,

a Gen. iv. 25, 26. v. 3. 8. Luke iii. 38. *Seth.*
b Gen. v. 9—11. Luke iii. 38. *Enos.*
c Gen. v. 12—14. Luke iii. 37. *Cainan.*
d Gen v. 15—17.
e Gen. v. 18—20. Luke iii. 37. *Jared.*
f Gen v. 21—24. Heb. xi. 5. Jude 14. *Enoch.*
g Gen. v. 25—27. *Methusaleh.* Luke iii 37. *Mathusala.*
h Gen. v. 28—31. B C 2348.
i Gen v. 32. Ez xiv 14. Matt. xxiv. 37, 38 Luke iii 36 *Noe.* Heb. xi. 7. 2 Pet. ii. 5.
k Gen vi 10.
l Gen. x. 1—5. Ez. xxvii. 13. xxxviii. 2, 3. 6. xxxix. 1.
m Gen x 3. *Ashkenaz.*
* Or, *Diphath*
n Ps lxxii 10. Is lxvi. 19
o Num xxiv 24. Ez. xxvii. 6. *Chittim.*
† Or, *Rodanim.*
p Gen. x 6, 7.
q Gen. x. 6. *Phut.*
r Gen. x. 8—12.
s Gen. x. 13, 14. Deut. ii. 23. Jer. xlvii. 4. Am. ix. 7.
t Gen. ix. 22. 25, 26. x. 15—19.
u Gen. xxiii. 3. 5. 20. xxvii. 46. xlix. 30—32. Ex xxiii. 28. Josh. ix. 1 2 Sam. xi. 6.
x Gen. xv. 21. Ex xxxiii. 2. xxxiv 11. Judg. i 21. xix. 11. 2 Sam. xxiv. 16. Zech. ix. 7.
y Gen. xlviii. 22. Num xxi. 21—32. Deut. xx. 17. Josh iii. 10. xxiv. 15. 2 Sam. xxi. 2. 2 Kings xxi. 11. Am ii. 9.
z Gen. xv. 21. Deut vii. 1. Josh. iii. 10. Neh. ix. 8.
a Ex. iii. 8. 17 xiii 5. 1 Kings ix. 20.
b Num. xxxiv 8 1 Kings viii. 65.
c Gen. xiv. 1. Is. xi. 11. xxi. 2. xxii. 6. Jer. xxv. 25. Ez. xxxii. 24. Dan. viii. 2.
d Gen. x. 22—32. xi 10
e Gen. xiv. 1. Is. xi. 11. xxi. 2. xxii. 6. Jer. xxv. 25. Ez. xxxii. 24. Dan. viii. 2.
f Num. xxiv. 22—24. Ezra iv. 2. Ps. lxxxiii. 8. Ez. xxvii. 23. xxxii. 22. Hos. xiv. 3.
B. C. 2247.
g Is. lxvi. 10. Ez. xxvii. 10.
h Num. xxiii. 7.
i Gen. x. 23. *Mash.*
k Gen. x. 24. xi. 13—15. *Salah.*
‡ *Division.* Gen. x. 25. xi. 16, 17.
l Gen. x. 26. *Hazarmaveth.*
m Gen. x. 28. *Obal*
n 1 Kings ix. 28. x. 11. 1 Chr. xxix. 4. Job xxii. 24. Ps. xlv. 9. Is. xiii. 12
o Gen. ii. 11.
p Gen. xi. 10-26.
q Luke iii. 35. *Sala.*
r Luke iii. 35. *Heber.*
s Luke iii. 35. *Phalec.*
t Luke iii. 35. *Ragau.*
u Luke iii. 35. *Saruch.*
x Luke iii. 34. *Nachor.*
y Luke iii 34. *Thara*
z Gen. xi. 27—32 xvii. 5. Josh. xxiv. 2. Neh. ix 7.
a Gen xvii. 19—21 xxi 3—5
b Gen. xvi 11—16 xxi. 9, 10.
c Gen xxv 12—15
d Gen. xxviii. 9. Is lx 7.
e Ps. cxx. 5. Cant i 5. Is. xxi. 16
§ Or, *Hadar.*
f Gen. xxv. 1—4. B. C 1853
g Gen. xxxvii 28. Ex. ii 15, 16. Num. xxii. 4 7. xxv. 6. xxxi 2. Judge vi 1—6.
h 1 Kings x. 1. Job vi 19 Ps. lxxii 10 15 Is. lx. 6
i Is xxi 13. Jer. xxv 23. xlix. 8 Ez xxv. 13. xxvii. 20.
k Is lx. 6.
l Gen xxi. 2, 3. Matt i 2 Luke iii. 34 Acts vii 8.
m Gen xxv 24—28 Mal i 2-4. Rom. ix. 10—13.
n Gen xxxii 28.
o Gen. xxxvi 4, 5 9. 10.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1—4. This chapter consists wholly of extracts and abridgments of genealogies from the book of Genesis: though several names are spelt differently, and some are changed. (*Marg. Ref.*) The original of Israel, and indeed of the whole human race, is in these verses derived from the first man, whom God created; and this rational account may be considered as an intended refutation of all the fabulous, obscure, and absurd pretensions, advanced, in this respect, by many pagan nations.

V. 5—23. (*Notes, Gen.* x.) This short review of the peopling of the earth by the sons of Noah might be intended to intimate, that we are all of one blood and nature, though of different families.

V. 24—27. (*Notes, Gen.* xi, 10—32.)

Reuel, and Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah.

p 53. Gen. xxxvi. 11—15. q Gen. xxxvi. 15. *Zepho.*

36 The sons of Eliphaz; [p] Teman, and Omar, [q] Zephi, and Gatam, Kenaz, and Timna, and Amalek.

37 The sons of Reuel; Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah.

r Gen. xxxvi. 20. 29, 30. s Gen. xxxvi. 21. *Ezer.*

38 ¶ And [r] the sons of Seir; Lotan, and Shobal, and Zibeon, and Anah, and Dishon, and [s] Ezar, and Dishan.

t Gen. xxxvi. 22. *Heman.* u Gen. xxxvi. 23. *Alvan—Shephe.*

39 And the sons of Lotan; Hori, and [t] Homam: and Timna *was* Lotan's sister.

40 The sons of Shobal; [u] Alian, and Manahath, and Ebal, Shephi, and Onam. And the sons of Zibeon; [x] Aiah, and Anah.

x Gen. xxxvi. 24. *Ajah.* y Gen. xxxvi. 25. z Gen. xxxvi. 26. *Hemdan.*

41 The sons of Anah; [y] Dishon. And the sons of Dishon; [z] Amram, and Eshban, and Ithran, and Cheran.

a Gen. xxxvi. 27. *Zaavan. — Achan.* b Gen xxxvi. 28. Gen. xxxvi 31 —39.

42 The sons of Ezer; Bilhan, and [a] Zavan, *and* Jakan. [b] The sons of Dishan, Uz; and Aran.

43 ¶ Now these *are* [c] the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before *any* king reigned over the children of Israèl; Bela the son of Beor; and the name of his city *was* Dinhabah.

d Is. xxxiv. 6. lxiii. 1.

44 And when Bela was dead, Jobab the son of Zerah of [d] Bozrah reigned in his stead.

45 And when Jobab was dead, Husham of the land of the Temanites reigned in his stead.

46 And when Husham was dead, Hadad the son of Bedad, which smote Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his stead: and the name of his city *was* Avith.

47 And when Hadad was dead, Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his stead.

e Gen. xxxvi. 37. *Saul.*

48 And when Samlah was dead, [e] Shaul of Rehoboth by the river reigned in his stead.

49 And when Shaul was dead, Baal-hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his stead.

50 And when Baal-hanan was dead, Hadad reigned in his stead: and the name of his city *was* [f] Pai; and his wife's name *was* Mehetabel the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab.

f Gen. xxxvi. 39. *Pau.*

51 Hadad died also. And the dukes of Edom were; Duke Timnah, duke [g] Aliah, duke Jetheth,

g Gen. xxxvi. 40. *Alvah.*

52 Duke Aholibamah, duke Elah, duke Pinon,

53 Duke Kenaz, duke Teman, duke Mibzar,

54 Duke Magdiel, duke Iram. [h] These *are* the dukes of Edom.

h Gen. xxxvi. 41—43.

V. 36. Timna was concubine to Eliphaz, and mother of Amalek, (*Gen.* xxxvi. 12.) The words here, therefore, seem to mean, *Of Timna, Amalek.* (39.)

V. 54. (*Notes, Gen.* xxxvi.) When the sacred historian had given the genealogy of Abraham, the father of the faithful; he briefly mentions Abraham's descendants by Ishmael, by Keturah, and by Esau, with some coincident matters: but he speedily leaves these subjects, to confine himself to the chosen people of God, and the line of the Saviour; in comparison with whom, the nations most renowned for arts or arms, seem entirely disregarded.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

As we are descended from that "one man by whom sin "and death entered into the world;" so we all resemble and imitate him: and this should remind us how vile and frail we are: and excite us to repent, to value the Saviour, to despair of happiness in this miserable world, to seek those things which are above, and habitually to prepare to meet death, who is to all unbelievers, "the king of terrors." For, as an invincible conqueror, he has already transmitted the bodies of innumerable millions to the grave, and their souls to the tribunal of God and to the eternal world; and is even now ready to deal with us in like manner. But whilst we are spared, we should regard every human being as a brother, a fellow-sinner, and a fellow-sufferer, without respect to climate, complexion, party, character, or even personal injuries: and, with expanded benevolence and compassion, we should aim to alleviate misery, to increase comfort, to promote peace, and to be instrumental to the salvation of men; by our example, prayers, and the improvement of our several talents. Short is our passage through time into eternity! we are no sooner born, than we begin to die: and all earthly distinctions will speedily be reduced to a level, as the rough weed, the green blade, and the gaudy flower, fall before the indiscriminating scythe! May we then be distinguished as the Lord's people, who are his portion, and whom he delighteth to honour and bless. The inconceivable multitudes of the human race, which have peopled, or shall people, the earth through successive generations, will ere long assemble before the judgment seat of Christ, and be divided as easily, and as certainly, "as the shepherd divideth the "sheep from the goats:" then the wicked "shall go away "into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life "eternal." May we then, so "look for these things, as "to give diligence that we may be found of him in peace, "without spot and blameless!"

CHAP. II.

The sons of Israel, 1, 2. *Of Judah*, 3—12. *Of Jesse*, 13—17. *Of Caleb the son of Hezron*, 18—20. *Of Hezron by the daughter of Machir*, 21—24. *Of Jerahmeel Hezron's son*, 25—33. *The posterity of Sheshan, by his daughter*, 34—41. *Another branch of Caleb's posterity*, 42—49. *The sons of Caleb, the sons of Hur*, 50—54. *The families of the Kenites*, 55.

THESE *are* the sons of * Israel; [b] Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun,

2 Dan, Joseph, and Benjamin; Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.

3 The sons of Judah; [c] Er, and Onan, and Shelah: *which* three were born unto him of the daughter of Shua the Canaanitess. And Er the first-born of Judah was evil in the sight of the LORD, and he slew him.

4 And [d] Tamar his daughter-in-law bare him [e] Pharez and [f] Zerah. All the sons of Judah *were* five.

5 The sons of Pharez; [g] Hezron, and Hamul.

6 And the sons of Zerah; [h] Zimri, and Ethan, and Heman, and Calcol, and [i] Dara: five of them in all.

7 And the sons of [k] Carmi; [l] Achar the troubler of Israel, who transgressed in the thing [m] accursed.

8 And the sons of Ethan; Azariah.

9 The sons also of Hezron, that were born unto him; Jerahmeel, and [n] Ram, and [o] Chelubai.

10 And Ram begat [p] Amminadab, and Amminadab begat [q] Nahshon, prince of the children of Judah;

11 And Nahshon begat [r] Salma, and Salma begat Boaz,

12 And Boaz Begat Obed, and Obed begat [s] Jesse.

13 ¶ And Jesse begat [t] his first-born [u] Eliab, and Abinadab the second, and [x] Shimma the third,

14 Nathaneel the fourth, Raddai the fifth,

15 Ozem the sixth, David the seventh:

16 Whose sisters *were* Zeruiah, and Abigail. And [y] the sons of Zeruiah; Abishai, and Joab, and Asahel, three.

17 And Abigail bare [z] Amasa: and the father of Amasa *was* [a] Jether the Ishmaelite.

18 ¶ And [b] Caleb the son of Hezron begat *children* of Azubah *his* wife, and of Jerioth: her sons *are* these; Jesher, and Shobab, and Ardon.

19 And when Azubah was dead, Caleb took unto him [c] Ephrath, which bare him Hur.

20 And Hur begat Uri, and Uri begat [d] Bazaleel.

21 And afterwards Hezron went in to the daughter of [e] Machir, the father of Gilead, whom he * married when he *was* threescore years old, and she bare him Segub.

22 And Segub begat [f] Jair, who had three and twenty cities in the land of Gilead.

* Or. *Jacob.* Gen. xxxii. 28 xlix. 2.
b Gen xxix. 32—35. xxx. 5—24. xxxv. 18. 22—26. xlvi. 8, &c. Ex. i. 2—4.
c Gen. xxxviii. 2—10 xlvi. 12. Num. xxvi. 19.
d Gen. xxxviii. 2—30. Matt. i. 3. *Thamar.*
e Num. xxvi. 21. Ruth. iv. 18 Matt. i. 3. Luke iii. 33. *Phares.*
f Num. xxvi. 20. Matt. i. 3. *Zara.*
g Gen. xlvi. 12. Num. xxvi. 21. Matt. i. 3 Luke iii. 33. *Esrom.*
h Josh vii. 1. 17, 18. *Zabdi.*
i 1 Kings iv. 31. *Darda.*
k iv. 1.
l Josh. vii. 1. *Achan.*
m Josh. vi. 18.
n Ruth iv. 19. Matt. i. 3. Luke iii. 33. *Aram*
o 18. 42. *Caleb.*
p Ruth iv. 20. Matt. i. 4. Luke iii. 33. *Aminadab.*
q Num. i 7 ii 3. vii. 12. Ruth iv. 20. Matt. i. 4. Luke iii. 32. *Naasson.*
r Ruth iv. 21. Matt. i. 4 Luke iii. 32. *Salmon.*
s Ruth iv. 22. 1 Sam. xvi 1. 13. xi. 1. 10. Matt. i. 5. Luke iii 32
t 1 Sam xvi. 6. xvii 13 28. B. C. 1090
u xxvii. 18. *Elihu*
x xx 7 *Shimea.* 1 Sam. xvi 9. *Shammah.*
y 1 Sam xxvi. 6 2 Sam. iii 18. xvi. 10 xix. 22.
z 2 Sam xx. 4—10.
a 2 Sam. xvii. 25. *Ithra an Israelite.*
B. C 1475
b 9.
c 50. *Ephratah.*
d Ex. xxxi. 2 xxxviii. 22.
e Num. xxvi. 29. xxvii. 1.
* Heb. *took.*
f Num. xxxii 41. Deut. iii. 14. Josh. xiii. 30.

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 3, 4. (*Notes, Gen.* xxxviii.)

V. 6. It is uncertain, whether Ethan, Heman, Calcol, and Dara, the sons of Mahol, of whom we read in Kings, were remote and eminent descendants of Zerah; or whether different persons, bearing nearly the same names, are there intended. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 7. Achan, who sinned in the accursed thing, is here called *Achar*, or *the troubler;* with reference to Joshua's words to him. (*Marg. Ref.*) The genealogies of Judah are very copious: because David the progenitor of the Messiah was of that tribe; and the whole nation of the Jews is composed of such as either descended from Judah, or incorporated with them that did.

V. 8. *Sons* here signifies *descendants*, who might be numerous, though but one son is mentioned.

V. 15. Jesse had eight sons; but it is probable, that one died before David came to the throne. (1 *Sam.* xvi. 10, 11.)

V. 17. Jether is generally supposed to have been an *Ishmaelite* by birth, but an *Israelite* by religion.

V. 18. It is not probable, that this Caleb or Chelubai, was the same with Caleb the son of Jephunneh, whose posterity is afterwards mentioned: (iv. 15.)

V. 20. Caleb, the father of Hur, must have lived before Israel left Egypt; as Bezaleel, who was the principal person employed in constructing the tabernacle, seems to have been his grandson. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 21. *The father of Gilead* means the prince of Gilead, or the father of a large proportion of the inhabitants. The term occurs frequently in this sense, throughout the subsequent genealogies; as the reader will readily perceive by consulting the marginal references.

g Josh. xiii. 13.

23 And he took [g] Geshur, and Aram, with the towns of Jair, from them, with Kenath and the towns thereof, *even* three-score cities: all these *belonged to* the sons of Machir the father of Gilead.

24 And after that Hezron was dead in [h] Caleb-ephratah, then Abiah, Hezron's wife, bare him [i] Ashur, the father of [k] Tekoa.

h 1 Sam. xxx. 14.
i iv. 5.
k Sam. xiv

25 ¶ And the sons of Jerahmeel, the first-born of Hezron, were Ram, the first born, and Bunah, and Oren, and Ozem, *and* Ahijah.

26 Jerahmeel had also another wife, whose name *was* Atarah, she *was* the mother of Onam.

27 And the sons of Ram, the first-born of Jerahmeel, were Maas and Jamin, and Eker.

28 And the sons of Onam were Shammai, and Jada. And the sons of Shammai; Nadab, and Abishur.

29 And the name of the wife of Abishur *was* Abihail, and she bare him Ahban, and Molid.

30 And the sons of Nadab; Seled, and Appaim: but Seled died without children.

31 And the sons of Appaim; Ishi. And the sons of Ishi; Sheshan. And [l] the children of Sheshan, Ahlai.

l 34, 36.

32 And the sons of Jada, the brother of Shammai; Jethur, and Jonathan: and Jethur died without children.

33 And the sons of Jonathan; Peleth, and Zaza. These were the sons of Jerahmeel.

34 ¶ Now Sheshan had no sons, but daughters: and Sheshan had a servant, an Egyptian, whose name *was* Jarha.

35 And Sheshan gave his [m] daughter to Jarha his servant to wife, and she bare him Attai.

m 31.

36 And Attai begat Nathan, and Nathan begat [n] Zabad,

n xi. 41.

37 And Zabad begat Ephlal, and Ephlal begat Obed,

38 And Obed begat Jehu, and Jehu begat Azariah,

39 And Azariah begat Helez, and Helez begat Eleasah.

40 And Eleasah begat Sisamai, and Sisamai begat Shallum,

41 And Shallum begat Jekamiah, and Jekamiah begat Elishama.

o 9. *Chelubai.*

42 ¶ Now the sons of [o] Caleb, the brother of Jerahmeel, *were* Mesha [p] his first-born, which *was* the father of [q] Ziph: and the sons of Mareshah, the father of Hebron.

p Gen. xlix. 3. Ex. iv. 22, 23. Rom. viii 29. Heb. xii 23
q Josh. xv. 24. 1 Sam. xxiii. 19.

43 And the sons of Hebron; Korah, and Tappuah, and Rekem, and Shema.

44 And Shema begat Raham, the father of Jorkoam; and Rekem begat Shammai.

45 And the son of Shammai *was* Maon: and Maon *was* the father of [r] Beth-zur.

r Josh. xv. 58.

46 And Ephah, Caleb's concubine, bare Haran, and Moza, and Gazez: and Haran begat Gazez.

47 And the sons of Jahdai; Regem, and Jotham, and Geshan, and Pelet, and Ephah, and Shaaph.

s Gen. xxv. 5, 6

48 Maachah, Caleb's [s] concubine, bare Sheber, and Tirhanah.

49 She bare also Shaaph the father of [t] Madmannah, Sheva the father of Machbenah, and the father of Gibea: and the daughter of Caleb *was* [u] Achsa.

t Josh xv. 31, Is. x. 31.
u Josh. xv. 17.

V. 22. Jair was descended by his father from Judah, and properly belonged to that tribe: but Hezron, his grandfather, having several wives and children, married a wife of the tribe of Manasseh; and Jair, as descended from her, united himself to that tribe, and at length inherited among them. (*Num.* xxxii. 41.)

V. 23. Jair seems to have taken by conquest Geshur, Aram, and some other places, from those who before possessed them.

V. 24. Ashur was the posthumous son of Hezron: but he became a man of consequence; and his descendants principally peopled, or ruled over Tekoa. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 34, 35. It does not appear that Sheshan had more than one daughter, whom he gave in marriage to his servant an Egyptian; who, it is probable, was a proselyte to the true religion, and had been faithful to him. But as a numerous progeny might spring from this one daughter, the plural number is used, as it was before observed to be in the case of sons.

V. 42. This Caleb, being the brother of Jerahmeel, was the same person of whom we read before. (18. 24.) His children by Azubah, and by Ephrath, had beed enumerated: (18—20:) so that "Mesha, his first-born, seems to have been born to him by another wife, whom he married before either Azubah, or Ephrath. The Jews, when they returned from the captivity, were principally of the tribe of Judah: and so these genealogies might be exceedingly useful to them." No doubt they were extracted from ancient public records of allowed authenticity.

50 ¶ These were the sons of Caleb the son of Hur, the first-born of [x] Ephratah; Shobal the father of [y] Kirjath-jearim,

51 Salma the father of [z] Beth-lehem, Hareph the father of Beth-gader.

52 And Shobal the father of Kirjath-jearim had sons: * Haroeh, *and* † half of the Manahethites.

53 And the families of Kirjath-jearim; the [a] Ithrites, and the Puhites, and the Shumathites, and the Mishraites: of them came [b] the Zareathites, and the Eshtaulites.

54 The sons of Salma; [c] Beth-lehem, and the [d] Netophathites, ‡ Ataroth, the house of Joab, and half of the Manahethites, the Zorites.

55 And the families of [e] the scribes which dwelt at [f] Jabez; the Tirathites, the Shimeathites, *and* Suchathites. These *are* [g] the Kenites that came of Hemath, the father of the house of [h] Rechab.

x 19. *Ephrath.*
y 53. Josh xv. 9. 60. 1 Sam. vii. 1.
z iv. 4.
* *Reaiah.* iv. 2.
† Or *half of the Menuchites, or, Hatsi-nammenuchoth*
a xi. 40. 2 Sam. xxiii. 38.
b Josh. xv. 33.
c 51.
d xi. 30. 2 Sam. xxiii 29.
‡ Or *Attarites, or, crowns of the house of Joab.* Josh xvi. 2.
e Ezra vii. 6. Jer. viii. 8.
f iv. 9, 10.
g Judg i. 16. iv. 11.
h Jer. xxxv. 2, 3.

CHAP. III.

The sons of David, 1—9. *His line to Zedekiah,* 10—16. *The sons and successors of Jeconiah,* 17—24.

NOW these were [a] the sons of David, which were born unto him in Hebron; the first-born, [b] Amnon of [c] Ahinoam the [d] Jezreelitess; the second [e] Daniel, [f] of Abigail the Carmelitess;

2 The third [g] Absalom the son of Maachah, the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur; the fourth [h] Adonijah the son of Haggith;

3 The fifth Shephatiah, of Abital; the sixth Ithream, by [i] Eglah his wife.

4 *These* six were born unto him in Hebron; and [k] there he reigned seven years and six months: and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years.

5 And these were born unto him in Jerusalem; [l] Shimea, and Shobab, and [m] Nathan, and [n] Solomon, four, of [o] Bath-shua the daughter of [p] Ammiel:

6 Ibhar also, and [q] Elishama, and [r] Eliphelet,

7 [s] And Nogah, and Nepheg, and Japhia,

8 And Elishama, and [t] Eliada, and [u] Eliphelet, nine.

9 *These were* all the sons of David, beside the sons [x] of the concubines, and [y] Tamar their sister.

a 2 Sam. iii. 2.
b 2 Sam. xiii. 1. 29.
c 1 Sam. xxv 42. xxvii. 3.
d Josh. xv. 56.
e 2 Sam. iii. 3. *Chileab*
f 1 Sam. xxv 39—42.
g 2 Sam. xiii. 28 38. xviii. 15—18 38.
h 2 Sam. iii. 4. 1 Kings i. 5. ii. 24, 25.
i 2 Sam. iii. 5.
k 2 Sam ii. 11. v. 4, 5. 1 Kings ii. 11.
l xiv. 4. 2 Sam. v. 14. *Shammuah.*
m Luke iii 31.
n xxviii. 5, 6. 2 Sam xii. 24. 25
o 2 Sam. xi. 3. *Bath-sheba.*
p 2 Sam. xi. 3. *Eliam.*
q xiv. 5. 2 Sam. v. 15. *Elishua.*
r xiv. 5. *Elpalet.*
s 2 Sam v 15, 16.
t xiv. 7. *Beeliada.*
u xiv. 7. 2 Sam. v. 16. *Eliphalet.*
x 2 Sam. v. 13.
y 2 Sam. xiii. 1, &c. 18.

V. 49. The cities, of which these persons are said to have been fathers, were all situated in Judah: and this confirms the preceding interpretation. (*Note* 21.) This Caleb had a daughter called Achsa, and so had Caleb the son of Jephunneh: yet it is not likely that the same person is meant. (*Note* 18.)

V. 50. Caleb, here spoken of, was the grandson of him before mentioned, and brother to Uri, the father of Bezaleel; probably, the same who erected the tabernacle. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 52, 53. The inhabitants of these cities consisted in general of Shobal's descendants; or they were the principal persons among them. This seems to be equivalent to the phrase, "the father of Ziph, of Beth-"lehem," &c.

V. 54. The word, rendered *the house of Joab*, seems to be a proper name; *Beth-joab:* for a place, not family, is evidently meant.

V. 55. *The Kenites*, &c. It seems that some of the Kenites the posterity of Hobab incorporated with Judah, and became expert in writing, and eminent in their knowledge of the law of God.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

No length of time will expunge the guilt, or infamy, of those who do evil in the sight of the Lord, are troublers of his people, and die in their sins. But, as the Saviour was pleased to assume human nature by descent through so many notorious transgressors, and thus to be made in the likeness of sinful flesh, as well as a sacrifice for sin, all manner of wickedness shall be purged away from those who believe in his name. Frequently the last become first, and the first last; and atrocious sinners have in every age been transformed into the most eminent believers. Difficulties, blemishes, and disgraces in the beginnings of life, or on the entrance of our undertakings, and remarkable blots in the origin of families, have often proved as foils to the lustre, success, or eminence, with which they were afterwards favoured. In the same wise, righteous, and merciful sovereignty, the Lord advances or depresses the branches of families, prospers or crosses our temporal pursuits, replenishes or diminishes our households, and renders them a comfort, or a trial to us. Submission to his will is our duty and wisdom: but it is the privilege of the true believer alone to maintain this happy frame of mind. In Christ, however, there is neither bond nor free, neither male nor female, neither Jew nor Gentile: all are equally welcome to his salvation who come to him; all are equally privileged, in proportion to their faith, love, and devotedness to him: and it is a peculiar favour for poor strangers to be made scribes well instructed in the kingdom of God, and to be fitted also for usefulness to others. In short, the whole that is truly valuable consists in the favour, peace, and image of God; and a life spent to his glory, in promoting the welfare of our fellow-creatures.

10 ¶ And Solomon's son *was* [z] Rehoboam; [a] Abia his son, [b] Asa his son, [c] Jehoshaphat his son,

11 [d] Joram his son, [e] Ahaziah his son, [f] Joash his son,

12 [g] Amaziah his son, [h] Azariah his son, [i] Jotham his son,

13 [k] Ahaz his son, [l] Hezekiah his son, [m] Manasseh his son,

14 [n] Amon his son, [o] Josiah his son.

15 And the sons of Josiah *were*, the first-born Johanan, the second [p] Jehoiakim, the third [q] Zedekiah, the fourth [r] Shallum.

16 And the sons of Jehoiakim; [s] Jeconiah his son, [t] Zedekiah his son.

17 And the sons of Jeconiah, Assir; [u] Salathiel his son,

18 Malchiram also, and Pedaiah, and Shenazar, Jecamiah, Hoshama, and Nedabiah.

19 And the sons of Pedaiah *were* [x] Zerubbabel, and Shimei: and the sons of Zerubbabel; Meshullam, and Hananiah, and Shelomith their sister:

20 And Hashubah, and Ohel, and Berechiah, and Hesadiah, Jushab-hesed, five.

21 And the sons of Hananiah; Pelatiah, and Jesaiah: the sons of Rephaiah, the sons of Arnon, the sons of Obadiah, the sons of Shechaniah.

22 And the sons of Shechaniah; Shemaiah: and the sons of Shemaiah; [y] Hattush, and Igeal, and Bariah, and Neariah, and Shaphat, six.

23 And the sons of Neariah; Elioenai, and * Hezekiah, and Azrikam, three.

24 And the sons of Elioenai, *were* Hodaiah, and Eliashib, and Pelaiah, and Akkub, and Johanan, and Delaiah, and Anani, seven.

z 1 Kings xi. 43. xiv. 31. Matt. i. 7. *Roboam.*
a 1 Kings xv. 1. *Abijam* 2 Chr. xiii. 1. *Abijah.*
b 1 Kings xv. 8. 2 Chr. xiv. 1.
c 1 Kings xv. 34. 2 Chr. xvii. 1. Matt. i. 8. *Josaphat.*
d 2 Kings iii. 1. 2 Chr. xxi. 1. *Jehoram.*
e 2 Kings viii. 24. 2 Chr. xxi. 17. *Jehoahaz.* xxii. 1. 6 *Azariah.*
f 2 Kings xi. 21. 2 Chr. xxiv. 1.
g 2 Kings. xv. 1. 2 Chr. xxv. 1.
h 2 Kings xiv. 21. 2 Chr. xxvi. 1. *Uzziah* Matt. i. 8, 9. *Ozias.*
i 2 Kings xv. 5. 32 2 Chr. xxvii. 1. Matt. i. 9. *Joatham.*
k 2 Kings xvi. 1. 2 Chr. xxviii. 1 —8. Matt. i. 9. *Achaz*
l 2 Kings xviii. 1. 2 Chr. xxix. 1. Matt. i. 9. *Ezekias*
m 2 Kings xxi. 1. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 1 Matt. i. 10. *Manasseh.*——n 2 Kings xxi. 19. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 21 - - —o 2 Kings xxii. 1. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 1. Matt. i. 10, 11. *Josias*——p 2 Kings xxiii. 34. *Eliakim* 2 Chr. xxxvi. 5 Jer. xxii. 18——q 2 Kings xxiv. 17, 18 *Mattaniah.* 2 Chr. xxxvi. 11.——r 2 Kings xxiii 30. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 1 *Jehoahaz.* Jer. xxii 11
s 2 Kings xxiv 8. xxv 27. 2 Chr xxxvi. 9. *Jehoiachin.* Jer xxii. 22 28. *Coniah.* Matt. i. 11. *Jechonias.*——t 15. 2 Kings xxiv. 17——u Ezra iii. 2. 8. v. 2. *Shealtiel.* Matt. i. 12.

x Ezra ii. 2. iii. 2. Hag. i. 12—14. ii. 2. 4 Zech iv. 6—9. Matt. i. 12, 13. *Zerubabel.*

B. C. 430.

y Ezra viii. 2

* Or, *Hiskijah.*

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1—9. David's other sons by Bath-shua, or Bath-sheba, are mentioned before Solomon, though younger than he, because the genealogy is resumed from him. Probably David called one of them Nathan, out of respect to the prophet of that name, whom he loved the better for his faithful reproof. Mary the mother of Jesus was descended from Nathan, not from Solomon. (*Luke* iii.) —The two sons, which are here mentioned more than in Samuel, probably died young: as there are two called Elishama, and two Eliphelet. (*Marg. Ref.*) It seems that David had children by his concubines, whose names are no where recorded.

V. 15. Johanan seems to have died young. Shallum is also called Jehoahaz. He was older than Zedekiah, though mentioned after him.

V. 16. *Zedekiah his son*, &c. Perhaps Jeconiah had a son called Zedekiah, though not elsewhere named: or his successor, who was in fact his uncle, may be meant.

V. 17. Many commentators take it for granted, that Salathiel, or Shealtiel, actually descended from Nathan, and was only the adoptive son of Jeconiah; that Solomon's line was extinct, and that Joseph the husband of Mary sprang from Nathan as well as she. They ground this sentiment on these reasons. Jeremiah is supposed to have pronounced Jeconiah childless; but perhaps a satisfactory solution of that difficulty may in due time be adduced.—(*Note, Jer.* xxii. 30.) Luke mentions a Zorobabel, the son of Salathiel, in the genealogy of Mary: but it is scarcely the shadow of an argument to say, because a father and son were of the same name in one line as they were in another, therefore they were the same persons, when no other part of the genealogy supports, or can accord with, the conclusion. Matthew says, Jeconiah *begat* Salathiel; and it will be harsh to interpret this of mere adoption, or of less than being his progenitor: and here are several other sons or descendants of Jeconiah mentioned, who cannot all have been adopted. Upon the whole, it is highly probable that the line from Solomon to Joseph was uninterrupted; and that the two families met in Jesus, the real son of Mary, and the supposed and legal son of Joseph.

V. 19. Perhaps Pedaiah was Salathiel's son, Jeconiah's grandson, and Zerubbabel's father, but being of small note, his name is omitted in the genealogies; which is a common case. We know nothing but the names of the persons afterwards mentioned; but several of them must have lived a long time after the captivity. St. Matthew deduces the line of Joseph from a different branch of the same stock.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In the large families of wise, eminent, and pious men, many persons prove too insignificant to attract our notice, and others so vicious as to excite our grief and indignation. They, therefore, who have no children, may hence learn submission to the will of God; for if, by that appointment, they are destitute of some comforts, they are also exempted from a variety of anxieties and trials. And they, to whom God hath given children, may learn to bring up their offspring for him to the best of their power, recommending them to his care and blessing: nor should they indulge the hope of much comfort from them, any more than seek great things for them in this vain and vexatious world.—Yet, upon the whole, the attentive and accurate observer will perceive, that the posterity of the righteous enjoy advantages, sometimes for many generations, in consequence of the piety of their progenitors: so that this is the best way of laying up an inheritance for our beloved offspring. Nothing more distinguishes the real believer from the slave of sin, than the manner in which each of

CHAP. IV.

The posterity of Judah, in the line of Hezron, Carmi, and Hur, 1—4. *The posterity of Ashur, Hezron's son,* 5—8. *Jabez, and his prayer,* 9, 10. *Other descendants of Judah by Pharez,* 11—20. *The posterity of Shelah, Judah's son,* 21—23. *The sons of Simeon, and their cities,* 24—38. *They conquer Gedor, and the Amalekites,* 39—43.

a Gen. xxxviii. 29. xlvi. 12. Num xxvi. 20, 21. Ruth iv. 18. Matt. i. 3. Luke iii 33.—*Phares Esrom.*
B. C. 1500.
b ii. 9. *Chelubai.* ii. 18. *Caleb.*
c ii. 52 *Haroeh.*
d Josh xv. 33. Judg. xiii. 25.
e Judg. xv. 11. 2 Chr. xi. 6.
f 18. 39. Josh. xv. 36.
g ii. 50.
h ii. 24.

THE sons of Judah;[a] Pharez, Hezron, and [b] Carmi, and Hur, and Shobal.

2 And [c] Reaiah the son of Shobal begat Jahath, and Jahath begat Ahumai and Lahad. These *are* the families of the [d] Zorathites.

3 And these *were of* the father of [e] Etam; Jezreel, and Ishma, and Idbash: and the name of their sister *was* Hazelelponi:

4 And Penuel the father of [f] Gedor, and Ezer the father of Hushah. These *are* the sons of [g] Hur, the first-born of Ephratah, the father of Beth-lehem.

5 ¶ And [h] Ashur the father of Tekoa had two wives, Helah and Naarah.

6 And Naarah bare him Ahuzam, and Hepher, and Temeni, and Haahashtari. These *were* the sons of Naarah.

7 And the sons of Helah *were* Zereth, and Jezoar, and Ethnan,

8 And Coz begat Anub, and Zobebah, and the families of Aharhel the son of Harum.

9 ¶ And Jabez was [i] more honourable than his brethren: and his mother called his name * Jabez, saying, Because [k] I bare him with sorrow.

10 And Jabez [l] called on [m] the God of Israel, saying, † Oh that thou wouldest [n] bless me indeed, and [o] enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that [p] thou wouldest ‡ keep *me* from evil, [q] that it may not grieve me! And [r] God granted him that which he requested.

11 ¶ And Chelub the brother of Shuah begat Mehir, which *was* the father of Eshton.

12 And Eshton begat Beth-rapha, and Paseah, and Tehinnah, the father of § Ir-nahash. These *are* the men of Rechah.

13 And the sons of Kenaz; [s] Othniel,

B. C. 1400.
i Gen. xxxiv. 19. Is xlii. 4. Acts xvii 11.
* *Sorrowful.*
k vii. 23. Gen. iii. 16. xxxv. 18. 1 Sam. iv 21.
l Ps lv 16. cxvi. 2-4. Jer. xxxiii. 3. Rom. x. 12—14. 1 Cor. i. 2.
m Gen xxxii 28. xxxiii 29. 1 Sam. i. 17. Is. xli. 17.
† *If thou wilt,* &c
n Gen xii. 2. xxxii 26. Ps. lxxii. 17. Acts iii. 26. Eph. i. 3.
o Josh. xvii. 14—18. Judg. i. 27—36. Prov. x. 22.
p Gen. xlviii. 16. Prov. xxx. 8, 9. Matt. vi. 13. Rom xii. 9. xvi. 19. 2 Tim. iv. 18.
‡ Heb *do* me.
q Ps. xxxii. 3, 4. li. 8. 12. Matt. xxvi. 75. John xxi. 17. 2 Cor. ii. 1—5. Eph. iv. 30. Rev. iii. 19.
r Job. xxii. 27, 28. Ps. xxi. 4. lxv 2. Matt vii. 7—11. Eph. iii. 20.
§ Or, *the city of Nahash.*
s Josh. xv. 17. Judg i. 13. iii. 9—11.

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them behaves towards their faithful reprovers; the former, upon reflection, will love and revere them as his best friends, the latter will habitually hate them as his enemies; (1 *Kings* xxi. 20. xxii. 8. *Psalm* cxli. 5.) But all our gratitude to the instruments of our mercies should be ultimately directed to the glory of God: and all the prosperity of ourselves and our families will eventually terminate in misery, unless it centre in union with the son of David, the king of Israel and the Saviour of sinners.

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1. *Carmi* seems to mean the same person before called Chalubai, and Caleb. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 2. The Zorathites were the inhabitants of Zorah, but in general descended from Shobal, or were subject to him. "The father of Etam," seems to imply, that the persons spoken of were the sons of one who was lord of Etam, and progenitor of its principal inhabitants. Hur appears to have been the grandfather of Salma, who before was called the father of Bethlehem. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 9, 10. We know nothing of the parentage or family of this remarkable person: but as he was eminent for wealth, valour, success, wisdom, or piety, the Jews might not want information concerning him. It is not, however, improbable, that he lived soon after Israel took possession of Canaan; and when they were greatly straitened by the remains of the ancient inhabitants. His mother having suffered much in her pregnancy or travail, called him *Jabez*, or *the Sorrowful;* but her sorrow was emphatically turned into joy, if she lived to see how eminent and excellent a man he proved. His achievements are not recorded; but his prayers are, for our instruction and imitation. He was a genuine son of Jacob, who wrestled, and prevailed with God, and on that account was surnamed Israel, and refused to depart without the blessing. From a full heart he earnestly entreated the God of Israel to *bless him indeed;* and neither to send him away without a blessing nor merely to bless him, like Esau, with temporal blessings. He seems to have been constrained to fight against the Canaanites: but he conducted the war with faith and prayer; and he entreated the Lord to be with him, and both to enlarge his coast and to preserve him from disastrous events, which might occasion grief unto him. In the land of Canaan ancient believers saw a type of heaven; in their wars was represented the conflict of God's people with their enemies: and every clause of his prayer may be applied to, and probably was intended for, more noble and spiritual blessings. Accordingly the Lord heard and granted his requests, and thus he became honourable, as well as prosperous in Israel. This instructive example, in the midst of genealogies to us so abstruse, seems like the fragrant rose surrounded by thorns; or to refreshing streams in the desert: and it appears a recompense intended for the careful student of God's word, who diligently and reverently examines the whole, comparing one part with another without disregarding or undervaluing any.

and Seraiah: and the sons of Othniel; § Hathath.

§ Or, *Hathath and Meonathai, who begat.*

14 And Meonothai begat Ophrah: and Seraiah begat Joab, the father of ‖ the valley of * Charashim; for they were craftsmen.

‖ Or, inhabitants *of the valley.*
* Or, *craftsmen.* Neh. xi. 35.

15 And the sons of [t] Caleb the son of Jephunneh; Iru, Elah, and Naam: and the sons of Elah, even † Kenaz.

t Num. xiiii. 6. 30. xiv. 6–10. 24. 30. Josh. xiv. 6–14. xv. 13–18. Judg. i. 12–14.
† Or, *Uknaz.*

16 And the sons of Jehaleleel; Ziph, and Ziphah, Tiria, and Asareel.

17 And the sons of Ezra *were* Jether, and Mered, and Epher, and Jalon: and she bare Miriam, and Shammai, and Ishbah the father of [u] Eshtemoa.

u vi 57.

18 And his wife ‡ Jehudijah bare Jered [x] the father of Gedor, and Heber the father of [y] Socho, and Jekuthiel the father of Zanoah. And these *are* the sons of Bithiah the daughter of Pharaoh, which Mered took.

‡ Or, *the Jewess.*
x 4. 39.
y Josh. xv. 34,35.

19 And the sons of *his* wife § Hodiah the sister of Naham, the father of [z] Keilah the Garmite, and Eshtemoa the Maachathite.

§ *Jehudijah.* 18.
z Josh. xv. 44. 1 Sam xxiii. 1, &c.

20 And the sons of Shimon *were* Amnon, and Rinnah, Ben-hanan, and Tilon. And the sons of Ishi *were* Zoheth, and Ben-zoheth.

21 ¶ The sons of [a] Shelah the son of Judah *were*, Er the father of Lecah, and Laadah the father of Mareshah, and the families of the house of them that wrought fine linen, of the house of Ashbea,

a Gen. xxxviii. 5. xlvi. 12 Num. xxvi. 20.

22 And Jokim, and the men of Chozeba, and Joash, and Saraph, who had the dominion in Moab, and Jashubi-lehem. And *these are* ancient things.

23 These *were* [b] the potters, and those that dwelt amongst plants and hedges: there they dwelt with the king for his work.

b 14.

24 ¶ The sons of Simeon *were*, [c] Nemuel, and Jamin, [d] Jarib, [e] Zerah, *and* Shaul:

c Ex. vi. 15. *Jemuel*
d Num. xxvi. 12. *Jachin*
e Gen. xlvi. 10. *Zohar.*

25 Shallum his son, Mibsam his son, Mishma is son.

26 And the sons of Mishma; Hamuel his son, Zacchur his son, Shimei his son

27 And Shimei had sixteen sons and six daughters; but his brethren had not many children, neither did all their family multiply ‖ like to the children of Judah.

‖ Heb. *unto.* Num. ii 4. 13 xxvi. 14. 22.

28 And they dwelt at Beer-sheba, and Moladah, and Hazar-shual,

29 And at [f] Bilhah, and at Ezem, and at [g] Tolad,

f Josh xix. 2, 3. *Belah Azem.*
g Josh. xix. 4. *Eltolad.*

30 And at [h] Bethuel, and at Harmah, and at Ziklag,

h Josh. xix. 4. *Bethul.*

31 And at Beth-marcaboth, and [i] Hazarsusim, and at Beth-birei, and at Shaaraim. These *were* their cities unto the reign of David.

i Josh. xix. 5, 6. *Hazar-susah. Beth-labaoth. Sharuhen.*

32 And their villages *were*, [k] Etam, and Ain, Rimmon, and Tochen, and Ashan, five cities:

k Josh. xix. 7. *Ether.*

33 And all their villages that *were* round about the same cities, unto [l] Baal. These *were* their habitations, and * their genealogy.

l Josh. xix. 8. *Baalath-beer.*
* Or, *as they divided themselves by nations among them.*

34 And Meshobab, and Jamlech, and Joshah the son of Amaziah;

35 And Joel, and Jehu the son of Josibiah, the son of Seraiah, the son of Asiel.

V. 17. *Ezra* seems to have been the same person before called *Asareel.* (16.)

She bare. That is, Bithiah bare to Mered: (18.) for these appear to have been Ezra's grandsons.

V. 18. Many think that *Pharaoh* was the name of an Israelite; yet it is not impossible but Mered might marry the daughter of some Egyptian king.

V. 20. Shimon is supposed to have been another son of Mered, by Hodiah or *Jehudijah.* As this name signifies a *Jewess*, it rather favours the opinion, that Beriah was not a Jewess, but an Egyptian.

V. 21. The sacred historian had mentioned the descendants of Judah by Zerah; and having more copiously given the genealogies of his posterity by Pharez, here mentions briefly a few of the line of Shelah, Judah's eldest son by the Canaanitish woman whom he married. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 22, 23. Perhaps these families in the time of David or Solomon, when Moab was subjected, had dominion there: but in process of time they were so reduced, as to be glad to subsist by the meanest employments. Their honour and dignity "were ancient things;" for at the time when this was penned, they were brought very low. Some think, that they remained near Babylon, after the return of Judah from the captivity, amongst the plants and hedges, for the sake of doing the work of the Persian kings. It was common in those ages, and still is in many places, for particular trades and professions to be continued in families through successive generations.

V. 24. The families of Simeon are mentioned next to those of Judah, because their inheritances adjoined to each other.

36 And Elioenai, and Jaakobah, and Jeshohaiah, and Asaiah, and Adiel, and Jesimiel, and Benaiah.

37 And Ziza the son of Shiphi, the son of Allon, the son of Jedaiah, the son of Shimri, the son of Shemaiah;

† Heb. *coming by names.* v. 24. Gen. vi. 4.

38 These † mentioned by *their* names *were* princes in their families: and the house of their fathers increased greatly.

39 ¶ And they went to the entrance of Gedor, *even* unto the east side of the valley, to seek pasture for their flocks.

m 4. 18. Josh. xv. 36.

40 And they found fat pasture and good, and the land *was* wide, and quiet, and peaceable; for *they* of Ham had dwelt there of old.

n Judg. xviii. 7—10.
o Gen. ix. 22, &c. Ps. lxxviii. 51.

41 And these written by name came in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and smote their tents, and the habitations that were found there, and destroyed them utterly unto this day, and dwelt in their rooms: because *there was* pasture there for their flocks.

p 2 Kings xviii. 8.

42 And *some* of them, even of the sons of Simeon, five hundred men, went to mount Seir, having for their captains Pelatiah, and Neariah, and Rephaiah, and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi.

q Gen xxxvi. 8. Deut. i. 2.

43 And they smote the rest of the Amalekites that were escaped, and dwelt there unto this day.

r Ex. xvii. 14—16. Deut. xxv. 17—19. 1 Sam. xv. 7, 8. xxx. 17. 2 Sam. viii. 12.

V. 39—43. Part of the Simeonites adhered to the house of David; and being greatly increased in the time of Hezekiah, they dispossessed some of the ancient Canaanites, who in that neighbourhood yet kept possession of a plentiful and peaceful country, fit for the feeding of cattle.—Perhaps this tract belonged to the Simeonites in the division of the land, and at length they got possession of it. It seems, that the remains of the Amalekites, after the general destruction of them made by Saul and David, had settled near to the Edomites, in mount Seir: but this remnant was extirpated by a small company of Simeonites. Some think, that the kings of Babylon permitted this part of Simeon to remain unmolested in their possessions, through the captivity, even to the time of Ezra: but perhaps Ezra extracted the words, *to this day*, from the ancient records, without altering them.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Children should consider how much their parents, especially their mothers, have suffered for them before they became capable of reflection; and they should endeavour by every means to requite them as much as possible, by their kindness, and by desiring and aiming to be a comfort to them, in their whole conduct. But it is basely ungrateful, though very common, willingly to cause them still more exquisite and durable anguish, by ill behaviour.—Those events, which at first occasion most sorrow, often terminate in the greatest comfort: we should not therefore yield to despondency, but hope to the end, and expect to extract good from every apparent evil. But it is natural for us to record our sorrows rather than our mercies; though we may reasonably wonder that the latter are so many, and the former so few. The honour which cometh from God is introduced by the gifts of wisdom, faith, and piety; and when these are bestowed, men will at length be honourable, whether or not renowned and prosperous. We go about our proper work in a right manner, when we use the means for success with all assiduity, and seek a blessing upon them by fervent prayer. A confluence of all earthly good things cannot "bless us indeed:" the true felicity, which our hearts should eagerly desire, consists in the favour, image, and presence of God; and we should pray for this, as resolved not to depart without it. The pardon of sin, the gift of righteousness, and the first-fruits of the Spirit, form the beginning of this happiness: but the world, Satan, and indwelling sin, crowd and straiten us on every side, and keep us from the possession of our inheritance. We should then beg of Israel's God to enlarge our coast, that we may attain to greater holiness, liberty, comfort, and usefulness; and acquire a more decisive victory over our enemies. And if his hand be with us, if his power be exerted in our cause, we shall be protected, upheld, and enabled to withstand, and to gain ground against, the confederated forces of the world, the flesh, and the devil. We may indeed very properly, with resignation, pray to be kept from the *evil of suffering*, which is grievous to nature: but the *evil of sinning* most affrights and disquiets the spiritually minded man; this extorts the bitterest groans and complaints; against this he most earnestly prays, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." And being kept from the burden of a guilty conscience, and the anguish of having dishonoured and offended the God of his salvation, he can the better bear up under other trials, as supported by that peace which passeth all understanding. Blessed be the Lord, he is ever ready to grant, and to exceed our prayers for promised blessings: and we are our own enemies, if we do not ask and expect great things from him, through the Saviour's name. In this checkered world, indeed, there is nothing durable or substantial: but possessing the hope of unchangeable felicity, we may cheerfully acquiesce in the Lord's allotment of our worldly settlements and occupations. Nor is it desirable to advance our children much above our own rank; for they, who at one time have dominion, may at another become dependent on the worst of men for a penurious maintenance: whereas honest labour, in some regular and useful calling, best preserves that mediocrity which is most comfortable and most advantageous to our spiritual concerns. Let us then adhere to the kingdom of the Son of David: for this prince of Peace will supply our temporal wants with every thing truly desirable, and make us happy for ever; whilst his curse will pursue all his enemies to their utter destruction.

CHAP. V.

Judah and Joseph preferred before Reuben, who forfeited his birthright, 1, 2. *His descendants, some of whom vanquish the Hagarites,* 3—10. *The chief men of Gad, and their habitations,* 11—17. *Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh, obtain a victory over the Hagarites,* 18—22. *The habitations and chief men of that half of Manasseh,* 23, 24. *The captivity of the two tribes and half, for their sins,* 25, 26.

NOW the sons of Reuben the first-born of Israel, (for [a] he *was* the first-born; but, [b] forasmuch as he defiled his father's bed, [c] his birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph, the son of Israel: [d] and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright.

2 For [e] Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him *came* [f] the * chief ruler; but the birthright *was* Joseph's:)

3 The [g] sons, *I say,* of Reuben, the first-born of Israel, *were,* Hanoch, and [h] Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi.

4 The sons of Joel; Shemaiah his son, Gog his son, Shimei his son,

5 Micah his son, Reaia his son, Baal his son,

6 Beerah his son, whom [i] Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria carried away *captive:* he *was* prince of the Reubenites.

7 And his brethren by their families, [k] when the genealogy of their generations was reckoned, *were* the chief, Jeiel, and Zechariah,

8 And Bela the son of Azaz, the son of [l] Shema, the son of Joel, who dwelt in [m] Aroer, even unto [n] Nebo, and Baal-meon.

9 And eastward he inhabited unto the entering in of the wilderness from the river Euphrates: [o] because their cattle were multiplied in the land of Gilead.

10 And in the days of Saul they made war with [p] the Hagarites, who fell by their hand: and they dwelt in their tents † throughout all the east *land* of Gilead.

11 ¶ And the children of Gad dwelt over against them, [q] in the land of Bashan unto Salcah:

12 Joel the chief, and Shapham the next, and Jaanai, and Shaphat in Bashan.

13 And their brethren, of the house of their fathers *were,* Michael, and Meshullam, and Sheba, and Jorai, and Jachan, and Zia, and Heber, seven.

14 These *are* the children of Abihail the son of Huri, the son of Jaroah, the son of Gilead, the son of Michael, the son of Jeshishai, the son of Jahdo, the son of Buz;

15 Ahi the son of Abdiel, the son of Guni, chief of the house of their fathers.

16 And they dwelt in Gilead in Bashan, and in her towns, and in all the suburbs of [r] Sharon, upon their ‡ borders.

17 All these were [s] reckoned by genealogies in the days of [t] Jotham king of Judah, and in the days of [u] Jeroboam king of Israel.

18 ¶ The sons of Reuben, and the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh, of ◊ valiant men, men able to bare buckler and sword, and to shoot with bow,

a Gen. xxix. 32. xlvi. 3. xlix. 3. Ex. vi. 14. Num. xxvi. 5.
b Gen xxxv. 22. xlix. 4. Lev. xviii. 8. xx. 11. Deut. xxvii. 20. 1 Cor. v. 1.
c Gen. xlviii. 15—22. Deut. xxi. 17.
d Gen. xxv. 23. 1 Sam. xvi. 6—11.
e Gen. xlix. 8—10. Num. ii. 3. vii. 12 Ps. lx. 7. cviii. 8.
f 2 Sam. viii. 15. Ps. lxxviii 68—71. Jer xxiii. 5, 6. Mic. v. 2 Matt. ii. 6. Heb. vii. 14
* Or, *prince.*
g Gen. xlvi. 9. Ex. vi. 14. Num. xxvi. 5—9.
h Gen. xlvi. 9. *Phallu.* B. C. 740.
i 26. 2 Kings xv. 29. xvi. 7. *Tiglath-pileser.*
k 17.
l 4. *Shemaiah.*
m Josh. xiii 15—20.
n Num xxxii. 38.
o Josh. xxii. 8, 9.
p 19, 20. Gen. xxi. 9. xxv. 12
† Heb. *upon all the face of the east.*
q Num. xxxii. 34—36. Deut. iii. 10—17. Josh. xiii. 11. 24—28.
r xxvii. 29. Cant ii. 1. Is xxxv. 12.
‡ Heb. *goings forth.* B. C 750.
s 7.
t 2 Kings xv. 5. 32. 2 Chr. xxvii. 1.
B. C. 780.
u 2 Kings xiv. 16. 23. 28.
◊ Heb. *sons of valour.*

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1, 2. (*Notes, Gen.* xlviii. xlix.) The double portion, which belonged to the first-born, having been forfeited by Reuben, Jacob's eldest son by Leah, was given to Joseph, his eldest son by Rachel, whose descendants had a double portion in Canaan; Jacob having adopted Ephraim and Manasseh, to be, as his own sons, heads of two distinct tribes. Yet, as the chief Ruler or Prince, even the Messiah, of whom David and his royal race were progenitors and types, was to descend from Judah, the genealogy began with him, and not with either Reuben or Joseph.

V. 4, 5. Very brief extracts are made from the registers of Reuben, and of several other tribes; because, it is probable but few persons of these tribes returned from the captivity to settle in Canaan: and therefore but few of them were concerned in the genealogies, compared with the numbers of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi, of whom the Jews after that event principally consisted. It may be supposed, that Ezra's contemporaries would see the reason, why the persons selected should be named, and not others; though we can assign none. This chapter contains all that relates to the two tribes and a half, which settled to the east of Jordan.

V. 9. The inheritance of Reuben extended to the borders of the desert, which reached even to the Euphrates.

V. 10. (*Note,* 18—22.)

V. 17. Part of the genealogies of Gad, whence these extracts were taken, seems to have been made during the time that Jeroboam the second reigned over Israel, and the rest when Jotham reigned in Judah.

and skilful in war, *were* [x] four and forty thousand seven hundred and threescore, that went out to the war.

19 And they [y] made war with the Hagarites, with Jetur, and [z] Nephish, and Nodab.

20 And [a] they were helped against them, and the Hagarites were delivered into their hand, and all that *were* with them: for [b] they cried to God in the battle, and he was entreated of them; [c] because they put their trust in him.

21 And they * took away their cattle; of their camels fifty thousand, and of sheep two hundred and fifty thousand, and of asses two thousand, and of † men an hundred thousand.

22 For there fell down many slain, because the war *was* [d] of God. And they dwelt in their steads [e] until the captivity.

23 ¶ And the children of the half tribe of Manasseh dwelt in the land: they increased from Bashan, unto [f] Baal-hermon and Senir, and unto mount Hermon.

24 And these *were* the heads of the house of their fathers, even Epher, and Ishi, and Eliel, and Azriel, and Jeremiah, and Hodaviah, and Jahdiel, mighty men of valour, ‡ famous men, *and* heads of the house of their fathers.

25 And they transgressed against the God of their fathers, and [g] went a whoring after the gods of the people of the land, whom God destroyed before them.

26 And the God of Israel [h] stirred up the spirit of [i] Pul king of Assyria, and the spirit of [k] Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria, and he carried them away, (even the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh) [l] and brought them unto Halah, and Habor, and Hara, and to the river Gozan, unto this day.

x Josh. iv. 12, 13.
y 10.
z i. 31. Gen xxv 15 *Naphish.*
a 22. Ex. xvii 11. Josh. x 14. 42 1 Sam vii. 12 xix. 5 Ps. xlvi 1. cxlvi. 5, 6.
b 2 Chr. xiv 11—13. xviii. 31 xx. 12 xxxii. 20, 21.
c Ps ix. 10. xx 7. 8. xxii. 4. 5. lxxiv. 11. 12.
* Heb. *led captive.*
† Heb. *souls of men.* Num. xxxi. 35.
d 2 Chr xxxii. 8. Rom. viii 31.
e 26 2 Kings xv. 29. xvii 6.
f Deut. iii. 8, 9 Josh. xiii. 29—31.
‡ Heb. *men of names.* iv. 38
g 2 Kings xvii. 7, &c. Hos. i. 2. ix. 1. Rev. xvii. 5.
h 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11. Ezra i. 5. Is. x. 5, 6. xiii. 2—5.
i 2 Kings xv. 19. B. C 740.
k 6. 2 Kings xv. 59. xvi. 7.
l 2 Kings xvii. 6. xviii. 11.

V. 18—22. The Hagarites were the descendants of Hagar, or the Ishmaelites, properly so called; and being a nation of plunderers, they could not fail to give their neighbours just cause of making war upon them; (*Note, Gen.* xvi. 12.) But indeed "the war was of God," undertaken in his fear, and in dependence on him, and it was approved and succeeded by him. If this was the same war that was before mentioned, (10;) the Israelites beyond Jordan might be left, during a part of Saul's reign, to defend themselves: but some think, that these tribes were numbered by genealogies, in the days of Jeroboam and Jotham; in order to make war against the Hagarites. They, however, acted in concert and with vigour, and with faith and prayer, against these formidable enemies. But especially it is noted, that they trusted in God, and called upon him in the battle; and their success accorded to their faith.—The multitude of the prisoners may give us an idea of the superiority in numbers of the enemy, and of the slaughter which was made. The Ishmaelites have always been remarkable for the numbers of camels which they take with them in their expeditions. When we read of this conduct and success of these Israelites, we are ready to say, 'Oh, 'that there had always been such an heart in them!' But the conclusion of the chapter gives us a different view of their character and condition.

V. 25, 26. Not only the Manassites, with the Reubenites and Gadites, forsook God, to worship idols; but the nation of Israel generally did the same; yet the two tribes and a half seem to have been more early and entirely corrupted than the other tribes. Their progenitors had hastily desired a settlement to the east of Jordan; and now these tribes were carried captive before the rest of Israel. But they were placed in the same regions by Pul and Tilgath-pilneser, to which Shalmanezer afterwards carried the other tribes. (*Marg. Ref.*)—*Hara* is supposed to be the same as *Media*, or a part of it.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is profitable to be frequently reminded, that sin degrades men from their excellency, stamps indelible disgrace on their characters, forfeits their advantages, and entails manifold losses on their posterity. But the Lord punishes none above their deserts; and as he sees good confers unmerited favours on mankind. They who are related to, and interested in, our chief Ruler of the tribe of Judah, are far more favoured than those who have a two-fold or a ten-fold portion of perishing riches. Let us seek and choose this better portion, and leave the children of this world to contend about their gilded baubles, without envying, coveting, or interfering. We need not in that case fear wanting any thing truly good for us, "for our Father "knoweth what things we have need of:" when our families increase, he will increase our provision: and it is our privilege to cast our care on him, and to keep in the path of duty. Happy are that people, who live together in harmony, who readily assist each other, who strenuously oppose the common enemies of their souls, and who acknowledge God in all their ways, but are especially earnest in times of trial and temptation. Such persons will assuredly be heard and helped; their warfare is of God, their enemies will be trodden down, their victory is certain, and their triumphs will be glorious. And let it be carefully noticed, that all genuine and warranted trust in God will be expressed by earnest prayer; and this in part distinguishes it from a presumptuous confidence, and an indolent reliance, which often subsist without application to God, or habitual prayer; and are especially maintained by lifeless forms,

CHAP. VI.

The sons of Levi, by Aaron, to Eleazar, 1—3. *The line of Eleazar to the captivity,* 4—15. *The families of Levi,* 16—19. *The sons of Gershom,* 20, 21 *Of Kohath,* 22—28. *Of Merari,* 29. 30. *The singers appointed by David,* 31—48. *The office of Aaron and his sons,* 49. *Aaron's line to Ahimaaz,* 50—53. *The cities of the priests and Levites,* 54—81.

B. C. 1700.
a xxiii 6. Gen. xlvi 11 Ex vi. 16. Num. xxvi. 57.
b 16. 17. *Gershom.*
c xxiii.12. Ex.vi. 18.
d 22 *Amminadab.*
e xxiii.13 Ex.vi. 20.
f Ex. ii. 4, 7. xv. 20. Mic vi 4
g xxiv. 1, 2. Ex. vi. 23 xxiv 1. xxviii 1. Lev. x. 1. 12
h ix. 20. Ex. vi. 25 Num.xxv. 6. —11 xxi. 6. Josh xxii. 13. 30—32. xxiv 33. Judges xx 28 Ezra viii. 2. Ps. cv. 30.
i Ezra vii. 1—5.

THE [a] sons of Levi; [b] Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

2 And [c] the sons of Kohath; Amram, [d] Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel.

3 And the children of Amram; [e] Aaron, and Moses, and [f] Miriam. The sons also of Aaron; [g] Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar.

4 Eleazar begat [h] Phinehas, Phinehas begat [i] Abishua,

5 And Abishua begat Bukki, and Bukki begat Uzzi,

6 And Uzzi begat Zerahiah, and Zerahiah begat Meraioth,

B. C. 1100.

7 Meraioth begat Amariah, and Amariah begat Ahitub,

k 2 Sam. vi 17. l 2 Sam xv 35. xvii. 15. xx. 25. 1 Kings i. 8. 34. 44 ii. 35 m 2 Sam xv. 27. 36 xvii. 17. 20. xviii. 19. 22. 27—29.
B B 760.
n 2 Chr. xxvi. 17—20

8 And [k] Ahitub begat [l] Zadok, and Zadok begat [m] Ahimaaz,

9 And Ahimaaz begat Azariah, and Azariah begat Johanan,

10 And Johanan begat Azariah, (he *it is* that [n] executed the priest's office in [*] the temple, that [o] Solomon built in Jerusalem,)

* Heb. *the house.*
o 1 Kings vi. vii. 2 Chr iii. iv.

11 Azariah begat [p] Amariah, and Amariah begat Ahitub,

p Ezra vii. 3.

12 And Ahitub begat Zadok, and Zadok begat [q] Shallum,

q ix. 11. Neh. xi. 11. *Meshullam.*

13 And Shallum begat [r] Hilkiah, and Hilkiah begat Azariah,

r 2 Kings xx 12—14 2 Chron. xxxiv. 14—20. xxxv. 8.
B C 588.

14 And Azariah begat [s] Seraiah, and Seraiah begat Jehozadak.

s 2 Kings xxv. 13. Ezra vii. 1. Neh. xi 11

15 And [t] Jehozadak went *into captivity,* [u] when the LORD carried away Judah and Jerusalem [x] by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.

t Ezra v 2. *Josadak* Hag. i 1. 12 14 ii 2. *Josedech.*
u 2 Kings xxv 21. 2 Chr xxxvi. 17—21 Jer xxxix. 9 lii 12—15. 28.
B C. 1700
x Acts xiv 27. xix. 11 Rom. xv. 18.

16 ¶ The sons of Levi; [y] Gershom, Kohath, and Merari.

y 1. Ex. vi. 16. *Gershon*

17 And these *be* the names of [z] the sons of Gershom: Libni, and [a] Shimei.

z xxiii 7 Num. iii 18. 21
a Ex vi. 17. *Shimi*

18 And the sons of Kohath *were* [b] Amram, and Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel.

b 2, 3. xxiii. 12.

19 The sons of Merari; [c] Mahli, and Mushi. And these *are* the families of the Levites, according to their fathers.

c xxiii. 21. xxiv. 26. Ex. vi 19. *Mahali.* Num. iii. 20. xxvi. 57, 58

20 Of Gershom; [d] Libni his son, Jahath his son, Zimmah his son.

d 17.

21 [e] Joah his son, Iddo his son, [f] Zerah his son, [g] Jeaterai his son.

e 42. *Ethan.*
f 41 *Adaiah.*
g 41 *Ethni.*

22 The sons of Kohath; [h] Amminadab his son, Korah his son, Assir his son,

h 2 18. Ex. vi. 21. 24. *Ishar.*

23 Elkanah his son, and Ebiasaph his son, and Assir his son,

24 Tahath his son, [i] Uriel his son, Uzziah his son, and Shaul his son.

i 36 *Zephaniah. Azariah. Joel.*
B. C. 1100.

25 And the sons of [k] Elkanah; Amasai, and Ahimoth.

k 35, 36. Ex. vi. 24.

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and inefficacious notions. They, who rebel against the Lord, and apostatize from him, must eventually be ruined: especially such as desert his worship and reject his salvation, for the sake of those idols which are either set up in temples, or in the hearts of the avaricious, the sensual, or the ambitious. It will little avail them, to have their names inserted in the genealogies of honourable families, or recorded as famous in the page of history, whilst they are rejected of God, and excluded from his kingdom. —We should consider that those actions, which are vain, foolish, and wicked in man, may be permitted and made use of by the Lord in justice, wisdom, and goodness. From him the renowned ravagers of the earth derive their power and courage: and they are employed as his executioners, and classed with pestilences, earthquakes, and famines; being equally dreadful and fatal to mankind. Nor should we forget, that they, whose inordinate desire of earthly objects draws them to a distance from God's ordinances, are assuredly preparing for their own correction or destruction.

NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 4—15. These verses contain the line of Eleazar, Aaron's eldest surviving son after the death of Nadab and Abihu, to the Babylonish captivity: but all the persons mentioned were not high-priests; for Ithamar's posterity enjoyed that dignity for some time.—"He that "executed the priest's office in the temple that Solomon "built," (an intimation that the writer lived when the second temple was built, or building;) is supposed to have been Azariah, who vigorously opposed Uzziah's presumptuous attempt to burn incense. His father Johanan is thought by some to have been the same with Jehoiada, the firm friend to religion and the family of David, during Athaliah's usurpation. Otherwise he is not mentioned. —Urijah, who basely obeyed idolatrous Ahaz, is not named in this catalogue, and perhaps several others are omitted, (*Marg. Ref.*)—It is wonderful, that so little is recorded of the high-priests, when the office is represented in the law as of peculiar sanctity and importance!

26 *As for* Elkanah: the sons of Elkanah; [l] Zophai his son, and [m] Nahath his son,

27 [n] Eliab his son, Jeroham his son, [o] Elkanah his son.

28 And the sons of Samuel; the first-born [p] Vashni, and Abiah.

29 The sons of Merari; [q] Mahli, Libni his son, Shimei his son, Uzza his son,

30 Shimea his son, Haggiah his son, Asaiah his son.

31 ¶ And these *are they*, [r] whom David set over the service of song in the house of the LORD, [s] after that the ark had rest.

32 And [t] they ministered before the dwelling-place of the tabernacle of the congregation with singing, [u] until Solomon had built the house of the LORD in Jerusalem: and *then* they * waited on their office according to their order.

33 And these *are* they that waited, with their children. Of the sons of the Kohathites: [x] Heman a singer, the son of [y] Joel, the son of [z] Shemuel.

34 The son of Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of [a] Eliel, the son of [b] Toah,

35 The son of [c] Zuph, the son of Elkanah, the son of Mahath, the son of Amasai,

36 The son of Elkanah, the son of [d] Joel, the son of Azariah, the son of Zephaniah,

37 The son of Tahath, the son of Assir, the son of [e] Ebiasaph, the son of [f] Korah,

l 35. 1 Sam. i. 1. *Zuph.*
m 34. *Toah.* 1 Sam. i. 1. *Tohu.*
n 34. *Eliel.* 1 Sam. i. 1. *Elihu.*
o 1 Sam. i. 1. 20.
p 33. 1 Sam. viii. 2. *Joel*
q 19.
r xxv. 1, &c. B. C. 1047.
s xvi. 1. 2 Sam. vi. 17. Ps. cxxxii. 8, 14.
t xvi. 37—42. Ps. lxviii. 24, 25.
u 10. 1 Kings viii. 6—13.
* Heb. *stood.* xxv. 8. 9. Ps. cxxxiv. 1, 2.
x xv. 17. 19. xxv. 4. Ps. lxxxviii. *title.*
y 28. *Vashni.*
z 28. *Samuel.*
a 27. *Eliab*
b 26. *Nahath.*
c 26. *Zophai*
d 24. *Shaul, Uzziaz, Uriel.*
e Ex. vi. 21—24. *Abiasaph.*
f Num. xvi. 1, &c. xxvi. 10, 11. Ps. xlii. xliv. xlv. xlix. xlxxiv. lxxxv. *titles.*

38 The son of [g] Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, the son of Israel.

39 And his brother [h] Asaph, (who stood on his right hand,) *even* Asaph, the son of Berachiah, the son of Shimea,

40 The son of Michael, the son of Baaseiah, the son of Malchiah,

41 The son of [i] Ethni, the son of Zerah, the son of [k] Adaiah,

42 The son of [l] Ethan, the son of Zimmah, the son of Shimei,

43 The son of [m] Jahath, the son of Gershom, the son of Levi.

44 And their brethren, the sons of Merari, *stood* on the left hand. [n] Ethan the son of [o] Kishi, the son of Abdi, the son of Malluch,

45 The son of Hashabiah, the son of Amaziah, the son of Hilkiah,

46 The son of Amzi, the son of Bani, the son of Shamer,

47 [p] The son of Mahli, the son of Mushi, the son of Merari, the son of Levi.

48 [q] Their brethren also the Levites *were* appointed unto all manner of service of the tabernacle of the house of God.

49 ¶ But [r] Aaron and his sons offered upon the altar of the burnt-offering, and [s] on the altar of incense, *and were appointed* for all the work of the *place* most holy, and to make an atonement for Israel, according to all that [t] Moses the servant of God had commanded.

50 And these *are* the sons of Aaron; [u] Eleazar his son, Phinehas his son, Abishua his son,

g Num. iii. *Izchar.*
h xv. 17—19. xxv. 2. Ps. l. lxxiii—lxxxiii. *titles.*
i 21. *Jeaterai.*
k 21. *Iddo.*
l 21. *Joah.*
m 20.
n xxv. 1, 3. 6. *Jeduthun.* Ps. lxxxix. *title.*
o xv. 17. *Kushaiah.*
p Ex. vi. 19. Num. iii. 20.
q Num. iv. 2, &c. xviii. 2, &c.
r B. C. 1496. Ex. xxviii. 3, &c. Lev. i. 5—7. viii. 2. Num. xvi. 40. Heb. vii. 11—14.
s Ex. xxx. 7.
t Deut. xxxiv. 5. Josh. i. 1.
u 3—9. Ezra vii. 2—5.

V. 16—30. The principal persons who presided over the three families of Levi, till the time of David, seem to be mentioned in these verses. The marginal references contain the variation in the names given to the same persons, in different parts of sacred history, (as far as it can be ascertained;) and nearly the whole, that is at present known concerning them, may be learned by carefully consulting them. Samuel was not a priest, but descended from Izhar, Aaron's uncle: yet, as a prophet, he seems to have sacrificed personally, and not by the ministration of the priests, as some have conjectured.

V. 31, 32. After the tabernacle had been made stationary, and the Levites had greatly multiplied; David, at length, formed arrangements for their regular ministering by rotation; especially a large number of them were employed as singers and musicians, in celebrating the praises of God. (*Notes*, xxv. xxvi.) This was settled before the building of the temple, but it was continued afterwards.

V. 33. Heman was grandson to *Samuel* or *Shemuel*, the prophet and judge of Israel; and probably he was advanced to this office, in honour of his illustrious ancestor. The genealogies of Heman, and Asaph, and Ethan, are carried back to Levi: whence we may infer that their station, as precentors, was considered as both important and honourable.

V. 39. As Asaph was of the same tribe with Heman, he is called his brother, though descended from a different family of that tribe.

V. 48. 'It is observable, that in all the genealogies of 'the Levites, there is not a word said of the sons of Moses 'and their posterity; he having no ambition to prefer them 'to any office, either in church or state!' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

51 Bukki his son, Uzzi his son, Zerahiah his son,

52 Meraioth his son, Amariah his son, Ahitub his son,

53 Zadok his son, Ahimaaz his son.

x Josh. xxi. 3—8.
y Gen. xxv. 16.
z Josh. xxi. 4, 5.

54 ¶ Now [x] these *are* their dwelling places, throughout their [y] castles in their coasts, of the sons of Aaron, [z] of the families of the Kohathites: for their's was the lot.

a Josh. xiv. 13. xv. 13. xxi. 11, 13.

55 And they gave them [a] Hebron in the land of Judah, and the suburbs thereof round about it.

56 But the fields of the city, and the villages thereof, they gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh.

b Josh. xx. 7—9.
c Josh. xxi. 13, 14.

57 And to the sons of Aaron they gave the cities of Judah, *namely*, Hebron, *the city* [b] of refuge, and [c] Libnah with her suburbs, and Jattir, and Eshtemoa, with their suburbs,

d Josh. xxi 15. *Holon.*

58 And [d] Hilen with her suburbs, Debir with her suburbs,

e Josh. xxi. 16. *Ain.*

59 And [e] Ashan with her suburbs, and Beth-shemeth with her suburbs:

f Josh. xxi. 17.
g Josh. xxi. 18. *Almon.*

60 And out of the tribe of Benjamin; [f] Geba with her suburbs, and [g] Alemeth with her suburbs, and Anathoth with her suburbs. All their cities throughout their families *were* thirteen cities.

h 65. Josh xxi. 4, 5. 20—26.

61 And unto the sons of Kohath, *which were* [h] left of the family of that tribe, *were cities given* out of the half tribe, *namely, out of* the half *tribe* of Manasseh, by lot, ten cities.

i Josh. xxi. 27—33 *Gershon.*

62 And to the sons of [i] Gershom throughout their families out of the tribe of Issachar, and out of the tribe of Asher, and out of the tribe of Naphtali, and out of the tribe of Manasseh in Bashan, thirteen cities.

k Josh xxi. 34—40.

63 Unto the sons of [k] Merari *were given* by lot, throughout their families, out of the tribe of Reuben, and out of the tribe of Gad, and out of the tribe of Zebulun, twelve cities.

l Josh. xxi. 41, 42.

64 And [l] the children of Israel gave to the Levites *these* cities with their suburbs

65 And they gave by lot out of the tribe of the children of Judah, and out of the tribe of the children of Simeon, and out of the tribe of the children of Benjamin, [m] these cities which are called by *their* names.

m 57—60.

n 61.

66 [n] And *the residue* of the families of the sons of Kohath had cities of their coasts out of the tribe of Ephraim.

67 And they gave unto them, *of* the cities of refuge, [o] Shechem in mount Ephraim with her suburbs; *they gave* also Gezer with her suburbs,

o Josh. xx. 7. xxi. 21.

68 And [p] Jokmeam with her suburbs, and Beth-horon with her suburbs,

p Josh. xxi. 22. *Kibzaim.*

69 And [q] Aijalon with her suburbs, and Gath-rimmon with her suburbs:

q Josh. xxi. 24.

70 And out of the half tribe of Manasseh; [r] Aner with her suburbs, and * Bileam with her suburbs, for the family of the remnant of the sons of Kohath.

r Josh xxi. 25. *Tanach Gath-rimmon* * *Ibleam.* Josh xvii. 11.

71 Unto the sons of Gershom *were given* out of the family of the half tribe of Manasseh, [s] Golan in Bashan with her suburbs, and [t] Ashtaroth with her suburbs:

s Deut. iv 43 Josh xx. 8
t Josh. xxi 27 *Be-eshterah.*

72 And out of the tribe of Issachar; [u] Kedesh with her suburbs, Daberath with her suburbs,

u Josh. xxi 28, 29. *Kishon Daberah. Jarmuth. En-gannim.*

73 And Ramoth with her suburbs, and Anem with her suburbs:

74 And out of the tribe of Asher; [x] Mashal with her suburbs, and Abdon with her suburbs,

x Josh. xxi. 30. *Mishal.*

75 And [y] Hukok with her suburbs, and Rehob with her suburbs:

y Josh. xxi 31. *Helkath.*

76 And out of the tribe of Naphtali; [z] Kedesh in Galilee with her suburbs, and [a] Hammon with her surburbs, and Kirjathaim with her surburbs.

z Josh. xx. 7.
a Josh xxi. 32. *Hammoth-dor. Kartan.*

77 Unto the rest of the children of Merari *were given* out of the tribe of Zebulun, [b] Rimmon with her suburbs, Tabor with her suburbs:

b Josh. xxi. 34, 35 *Jokneam Kartah Dimnah. Nahalal.*

78 And on the other side Jordan by Jericho, on the east side of Jordan, *were given them* out of the tribe of Reuben, [c] Bezer in the wilderness with her suburbs, and [d] Jahzah with her suburbs,

c Josh. xx. 8.
d Josh xxi. 36. *Jahazah.*

79 Kedemoth also with her suburbs, and Mephaath with her suburbs:

80 And out of the tribe of Gad; [e] Ra-

e Josh. xxi 38, 39.

V. 54—60. Juttah and Gibeon are here omitted; perhaps they lay in ruins when the book was written: so that only eleven cities are enumerated; though thirteen were allotted to the priests in the days of Joshua. (*Marg. Ref.*)

moth in Gilead with her suburbs, and Mahanaim with her suburbs,

81 And Heshbon with her suburbs, and Jazer with her suburbs.

CHAP. VII.

The sons of Issachar, 1—5. *Of Benjamin,* 6—12. *Of Naphtali,* 13. *Of Manasseh,* 14—19. *The sons of Ephraim, of whom some were slain by the men of Gath,* 20—22. *His sons by Beriah,* 23—27. *Their habitations,* 28, 29. *The sons of Asher,* 30—40.

B. C. 1760. NOW the sons of Issachar *were,* Tola, and [a] Puah, Jashub, and Shimron, four.

a Gen. xlvi. 13. *Phuvah.* Job. Num xxvi 23, 24. *Pua.*

2 And the sons of Tola; Uzzi, and Rephaiah, and Jeriel, and Jahmai, and Jibsam, and Shemuel, heads of their father's house, *to wit,* of Tola: *they were* valiant men of might in their generations; [b] whose number *was* in the days of David two and twenty thousand and six hundred.

b xxi. 1—5 xxvii. 1. 23, 24. 2 Sam. xxiv. 1—9

3 And the sons of Uzzi; Izrahiah: and the sons of Izrahiah; Michael, and Obadiah, and Joel, Ishiah, five: all of them chief men.

4 And [c] with them, by their generations, after the house of their fathers, *were* bands of soldiers for war, six and thirty thousand *men:* for they had many wives and sons.

c xii. 32.

5 And their brethren, among all the families of Issachar *were* valiant men of might, reckoned in all by their genealogies fourscore and seven thousand.

6 ¶ *The sons* [d] of Benjamin; Bela, and Becher, and [e] Jediael, three.

B. C. 1700. d viii. 1, &c. Gen. xlvi. 21 Num. xxvi. 38—41.

7 And the sons of Bela, Ezbon, and Uzzi, and Uzziel, and Jerimoth, and Iri, five; heads of the house of *their* fathers, mighty men of valour; and [f] were

e 10, 11. B. C. 1017. f xxi. 1—5. 2 Chr. xvii 17, 18.

V. 67—81. Either some of these cities, or their names, had been changed since the time of Joshua: but, as Mr. Henry observes, Salop and Shrewsbury, Saram and Salsbury, are as different names for the same places, as any in these catalogues; yet they, who live in their vicinity, are no ways confused by them. Some cities also are here mentioned as having belonged to Ephraim, which in Joshua are spoken of as cities of Dan: but various changes in such matters would occur in a course of ages.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In the judgment of God, none of the human race are more honourable or valuable, than they who consistently minister in holy things. And though many, nominally bearing this sacred character, render themselves insignificant by their indolence, contemptible by their covetousness, or odious by their profligacy, or bring the divine vengeance upon themselves by offering strange fire before the Lord: yet, instead of that order being despised on these accounts, they, who are singularly humble, diligent, disinterested, zealous, and valiant for the truth, ought to be treated with the greater respect; and of this God himself hath condescended to set the example in his holy word. None of the Lord's people, and especially of his ministers, should be unemployed: they who, through want of ability or change of circumstances, are precluded from one method of glorifying God, should set themselves to devise another. And if they deem nothing, which may conduce to the advancement of true godliness, too laborious, mean, disgusting, or discouraging; if they be disposed to be "instant in season "and out of season;" to instruct or encourage one, ten, or ten thousand, in public or in private, in a cottage, an hospital, a prison, or a palace; in safe and easy, or in difficult and perilous circumstances; if they consider nothing too little to be attended to, and nothing too arduous to be attempted; and if they do all in sincerity, humility, and simplicity of spirit, they cannot long be unoccupied or useless. But nothing can be a more pleasant and honourable work, than to excite or assist the devotions of the pious, and to lead them to abound in many thanksgivings and praises to the Lord. If a rich inheritance, or the important station of a magistrate or civil governor, could with propriety be quitted for such a service, the enlightened understanding must perceive it to be an honourable and advantageous exchange; for this is the delightful employment of those above, who are arrived at their eternal rest. They that have shown themselves peculiarly disinterested in the cause of God and his people, should be peculiarly considered by their brethren, and their families respected for their sakes. But, though Christians and ministers may be very useful to the church, whilst "they wait in their offices," none, but our great High-Priest can make atonement for sin, nor can any be accepted save through his atonement. Whilst the ministers are bound to wait on their ministering, according to the work of their place; the people are equally bound, in their several stations, to strengthen their hands, and to contribute without grudging to their comfortable maintenance: and in every good work, equality and unanimity will render the burthen light, and conduce to the comfort of all concerned, as also to render their endeavours more generally useful.

NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 2. When David numbered Israel, this was the number of men, fit for war, in Issachar. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 3. Izrahiah, and his four sons, are here spoken of, as five sons of Uzzi.

reckoned by their genealogies twenty and two thousand and thirty and four.

8 And the sons of Becher; Zemira, and Joash, and Eliezer, and Elioenai, and Omri, and Jerimoth, and Abiah, and Anathoth, and Alameth. All these *are* the sons of Becher.

9 And the number of them, after their genealogy by their generations, heads of the house of their fathers, mighty men of valour, *was* twenty thousand and two hundred.

10 The sons also of Jediael; Bilhan: and the sons of Bilhan; Jeush. and Benjamin, and [g] Ehud, and Chenaanah, and Zethan, and Tharshish, and Ahishahar.

g Judg. iii. 15, &c.

11 All these the sons of Jediael, by the heads of their fathers, mighty men of valour, *were* seventeen thousand and two hundred *soldiers,* fit to go out for war *and* battle.

12 [h] Shuppim also, and Huppim, the children of [i] Ir, *and* Hushim, the sons of [k] Aher.

h 15. Gen. xlvi. 21. *Muppim. Huppim.* Num. xxvi. 39 *Shupham Hupham.* i. 7. *Iri*
k Num. xxvi. 38. *Ahiram.*
l Gen xlvi. 24 Num xxvi. 48 *Jahzeel*
m Gen. xlv. 24. Num. xxvi. 49. *Shillem.*
B. C 1670.
n Num xxvi 29. —34. xxvii. 1
o ii. 21-23 Num. xxxii. 39, 40. Josh. xvii. 1.

13 ¶ The sons of Naphtali; [l] Jahziel, and Guni, and Jezer, and [m] Shallum, the sons of Bilhah.

14 ¶ The [n] sons of Manasseh; Ashriel, whom she bare: (*but* his concubine the Aramitess bare [o] Machir the father of Gilead:

15 And Machir took to wife *the sister* of [p] Huppim and Shuppim, whose sister's name *was* Maachah;) and the name

p 12.

of the second *was* Zelophehad: and [q] Zelophehad had daughters.

q Num. xxvi. 33. xxvii. 1—11. xxxvi. 1—12.

16 And Maachah the wife of Machir bare a son, and she called his name Peresh; and the name of his brother *was* Sheresh; and his sons *were* Ulam and Rakem.

17 And the sons of Ulam; [r] Bedan. These *were* the sons of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh.

r 1 Sam. xii. 11.

18 And his sister Hammoleketh bare Ishod, and [s] Abiezer, and Mahalah.

s Num. xxvi. 30. *Jeezer* Judg. vi. 11 24. 34. viii. 2. B. C. 1600.

19 And the sons of Shemida were Ahian, and Shechem, and Likhi, and Aniam.

20 ¶ And [t] the sons of Ephraim; Shuthelah, and Bered his son, and Tahath his son, and Eladah his son, and Tahath his son.

t Num. xxvi. 35, 36.

21 And Zabad his son, and Shuthelah his son, and Ezer, and Elead, whom the men of Gath *that were* born in *that* land slew, because they came down to take away their cattle.

B. C 1600.

22 And Ephraim their father [u] mourned many days, and his brethren came to comfort him.

u Gen. xxxvii. 34

23 And when he went in to his wife, she conceived, and bare a son, and [x] he called his name * Beriah, because it went evil with his house.

x iv. 9 Gen. xxxv. 18. 1 Sam. iv. 21.
* *In evil.*

24 (And his daughter *was* Sherah, who built [y] Beth-horon the nether, and the upper, and Uzzen-sherah.)

y Josh xvi. 3. 5. 1 Kings ix 17. 2 Chr. viii. 5.

25 And Rephah *was* his son, also Re-

V. 7—11. These seem not, strictly speaking, to have been the *sons* of Bela and Bechel, but renowned persons among their descendants, or such as were progenitors of those who returned from Babylon.

V. 12. *Aher.* Aher signifies *another*, and it hath been conjectured, that these were Danites; especially as Hushim is named as the only son of Dan. (*Gen.* xlvi. 23.) And they suppose, that the name of Dan was not mentioned, because his descendants first established idolatry. But Zebulun also is here omitted: perhaps because none of either of these tribes returned at first from Babylon. Though the Benjamites had been almost destroyed in the first days of the judges, they were become numerous and powerful by the time of David.

V. 14, 15. Ashriel was Manasseh's son *by his wife,* who is not named: but a Syrian concubine was the mother of Machir, from whom the whole of that numerous tribe seems to have descended: for Ashriel as the son of Manasseh is not mentioned elsewhere; and Zelophehad was a descendant of Machir, two generations having intervened betwixt them. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 18. Hammoleketh seems to have been the sister of Gilead: though some think she was the sister of Bedan.

V. 21, 22. Ezer and Elead seem to have been the sons or grandsons of Ephraim, and not his more remote descendants: for it is evident he was living when they were slain. Some think, that they supposed the time was arrived for their possessing Canaan; and so made an unsuccessful invasion of it. But it is more likely, that some inhabitants of Gath, who had been natives of Egypt, made an incursion into Goshen, to make depredations on the cattle of Israel, and slew those who defended them. Thus Ephraim, that was intended to be a very numerous and prosperous tribe, was at first diminished.

V. 24. Some female descendant of Ephraim had affluence, influence, and liberality to rebuild three cities for her brethren. (*Marg. Ref.*)

sheph, and Telah his son, and Tahan his son,

26 Laadan his son, Ammihud his son, Elishama his son,

27 [a] Non his son, [b] Jehoshua his son.

28 And their possessions and habitations *were*, Beth-el and the towns thereof, and eastward [c] Naaran, and westward Gezer with the * towns thereof; Shechem also and the towns thereof, unto Gaza and the towns thereof:

29 And by the borders of the children of [d] Manasseh, Beth-shean and her towns, Taanach and her towns, Megiddo and her towns, Dor and her towns. [e] In these dwelt the children of Joseph the son of Israel.

30 ¶ The sons of Asher; [f] Imnah, and Isuai, and [g] Ishuai, and Beriah, and Serah their sister.

31 And the sons of Beriah; Heber, and Malchiel, who *is* the father of Birzavith.

32 And Heber begat Japhlet, and [h] Shomer, and Hotham, and Shuah their sister.

33 And the sons of Japhlet; Pasach, and Bimhal, and Ashvath: these *are* the children of Japhlet.

34 And the sons of [i] Shamer; Ahi, and Rohgah, Jehubbah, and Aram.

35 And the sons of his brother Helem; Zophah, and Imna, and Shelesh, and Amal.

36 The sons of Zophah; Suah, and Harnepher, and Shual, and Beri, and Imrah,

37 Bezer, and Hod, and Shamma, and Shilshah, and [k] Ithran, and Beera.

38 And the sons of Jether; Jephunneh, and Pispah, and Ara.

39 And the sons of Ulla; Arah, and Haniel, and Rezia.

40 All these *were* the children of Asher, heads of *their* father's house, choice *and* mighty men of valour, chief of the princes. And [l] the number throughout the genealogy of them that were apt to the war *and* to battle *was* twenty and six thousand men.

a Num. xiii. 8. 16 *Nun Oshea.*
b Num. xiv. 6. *Joshua.* Acts vii. 45. Heb. iv. 8. *Jesus.*
c Josl. xvi. 7. *Naarath*
* Heb. *daughters.*
d Josh. xvii. 7-11.
e Josh. xvi. xvii. Judg. i 22—29.
B. C. 1700.
f Gen xlvi. 17. Num xxvi. 44—46 *Jimnah*
g Gen. xlvi. 17. *Isui.*
h 34. *Shamer.*
i 32 *Shomer.*
k 38 *Jether.*
B. C. 1017.
l xxi. 1—5. 2 Sam. xxiv. 1—9.

CHAP. VIII.

The sons and chief men of Benjamin, 1—32. *The family of Saul and his descendants by Jonathan,* 33—40.

NOW Benjamin begat [a] Bela his first-born, Ashbel the second, and [b] Aharah the third,

2 Nohah the fourth, and Rapha the fifth.

3 And the sons of Bela were, [c] Addar, and Gera, and Abihud,

4 And Abishua, and Naaman, and Ahoah,

5 And [d] Gera, and [e] Shephuphan, and Huram.

6 And these *are* the sons of [f] Ehud: these are the heads of the fathers of the

B. C. 1700.
a vii. 6. Gen. xlvi 21.
b Num. xxvi. 38. *Ahiram.*
c Gen xlvi. 21 Num. xxvi. 40. *Ard.*
d Judg. iii. 15.
e vii. 12 Num. xxvi. 39. *Shupham*
f Judg. iii. 20.

V. 25—40. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Events frequently occur entirely beyond our expectations, and contrary to probabilities: the dispensations of Providence *seem* to run counter to the promises, in order that their performance may be more observed and admired; and often a good cause is run down, whilst the wicked triumph in the success of their villany: but the day of judgment will clear up, and rectify, all such *apparent* obliquities in the divine administration.—They, who live long, often become like the decaying tree, which stands till all its branches are withered, or broken off one after another. But, though the premature death of our children must necessarily be afflictive, and it behooves us all mutually to comfort each other: yet, we should not mourn as men without hope; for the Lord is able to make up all our losses. Considering our state on earth, we may properly call all our children *Beriah;* for "man is born to trouble, as the "sparks fly upwards." But the supports, consolations, and prospects, which the Gospel brings to believers, are sufficient to counterbalance every evil, and to render both life and death tolerable, if not joyful.—If men venture their lives to preserve their cattle; surely we should be willing to renounce, venture, and suffer any thing for the sake of Jesus Christ and his precious salvation.

NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1. The tribe of Benjamin adhered to Judah in the division of the kingdom, and returned with the Jews from Babylon: and as the history is about to open with the translation of the kingdom from Saul, of that tribe, to David of Judah; we have here a more copious account given of it than of several other tribes: but either some of the sons of Benjamin had several names; or those called his sons were his more remote descendants: so that we cannot extricate the genealogy from the obscurity, in which to us it is involved.

inhabitants of Geba, and they removed them to [g] Manahath:

g ii. 52. 54.

7 Naaman, and Ahiah, and Gera, he removed them, and begat Uzza, and Ahihud.

8 And Shaharaim begat *children* [h] in the country of Moab, after [i] he had sent them away; Hushim and Baara *were* his wives.

h Ruth i. 1.
i Gen. xxv. 6.

9 And he begat of Hodesh his wife, Jobab, and Zibia, Mesha, and Malcham,

10 And Jeuz, and Shachia, and Mirma. These *were* his sons, heads of the fathers.

11 And of Hushim he begat Abitub, and Elpaal.

12 The sons of Elpaal; Eber, and Misham, and Shamed, who built [k] Ono, and Lod, with the towns thereof:

k Ezra ii. 33. Neh. vi. 2. vii. 37. xi. 35.

13 Beriah also, and [l] Shema, who *were* heads of [m] the fathers of the inhabitants of [n] Aijalon, who drove away the inhabitants of Gath.

l 21. *Shimhi.*
m ii. 49, 50. 52. iv. 4.
n Josh. xix. 42. *Ajalon.*

14 And Ahio, Shashak, and Jerimoth,

15 And Zebadiah, and Arad, and Ader,

16 And Michael, and Ispah, and Joha, the sons of [o] Beriah;

o 13.

17 And Zebadiah, and Meshullam, and Hezeki, and Heber,

18 Ishmerai also, and Jezliah, and Jobab, the sons of Elpaal;

19 And Jakim, and Zichri, and Zabdi,

20 And Elienai, and Zilthai, and Eliel,

21 And Adaiah, and Beraiah, and Shimrath, the sons of [p] Shimhi;

p 13. *Shema.* B. C. 1300.

22 And Ishpan, and Heber, and Eliel,

23 And Abdon, and Zichri, and Hanan,

24 And Hananiah, and Elam, and Antothijah;

25 And Iphdeiah, and Penuel, the sons of Shashak;

26 And Shamsherai, and Sheharaiah, and Athaliah,

27 And Jaresiah and Eliah, and Zichri, the sons of Jeroham.

28 These *were* heads of the fathers, by their generations, chief *men*. These [q] dwelt in Jerusalem.

q Josh. xv. 63. xviii. 28. Judg i. 21.

29 And at Gibeon dwelt [r] the father of Gibeon; whose wife's name *was* Maachah:

r ix. 35. *Jehiel.*

30 And his first-born son Abdon, and Zur, and Kish, and Baal, and Nadab,

31 And Gedor, and Ahio, and [s] Zacher.

s ix. 37. *Zechariah.*

32 And Mikloth begat [t] Shimeah. And these also dwelt with their brethren in Jerusalem, over against them.

t ix. 38. *Shimeam.* B. C. 1200.

33 And [u] Ner begat [x] Kish, and Kish begat Saul, and [y] Saul begat Jonathan, and Malchishua, and [z] Abinadab, and [a] Esh-baal.

u 1 Sam. ix. 1. xiv. 50, 51.
x Acts xiii. 21. *Cis*
y 1 Sam. xiv. 49. xxxi 2.
z 1 Sam xiv. 49. *Ishui.*
a 2 Sam ii 8. iv. 12 *Ish-bosheth.*

34 And the son of Jonathan *was* [b] Merib-baal; and Merib-baal begat [c] Micah.

b 2 Sam iv 4. ix 6 *Mephibosheth.*
c 2 Sam. ix. 12.

35 And the sons of Micah *were*, Pithon, and Melech, and [d] Tarea, and Ahaz.

d ix. 41. *Tahrea.* B. C. 1000.

36 Ahaz begat [e] Jehoadah; and Jehoadah begat Alemeth, and Azmaveth, and Zimri; and Zimri begat Moza,

e ix. 42. *Jarah.*

37 And Mosa begat Binea: [f] Rapha *was* his son, Eleasah his son, Azel his son:

f ix. 43. *Repaiah.*

38 And Azel had six sons, whose names *are* these, Azrikam, Bocheru, and Ishmael, and Sheariah, and Obadiah, and Hanan. All these *were* the sons of Azel.

39 And the sons of Eshek his brother *were*, Ulam his first-born, Jehush the second, and Eliphelet the third.

40 And the sons of Ulam were mighty men of valour, [g] archers, and had [h] many sons, and sons' sons, an hundred and fifty. All these *are* of the sons of Benjamin.

B. C. 900.
g xii. 2. 2 Chr. xiv. 8.
h Ps cxxvii. 3—6. cxxviii. 3—6.

V. 6—10. Ehud was that judge of Israel who slew Eglon king of Moab. And perhaps in consequence he acquired dominion among the Moabites, and lived among them; and having many children, he removed some of them from him, and settled them in different places in his life-time.

V. 11—39. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 40. There are no remaining genealogies of any of the kings of Israel, after the division of the kingdom. But we have here an account of Saul's descendants by Jonathan, and Merib-baal, or *Mephibosheth*, and his son Micah for several generations. Perhaps David took care to record what passed in his days, and his descendants recorded what came after, in honour of Jonathan, David's covenanted generous friend.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord delighteth to exalt those who have been abased; and to honour those who adhere to him, and to the king whom he hath placed upon his holy hill of Zion, to his

CHAP. IX.

The original of the genealogies of Israel and Judah, 1. The first settlers in the land after the captivity, 2. The first who dwelt at Jerusalem, of the other tribes, 3—9. And of the priests and Levites, with their charge and service, 10—34. A repeated account of Saul's family, 35—44.

a Ezra ii 59. 62, 63. SO [a] all Israel were reckoned by genealogies; and, behold, they *were* written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah, *who* were [b] carried away to Babylon for their transgression.

b 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11. xxxvi. 9, 10 18—20. Jer lii. 14, 15 Dan. i. 2.

2 ¶ Now [c] the first inhabitants, that *dwelt* in their possessions in their cities, *were*, the Israelites, the priests, Levites, and [d] the Nethinims.

c Ezra ii 70. Neh. vii. 73. xi. 3.

d Josh. ix. 21—27. Ezra ii. 58 viii. 20

3 And [e] in Jerusalem dwelt of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin, and [f] of the children of Ephraim, and Manasseh;

e Neh. xi. 1, &c.

f 2 Chro xi. 16. xxx. 11 18.

4 Uthai the son of Ammihud, the son of Omri, the son of Imri, the son of Bani, of the children of [g] Pharez the son of Judah.

g Gen xlvi 12 Num. xxvi. 20

5 And of the [h] Shilonites; Asaiah the first-born, and his sons.

h Num. xxvi 20 *Shelanites.*

6 And of the sons of Zera; Jeuel, and their brethren, six hundred and ninety.

7 And of the sons of Benjamin; [i] Sallu the son of Meshullam, the son of Hodaviah, the son of Hasenuah,

i Neh. xi. 7

8 And Ibneiah the son of Jeroham, and Elah the son of Uzzi, the son of Michri, and Meshullam the son of Shephatiah, the son of Reuel, the son of Ibnijah,

9 And their brethren, according to their generations, nine hundred and fifty and six. All these men *were* chief of the fathers in the house of their fathers.

10 ¶ And of the priests; Jedaiah, and [k] Jehoiarib, and Jachin,

k Neh. xi. 10. *Joiarib.*

11 And [l] Azariah the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zedok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, [m] the ruler of the house of God;

l Neh. xi. 11. *Seraiah.*

m xxiv. 5. Num. iv 15, 16 28 33. 2 Kings xxiii 4. xxv. 18 Neh. xi. 11. Acts v. 24. 26.

12 And Adaiah the son of Jeroham, the son of Pashur, the son of Malchijah, and Maasiah the son of Adiel, the son of Jahzerah, the son of Meshullam, the son of [n] Meshillemith, the son of Immer,

n Neh xi. 12, 13. *Meshillemoth.*

13 And their brethren, heads of the house of their fathers, a thousand and seven hundred and threescore; * very

*Heb. *mighty men of valour.* xxvi. 6. 30. 32. Neh. xi. 14.

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chosen people, and his instituted worship. Numbers of renowned names are now buried in oblivion; but God honours some of those, who have been faithful and useful in their generation, by recording their names in the sacred Scriptures; and he writes the names of all his people in the book of life. May this be our privilege, however unnoticed in the partial histories of mankind! Alas, what will it avail to those who perish in an unequal contest with the Almighty, to have been admired as men of valour and activity by their fellow-creatures? Let us seek to make our peace with God; and for his sake, and after his example, to forgive our enemies, and show a decent respect to their memories: and still more to express affection for, and gratitude to, those who have been kind and useful to us, not neglecting the credit and interests of their posterity.

NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 1. This verse seems to be the sacred writer's account of the source from which he had transcribed the preceding genealogies. Both Israel and Judah had been thus reckoned or registered: and he had made extracts from the books of the two kingdoms, before the captivity. The ten tribes had been carried into regions at a considerable distance from Babylon: but they were at the time when this was written, in general, subject to the kings of Babylon.

V. 2. The persons that first after the captivity regained possession of their cities and lands, contained among them not only Jews, properly so called, but many Israelites from the other tribes; and also a number of priests, and Levites, and Nethinims. The *Nethinims* were the remainder of the Gibeonites, with others perhaps joined with them, who were *given* as servants to the priests and Levites. The word signifies *given ones.* (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 3—9. From the subsequent names of the priests and Levites, it is probable, that the sacred writer is speaking of the transactions recorded by Nehemiah: (*Marg. Ref.*) yet the names here mentioned so differ from those recorded in the parallel passage, that it can hardly be supposed the same persons in general are meant. But in these matters there are difficulties, which are perhaps incapable of a satisfactory solution at this distance of time, though the whole might be plain to those for whose use it was principally intended.

V. 11. "The ruler of the house of God," does not signify the high-priest, but the second priest, who officiated for him when incapacitated, or one of the chief priests, who superintended the affairs of the temple in all ordinary cases. (*Marg. Ref.*)

able men for the work of the service of the house of God.

14 ¶ And of the Levites; [o] Shemaiah the son of Hashub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, [p] of the sons of Merari;

15 And Bakbakkar, Heresh, and Galal, and Mattaniah the son of Micah, the son of [q] Zichri, the son of Asaph;

16 And [r] Obadiah the son of Shemaiah, the son of Galal, the son of Jedu-thun; and Berechiah the son of Asa, the son of Elkanah, that dwelt in the villages of the [s] Netophathites.

17 And [t] he porters *were* Shallum, and Akkub, ahd Talmon, and Ahiman, and their brethren: Shallum *was* the chief;

18 Who hitherto *waited* in [u] the king's gate eastward: [x] they *were* porters in the companies of the children of Levi.

19 And Shallum the son of Kore, the son of [y] Ebiasaph, the son of [z] Korah, and his brethren, of the house of his father, the Korahites, *were* over the work of the service, keepers of the † gates of the tabernacle: and their fathers, *being* [a] over the host of the LORD, *were* [b] keepers of the entry.

20 And [c] Phinehas the son of Eleazar was the ruler over them in time past, *and* [d] the LORD *was* with him.

21 *And* [e] Zechariah the son of Meshelemiah *was* porter of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

22 All these *which were* chosen to be porters in the gates *were* two hundred and twelve. These were reckoned by their genealogy [f] in their villages, whom [g] David and [h] Samuel the seer * did ordain in their † set office.

23 So they and their children *had* the oversight of the gates of the house of the LORD, *namely*, the house of the tabernacle, by wards.

24 In [i] four quarters were the porters, toward the east, west, north, and south.

25 And their brethren, *which were* in their villages, *were* to come after [k] seven days from time to time with them.

26 For these Levites, the four chief porters, were in *their* set ‡ office, and were over the § chambers and treasuries of the house of God

27 And they lodged round about the house of God, because [l] the charge *was* upon them, and [m] the opening thereof every morning *pertained* to them.

28 And *certain* of them had [n] the charge of the ministering vessels, that they should ‖ bring them in and out by tale.

29 *Some* of them also *were* appointed to oversee the vessels, and all the * instruments of the sanctuary, and the fine flour, and the wine, and [o] the oil, and [p] the frankincense, and the spices.

o Neh. xi. 15.
p vi. 19.
q xxv. 2. *Zaccur.* Neh. xi. 17. *Zabdi.*
r Neh. xi. 17. *Abdu.—Shamua.*
s ii. 54. Neh. xi. 28—30
t xxvi 1, &c Neh. xi. 19.
u 1 Kings x. 5. 2 Kings xi 19. Ez. xliv. 2, 3 xlvi 1, 2. Acts iii 11.
x xxvi 12. 19.
y vi. 22, 23.
z Num. xxvi. 9—11. Ps. xlii. xliv xlix. *titles.*
† Heb. *thresholds.*
a 2 Kings xi. 9, 15.
b xxvi. 7, 8. 13—19
B. C. 1450.
c Num, iii. 32. xxxi. 6.
d Num xxv 11—13. 1 Sam. xvi. 18. Acts vii. 9, 10.
e xxvi. 14.
B. C. 444.

f 16. Neh. xi. 25—30.
g xxiii. xxv xxvi xxviii. 13. 21.
h 1 Sam ix 9.
* Heb *founded.*
† Or. *trust* 26. 2
i xxvi. 14—18.
k 2 Kings xi. 5. 7. 2 Chr. xxiii. 9.
‡ Or, *trust.* 22 31.
§ Or, *storehouses.* 2 Chr xxxi 5—12. Neh. x. 38, 39. xiii 5.
l xxiii. 32. Rom. xii. 7.
m 1 Sam. iii 15. Mal. i. 10.
n xxvi 22—26. Num. iii. 25—36. Ezra viii. 25—30 Neh. xii. 44. xiii. 4, 5
‖ Heb. *bring them in by tale, and carry them out by tale.*
* Or, *vessels.*
o Ex. xxvii. 20.
p Ex. xxx. 23—28.

V. 12—18. Several names may be omitted, in the genealogies of these persons; and others introduced, which are elsewhere omitted: but the names are so far the same, as to show that the transactions recorded by Nehemiah are intended. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 19, 20. It has been conjectured, that the Jews, upon their return from Babylon, prepared a *tabernacle* for the worship of the Lord, before they had courage or ability to rebuild the temple. But it appears, that the inspired historian spoke of the times of Nehemiah: and the temple had been finished many years before. The word *tabernacle* may therefore refer to the sanctuary erected by Moses, which the temple, built after the captivity, more resembled, than it did Solomon's magnificent edifice. Indeed the sanctuary was only a *tent* or *tabernacle*, when Phinehas superintended it, in times past: yet "the LORD was with "him." This seems to have been mentioned, as an instruction, and encouragement, to the priests and Levites, in the times of Ezra and Nehemiah: for there can be no reasonable doubt but that this Phinehas was intended. Among numerous instances in which the WORD of the LORD is used by the Jewish paraphrasts *personally* for the LORD, the following may be adduced: 'In the Targum, 'the WORD of the LORD was his helper. If he who was 'with Phinehas was JEHOVAH the true God, and this 'WORD was with Phinehas; then the WORD, in the opin-'ion of this paraphrast, was JEHOVAH the true God.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 22. Samuel seems to have made some regulations respecting the attendance of the Levites, before those which David afterwards established: indeed some think, David received those instructions from Samuel, according to which he regulated the courses of the priests and Levites. (*Marg. Ref.*) And when the Jews returned from Babylon, they ordered these matters with respect to those appointments.

V. 23. The expression here used, "the house of the "tabernacle," is considered by many as confirming the opinion before mentioned; that a tabernacle was erected, after the captivity, till the temple was finished. No doubt can, I suppose, be made as to the *fact:* but if the sacred historian wrote of Nehemiah's time, whatever allusion he might make to that fact, it is certain, that the temple was then finished. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 27—29. The gold and silver vessels, and other treasures appropiated to the service of God, were depo-

30 And *some* of the sons of the priests made the ointment of the spices.

31 And Mattithiah, *one* of the Levites, who *was* the first-born of [r] Shallum the Korathite, had the † set office over the things that were made ‡ in the pans.

32 And *other* of their brethren, of [s] the sons of the Kohathites, *were* over the § shew-bread, to prepare *it* every sabbath

33 And these *are* [t] the singers, chief of the fathers of the Levites, *who remaining* in the chambers *were* free: for ‖ they were employed in *that* work day and night.

34 [u] These chief fathers of the Levites *were* chief throughout their generations; these dwelt at Jerusalem.

35 ¶ And in Gibeon dwelt [x] the father of Gibeon, Jehiel, whose wife's name *was* Maachah:

36 And his first-born son Abdon, then Zur, and Kish, and Baal, and Ner, and Nadab,

37 And Gedor, and Ahio, and [y] Zechariah, and Mikloth.

38 And Mikloth begat Shimeam. And they also dwelt with their brethren at Jerusalem, over against their brethren.

39 And Ner begat Kish, and Kish begat Saul, and Saul begat Jonathan, and Malchishua and Abinadab, and Eshbaal.

40 And the son of Jonathan *was* Meribbaal: and Merib-baal begat Micah.

41 And the sons of Micah *were* Pithon, and Melech, and Tahrea, *and Ahaz.*

42 And Ahaz begat [z] Jarah, and Jarah begat Alemeth, and Azmaveth, and Zimri; and Zimri begat Moza,

43 And Moza begat Binea; and [a] Rephaiah his son, Eleasah his son, Azel his son.

44 And Azel had six sons, whose names *are* these, Azrikam, Bocheru, and Ishmael, and Sheariah, and Obadiah, and Hanan: these *were* the sons of Azel.

r 19.
† Or, *trust.* 22. 26.
‡ Or, *on flat plates.* or, *slices.* Lev. ii. 5. 7. vi. 21.
s vi. 33, &c.
§ Heb. *bread of ordering* Ex. xxv. 30. Lev. xxiv. 8.
t vi. 31—33. xv. 16—22. xvi 4—6. xxv. 1, &c Neb. xi. 17 22, 23.
‖ Heb. *upon them* was Ps. cxxxiv. 1, 2. cxxxv. 1—3.
u 14. Neb xi. 1. 15
B. C 1300.
x viii. 29—40.
y viii. 31. *Zacher.*
z viii. 36. *Jehoaddah.*
a viii. 38 *Rapha* B. C. 1099.

CHAP. X.

Saul's defeat and death, 1—7. *The Philistines abuse his dead body,* 8—10. *The men of Jabesh-gilead rescue it, with the bodies of his sons,* 11, 12. *Saul's sin, for which he died, and the kingdom was transferred to David,* 13, 14.

NOW [a] the Philistines fought against Israel; and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down * slain in mount [b] Gilboa.

B. C 1056.
a 1 Sam. xxviii. 1. 4. xxix. 1, 2. xxxi 1, 2.
* Heb. *wounded.*
b 2 Sam. i. 6. 21. xxi. 12

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sited in the tabernacle; and the Levites lodged around it, as the appointed guard of them, as well as to be ready for their work.

V. 30. The Levites kept guard over the deposit of spices and frankincense, as well as over the other treasures: but the priests alone might compound the holy oil and incense.

V. 33. A number of the Levites were employed, by rotation, in singing praises to the LORD; and they seem to have continued the service night and day; and consequently were exempted from other employments. Moses *commanded* nothing concerning singers or musicians: and he forbade any to add to his words: but this could only mean *uninspired persons;* for no doubt God, by his prophets, might add, or diminish, or altar, as he saw good.

V. 35—44. (*Marg. Ref.*) This repetition seems to have been intended merely as an introduction to the ensuing history.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In remembering the miseries of man, we should be careful not to lose sight of his transgressions, that the justice of God in them may be noticed. When sinners repent, and forsake their sins, they are in a fair way of being extricated from their trouble: and the affairs of church and state are likely to be well ordered, when men of all ranks and orders in the community concur in endeavours for that purpose.—Whatever politicians may suppose, no description of men are more essential to the real welfare of the state, than conscientious ministers of religion; and that service requires very able men, of clear heads and steadfast minds. God will raise up such persons in those nations which he peculiarly favours: and qualify some for rulers in his church, and others for subordinate services; and it is well, when every one knows, and diligently attends to, his proper work, without envying or contemning any of his brethren. To be a door-keeper in the house of the Lord is an honourable employment: and if He be with us, it will both be comfortable to us, and profitable to others; but without this, our services will be formal, and our souls miserable. If employed in the service of the sanctuary, we have a charge to keep, as well as a work to do; and those, who "watch "for men's souls, as they that must give account," are intrusted with that which is far more valuable than the richest treasures of silver and gold. They should therefore reside upon the spot, as much as possible, in order to be near, and ready for their work, at every hour, as occasion may require. To prepare bread for the sanctuary, in their stated public preaching, may *perhaps* be only expected from them every sabbath: but some parts of their work must be needful every day; and they should generally be exempted from other cares and employments, that they may give themselves wholly to the word of God and prayer. Blessed be his name! if believers, we shall for ever, (not in rotation, but all together;) without interruption or cessation, praise him night and day, in his temple above.

2 And the Philistines followed hard after Saul, and after his sons; and the Philistines slew [c] Jonathan, and [d] Abinadab, and Malchishua, [e] the sons of Saul.

3 And the battle [f] went sore against Saul, and the * archers † hit him, and [g] he was wounded of the archers.

4 Then said Saul to his armour-bearer, [h] Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these [i] uncircumcised come and ‡ abuse me. But his armour-bearer would not; for [k] he was sore afraid. So [l] Saul took a sword, and fell upon it.

5 And when his armour-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise on the sword, and died.

6 So [m] Saul died, and his three sons, and all his house died together.

7 And when all the men of Israel that *were* in the valley saw that they fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead, [n] then they forsook their cities and fled: and the Philistines came and dwelt in them.

8 ¶ And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came [o] to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his sons fallen in mount Gilboa.

9 And when they had stripped him, they [p] took his head, and his armour, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to carry [q] tidings unto their idols, and to the people.

10 And they put his armour in the house of [r] their gods, and fastened his head [s] in the temple of Dagon.

11 And when [t] all Jabesh-gilead heard all that the Philistines had done to Saul,

12 They arose, all the valiant men, and took away the body of Saul, and the bodies of his sons, and brought them to Jabesh, and buried their bones under [u] the oak in Jabesh, and [x] fasted seven days.

13 ¶ So Saul died for his transgression, which he ◊ committed against the LORD, [y] *even* against the word of the LORD, which he kept not, and also [z] for asking *counsel* of *one that had* [a] a familiar spirit, to inquire *of it*,

14 And [b] inquired not of the LORD: therefore [c] he slew him, and [d] turned the kingdom unto David the son of ‖ Jesse.

c viii. 33. ix. 39. 1 Sam. xiv. 39, 40. 2 Kings xxiii. 39.
d 1 Sam. xiv. 49. *Ishui.*
e Ex. xx. 5. 2 Kings xxv. 7.
f 1 Sam. xxxi. 3—6. 2 Sam. i. 4—10. Am. ii. 14.
* Heb. *shooters with bows.*
† Heb *found.*
g Gen. xlix. 23, 24.
h Judg. ix. 54.
i 1 Sam. xvii. 26. 36.
‡ Or, *mock.* Judg. xvi. 21 25.
k 2 Sam. i. 14—16.
l 2 Sam. i. 9, 10. xvii 23. 1 Kings xvi. 18. Matt. xxvii. 4, 5 Acts i. 18. xvi. 27.
m 1 Sam. iv. 10, 11 18. xii. 25. Ec. ix 1, 2 Hos. xiii. 10, 11.
n Lev. xxvi. 32. 36. Deu. xxviii. 33—43. Judg vi. 2. 1 Sam. xiii 6. xxxi. 7.
o 1 Sam xxxi. 8 2 Kings iii 23. 2 Chr. xx. 25.
p 4. 2 Sam. i 20. Matt. xiv. 11.
q Judg. xvi. 23, 24. Dan. v. 2—4. 23.
r 1 Sam. xxxi 16. *Ashtaroth.*
s 1 Sam v. 2—7.
t 1 Sam xi. 1—11. xxxi 11—13. 2 Sam. ii. 4—7.
u Gen. xxxv. 6. 2 Sam xxi. 12—14
x Gen. l. 10. 2 Sam iii. 35.
◊ Heb. *transgressed.*
y 1 Sam xiii. 13. xv. 3. 23.
z 1 Sam. xxviii. 7—20.
a Ex. xxii. 18. Lev. xix. 31. xx. 6 Deut. xviii. 10—14. 2 Kings xxi 6. Is. viii 19. Acts viii 9. 11 xvi. 16—18
b Judg. x. 11 16. 1 Sam xxviii 6. Ez. xiv 3—6.
c Ps. xvii. 13 Is. x. 7. 15
d 1 Sam. xiii 14. xv. 28. xxviii. 17 2 Sam. iii. 9, 10. v. 3.
‖ Heb. *Isai.*

CHAP. XI.

David, by general consent, is made king over all Israel, at Hebron, 1—3. *He takes Zion from the Jebusites; dwells there, and prospers,* 4—9. *The names, and achievements of his principal warriors,* 10—47.

THEN [a] all Israel gathered themselves to David unto [b] Hebron, saying, [c] Behold, we *are* thy bone and thy flesh.

2 And moreover * in time past, even when Saul was king, thou *wast* he [d] that

a xii. 23—40. 2 Sam v. 1.
b 2 Sam. ii. 1. xv. 10.
c Gen. xxix. 14. Deut. xvii. 15. Judg ix. 2. 2 Sam. xix 13. Eph v. 30
* Heb. *both yesterday and the third day.*
d Num. xxvii 17. 1 Sam xviii 13. Is. lv. 4. John x. 4.

NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1—12. (*Notes*, &c. 1 *Sam.* xxxi.) (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 13, 14. This history is repeated as an introduction to that of the kingdom of David. The Lord is said to have slain Saul, because he sentenced him to death, and gave Satan leave to tempt him to be his own executioner. Is it possible more strongly to mark the excessive criminality of consulting witches, conjurers, fortune-tellers, or sorcerers of any kind, real or pretended, than by representing Saul's conduct in this respect, as one principal reason of his rejection and awful end? (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord punishes only sinners; and none of *them* can escape, who do not humbly cast themselves upon his mercy: but when transgressors inquire of the Lord, and earnestly seek deliverance in his appointed way, they will certainly prevail; and if they be involved in domestic or national calamities in this world, they will be saved from the wrath to come. Alas! many "reject his counsel, and will none "of his reproof," till he leaves them to "eat of the fruit "of their own ways, and to be filled with their own "devices:" and numbers, who pretend to seek the Lord, are so superficial in doing it, so soon weary of it, and so ready to listen to Satan's temptations, that God accounts it no *inquiry* at all. May we seek the Lord whilst he is to be found, and till we have obtained pardon, peace, and sanctifying grace! Until we are enabled to renounce all fellowship with the works, and prince of darkness! And may the good Lord deliver us from unbelief, impatience, and despair, and teach us to trust in him, to obey and submit to his will; and to render due honour and kindness to all, whatever their behaviour may have been! Thus waiting on him, we shall obtain a kingdom that cannot be moved, being beyond the reach of the incessant changes and revolutions of sublunary things.

leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the LORD thy God said unto thee, [e] Thou shalt * feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be [f] ruler over my people Israel.

3 Therefore came all [g] the elders of Israel to the king to Hebron; and [h] David made a covenant with them in Hebron [i] before the LORD; and they [k] anointed David king over Israel, according [l] to the word of the LORD † by Samuel.

4 ¶ And [m] David and all Israel went to Jerusalem, which *is* [n] Jebus; where the Jebusites *were*, [o] the inhabitants of the land.

5 And the inhabitants of Jebus said to David, [p] Thou shalt not come hither. Nevertheless David took [q] the castle of Zion, which *is* [r] the city of David.

6 And David said, [s] Whosoever smiteth the Jebusites first shall be ‡ chief and captain. [t] So Joab the son of Zeruiah went first up, and was chief.

7 And [u] David dwelt in the castle; therefore they called § it, The city of David.

8 And he built the city round about, even from [x] Millo round about: and Joab ‖ repaired the rest of the city.

9 So David * waxed greater and greater: [y] for the LORD of hosts *was* with him.

10 ¶ [z] These also *are* the chief of the mighty men whom David had, who † strengthened themselves with him in his kingdom, *and* with all Israel, to make him king, [a] according to the word of the LORD concerning Israel.

11 And this is the number of the mighty men whom David had; Jashobeam ‡ an Hachmonite, the chief of the captains: he lifted up his spear against three hundred slain *by him* at one time.

12 And after him *was* [b] Eleazar the son of Dodo the [c] Ahohite, who *was one* of the three *mighties*.

13 He was with David at [d] Pas-dammim, and there the Philistines were gathered together to battle, where was a parcel of ground full of barley; and the people fled from before the Philistines.

14 And they § set themselves in the midst of *that* parcel, and delivered it, and slew the Philistines; and [e] the LORD saved *them* by a great ‖ deliverance.

15 ¶ Now three * of the thirty captains went down to the rock to David, into [f] the cave of Adullam; and the host of the Philistines encamped [g] in the valley of [h] Rephaim.

16 And David *was* then [i] in the hold, and [k] the Philistines' garrison *was* then at Bethlehem.

17 And David [l] longed, and said, Oh that one would give me drink [m] of the water of the well of Beth-lehem, that *is* at the gate!

18 And the three [n] brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Beth-lehem, that *was* by the gate, and took *it*, and brought *it* to David: but David would not drink *of* it, but [o] poured it out to the LORD,

19 And said, [p] My God forbid it me, that I should do this thing: [q] shall I drink the blood of these men † that have put their lives [r] in jeopardy? for with *the jeopardy of* their lives they brought it: therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mightiest.

20 ¶ And [s] Abishai the brother of Joab, he was chief of the three: for lifting up his spear against three hundred, he slew *them*, and had a name among the three.

21 Of the three, he was more honourable than the two; for he was their captain: [t] howbeit he attained not unto the *first* three.

22 [u] Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man of [x] Kabzeel, ‡ who had done many acts; he slew two lion-like men of Moab: also he went down and slew a lion in a pit in a snowy day.

23 And he slew an Egyptian, a § man of *great* stature, [y] five cubits; and in the Egyptian's hand *was* [z] a spear like a

e 1 Sam. xvi. 1. 13. 2 Sam. vii. 7 Ps lxxviii. 71, 72. Is. xl. 11. Mic. v. 2 4. Matt ii. 6.
* Or, *rule.*
f 2 Sam. v. 2. 1 Kings iii. 8. xiv 7.
g 2 Sam. v. 3.
h 1 Sam. xi. 15. 2 Kings xi. 17.
i Judg. xi. 11. 1 Sam. xxiii. 18
k 2 Sam. ii. 4.
l 1 Sam. xv. 28. xxviii. 17.
† Heb. *by the hand of.*
m 2 Sam. v. 6—11.
n Josh. xv. 63. xviii. 28. *Jebusi.* Judg. i. 21. xix. 10—12.
o Gen. xv. 21. Ex. iii. 17.
p 1 Sam. xvii. 9, 10
q Ps. xlviii. 2. 12, 13. cxxv. 1, 2. Lam iv. 11, 12
r 2 Sam. vi. 10. Ps. cxxii. 5.
s Josh. xv. 16, 17. 1 Sam. xvii. 25.
‡ Heb *head.*
t 2 Sam viii. 16.
u Ps. ii. 6.
§ *Zion.*
x 1 Kings ix. 15. xi. 27
‖ Heb *revived.* Neh. iv. 2.
* Heb. *went in going and increasing.* 2 Sam. iii 1 v. 10 Job xvii 9. Is ix. 7.
y ix. 29. Is viii 9, 10 xli 10—14. Rom. viii 31.
z 2 Sam. xxiii. 8.
† Heb. *held strongly.*
a 1 Sam. xvi. 1. 12—14.
‡ *son of Hachmoni.* 2 Sam. xxiii. 8 *The Tachmonite,—Adino, the Eznite*
b 2 Sam. xxiii. 9.
c viii. 4.
d 1 Sam. xvii. 1. *Ephes-dammim.*
§ Or, *stood.*
e 1 Sam. xix 5. 2 Sam. xxiii 10. 2 Kings v. 1. Ps. xviii 50 cxliv 10.
‖ Or, *salvation.* Prov xxi. 31.
* Or, *captains over the thirty.* 2 Sam. xxiii. 13.
f 1 Sam xxii. 1. Mic. i. 15.
g xiv. 9 2 Sam. v. 18. 22. Is. xvii 5.
h Josh. xv. 8. *giants.*
i 1 Sam. xxii. 1. xxiii. 25. Ps. cxlii. *title.*
k 1 Sam. x. 5. xiii. 4 26.
l Num xi. 4, 5 2 Sam. xxiii 15 16. Ps. cxliii. 6.
m Is xii. 3. John iv. 10. 14.
n 1 Sam. xix. 5. Cant. viii 6. Acts xx. 24. xxi. 13. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.
o 1 Sam. vii. 6.
p 2 Sam. xxiii. 17. 1 Kings xxi. 3. Rom vi. 1, 2.
q Lev. xvii 10, 11. Job xxxi. 31. Ps. lxxii. 14.
† Heb *with their lives.* Rom xvi. 4. 2 Cor. xii 15.
r Judg. v. 18. 1 Cor. xv. 30.
B. C 1047.
s ii. 16. 1 Sam. xxvi 6. 2 Sam. ii. 13. xviii. 2. xxi. 17. xxiii. 18, 19.
t Matt. xiii. 8. 23. 1 Cor. xv. 41.
u 2 Sam. viii. 18. xx. 23. xxiii. 20—23. 1 Kings i. 8. 38. ii. 35.
x Josh. xv 21.
‡ Heb. *great of deeds.*
§ Heb. *a man of measure.*
y Deut. iii. 11. 1 Sam. xvii. 4—7.
z xx. 5.

NOTES.

CHAP. XI. V. 6. It is evident, that Joab was, before this, high in authority under David; but he was, as a reward of his courage and conduct on this occasion, established as commander in chief over the whole army.—The variations, between this chapter, and the parallel passages referred to, are not so material, as to need any further exposition; (*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* v. 1—10.)

weaver's beam; and he went down to him with a staff, and plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and [a] slew him with his own spear.

a 1 Sam. xvii. 51.

24 These *things* did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and had a name among the three mighties.

25 Behold, he was honourable among the thirty, [b] but attained not to the *first* three: and [c] David set him over his guard.

b 21.
c 2 Sam. xx. 23.

26 ¶ Also the valiant men of the armies *were* [d] Asahel the brother of Joab, [e] Elhanan the son of Dodo of Bethlehem,

d 2 Sam. ii. 18—23. xxiii. 24.
e 2 Sam. xxi. 19

27 [f] Shammoth the Harorite, Helez the [g] Pelonite,

f 2 Sam. xxiii 25. *Shammah the Harodite*
g 2 Sam. xxiii 26. *Paltite.*

28 Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite, Abiezer the Antothite,

29 [h] Sibbecai the Hushathite, Ilai the Ahohite,

h 2 Sam. xxiii. 27, 28 *Mehunnai.—Zalmon.*

30 Maharai the Netophathite, [i] Heled the son of Baanah the Netophathite,

i 2 Sam xxiii 29. *Heleb*

31 [k] Ithi the son of Ribai of Gibeah, *that pertained* to the children of Benjamin, Benaiah the Pirathonite,

k 2 Sam. xxiii 29. *Ittai.*

32 [l] Hurai of the brooks of Gaash, [m] Abiel the Arbathite,

l 2 Sam xxiii 30. *Hiddai.*
m 2 Sam. xxiii. 31. *Abi-albon.*

33 Azmaveth the [n] Baharumite, Eliahba the Shaalbonite,

n 2 Sam. xxiii. 31. *Barhumite.*

34 The sons of [o] Hashem the Gizonite, Jonathan the son of Shage the Hararite,

o 1 Sam. xxiii.32. *Jashen.*

35 Ahiam the son of [p] Sacar the Hararite, [q] Eliphal the son of Ur,

p 2 Sam. xxiii 33 *Sharar.*
q 2 Sam xxiii. 34 *Eliphelet.—Ahasbai.*

36 Hepher the Mecherathite, Ahijah the Pelonite,

37 [r] Hezro the Carmelite, Naarai the son of Ezbai,

r 2 Sam.xxiii. 35 *Hezrai. Paarai the Arbite*

38 [s] Joel the brother of Nathan, Mibhar * the son of Haggeri,

s 2 Sam. xxiii.36. *Igal.*
* Or, the *Hagerite.*

39 Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai the Berothite, the armour-bearer of Joab the son of Zeruiah,

40 Ira the [t] Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite,

t 2 Sam. xx. 26. *Jairite.*

41 [u] Uriah the Hittite, Zabad the son of Ahlai.

u 2 Sam. xi. 6, &c.

42 Adina the son of Shiza the Reubenite, a captain of the Reubenites, and thirty with him,

43 Hanan the son of Maacah, and Joshaphat the Mithnite,

44 Uzzia the Ashterathite, Shama and Jehiel the sons of Hothan the Aroerite,

45 Jediael † the son of Shimri, and Joha his brother, the Tizite,

† Or. *Shimrite.*

46 Eliel the Mahavite, and Jeribai, and Joshavia, the sons of Elnaam, and Ithmah the Moabite,

47 Eliel, and Obed, and Jasiel the Meshoabite.

CHAP. XII.

The companies which came to David at Ziklag, 1—22. *The armed troops that came to him at Hebron,* 23—40.

NOW [a] these *are* they that came to David to Ziklag, * while he yet kept himself close because of Saul the son of

B. C. 1058.
a 1 Sam. xxvii.6.
* Hab. being *yet shut up.*

V. 10—47. (*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 8—39.) The marginal references and readings, show the principal differences between this part of the chapter, and the passages referred to. Several names are added to the catalogue of worthies; which, it is probable, were something less famous than those mentioned in the second book of Samuel.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When the time arrives for the performance of God's word, those persons who before were the most averse to the things predicted, will concur to accomplish them.—Kings are not advanced for their own aggrandizement or self-indulgence; but that they should, with activity and vigour, provide for the defence and welfare of the nation.—The desire of applause and pre-eminence seems to be the highest motive, of which carnal men are capable: but they, who are born from above, are actuated by purer and nobler principles. Yet, in seeking the glory of God and the good of man by endeavouring to advance the kingdom of Jesus the Lord's anointed; they most effectually secure their own honour and exaltation. *He* will surely wax greater and greater, the Lord of hosts being with him, till all his enemies are put under his feet, and all his friends placed with him upon his throne. Thus, the way to be truly great is to be really useful; and to give the use and glory of all our talents and services to the Lord; and if we are at length preserved from the destruction of the wicked, we shall perceive that the Lord hath saved us with a great deliverance. May he teach us to repress all our earthly desires, to govern our appetites, to acknowledge candidly our mistakes, and completely to rectify them, when discovered; and to be gentle to and tender of others, and only severe against our own sins. Attached to the person and cause, and obedient to the orders, of our King and Captain, may we endure hardship, be valiant for the truth, and so fight the good fight of faith, that we may lay hold on eternal life, and have our names enrolled with honour in the records of the heavenly Jerusalem!

Kish; and they *were* among the mighty men, helpers of the war.

2 *They were* armed with bows, and [b] could use both the right hand and the left [c] in *hurling* stones, and *shooting* arrows out of a bow, *even* of Saul's brethren of Benjamin.

3 The chief *was* Ahiezer, then Joash, the sons of † Shemaah the [d] Gibeathite; and Jeziel, and Pelet, the sons of [e] Azmaveth; and Berachah, and Jehu the Antothite,

4 And Ismaiah the [f] Gibeonite [g] a mighty man among the thirty, and over the thirty; and Jeremiah, and Jahaziel, and Johanan, and Josabad the [h] Gederathite,

5 Eluzai, and Jerimoth, and Bealiah, and Shemariah, and Shephatiah the Haruphite,

6 Elkanah, and Jesiah, and Azareel, and Joezer, and Jashobeam, the Korhites,

7 And Joelah, and Zebadiah, the sons of Jeroham of [i] Gedor.

8 And of the Gadites there separated themselves unto David [k] into the hold to the wilderness, men of might, *and* men ‡ of war *fit* for the battle, that could handle shield and buckler, [l] whose faces *were* *like* the faces of lions, and *were* as § swift as the roes upon the mountains;

9 Ezer the first, Obadiah the second, Eliah the third,

10 Mishmanah the fourth, Jeremiah the fifth,

11 Attai the sixth, Eliel the seventh,

12 Johanan the eighth, Elzabad the ninth,

13 Jeremiah the tenth, Machbanai the eleventh.

14 These *were* of the sons of Gad, captains of the host: one of the least *was* ‖ over an hundred, and the greatest over a thousand.

15 These *are* they that went over Jordan in the first month, when [m] it had * overflowed all his banks; and they put to flight all *them* of the valleys, *both* toward the east, and toward the west.

16 And there came of the children of Benjamin, and Judah to the hold unto David.

17 And David went out † to meet them, and answered and said unto them, [n] If ye be come peaceably unto me to help me, mine heart shall be ‡ knit unto you: but if *ye be come* to betray me to mine enemies, seeing *there is* no ♦ wrong in mine hands, [o] the God of our fathers look *thereon*, and [p] rebuke *it*.

18 Then the Spirit ‖ came upon [q] Amasai, *who was* chief of the captains, *and he said*, [r] Thine *are we*, David, [s] and on thy side, thou son of Jesse: [t] peace, peace *be* unto thee, and peace *be* to thine helpers; for [u] thy God helpeth thee. Then David

b Judg. iii. 15. xx. 16.
c 1 Sam. xvii. 49.
† Or, *Hasmaah*
d 1 Sam. xxi. 4. 2 Sam. xxi. 6.
e xi. 33.
f Josh. ix. 3. 17—23
g xi. 15.
h Josh. xv. 36.
i iv. 18. 39.
k xi. 16. 1 Sam. xxiii. 14 29 xxiv. 22.
‡ Heb *of the host*
l 2 Sam. i. 23. xvii. 10. xxiii 20. Prov. xxviii. 1.
§ Heb *as the roes of the mountains to make haste* 2 Sam. ii. 18 Prov. vi. 5 Cant. viii. 14.
‖ Or, could resist *an hundred, and the greatest a thousand* Lev. xxvi. 8. Deut. xxxii. 30
m Josh. iii. 15. iv. 18 Jer. xii. 5. xlix. 19.
* Heb *filled over.*
† Heb. *before them*
n 2 Sam. iii. 24, 25 1 Kings ii. 13 Ps. xii. 1, 2.
‡ Heb *one*
1 Sam. xviii. 1. 3. 2 Kings x. 15. 1 Cor. i. 10. 2 Cor. viii. 11. Phil. i. 27
♦ Or, *violence*
o Gen. xxxi. 42—53 1 Sam. xxiv. 11-17 xxvi. 23, 24. Ps. vii. 6 1 Pet. ii. 23.
p Zech. iii. 2. Jude 9.
‖ Heb. *clathed. Amasai.* Judg. vi. 34 xiii. 25.
q ii. 17 2 Sam. xvii 25 xix. 13. xx 4, &c. *Amasa.*
r 2 Kings x. 6.
s Ruth i. 16. 2 Sam. xv. 21. Matt. xii 30.
t Gal. vi. 16 Eph. vi 24
u 1 Sam. xxv. 28, 29 2 Sam. v. 2. Zech. viii 23. John vi 67, 68.

NOTES.

CHAP. XII. V. 1, 2. The sacred writer here goes back in the history, to the times which preceded the death of Saul, and records some particulars not mentioned in the books of Samuel, respecting David's advancement to the throne.—Several considerable persons resorted to him at Ziklag, and either joined his small troop, or assured him of assistance when it became necessary. Some of these were Benjamites, who were either induced by a firm belief of the word of God by Samuel respecting him; or by indignation at the base treatment which he met with from Saul, to the disgrace of their tribe; or because they perceived, that the Lord was departed from Saul, and was with David of a truth. The hand of God was however very conspicuous, in raising him up friends from this tribe, whence he might have expected the most determined opposition. (*Note, Judg.* xx. 16.)

V. 4. Perhaps Saul had conferred some honourable distinction on thirty of his most valiant captains; (as David afterwards did on the same number of his:) and Ismaiah was placed over this illustrious company. For Ahiezer, (3) seems to have been the chief of those who came to David at this time.

V. 8. *Into the hold*, &c. Either to Ziklag, or to some of those natural fortresses in which David secured himself, before he went into the land of the Philistines.

V. 14. Either these persons had the command, some over a hundred men, and others over a thousand, before they came to David; or he preferred them afterwards, in consideration of their services; or the passage may be understood according to the marginal reading.

V. 15. The lot of Gad was to the east of Jordan; and it is probable, that these men crossed the river towards the west, or into the land of Canaan properly so called. It seems also, that some great emergency required their immediate interposition: but it is not stated what enemies they opposed.—Perhaps, during some part of Saul's reign, the Philistines, and other tribes, made incursions into the land of Israel; and these resolute Gadites hastened to assist their brethren: or perhaps they were coming to join David, in his extreme danger; and being opposed by Saul's adherents, they put them to flight, and pursued them in every direction. (8)

received them, and made them captains of the band,

19 And there fell *some* of Manasseh to David, ([x] when he came with the Philistines against Saul to battle: but they helped them not: for the lords of the Philistines upon advisement sent him away, saying, He will fall to his master Saul * to *the jeopardy of* our heads.)

20 As he [y] went to Ziklag, there fell to him of Manasseh, Adnah, and Jozabad, and Jediael, and Michael, and Jozabad, and Elihu, and Zilthai, [z] captains of the thousands that *were* of Manasseh.

21 And they helped David † against [a] the band *of the rovers:* for they *were* all [b] mighty men of valour, and were captains in the host.

22 For at *that* time, [c] day by day, there came to David to help him, until *it was* a great host, like [d] the host of God.

23 ¶ And these *are* [e] the numbers of the ‡ bands *that were* ready armed to the war, *and* came to David to Hebron, [f] to turn the kingdom of Saul to him, [g] according to the word of the LORD.

24 The children of Judah, that bare shield and spear, *were* six thousand and eight hundred, ready ◊ armed to the war.

25 Of the children of Simeon, mighty men of valour for the war, seven thousand and one hundred.

26 Of the children of Levi four thousand and six hundred.

27 And Jehoiada *was* [h] the leader of the [i] Aaronites, and with him *were* three thousand and seven hundred.

28 And [k] Zadok, a young man mighty of valour, and of his father's house twenty and two captains.

29 And of the children of Benjamin, ‖ the kindred of Saul, three thousand: for hitherto * the greatest part of them had kept the ward of the house of Saul.

30 And of the children of Ephraim twenty thousand and eight hundred, mighty men of valour, † famous throughout the house of their fathers.

31 And of [l] the half tribe of Manasseh eighteen thousand, which were expressed by name, to come and make David king.

32 And of the children of Issachar, *which were men* that had [m] understanding of the times, [n] to know what Israel ought to do; the heads of them *were* two hundred; and [o] all their brethren *were* at their commandment.

33 Of Zebulun, such as went forth to battle, ‡ expert in war, with all instruments of war, fifty thousand, which could ◊ keep rank; *they were* ‖ not of double heart.

34 And of Naphtali a thousand captains, and with them, with shield and spear, thirty and seven thousand.

35 And of the Danites expert in war twenty and eight thousand and six hundred.

36 And of Asher, such as went forth to battle, * expert in war, forty thousand.

37 And on [p] the other side of Jordan, of the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and of the half tribe of Manasseh, with all manner of instruments of war for the battle, an hundred and twenty thousand.

x 1 Sam. xxix. 2—4.
* Heb. *on our heads.*
y Gen. xxii. 14. 1 Sam. xxix. 11.
z Ex. xviii. 21.
† Or, *with a band.*
a 1 Sam. xxx. 1—17.
b v. 24.
c 2 Sam. ii. 2—4. iii. 1. Job xvii. 9.
d Gen. xxxii. 2. Josh. v. 14.
B. C. 1048.
e xi. 1—3. 2 Sam. v. 1—3.
‡ Or, *captains*, or *men.* Heb. *heads.*
f x. 14.
g xi. 10. 1 Sam. xvi. 1. 12, 13. 2 Sam. iii. 18. Ps. ii. 6. lxxxix. 19, 20.
◊ Or, *prepared.*
h ix. 20. 2 Kings xi. 4. 9. xxv. 18.
i vi. 49—57. xxvii. 17.
k 2 Sam. viii. 17. 1 Kings i. 8. ii. 35.
‖ Heb. *brethren.* Gen. xxxi. 23.
* Heb. *a multitude of them.* 2 Sam. ii. 8, 9.
† Heb. *men of names.* Gen. vi. 64.
l Josh. xvii.
m Gen. xlix. 15. Esth. i. 13. Is. xxii. 12—14. Mic. vi. 9. Matt. xvi. 3. Luke xii. 56, 27.
n Prov. xiv. 6. Eph. v. 17.
o Prov. xxiv. 5. Ec. vii. 19. ix. 18.
‡ Or *rangers of battle*, or *ranged in battle.*
◊ Or, *set the battle in array.*
‖ Heb. *without a heart and a heart.* Ps. xii. 2. John i. 46.
* Or, *keeping their rank.*
p v. 1, &c.

V. 17, 18. David had experienced much treachery even from those of his own tribe, and was therefore upon his guard: but he very frankly avowed his suspicions, and appealed to the consciences of those concerned. If they came peaceably to assist him, he would cordially unite with them; and the time would come when he should be able to recompense them; but, as he was conscious, he had not injured either Saul or his country, he reminded them, that if they came to betray him, the God of their fathers would surely avenge his cause upon them. Then Amasai, their leader, animated by a special impulse of the Spirit of God, answered him in the name of all the rest. He declared, that they were entirely attached to his person and interest; and cordially desired the prosperity of him, and all who helped him; not only as his cause was just, but as they were persuaded that it was the cause of God, and would prevail; and they desired to share the conflicts, and the successes of David and his friends. It is not certain, whether Amasai was or was not the same with Amasa, elsewhere mentioned. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 20, 21. These captains of Manasseh seem to have met David, as he was returning from the army of the Philistines to Ziklag: and though it is probable that they did not bring their companies with them; yet they both assured him of future assistance, and very seasonably helped him against the Amalekites who had spoiled Ziklag. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 22. Such numbers resorted to David, after Saul's defeat and death, and they were so loyally attached to David, so united with each other, and so powerfully illustrious and valiant; that they resembled the *host of God*, that is, his legions of angels.

38 All these men of war that could keep rank, came with [q] a perfect heart to Hebron, to make David king over all Israel: and [r] all the rest also of Israel *were* of one heart to make David king.

39 And there they were with David three days, [s] eating and drinking: for their brethren had prepared for them.

q 1 Kings viii. 61. xi. 4. 2 Kings xx. 3. Ps. ci. 2.
r Gen. xlix. 8—10. Ps. cx. 3.
s Gen. xxvi. 30. xxxi. 54. 2 Sam. vi. 19. xix. 42.

40 Moreover, they that were nigh them, *even* unto Issachar, and Zebulun, and Naphtali, brought [t] bread on asses, and on camels, and on mules, and on oxen, *and* meat, * meal, [u] cakes of figs, and bunches of raisins, and wine, and oil, and oxen, and sheep abundantly: for [x] *there was* joy in Israel.

t 2 Sam. xvi. 1 xvii. 27—29.
* Or, *victual of meal*
u 1 Sam. xxv. 18. x 1 Kings i. 40. 2 Kings xi. 10. Prov. xi. 10. xxix. 2. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. Luke xix. 37, 38. Rev. xix. 5—7

V. 23—40. Some learned men understand this passage, or at least a part of it, as relating to the time when David was made king over Judah, on his first coming to Hebron: but it seems entirely to refer to his being made king over all Israel, after the death of Ish-bosheth. At that time vast numbers came to David from each of the tribes of Israel: but in different proportions, according to the degree of the cordiality and zeal of each tribe. It is probable that so small a number of Judah was present, in order that David's own tribe, over which he had now reigned seven years, might not appear to impose a king on their brethren. There was a considerable number of Levites assembled; but not at all in proportion to the multitude of the priests, the descendants of Aaron, who appeared on this occasion under a leader, perhaps appointed by the high priest: whilst Zadok who was afterwards high priest, being now a young man, headed a company of chief men, perhaps of the line of Eleazar. So greatly had that family increased, notwithstanding the slaughter which Saul had not long before made of them! The Benjamites in general had favoured the house of Saul; and numbers of them still waited for an opportunity of reviving the claim of that family, in some of its branches: for so the latter part of the twenty-ninth verse may be interpreted. The leaders of Issachar were intelligent men, who understood the signs of the times; and perceived that it was both the duty and political interest of Israel to advance David to the throne: and having great authority in their tribe, they induced them to an unanimous concurrence in this measure; though they do not seem to have brought them to Hebron.—Besides the numbers, who doubtless on various accounts were kept away, though cordially attached to David, there were three hundred and fifty thousand armed men, all heartily devoted to his service; who placed him upon the throne of Israel, with every expression of joy and affection.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—18.

Earthly princes are accustomed to honour peculiarly such persons, as have faithfully adhered to them in seasons of difficulty and danger: and in like manner, Jesus Christ will confer peculiar honour upon those, who embrace and adhere to his Gospel, in times of persecution and distress; who deny themselves, renounce their worldly interests, break through difficulties, and bear the cross, for his sake and after his example. Courage, strength, agility, ingenuity, or superior mental endowments, are only valuable to the possessors, and to the community, when, being considered as talents committed to them by the great Lord of all, they are conscientiously improved in promoting the glory of God, and the welfare of mankind; for, when abused or neglected, they prove occasions of increasing condemnation.—Long experience of the deceitfulness of mankind will teach caution to every reflecting person; but we should be afraid of growing unreasonably suspicious: and if we have a clear conscience, and use moderate precautions, we may trust in God to defend us from the effects of secret treachery, as well as of open violence; whilst we should readily forgive former injuries, and unite with those, who profess a disposition to be at peace with us, and to help us. But when we cannot but suspect men's intentions in courting our friendship; it is best, in some cases, frankly to remonstrate with them as in the sight of God. This may sometimes intimidate the insincere, and give the upright an opportunity of clearing up their characters: whilst suspicions, harboured in secret, or only whispered among friends, are often injurious to the suspected person, and always troublesome to ourselves. Integrity and affection will often, when the case requires it, dictate such frank, unreserved, and energetic language, as to afford full satisfaction: and then, cordial union in promoting one common cause, succeeds jealousies, distance, and the debility of distrust.—Peace or victory, prosperity and felicity, are ensured to those whom God helpeth, and to all who concur with them. If under the influence of his Spirit, we shall, on that account, desire to have our lot among them, and declare on their side: and if we uprightly embrace the cause of Christ, his heart will be knit unto us, and he will receive and advance us.

V. 19—40.

The cause of our king appears to a carnal eye weak and obscure, and his subjects have been hitherto comparatively few: but his kingdom and glory will, ere long, rapidly advance; and his host become, like the host of God, innumerable and invincible. The advancement of wise and good men to authority is justly considered as a cause of great and general joy; and joy naturally enlarges the heart in cheerful liberality. Thus the Saviour's exaltation to the throne of glory filled the hearts of his people with gladness: nay, the sinner's willing submission to him, ushers in a day of joy and gladness, in which his brethren share, and to which they contribute. But what a joyful time will that be, "when all kings shall fall down before him, all "nations shall serve him!" Every individual, in the innumerable throng, will participate and add to the joy of all the rest: and nothing short of the perfect purity and harmony of heaven, can give us a higher idea of true happiness. Mean while, happy are they "who have understanding of "the times, to know what Israel ought to do;" who wisely perceive it to be their duty and interest, to submit to, and

CHAP. XIII.

David, with great solemnity, fetches the ark from Kirjath-jearim, 1—8. Uzza is smitten, David is disconcerted, and the ark is left at the house of Obed-edom, 9—14.

AND David [a] consulted with the captains of thousands and hundreds, *and* with every leader.

2 And David said unto all the congregation of Israel, [b] If *it seem* good unto you, [c] and *that it be* of the LORD our God, let us * send abroad unto our brethren every where, *that are* [d] left in all the land of Israel, and with them *also* to [e] the priest and Levites *which are* in † their cities *and* suburbs, that they may gather themselves unto us:

3 And let us ‡ bring again [f] the ark of our God to us: for [g] we inquired not at it in the days of Saul.

4 And all the congregation said that they would do so; for [h] the thing was right in the eyes of all the people.

5 So [i] David gathered all Israel together, from [k] Shihor of Egypt even unto the entering of [l] Hemath, to bring the ark of God from [m] Kirjath-jearim.

6 And David went up, and all Israel, to [n] Baalah, *that is*, to Kirjath-jearim, which *belonged* to Judah, to bring up thence the ark of God the LORD, [o] that dwelleth *between* the cherubims, [p] whose name is called *on it*.

7 And they ‖ carried the ark of God [q] in a new cart [r] out of the house of Abinadab; and Uzza and Ahio drave the cart.

8 And [s] David and all Israel played before God with all *their* might, and with ‖ singing, and [t] with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets.

9 ¶ And when they came unto the threshing-floor of [u] Chidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark; for the oxen * stumbled.

10 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him, because [x] he put his hand to the ark: and [y] there he died before God.

11 And David was [z] displeased, because the LORD had made a breach upon Uzza: wherefore that place is called † Perez-uzza [a] to this day.

12 And David was [b] afraid of God that day, saying, [c] How shall I bring the ark of God *home* to me?

13 So David ‡ brought not the ark *home* to himself to the city of David, but carried it aside into the house of [d] Obed-edom [e] the Gittite.

14 And the ark of God remained with the family of Obed-edom in his house three months. And [f] the LORD blessed the house of Obed-edom, and all that he had.

a xii. 14. 20. 32. 2 Kings xxiii. 1.
b Prov. xv. 22 1 Kings xii 7. 2 Kings ix. 15.
c Ex xviii. 23 2 Sam vii 2—5.
* Heb *break forth and send.*
d x. 7. Is. xxxvii 4.
e xv 2—14 Num iv. 4, &c. 2 Chr. xxxii 4, &c
† Heb *the cities* ‖ *of their suburbs* vi 54—80
‡ Heb. *bring about.*
f 1 Sam vii. 1, 2. Ps cxxxii. 6
g 1 Sam xiv. 18 36, 37 xxii. 10 15 xxiii. 2. 4. 9—12
h 2 Sam. iii. 26
i 2 Sam. vi. 1.
k Num xxxiv. 5—8 Joshua xiii 3—6 1 Kings iv 21.
l 2 Kings xxv 21 *Hamath.*
m 1 Sam. vi 2
n Josh. xv 9. 60. 2 Sam. vi. 2 *Baale.*
o Ex xxv. 22. 1 Sam. iv 4 2 Kings xix. 15 Ps. lxxx. 1.
p Ex. xx. 24. xxiii 21. Num. vi 27 1 Kings viii 16.
‖ Heb. *made the ark to ride.*
q xv. 2 13. Num. iv. 15. 1 Sam. vi 7, 8. 2 Sam. vi 3
r 1 Sam. vii. 1, 2.
s xv. 10—24. 1 Sam. x. 5. 2 Sam vi. 5. 2 Kings iii 15. Ps. xlvii. 5. lxviii. 25—27. cl. 3—5
‖ Heb *songs.*
t Dan. iii 5—7. Am v. 23. vi. 5.
u 2 Sam. vi. 6. *Nachon.*
* Or, *shook it.*
x xv. 13. 15. Num. iv. 15. Josh. vi. 6
y Lev. x. 1—3. Num xvi. 35. 1 Sam vi. 19. 2 Chr. xxvi. 16—20. 1 Cor. xi. 30—32.
z 2 Sam vi. 7—9. Jon iv 1. 9.
† *The breach of Uzza.*
a Gen. xxxii. 32. Deut xxxiv 6. Josh. iv 9.
b Num. xvii. 12, 13. 1 Sam v. 10, 11. vi 20. Ps. cxix. 120 Is. vi. 5. Luke v. 8, 9.
c 1 Kings viii. 27. Job xxv. 5, 6. Matt xxv. 24.
‡ Heb. *removed.*
d xv 18 xvi 5. xxvi. 4. 8. 2 Sam vi. 10, 11.
e 2 Sam. iv. 3.
f Gen. xxx. 27. xxxix. 5 Prov. iii. 9, 10. Mal. iii. 10, 11.

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trust in, Jesus Christ the Son of David; who renounce all inconsistent connexions, pursuits, and employments for his sake; and unreservedly employ all their influence and ability to promote his cause, from love to him and to their brethren; whose love also abounds in knowledge and in all judgment: so that their beneficent endeavours are directed by heavenly wisdom, through an acquaintance with the word of God, and a maturity of experience and observation; and they consequently know how to attempt every thing in that manner, and at those seasons, which are suited to give it the greatest effect. This is to unite "the wisdom of "the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove;" and if "any man lack this wisdom, let him ask it of God, who "giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it "shall be given him."

NOTES.

CHAP. XIII. V. 1—4. It is probable, that David consulted with his principal friends and officers, about bringing back the ark, immediately after he had got possession of mount Zion, and had fixed his residence there: yet it appears, from comparing the different parts of the narrative, that he did not accomplish his design till some time after, being retarded by the incursions of the Philistines, and by other hinderances. He did not think it best, to act merely by authority, in so important a concern: but by consulting his friends, he ensured their ready concurrence, and that of their several connexions, and also of the priests and Levites. During Saul's reign, or the latter part of it at least, the ark had been neglected, and even David had inquired of God by the high-priest at a distance from it, while Saul concerned himself very little in any way about religion. Thus the regular way of inquiring the will of God, by the high priest, with the breast-plate of Judgment before the ark in the sanctuary, had been long neglected.

V. 5—14. (*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* vi. 1—11.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When we set out in life, or obtain any temporal advancement, we should first inquire, how we may honour

CHAP. XIV.

Hiram sends timber and builders to build David a house, 1. *He prospers in his kingdom, takes more wives, and has several children,* 2, 3. *The names of his sons,* 4—7. *He gains two signal victories over the Philistines,* 8—17.

a 2 Sam. v. 11, 12. 1 Kings v. 1. 8. 9.

NOW [a] Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and timber of cedars, with masons and carpenters, [b] to build him an house.

b xvii. 1. 1 Kings vii. 1—12.

2 And David perceived that [c] the LORD had confirmed him king over Israel, for [d] his kingdom was lifted up on high, [e] because of his people Israel.

c xvii. 17. Ps. lxxix. 20—37.

d Num. xxiv. 7. 2 Sam. vii. 8, 9

e 1 Kings x. 9. 2 Chr. ii. 11. Esth iv. 14. Is. i. 25—27 Dan ii. 30

3 And David [f] took * more wives at Jerusalem: and David begat more sons and daughters.

f iii. 1—4. Deut xvii 17. 2 Sam. v. 13.

* Heb. *yet.*

4 Now these *are* the names of *his* children which he had in Jerusalem, [g] Shammua, and Shobab, [h] and Nathan, and [i] Solomon,

g iii. 5. *Shimea.*

h 2 Sam. xii. 1. Luke iii 31.

i 2 Sam xii 24. 25 Matt. i. 6.

5 And Ibhar, and [k] Elishua, and Elpalet,

k iii. 6. *Elishama*

6 And Nogah, and Nepheg, and Japhia,

7 And Elishama, and [l] Beeliada, and Eliphalet.

l iii. 8. *Eliphelet.* 2 Sam v. 16. *Eliada.* B. C 1047.

8 ¶ And [m] when the Philistines heard that David was [n] anointed king over all Israel, [o] all the Philistines went up to seek David. And David heard *of it,* and went out against them.

m 2 Sam. v. 17—21

n xi. 3. 2 Sam. v. 3.

o Ps. ii 1—6. Rev. xi. 15—18.

9 And the Philistines came and spread themselves in [p] the valley of Rephaim.

p xi. 15.

10 And David [q] inquired of God, saying, [r] Shall I go up against the Philistines? and wilt thou deliver them into mine hand? And the LORD said unto him, [s] Go up; for I will deliver them into thine hand.

q xiii. 3. 2 Sam. ii. 1.

r 1 Sam. xxx. 8. Prov. iii. 6.

s 1 Kings xxii. 6. 15—17.

11 So they came up to [t] Baal-perazim; and David smote them there. Then David said, God hath broken in upon mine enemies by mine hand like the breaking forth of waters: therefore they called the name of that place † Baal-perazim.

t Is. xxviii. 21.

u Ps. xviii. 13—15. xliv. 3. cxliv. 1. 10.

† *A place of breaches,* or, *the lord of breaches.*

12 And when they had left their gods there, David gave a commandment, and they [x] were burned with fire.

x Ex. xxxii. 20. Deut. vii. 5. 25. 1 Sam. v. 2—6. 2 Kings xix. 18.

13 And the Philistines [y] yet again spread themselves abroad in the valley.

B. C. 1046

y 2 Sam. v. 22—25. 1 Kings xx. 22.

14 Therefore David [z] inquired again of God; and God said unto him, Go not up after them; [a] turn away from them, and come upon them over against the mulberry trees.

z 10.

a Josh. viii. 2—7. John ix. 6, 7.

15 And it shall be, when thou shalt hear [b] a sound of going in the tops of the mulberry trees, *that* [c] then thou shalt go out to battle: for God is gone forth before thee to smite the host of the Philistines.

b Lev. xxvi. 36. 2 Kings vii. 6. xix. 7. Acts ii. 2.

c Judg. iv. 14. vii. 9. 15. 1 Sam. xiv. 9—12. Phil. ii. 12, 13.

16 David therefore [d] did as God commanded him: and they smote the host of the Philistines from [e] Gibeon even to [f] Gazer.

d Gen. vi. 22. Ex. xxxix. 42, 43. John ii. 5. xiii. 17. xv. 14.

e 2 Sam. v. 25. *Geba.*

f Josh. xvi. 10. *Gezer.*

17 And the [g] fame of David went out into all lands; and the LORD brought [h] the fear of him upon all nations.

g Josh. vi. 27. 2 Chr. xxvi. 8.

h Deut. ii. 25. xi. 25.

God and do good, and enjoy the divine blessing, in our several situations, and in the use of our possessions! Princes especially, ought to devise the most useful measures they can, to promote true religion by their example and authority; that they may have the Lord nigh unto them in all they undertake. This can only be done by consulting with others, and engaging them to concur in measures of acknowledged utility, and evidently consistent with the word of God; and by reminding, encouraging, and charging ministers to attend to their important duties in their several situations, that good examples and good instructions may abound throughout the land. When such things, being mildly proposed, seem good to the leading men, we may hope that it is from the Lord, and expect that many others, being called upon, will *voluntarily* assist; and that thus, the Gospel will excite general attention, without any of the antichristian weapons of compulsion. In rectifying abuses it is generally best to shun personal reflections and severe accusations: they appear malevolent, and excite opposition. Suffice it to show, that things needful have been neglected, and that it is proper for us to attend to them: and in public transgressions, humility will teach a man, to consider himself as, in some measure, guilty, and more readily to condemn himself than others. Even good men, in doing their duty, are liable to mistakes, and to act in an improper spirit: and rebukes, though merited and needed, often excite murmurs, discouragements, and hard thoughts of God. May we then, with redoubled diligence, seek to become acquainted with the whole word of God, and to make it the lantern of our paths: may we walk humbly and circumspectly, avoid rashness and presumption, rejoice in our privileges with trembling, be patient under divine rebukes, persevere in well doing without discouragement, and seek the forgiveness and acceptance of every service, from the mercy of God in Christ Jesus! Thus will the Gospel, which is to many the savour of death, become to us the savour of life, and the source of all blessings in time and to eternity.

CHAP. XV.

David prepares a place for the ark, and gives orders to the priests and Levites about bringing it from the house of Obed-edom, 1—24. He and all the chiefs of Israel attend its removal, with sacrifices and songs of praise, 25—28. Michal despises David for dancing before the ark, 29.

AND *David* made him [a] houses in the city of David, and prepared a place for the ark of God, and [b] pitched for it a tent.

2 Then David said, * None ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites: for [c] them hath the LORD chosen to carry the ark of God, and [d] to minister unto him for ever.

3 And David [e] gathered all Israel together to Jerusalem, [f] to bring up the ark of the LORD unto his place, which he had prepared for it.

4 And David assembled [g] the children of Aaron, and the Levites:

5 Of the sons of Kohath; [h] Uriel the chief, and his † brethren an hundred and twenty.

6 Of the sons of Merari; [i] Asaiah the chief, and his brethren two hundred and twenty:

7 Of the sons of Gershom; [k] Joel the chief, and his brethren an hundred and thirty:

8 Of the sons of [l] Elizaphan; [m] Shemaiah the chief, and his brethren two hundred:

9 Of the sons of [n] Hebron; Eliel the chief, and his brethren fourscore:

10 Of the sons of [o] Uzziel; Amminadab the chief, and his brethren an hundred and twelve.

11 And David called for [q] Zadok and Abiathar the priests, and for the Levites, for [q] Uriel, Asaiah, and Joel, Shemaiah, and Eliel, and Amminadab,

12 And said unto them, Ye *are* the chief of the fathers of the Levites: [r] sanctify yourselves, *both* ye and your brethren, that ye may bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel unto *the place, that* I have prepared for it.

13 For because [s] ye *did it* not at the first, [t] the LORD our God made a breach upon us, [u] for that we sought him not after the due order.

14 So the priests and the Levites [x] sanctified themselves, to bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel.

a 2 Sam. xiii. 7, 8. xiv. 24.
b xvi. 1. xvii. 1—5. Acts vii. 46.
* Heb. It is *not to carry the ark of God, but for the Levites.*
c Num. iv. 2—15 19, 20. vii. 9. Deut. x. 8. xxxi. 9. Josh. iii 3 vi. 6 2 Chr. xxxv. 3.
d Num. viii. 13, 14. 24—26. xviii. 1—8. Is. lxvi. 21. Jer. xxxiii. 17—22.
e xiii. 5. 1 Kings viii. 1.
f 2 Sam. vi. 12.
g vi. 16—20. 49, 50. xii. 26—28. Ex. vi. 16—22. Num. iii. 4.
h vi. 24.
† Or, *kinsmen.*
i vi. 30.
k ii. 17 vi. 33 xxiii. 8. 1 Sam. viii. 2.
l Ex. vi. 22
m 11.
n xxiii. 12. 19.
o Ex. vi. 18—22.
p xii. 28. xviii. 16. 2 Sam. xv. 24—29. 35. xx. 25. 1 Kings ii. 35.
q 5—9.
r 14. Ex. xix. 14. 15. 2 Chr. xxix. 4, 5, xxx. 15 John xvii 17. Rom. xii. 1, 2.
s xiii. 7. 2 Sam. vi. 3.
t xiii. 10, 11. 2 Sam. vi. 7, 8.
u Num iv 15 vii. 9. Deut. xxxi. 9. 2 Chr. xxx. 17—20. Prov. xxviii. 13. 1 John i. 8—10
x Lev. x 3. 2 Chr. xxix 15. 34. Joel ii. 16, 17.

NOTES.

CHAP. XIV. V. 1—7. (*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* v. 11—25.) The events, recorded in this chapter, are supposed to have taken place in the order assigned to them in the second book of Samuel; and before David attempted to bring the ark to mount Zion. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord hath so arranged matters in his providence, that all have reciprocally need of each other's assistance. Thus they learn to feel their own insufficiency, and to unite in society for common benefit. But all our advantages are from God, by whatever means or instruments they are derived to us: and we should recollect, that we possess them for the good of others, and especially for the benefit of his people. To repress that disposition to carnal security, and self-indulgence, which gathers strength by prosperity, we must expect successive conflicts and troubles. But, if we inquire of the Lord in all our difficulties, and trust in him simply; if we use the appointed means with diligence, and obey his orders without reserve; if we break every league with sin, give no quarter to our lusts, and neither spare our idols, nor covet those of others; and if we be disposed to give all the glory to the Lord: we shall not only be conquerors, but every conflict will increase our felicity, and add lustre to our eternal triumphs. Yet all the praise and honour will ultimately be ascribed to the Saviour: his kingdom is confirmed and made very high, for the benefit of all his believing people: may his fame go forth into all lands; and may all nations fear his indignation, trust his mercy, submit to his authority, and unite in glorifying his name!

NOTES.

CHAP. XV. V. 1. As David had many wives and children, he had occasion to build several houses for them. Some think that the tabernacle made by Moses was become ruinous from time and neglect. (*Note*, xvi. 37—43.)

V. 4—11. The priests and Levites had been before sent to, (xiii. 2;) but it is probable, that only a few of them attended: at least, at this time greater numbers were collected, and they were arranged with more exact regularity. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 12—14. It appears from David's language to the priests and Levites, that they had before neglected to *sanctify themselves*, by carefully avoiding, or seeking to be cleansed from, all ceremonial pollutions; by abstraction from outward satisfactions; and by repentance, faith, prayer, and meditating on the law of God. The ark had been long stationary, and they had, through negligence,

15 And the children of the Levites bare the ark of God upon their shoulders with the staves thereon, as Moses commanded, according to the word of the LORD.

16 And David spake to the [y] chief of the Levites [z] to appoint their brethren *to be* [a] the singers with instruments of musick, psalteries, and harps, and cymbals, sounding, by [b] lifting up the voice with joy.

17 So the Levites appointed [c] Heman the son of Joel; and of his brethren, [d] Asaph the son of Berechiah; and of the sons of Merari their brethren, [e] Ethan the son of Kushaiah;

18 And with them their brethren of [f] the second *degree*, [g] Zechariah, Ben, and [h] Jaaziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Unni, Eliab, and Benaiah, and Maaseiah, and Mattithiah, and Elipheleh, and Mikneiah, and Obed-edom, and Jeiel, the porters.

19 So the singers, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan, *were appointed* to sound with [i] cymbals of brass;

20 And Zechariah, and [k] Aziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Unni, and Eliab, and Maaseiah, and Benaiah, with psalteries on [l] Alamoth;

21 And Mattithiah, and Elipheleh, and Mikneiah, and Obed-edom, and Jeiel, and Azaziah, with [m] harps on the * Sheminith to excel.

22 And Chenaniah, chief of the Levites, *was* † for ‡ song: he instructed about the song, because he *was* skilful.

23 And Berechiah and Elkanah *were* [n] door-keepers for the ark.

24 And Shebaniah, and Jehoshaphat, and Nethaneel, and Amasai, and Zechariah, and Benaiah, and Eliezer, [o] the priests, did blow with the trumpets before the ark of God: and [p] Obed-edom and Jehiah *were* door-keepers for the ark.

25 ¶ So [q] David, and the elders of Israel, and the captains over thousands, went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of [r] the house of Obed-edom [s] with joy.

26 And it came to pass, when [t] God helped the Levites that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, that [u] they offered seven bullocks and seven rams.

27 And David *was* clothed with [x] a robe of fine linen, and all the Levites that bare the ark, and the singers, and Chenaniah the master of the § song with the singers: David also *had* upon him an ephod of linen.

28 Thus all Israel [y] brought up the ark of the covenant of the LORD [z] with

y 12.
z Ezra vii. 24—27.
a xiii. 8. xxv. 6 Ps. lxxxvii. 7. cxlix. cl. 3, 4.
b 2 Chr. v. 13 Ezra iii. 11 Neh xii. 43. Ps. lxxxi. 1. xcii. 1—3. xcv. 1. c. 1.
c 11. vi 33 xxv. 1. 1 Sam. viii. 2. Ps. lxxxviii. *title.*
d vi. 39. Ps. 1. *title.*
e vi. 44. *son of Kishi* Ps. lxxxix. *title.*
f xxv. 2—6. 9—31.
g xvi. 5, 6.
h 20. *Aziel.*
i xxv. 1. Ps. cl. 5.
k 18 *Jaaziel.*
l Ps. xlvi. *title.*
m xxv 6, 7. Ps xxxiii 2 lxxxi. 1, 2. xcii. 3
* Or, *eighth to oversee.* Ps. vi. *title*
† Or, *for the carriage: he instructed about the carriage.*
‡ Heb *lifting up.* 16 27.
n ix. 21—23.
o xvi. 6 Num. x. 8. 2 Chr v. 12, 13. Ps. lxxxi. 3.
p 18. 23.
q 2 Sam. vi. 12 13. 1 Kings viii. 1.
r xiii. 14.
s xiii. 11, 12. Deu. xii. 7. 18. xvi. 11—15. 2 Chr. xx 27, 28. Ezra vi. 16 Ps xcv. 1, 2 c. 1, 2.
t xxix. 14 1 Sam. vi. 12. Acts xxvi. 22. 2 Cor. ii. 16. iii. 5.
u 2 Sam. vi. 13. Job xlii 8. Ps. lxvi 13—15.
x 1 Sam ii. 18. 2 Sam. vi. 14.
§ Or, *carriage.* 22.
y 2 Sam. vi. 15.
z 16. xiii 8. 2 Chr. v. 12, 13. Ezra iii. 10, 11. Ps. xlvii. 1—5. lxviii 25. xcviii. 4—6. cl. 3—5.

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forgotten how it ought to be removed; so that the king himself first discovered the error which had been committed, and pointed it out to them: and though he joined himself with them, as "not having sought the LORD after "the due order;" yet it is plain that a large proportion of the blame belonged to the priests and Levites, especially the chief persons among them. It seems, however, that they were at this time made sensible of their guilt and danger; and very seriously and reverently prepared for the solemn service.

V. 15. The Levites of the family of Kohath were appointed to carry the ark, and the priests were of that family; so that, on some occasions the priests, and on others the ordinary Levites descended from Kohath, performed this service.

V. 16. David, as a prophet, was appointed to order the several particulars concerning the solemn worship at the sanctuary, especially in respect of psalmody and music; and he seems first to have begun this arrangement when he removed the ark, though he afterwards more entirely completed it. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 18. It is doubted whether *Ben* be a proper name, or an appellative; in which case, the words must read, *the son of Jaaziel.*

V. 20, 21. *Alamoth* and *Sheminith* are musical terms, which either signify treble and bass, or some particular tunes, or the construction of the instruments to which the compositions were adapted.

V. 22. Chenaniah seems to have been the *precentor*, and the principal instructor of all the company in singing: though Heman, Asaph, and Ethan, had the chief authority over the singers and musicians of the three families of Levites. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 23, 24. Perhaps Berechiah and Elkanah were stationed on mount Zion, to open the doors of the tent, when the ark approached to it; and when the singers called on them for admission. (*Notes, Ps.* xxiv. 7—10.) And Obed-edom and Jehiah were afterwards appointed statedly to guard the door of the tent, that none might enter, but according to the law. The blowing of the trumpets was exclusively the office of the priests.

V. 26. The Levites offered these sacrifices on their own account, besides those which David offered. Thus they acknowledged the unmerited goodness of God, in enabling them with safety to perform the service allotted them; being probably conscious, that Uzziah had been smitten as much through their fault, as for his own. Some think they rested seven times, and offered a bullock and a ram each time. (*Marg. Ref.*)

shouting, and with sound of the cornet, and with trumpets, and with cymbals, making a noise with psalteries and harps.

29 And it came to pass, *as* [a] the ark of the covenant of the LORD came to the city of David, that [b] Michal the daughter of Saul, looking out at a window, saw king David [c] dancing and playing: and [d] she despised him in her heart.

a 2 Sam. vi. 16.
b 1 Sam. xviii. 27, 28. xix. 11—17. xxv. 44. 2 Sam. iii. 13, 14.
c Ex. xv. 20 Ps. xxx. 11. cxlix. 3 cl 4.
d 2 Sam. vi 20—23. Ps. lxix. 7—9. Acts ii. 13. 1 Cor. ii. 14. 2 Cor. v. 13.

CHAP. XVI.

The ark being placed in its tent, David offers sacrifices, and liberally feasts the people, 1—3. *He appoints singers and musicians to praise the Lord,* 4—6. *The psalm of thanksgiving then used,* 7—36. *The priests, singers, and porters, appointed to minister continually before the ark,* 37—42. *David dismisses the people,* 43.

SO [a] they brought the ark of God, and set it [b] in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it: and [c] they offered burnt-sacrifices and peace-offerings before God.

a 2 Sam. vi. 17—19. 1 Kings viii. 6.
b xv 1. 2 Chr. i. 4. Ps. cxxxii. 8.
c Ezra vi. 16—18.

2 And when David had made an end of offering [d] the burnt-offerings, and the peace-offerings, [e] he blessed the people in the name of the LORD.

d Lev. i. iii.
e 1 Kings viii. 55, 56. 2 Chr. xxix. 29. xxx. 18—20. 27.

3 And he dealt to every one of Israel, both man and woman, [f] to every one a loaf of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon *of wine.*

f 2 Chr. xxx 24. xxxv. 7, 8. Nehem viii. 10. Ez. xlv. 17. 1 Pet. iv. 9.

4 And he appointed *certain* of the Levites to [g] minister before the ark of the LORD, and [h] to record, and to thank and praise [i] the LORD God of Israel;

g 37—42. xxiii 27—32. Num. xviii. 1—6.
h 8. Ps xxxviii. lxx. *titles.* ciii 2. cv. 5. Is. lxii. 6, 7.
i Gen. xvii. 7 1 Kings viii. 15. Ps. cvi. 48.

5 [k] Asaph the chief, and next to him Zechariah, Jeiel and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Mattithiah, and Eliab, and Benaiah, and Obed-edom: and Jeiel with * psalteries and with harps; but Asaph made a sound with cymbals;

k vi. 39. xv. 16—24. xxv. 1—6.
*Heb. *instrument. of psalteries and harps.* xv 20, 21. 2 Chr. xxix. 25

6 Banaiah also and Jahaziel the priests, [l] with trumpets continually before the ark of the covenant of God.

l Num. x. 8. 2 Chr v. 12, 13. xxix 26—28.

V. 27—29. (*Notes,* 2 *Sam.* vi. 12—23.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The most zealous and useful reformers have in all ages been left to make mistakes, which very inferior persons could easily discern; and especially, before their judgments were matured by experience and observation. Satan avails himself of these errors to prejudice the minds of men against their whole character and work: and the artifice readily takes with those, who are in quest of some specious pretence for despising and opposing the humbling truths and the holy service of God. But we should hence infer, that nothing perfect can be expected from mere man; and neither be offended at the miscarriages blended with laudable and useful endeavours, nor yet vindicate or adopt every sentiment and practice, which have been sanctioned by respectable and eminent men: but we should compare all, as well as we can, with the word of God, and by that criterion distinguish between the precious and the vile. Wise and good men, however, will profit by rebukes, and having discovered, they will honestly confess their mistakes, and acknowledge that they did not seek the Lord after the due order: and, upon recollection, they will both justify him in his sharpest corrections, and proceed with their work with greater circumspection. It indeed, seems one of the greatest attainments of human nature, to search out, confess, rectify, and profit by, our own mistakes and miscarriages. The Lord's choice of us, in every sense implies our being chosen to services as well as privileges; and plain and serious admonitions, from those who lead the way by good example, and whose rank and character give weight and authority to their words, will often excite the remiss to diligence, and the ignorant and heedless to learn and attend to their duty. But, alas! pre-eminence is generally privileged with supineness and indulgence: and too often examples of avarice, pride, and licentiousness, become infamously conspicuous, through the rank of those who set them; and diffuse their baleful influence, like a destructive pestilence, among the subordinate members of the community. We have all, however, our proper place, work, and talent: every servant should know well his own business, and punctually execute it; and this cannot be done without attention to the Scriptures, and preparation of heart by the sanctification of the Spirit, vouchsafed in answer to our prayers. Every thing we engage in, must be done in dependence on the mercy and grace of God through the sacrifice of the Redeemer: and, as "it is of "the LORD's mercy, that we are not consumed;" so, if we go successfully and comfortably through any service, we must remember that he hath helped us, and give him the glory; for without him we can do nothing. When God accepts our persons and our works, and makes our hearts joyful in him, and renders our services beneficial to his church; we may indeed expect, but need not regard, the scoffs and reproaches of unbelievers; and we must learn to bear them with patience, and to persevere in our compassionate prayers for those, who are thus enemies to their own souls, by opposing the cause of God which we are honoured to promote.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVI. V. 1—3. (*Notes,* 2 *Sam.* vi. 17—19.)

V. 4—6. The Levites were appointed "to *record,*" or to put the people in remembrance of the wonderful works of God for Israel, as well as to thank and praise his name.

7 ¶ Then [m] on that day David delivered first *this psalm* to thank the LORD, [n] into the hand of Asaph and his brethren.

8 [o] Give thanks unto the LORD, [p] call upon his name, [q] make known his deeds among the people.

9 [r] Sing unto him, sing [s] psalms unto him, [t] talk ye of all his wondrous works.

10 [u] Glory ye in his holy name: [x] let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD.

11 [y] Seek the LORD and [z] his strength: seek his face continually.

12 [b] Remember his marvellous works that he dath done, his wonders, and [c] the judgments of his mouth;

13 O [d] ye seed of Israel his servant, ye children of Jacob, [e] his chosen ones.

14 He *is* [f] the LORD our God; [g] his judgments *are* in all the earth.

15 Be [h] ye mindful always of his covenant; the word *which* he commanded to [i] a thousand generations;

16 *Even of the covenant* [k] which he made with Abraham, and of his oath unto Isaac;

17 And hath confirmed the same to

m 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2. 2 Chr. xxix. 30. Neh. xii. 24. n Ps. xii. xviii. *titles*. o Ps. cv. 1—15. p Is. xii. 4. Acts ix. 14. 1 Cor. i. 2. q 1 Kings viii. 43. 2 Kings xix 19. Ps. lxvii. 2—4. lxxviii. 3—6. cxlv. 5, 6. r Ps. lxxv. 1, 2. xcvi. 1, 2. xcviii 1—4. s Matt. xxvi. 30. Eph. v. 19. Col. iii. 16. Jam. v. 13. t Ps. xl 10. lxxi. 17, 18. xcvi. 3. cv. 2, 3. cxlv. 4—6. 12. u Ps. xxxiv. 2. xliv. 8. Is. xlv. 25. Jer. ix. 23, 24. 1 Cor. i. 30, 31. x xxviii. 9. Prov viii. 17 Is. xlv. 19. lv. 6, 7. Jer xxix 12 Matt. vii. 7, 8.——y Am. v. 6. Zeph. ii. 2, 3. 2 Chr. vi. 41——z Ps. lxviii. 35. lxxviii. 61.——a Ps. iv. 8. xxvii. 8, 9. lxvii. 1.

b Ps. ciii. 2. cxi. 4. c Ps. cxix. 13. d Gen. xvii. 7. xxviii. 13 14. xxxv 10--12 e Ex xix. 5. 6. Deut vii. 6. Ps. cxxxv. 4. Matt. xi. 26. 1 Pet. ii. 9. f Ex. xv. 2. Ps. lxiii. 1 xcv. 7. c 3. cxviii. 28. g Ps. xlviii. 10, 11. xcvii. 8, 9. h Ps. xxv. 10. xliv. 17. cv. 8. Mal. iv. 4. i Deut vii 9. k Gen. xvii. 2. xxvi 3. xxviii. 13, 14. Ex. iii. 15. Luke i. 72, 73.

Doubtless David acted as a prophet in regulating this part of divine worship: and his example will not justify uninspired men, in introducing *human inventions* into the worship of God, and *imposing* them by their own authority; for when Hezekiah made similar arrangements, he only enforced what David had appointed. (*Marg. Ref.*)—The use of *instrumental music* in the worship of God was evidently prior to the ceremonial law; and therefore could form no part of it, or be abrogated with it: and though it is not *required* in the New Testament, yet it seems no way inconsistent with it, povided it be suited to the solemnity and seriousness of our religious rejoicing, and so regulated as really to assist the exercise of devout affections.—The sad abuse of making, what is called *sacred music*, a matter of mere *carnal diversion*, with some other subordinate evils of the same kind, forms the strongest argument against it. The trumpets alone were appointed in the law, and had a typical meaning.

V. 7. The psalm which was sung on this solemn occasion is composed of extracts from several psalms. (*Marg. Ref.*) Probably David had these by him, with many others, for his own private use; and he composed from them a song of praise and thanksgiving, to record the mercies of the Lord, suited to the solemnity. But afterwards he gave the other psalms also, one after another, into the hand of the chief singers, for the benefit of the people who attended the worship performed before the ark.

V. 8, 9. In these verses the inspired and enraptured Psalmist excited the people, and taught them to animate each other, in blessing the God of Israel for all his mercies, and in celebrating his glorious perfections, which are worthy to be known, admired, and extolled; and which render him the meet object of the universal and entire love, worship, confidence, and obedience of all rational creatures. He also exhorted them to *meditate* and converse frequently on the wonderful works of the Lord, and to proclaim them before others; to call on him in all their wants and dangers; and by every means to adore and praise him.

V. 10. To glory in God, is to value our relation to him, as our honour and privilege, far above all other distinctions; to make that alone the ground of our confidence and exultation; to account ourselves in this, more happy, more honoured, and more favoured, than any other people. To glory *in his holy name*, is to rejoice and exult in his immutable wisdom, justice, truth, and love. And even they, who are only beginning to seek the Lord, may rejoice that he is upon a mercy-seat ready to receive their submissions, to hear their prayers, to forgive their sins, to supply their wants, and to save their souls.

V. 11. *Seeking the Lord* implies an earnest and diligent endeavour to obtain the knowledge and favour of God according to the revelation made of him in his word; the renewal of the soul to holiness by his grace, the safety to be enjoyed under his omnipotent protection, and the comfort and support of his Spirit under all trials and temptations, till his strength hath perfected the work of his mercy in the full salvation of both body and soul; when present glimpses of his glory, and experience of his love, shall be perfected by beholding the full display of that glory, and enjoying the full effects of that love, in heaven for ever.—The gracious aid and protection of JEHOVAH were ensured to Israel, when they sought him as dwelling between the cherubims above the ark; therefore the ark itself is called *his strength*: and this implies, that we must seek the Lord, through Christ, and according to the gospel. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 12. "The judgments of his mouth," may either mean, the righteous laws and statutes given to Israel, or the just vengeance which God denounced and executed on his enemies, in Egypt, in the wilderness, and in Canaan.

V. 14. Israel, as the peculiar people of JEHOVAH, were bound to worship and obey him; and ought to rejoice in him. Indeed his word and his works, both of mercy and vengeance, which had become known and renowned among the nations far and wide, suggested powerful motives both of warning and encouragement, to his professed servants. He also governs the whole earth, in justice and in judgment; and is continually executing, in his providence, deserved punishment upon offending nations and individuals. His judgments were known in all the earth, in a most striking manner, when christianity was established in the world; while the nation of the Jews, and the idolatrous Gentiles, who opposed the cause of Christ, were exposed to the most terrible and durable calamities.

Jacob for a law, *and* to Israel *for* [l] an everlasting covenant,

18 Saying, [m] Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the † lot of your inheritance;

19 When we were but ‡ few, even [n] a few, and strangers in it.

20 And *when* [o] they went from nation to nation, and from *one* kingdom to another people;

21 [p] He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, [q] he reproved kings for their sakes,

22 *Saying*, Touch not [r] mine anointed, and do my [s] prophets no harm.

23 [t] Sing [u] unto the LORD, all the earth; [x] shew forth, from day to day, his salvation.

24 ¶ [y] Declare his glory among the heathen; his marvellous works among all nations.

25 For [z] great *is* the LORD, and greatly to be praised: [a] he also *is* to be feared above all gods.

26 For [b] all the gods of the people *are* idols: but [c] the LORD made the heavens.

27 [d] Glory and honour *are* in his presence; [e] strength and gladness *are* in his [f] place.

28 [g] Give unto the LORD, [h] ye kindreds of the people, give unto the LORD [i] glory and strength.

29 Give unto the LORD [k] the glory *due* unto his name: [l] bring an offering, and [m] come before him: worship the LORD in [n] the beauty of holiness.

l Gen. xvii. 7, 8. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Is. lv. 3. Heb xiii. 20.
m Gen xii. 3. xiii. 15. xvii. 8. xxviii. 13, 14. xxxv. 11, 12.
† Heb *cord*. Num. xxvi. 53 – 56. Deut. xxxii. 8.
‡ Heb. *men of number*.
n Gen. xxxiv. 30 Acts vii 5. Heb. xi. 13.
o Gen. xii. 10. xx. 1. xlvi. 3.
p Gen. xxxi. 24. 29. 42.
q Gen. xii. 17 xx. 3. Ex. vii. 16, 17. ix. 13-16.
r 1 Kings xix. 16. 1 John ii. 27.
s Gen. xx. 7. xxxvii. 39, 40. xlviii. 19, 20. xlix. 8–10.
t Ps. xcvi. 1–13.
u 9. Ps. xlvii. 1. 6, 7. xcv. 1, 2.
x Ps xl. 10. lxxi. 15. xcviii. 2. Is. li. 6. 8.
y 2 Kings xix. 19. Ps. xxii. 27. lxxii. 19 xcvi. 10. cxvii. Is. xii. 2-6. Dan. iv. 1-3.
z Ps. lxxxix. 7. cxlv. 3–6. Is. xl. 12–17. Rev. xv. 3, 4.
a Ex. xv. 11. Ps. lxvi. 3 – 5 lxxvi. 7. Jer. v 22. x 6–10.
b Lev. xix. 4. Ps. cxv 4–8. Act. xix. 26. 1 Cor. viii. 4.
c Is. xlii. 5. Jer. x. 11, 12.
d Ps viii. 1. xvi. 11. lxiii 2, 3. John xvii. 24.
e Ps. xxvii. 4–6. xxviii. 7, 8. xliii. 2–4.
f Ps. xcvi. 6.
g Ps. xxix. 1, 2. lxviii. 34.
h Ps lxvi. 1, 2. lxvi. 4. 7. lxxxvi. 8 – 10. xcviii. 4. c. 1, 2. Is. xi. 10.
i xxix. 10 – 14. Ps. cxv. 1, 2. 1 Cor. xv. 10. 2 Cor xii. 9, 10. Eph. i. 6. 17–19.
k Ps. lxxxix. 5–8. cviii. 3 – 5. cxlviii. 13, 14. Is. vi. 3. Rev. iv. 9–11. v. 12–14. vii. 12.—l 1 Kings viii 41–43 Ps. lxviii. 30, 31. lxxii. 10. 15 Is. lx. 6, 7.—m Ps xcv. 2. c. 4.—n 2 Chr. xx 21 Ps. xxix. 2. 1. 2. xcvi. 6. 9. cx. 3 Ez. vii. 20. xxiv. 25.

V. 15—19. The covenant of the Lord with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, engaged to their posterity the inheritance of Canaan. This was *absolute*, as *a law* which requries prompt obedience. Their descendants must inherit the land; but in which of their generations, or for how long a time that should be, depended on other circumstances, which were declared by the Sinai-covenant. A thousand generations is a large definite number taken for an indefinite one; and this language was suited to lead the thoughts of pious Israelites to the eternal inheritance typified by Canaan. The oath, by which the Lord condescended to ratify this engagement, showed the immutability of his counsel; and represented the covenant of grace, as irreversibly confirmed with every true believer. David called upon the people to remember this covenant: that considering from how small beginnings, through how many and formidable difficulties, and after how many delays, the Lord's engagement had been fulfilled; they might be animated to praise him, encouraged to trust him, and induced to cleave to and obey him.

V. 20—22. The patriarchs were the Lord's *anointed*, as they were believers, prophets, priests, types, and ancestors of Christ; in respect of the Lord's choice of them, his grace bestowed upon them, and their spiritual consecration to his service; though they were not externally anointed with oil, that we read of. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 23, 24. David having taken a suitable passage from one psalm, to stir up the congregation to celebrate the praises of God, for his special mercies to Israel; from another psalm, adds a solemn call to all the inhabitants of the earth to join in his praises, as the only living and true God, the Creator and Judge of the world, and the God of salvation; and from day to day to make known his glory and salvation still more widely.

V. 25, 26. The power, majesty, authority, eternity, omniscience, omnipresence, and unchangeableness of God, are his *greatness:* as his justice, wisdom, truth, goodness, and mercy form his *holiness*. In both respects he is altogether glorious, and infinitely exceeds the most exalted praises, and even the comprehension of the noblest of all created intelligences. Thus he is the sole object of fear, and reverential worship, and adoring love; while all others, to whom divine worship ever was rendered, are either senseless stocks, or fallen angels, or mere creatures, who cannot help their worshippers, or punish their despisers.

V. 27. Wherever the Lord displays his presence by his operations, he shows us the glory and honour of his perfections: but in heaven, where his presence is manifested, in a manner to us inconceivable and ineffable, his glory and honour beam forth upon the blessed inhabitants, so as to transform them fully into his holy image of light, purity, and felicity, and to be reflected back in their rapturous unceasing worship and service of him. This is, in a feeble way, imitated and emulated, in his *place*, his *sanctuary*, his church on earth. There his power and beauty are in a measure displayed; and the true believer beholding in Christ Jesus the glory of the Lord, "is changed into the "same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the "Lord;" and thus is both made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, and enjoys the earnests of it.

V. 28, 29. This is an exhortation to all who then heard, and all who now hear or read it, to *ascribe* to JEHOVAH the tribute of praise and adoration, which he demands as his due; to allow that all glory belongs to him, and that all power resides in him, or is derived from him; to render to him that gratitude, love, and service, which he deserves from all as their Creator and hourly Benefactor. This cannot be withheld without the basest ingratitude. "All the "kindreds of the earth," form but one family; and ought to unite in the service of their common Father. But all had sinned, and fallen under condemnation: yet through the Redeemer, who was promised from the beginning, all were invited to approach the Lord with their worship and oblations at his sanctuary. This may be called, *the beauty of holiness*, from the especial presence of the Lord, dwelling above the ark between the cherubim, upon the mercy-seat as Israel's God; as typifying the human nature of Jesus Christ; and representing the believer's heart, as become an

30 [o] Fear before him, all the earth: the world also shall be [p] stable, that it be not moved.

31 [q] Let the heavens be glad, and [r] let the earth rejoice: and let *men* say among the nations, [s] The LORD reigneth.

32 Let [t] the sea roar, and the fulness thereof: let the [u] fields rejoice, and all that *is* therein.

33 Then shall [x] the trees of the wood sing out at the presence of the LORD, [y] because he cometh to judge the earth.

34 O [z] give thanks unto the LORD; for *he is* good; for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

35 And say ye, [a] Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, [b] that we may give thanks to thy holy name, *and* [c] glory in thy praise.

36 [d] Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel for ever and ever. And [e] all the people said Amen, and praised the LORD.

37 ¶ So he left there, before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, [f] Asaph and his brethren, to minister before the ark continually, [g] as every day's work required:

38 And [h] Obed-edom, with their brethren, threescore and eight; Obed-edom also the son of [i] Jeduthun, and Hosah *to be* porters:

39 And [k] Zadok the priest, and his brethren the priests, [l] before the tabernacle of the LORD, [m] in the high place that *was* at Gibeon.

40 To [n] offer burnt-offerings unto the LORD upon the altar of the burnt-offering continually, * morning and evening, and *to do* according to all that is written in the law of the LORD, which he commanded Israel;

41 And with them [o] Heman and Jedu-

o 23. Rev. xi. 15. p Ps. xxxiii. 9. xciii. 1. cxlviii. 5, 6. Is. xlix. 8. Col. i. 17. Heb. i. 3. q Ps. xix. 1. lxxxix. 5. cxlviii. 1—4. Luke ii. 13, 14. xv. 10. r Ps. xcvii. 1. xcviii. 4. Luke ii. 10. s Ps. xciii. 1, 2. xcvi. 10. xcix. 1. cxlv. 1. Is. xxxiii. 22. Mat. vi. 13. Rev. xix. 6. t Ps. xciii. 4. xcviii. 7. u Ps. xcviii. 8. cxlviii. 9, 10. Is. xliv. 23. lv. 12. x Ps. xcvi. 12, 13. Ez. xx. 46, 47. y Ps. xcviii. 9. 2 Thes. i. 10. Rev. xi. 17, 18. z Ezra iii. 11. Ps. cvi. 1. cvii. 1. cxviii. 1. cxxxvi. 1, &c. Jer. xxxiii. 11. a Ps. xiv. 7. liii. 6. lxxix. 9, 10. cvi. 47, 48. b Ps. cv. 45. Is. xliii. 21. Eph. i. 12. 1 Pet. ii. 9. c 9, 10. Ps. xliv. 8. Is. xlv. 25. 1 Cor. i. 31. d 1 Kings viii. 15. 56. Ps. lxxii. 18, 19. cvi. 48. Eph. i. 3. 1 Pet. i. 3. — e Deu. xxvii. 15. Neh. viii. 6. Jer. xxviii. 6. 1 Cor. xiv. 16.

f 4—6. xv. 17—24. xxv. 1—6. g 2 Chr. viii. 14. Ezra iii. 4. h xiii. 14. xxvi. 4—8. i xxv. 3. k xii. 28. l xxi. 29. 2 Chr. i. 3. m 1 Kings iii. 4. n Ex. xxix. 38—42. Num. xxviii. 3—8. * Heb. *in the morning and in the evening.* o 37. vi. 39—47. xxv. 1—6.

habitation of God through the Spirit. When, however, we approach the Father, upon a mercy-seat, through the sacrifice and mediation of the Son, and under the influences of the Holy Spirit: then, *and then only*, do we worship God in *the beauty of holiness*.

V. 30. Let all men fear the power, justice, and majesty of God: let them fear his wrath, and flee for refuge to his mercy: let them reverence his authority and excellency, and learn to worship and obey him. If this were done, it would render the moral state of the world as stable and immoveable, and keep every thing in as great order and regularity, as his creating and upholding word hath established the natural state of it: and to this the Gospel is suited to bring all who embrace it.

V. 31. Wise, righteous, and good kings, and equitable laws, impartially administered, make prosperous nations; and all good subjects must rejoice in such a government: but traitors and criminals tremble on that very account.—The Lord, who reigneth over all, is perfect in his character, his law, and his administration: this alone would be cause of universal joy, if all were loyal and obedient; yet it speaks terror to the sinner's conscience. But as the Lord reigneth in Jesus Christ upon a throne of grace; even sinners, yea, the vilest, may rejoice, when desirous of forgiveness and reconciliation, they are made humbly willing to become his subjects: so that men of all nations on earth are called on to join the gladness of the blessed inhabitants of heaven; and in exulting joy to proclaim, that "the LORD "God omnipotent reigneth." (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 32—34. All the parts of nature are here poetically addressed by the royal prophet, to join the universal song of joy and praise, and in their several ways to welcome JEHOVAH as the Sovereign of the universe; and to wait the great decisive day, when he will come, as the Saviour of his people, to judge the world in righteousness. Perhaps all the different ranks and descriptions of the human species, who have feared the Lord, and hoped in his mercy, and who will then unanimously rejoice in the consummation of their felicity, are here intended under figurative expressions. The first coming of Christ likewise, with the calling of the Gentiles, and the surprising and most happy change effected by the Gospel, in the moral and religious state of the world, as preparatory to his second coming, seem also to have been predicted. Indeed nothing but the plenteous goodness of God, the perpetuity and eternity of his mercy in Christ Jesus, can encourage a sinner to hope for and desire his appearing as a Judge; all therefore, but believers, must tremble at the thoughts of that solemn season, and will be driven to desperation when it shall arrive.

V. 35, 36. Many Israelites, even when David came to the throne, might be dispersed in other nations by the frequent wars waged with their neighbours. And he prayed that they might be gathered from their dispersions, to join in this joyful worship. Perhaps the Spirit of God, that spake by the Psalmist, intended the gathering of Israel from future and greater dispersions; and it may well be accommodated to the present state of that nation, and our hope of their future calling into the church, as well as to the collecting together of believers from all the nations of the earth, to bless and adore the God of Israel, in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. We can scarcely stretch our thoughts to conceive the effect, which these high praises of God, sung by so vast a multitude, with harmonious elevation of heart and voice, upon this joyful occasion, must have produced: it naturally leads our thoughts to the songs of the redeemed of the Lord in glory; and perhaps we are not in this world, capable of more just and spiritual ideas of them, than are suggested by this subject, though we are sure that they are unspeakably more sublime and refined. (*Marg. Ref.*)

thun, and the rest that were chosen, who were [p] expressed by name, [q] to give thanks to the LORD, because his mercy *endureth* for ever;

42 And with them Heman and Jeduthun with [r] trumpets and cymbals, for those that should make a sound, and with [s] musical instruments of God. And the sons of Jeduthun *were* * porters.

43 And [t] all the people departed, every man to his house: and David returned [u] to bless his house.

p xii. 31. Num. i. 17. Ez. viii. 20.
q 34. 2 Chr. v. 4. 13. vii 3.
r 2 Chr. xxix. 25—28. Ps. cl. 3—6.
s xxv. 6. * Heb *for the gate.*
t 2 Sam. vi. 19, 20. 1 Kings viii. 66.
u Gen. xviii. 19. Josh. xxiv. 15. Ps. ci. 2.

V. 37—43. Abiathar was high-priest at this time; and, it is probable, he resided at Jerusalem. The stated worship before the ark consisted principally of Psalmody and music, over which Asaph presided. But Zadock, of Eleazar's line, as next in authority under the high-priest, resided at Gibeon, where the tabernacle and the brazen altar still remained; and there, with the other priests, he took care that all the sacrifices prescribed by the law should be regularly offered. Psalmody was constantly performed here also, under the direction of Heman and Jeduthun: and *they had with them* the sacred trumpets, which seem to have been kept by them, though used by none but the priests. When David brought the ark from obscurity, he was directed to convey it to Jerusalem, because it was to be stationed there. As he intended immediately to build a temple for its reception, he did not remove the tabernacle of Moses thither; but prepared a temporary tent, perhaps formed in the same manner: and when he was not allowed to build the temple, he made no alteration, but attended to both separately all his days. It seems that these regulations were made and declared, before the people separated, and were continued from that very day.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

The public revival of religion, and the pure worship of God, being countenanced and protected *by the powers that be*, are joyful events to believers: and when their hearts are enlarged with gratitude to God, they will also be expanded in liberality towards men, and disposed to pray for them, and to do good to them, for his sake. It is a good and pleasant thing to be thankful, and we should carefully record and frequently review the Lord's mercies, to us and to his church, that we may be excited to abound in joyful praises: and ministers are especially appointed by the son of David our *King* to animate, and assist the people thus to glorify and rejoice in God, by preaching to them the gospel of salvation, and by every other means in their power. The streams of mercy we partake of should be traced back to that fountain of love whence they are derived; and in thanking the Lord for his benefits to us, we should celebrate the glorious excellencies of his nature. This will also encourage our own faith and hope, and excite the attention of others to observe and admire his marvellous works: and therefore we should be unreserved and open, in singing and speaking forth the praises of our God. Riches, pre-eminence, wisdom, and strength, are precarious blessings, in which we must not glory and rejoice: but let him that glorieth, glory in his relation to the Lord our salvation. To know, love, and belong to him, constitutes the chief honour and happiness of man; and forms that good part which shall never be taken from us. Whilst the assured believer boldly glories in the righteousness, mercy, truth, and power of his reconciled God, let the trembling sinner rejoice also; for he casteth out none that come, and saveth all who trust in him. But let us all learn to seek him diligently and continually: not only that we may rejoice in his favour; but that we may be strengthened by him, to perform every service, and triumph over all our inward and outward enemies. Indeed we could no longer distrust either his mercy or his power, if we duly remembered his works of old; especially the marvellous work of redemption, through Jesus Christ, which hath eclipsed all former displays of his wisdom, truth, and love. Nor are the judgments of his mouth less worthy of our attention, than the operations of his hands; by them we are instructed and directed: and even the denunciations of his wrath, and the execution of his righteous vengeance upon sinners, warn us to flee from the wrath to come, and to give diligence to make our calling and election sure; whilst his mercies are recorded, to enliven our gratitude and encourage our hope.

V. 13—29.

Happy are the chosen servants of God, who "are followers of them who through faith, and patience; inherit "the promises:" He is their portion, and their everlasting recompense; whilst his worship and service form the solace of their souls in this evil world. "He is ever "mindful of his covenant," and he makes it a law to himself, an invariable rule of his conduct towards his people: and if we were duly mindful of it, we should derive great encouragement from his promises, and from that oath which he hath interposed for the "strong consolation of "all those, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on "the hope set before them;" while love and gratitude would, as an inward law in our minds, command and constrain our most devoted obedience. They, who are interested in his promise of eternal life, by faith in Jesus Christ, will be carried through all difficulties, and rendered superior in all conflicts, though in themselves they are few and poor. Here, they wander as strangers and pilgrims: but compared with them the most potent monarchs are accounted mean and vile, in the judgment of God. They have received the unction of his Holy Spirt; his seal is affixed to them, and no man can injure them with impunity: nay, nothing can possibly harm them, but all things shall eventually work together for their good. Let us however be careful of prematurely concluding, that we are numbered with them: let us seriously appeal to our consciences and experience, whether the Lord of the whole earth be that Lord whom we desire to obey? And whether salvation by Jesus Christ from deserved wrath, from Satan, sin, and this present evil world, be our daily prayer, hope, and rejoicing? Do we perceive and adore the glory of the divine perfections, and rejoice in celebrating his praise? And do

CHAP. XVII.

David, purposing to build a temple, is encouraged by Nathan, 1, 2. *The Lord afterwards, by Nathan, prohibits it; but with many encouraging promises,* 3—15. *David's prayer and thanksgiving,* 16—27.

a 2 Sam. vii. 1, 2. Dan. iv. 29, 30.
b 2 Sam. xii. 1. 1 Kings i. 8.
c Jer. xxii. 15. Hag. i. 4.
d Ps. cxxxii. 5. Acts vii. 46.
e xvi. 1. Ex. xl. 19—21. 2 Sam. vi. 17. 2 Chr. i. 4.
f xxii. 7. xxviii. 2. Josh. ix. 14. 1 Sam. xvi. 7. Ps. xx. 4. 1 Cor. xiii. 9.
g 1 Sam. x. 7. 2 Sam. vii. 3. Zech. viii. 23.
h Num. xii. 6. Is. xxx. 21. Amos iii. 7.
i Is. lv. 8. Rom. xi. 33, 34.
k xxii. 8. xxviii. 3. 2 Sam. vii. 4. 1 Kings viii. 19.

NOW it came to pass, [a] as David sat in his house, that David said to [b] Nathan the prophet, Lo, [c] I dwell in an house of cedars, but [d] the ark of the covenant of the LORD *remaineth* [e] under curtains.

2 Then Nathan said unto David, [f] Do all that *is* in thine heart: [g] for God *is* with thee.

3 And it came to pass the same night, that [h] the word of God came to Nathan, saying,

4 [i] Go and tell David my servant, Thus saith the LORD, [k] Thou shalt not build me an house to dwell in:

5 For I have not dwelt in an house since the day that I brought up Israel, unto this day; but have * gone [l] from tent to tent, and from *one* tabernacle *to another.*

* Heb. *been.*
l Ex. xl. 2. 2 Sam. vi. 17. 1 Kings viii. 4. 16.

6 Wheresoever I have [m] walked with all Israel, spake I a word to any of [n] the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to [o] feed my people, saying, Why have ye not built me an house of cedars?

7 Now therefore thus shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, [p] I took thee from the sheep-cote, *even* † from following the sheep, that thou shouldest be [q] ruler over my people Israel:

8 And [r] I have been with thee whithersoever thou hast walked, and [s] have cut off all thine enemies from before thee, and have [t] made thee a name like the name of the great men that *are* in the earth.

9 Also [u] I will ordain a place for my people Israel, and will [x] plant them, and they shall dwell in their place, [y] and shall be moved no more; neither shall [z] the children of wickedness [a] waste them any more, ([b] as at the beginning,

10 And [c] since the time that I commanded judges *to be* over my people

m Ex. xxxiii. 14, 15. xl. 35—38. Lev. xxvi. 11, 12. Num. x. 33—36. Deut. xxiii. 14. 2 Cor. vi. 16. Rev. ii. 1.
n Judg. ii. 16—18. 1 Sam. xii. 11. 2 Sam. vii. 7. *tribes.* Acts xiii. 20.
o xi. 2. Ps. lxxviii. 71, 72. Jer. xxiii. 4. Ez. xxxiv. 2. Mic. v. 4.
p Ex. iii. 1. 10. 1 Sam. xvii. 15. 2 Sam. vii. 8. Ps. lxxviii. 70, 71. Am. vii. 14, 15. Luke v. 10.
† Heb. *from after.*
q 2 Sam. vi. 21. Mic. v. 2. Matt. ii. 6.
r 1 Sam. xviii. 14. 28. 2 Sam. vii. 9. viii. 6. 14. Ps. xlvi. 11.
s 1 Sam. xxvi. 10. xxxi. 1—6. 2 Sam. xxii. 1. 38—42.
t Ps. lxxv. 7. cxiii. 7, 8. Luke i. 52.
u Jer. xxxi. 3—12. Ez. xxxiv. 13. xxxvi. 14, 15.
x Ps. xliv. 2. Jer. xxiv. 6. xxxii. 41.
y Ez. xxxvii. 25.
z Ps. lxxxix. 22. Eph. ii. 2, 3. v. 6.
a Is. lx. 18.
b Ex. i. 13, 14. ii. 23.
c Judg. iii. 8. iv. 3. vi. 5, 6. 1 Sam. xiii. 5, 6. 19, 20.

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we yield ourselves to his service; depending on his mercy and grace, and lamenting that we love him no more and serve him no better? All this, and far more, is due to him: for he is infinitely great, holy, and good; all our praises are beneath his excellency, and nothing can be compared with his uncreated majesty. But let us devote all we have and are to him, and aim to worship him "in the beauty "of holiness."

V. 30—43.

The LORD our God is greatly to be feared. All the earth should stand in awe of him, for his wrath against the workers of iniquity is intolerable and eternal; but "in his "favour there is life, in his presence there is fulness of "joy, and at his right hand there are pleasures for ever-"more." He is glorious as our Creator and Judge, but more glorious as a Saviour: in that character sinners may approach and worship him with acceptance and comfort; and men on earth may rejoice in his universal and everlasting kingdom, as well as the holy inhabitants of heaven; because in Christ Jesus, "He is good, and his mercy en-"dureth for ever." Oh that there were such a heart in us and in all men, thus to fear him and to hope in his mercy; that we might look forward with comfort, and exultation to our meeting him upon his awful judgment seat! He is continually collecting before his throne, that chosen remnant which the Saviour hath redeemed unto God with his blood, from all the nations of the earth: and there being freed from sin, admitted to the beatific vision, and filled with love, and gratitude, and joy, they sing eternal praises to his name. As we successively depart this life, may our souls be gathered unto them; and may that time speedily arrive, when the scattered Jews shall at length be gathered into the church, and the fulness of the Gentiles brought in, to "give thanks to his holy name, and "to glory in his praise!" Amen, and Amen! In this life believers enjoy, from time to time, earnests and foretastes of heavenly bliss; but when they cannot reach such fervent affections and exalted strains, they must statedly persevere in using the means of grace as sinners, "beholding the "Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world:" and the continual attendance of his appointed ministers in his courts, is not only right in itself, but an encouragement to faith and hope, and a help to the praises and thanksgivings, of the people. Finally, it is well, when one duty prepares the soul for another; when public worship renders us more constant and spiritual in family and secret devotion; and when the effects of the whole appear in our conduct in relative life, and in society.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVII. V. 5. *Tent to tent,* &c. In the wilderness, the ark was taken out of the tent, when the camp of Israel marched: and was returned into it, when they rested. It was afterwards taken from the tabernacle at Shiloh, and then stationed at Kirjath-jearim, doubtless in a tent prepared for it; and thence David removed it to another tent on mount Zion. (*Notes,* 2 *Sam.* vii.)

Israel.) [d] Moreover I will subdue all thine enemies. Furthermore I tell thee that [e] the LORD will build thee an house.

11 And it shall come to pass, [f] when thy days be expired that thou must [g] go *to be* with thy fathers, that [h] I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons; and I will establish his kingdom.

12 [i] He shall build me an house, and [k] I will stablish his throne for ever.

13 [l] I will be his father, and he shall be [m] my son: and [n] I will not take my mercy away from him, [o] as I took *it* from *him* that was before thee:

14 But I will settle him [p] in mine house, and in my kingdom for ever: and his throne shall be established for evermore.

15 [q] According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.

16 ¶ And David the king came and [r] sat before the LORD, and said, [s] Who *am* I, O LORD God, and [t] what *is* mine house, [u] that thou hast brought me hitherto?

17 And *yet* this was [x] a small thing in thine eyes, O God; for [y] thou hast *also* spoken of thy servant's house for a great while to come, and [z] hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree, O LORD God.

18 What can David *speak* more to thee for [a] the honour of thy servant? for [b] thou knowest thy servant.

19 O LORD, for [c] thy servant's sake, and [d] according to thine own heart, hast thou done all this greatness, in making known all *these* * great things.

20 O LORD, *there is* [e] none like thee, neither *is there any* God [f] beside thee, [g] according to all that we have heard with our ears.

21 And [h] what one nation in the earth *is* like thy people Israel, whom God went to [i] redeem *to be* his own people, to [k] make thee a name of [l] greatness and terribleness, [m] by driving out nations from before thy people, whom thou hast redeemed out of Egypt?

22 For [n] thy people Israel didst thou make thine own people for ever; and thou, LORD, becamest their God.

23 Therefore now, LORD, [o] let the thing that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, be established for ever, and do as thou hast said.

24 Let it even be established, [p] that thy name may be magnified for ever, saying, The LORD of hosts *is* the God of Israel, *even* [q] a God to Israel: and *let* the house of David thy servant *be* established before thee.

25 For thou, O my God, hast † told thy servant, [r] that thou wilt build him an house: therefore thy servant hath [s] found *in his heart* to pray before thee.

26 And now, LORD, [t] thou art God, and hast promised this goodness unto thy servant:

27 Now therefore ‡ let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may be before thee for ever: for thou [u] blessest, O LORD, and *it shall be* blessed for ever.

d Ps xxi. 8, 9. lxxxix. 23. cx. 1.
e Ex. i. 21. 2 Sam. vii. 11. Ps. cxxvii. 1.
f xxix. 15. 28. Acts xiii 36.
g 1 Kings i. 21. ii 10. Acts ii 29.
h 2 Sam. vii. 12, 13. xii. 24, 25. 1 Kings viii. 20. Ps cxxxii 11. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. Rom i. 3, 4.
i xvii 9, 10. xxviii. 8—10. 1 Kings v. 5. Zech. vi. 12, 13. John ii 19—21. Col. ii. 9.
k Ps. lxxxix. 4, 29. 36, 37. Is. ix. 7. Dan. ii. 44. 1 Cor. xv. 25.
l 2 Sam. vii. 14. Ps lxxxix. 26, 27. Heb. i. 5.
m Ps ii. 7. 12. Luke ix. 35. John iii. 35.
n 2 Sam. vii 15, 16. 1 Kings xi 12, 13. 36.
o x. 14. 1 Sam. xv. 28.
p Ps. ii. 6. lxxix. 36. Luke i. 32. 33. Heb. iii. 6.
q 2 Sam. vii. 17. Jer. xxiii. 28.
r 2 Sam. vii. 18. 2 Kings xix 14. Gen. xxxii. 10. Ps. cxliv. 3.
s Judg. vi. 15. 1 Sam ix. 21.
t Gen xlviii. 15, 16. 1 Sam. vii 12. Acts xxvi 22. 2 Cor. i. 10.
u 7, 8. 2 Sam. vii. 19. xii. 8. 2 Kings iii. 13. Is. xlix. 6.
x 11 — 15. Eph. iii. 20.
y 1 Kings iii. 13. Ps lxxviii. 70—73. lxxxix. 19, &c. Phil. ii. 8—11.
z 1 Sam. ii. 30. 2 Sam. vii. 20—24.
a 1 Sam. xvi. 7. Ps xxxix 1. John xxi. 17. Rev. ii. 23.
b Is xxxvii. 35. xlii. 1. xlix. 3. 6. Matt. xi 25. Eph. i. 9 — 11. iii. 11.

* Heb. *greatnesses.* xxix. 11, 12. Ps. cxi 3. 6.
e Ex xv. 11. xviii 11. Deut. iii. 24. Ps. lxxxix. 6. 8. Is. xl. 18. 25. Jer x. 6, 7.
f Deut. iv. 35. 39. 1 Sam. ii. 2. Is. xliii. 10. xliv. 6. xlv. 5. 22.
g Ps. xliv. 1. lxxviii 3, 4. Is. lxii 11.
h Deut. iv. 7. 32—34. xxxiii. 26—29. Ps. cxlvii. 20.
i Ex. iii. 7, 8. xix. 4—6. Deut. xv. 15. Ps. lxxvii. 15. cvii. 2. cxi. 9. Is. lxiii 9. Tit ii 14.
k Neh. ix. 10. Is. xlviii. 9. Ez. xx. 9, 10.
l Deut iv. 34. Ps. lxv. 5. lxvi. 3—7. cxiv. 3 — 8. Is. lxiv. 3.
m Deut. vii. 1, 2. Josh. x. 42. xxi. 43 — 45. xxiv 11, 12. Ps xliv 2, 3.
n Gen. xvii. 7. Deut xxvi. 18, 19. 1 Sam. xii. 22. Jer xxxi. 31 — 34. Zech xiii. 9. Rom ix. 4—6. 25, 26. 1 Pet. ii. 9.
o Gen. xxxii. 12. 2 Sam vii. 25—29. Ps cxix. 49. Jer. xi. 5. Luke i. 38.
p 2 Chr. vi. 33. Ps xxi. 13. lxxii. 19. Matt. vi. 9. 13. John xii. 28. 1 Pet. iv. 11.
q Jer xxxi. 1. Heb. xi. 16.
r Heb. *revealed the ear of.* 1 Sam. ix. 15.
s 10.
s Ps. x. 17. Ez. xxxvi. 27. 1 John v. 14, 15.
t Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. Tit. i. 2. Heb. vi 18.
‡ Or, *it hath pleased.*
u Gen xxvii. 33. Ps. lxii 17. Rom. xi. 28. Eph. i. 3.

V. 14. In the parallel passage the Lord says to David, "*thine* house, and *thy* kingdom;" but here "*mine house*," &c. The Lord was Israel's King; and David and Solomon were his vicegerents, as well as types of the Messiah, in whose church and kingdom all these promises and predictions have their grand fulfilment.

V. 17. *Thou hast*, &c. In the parallel passage we read, "Is this the manner of men, O LORD!" It was not the manner of men to raise a poor shepherd to be a renowned and powerful king. Some expositors, however, suppose, that David here referred to the Messiah himself, the seed of the woman, the greatest of the human race, being also "the Lord from heaven;" in whose *line* God had placed David as the progenitor, and had honoured him as the type of his anointed king. In this sense the words may be rendered, "Thou hast looked upon me, according "to the order, or line of that exalted Man, who is above "all," O LORD God. And we know that "David in "Spirit called him Lord;" though he knew he was to be his Son.

V. 19. *Thy servant's sake.* In the second of Samuel we read, "For thy *word's* sake." The promise, in fulfilling which, God conferred these benefits on David and his race, was first given from love to him, as a type of Christ, "his Servant in whom his soul de-"lighteth."

V. 24. *A God to Israel.* The Lord not only, as "the "God of Israel," required worship and obedience; but he was himself the all-sufficient Friend and Patron of his chosen people.

CHAP. XVIII.

David subdues the Philistines, and makes the Moabites tributary, 1, 2. *He smites Hadarezer and the Syrians,* 3—8. *Tou, king of Hamath, sends his son to David with presents, which he dedicates, with the spoil, unto God,* 9—11. *He puts garrisons into Edom,* 12, 13. *He reigns in equity,* 14. *His principal officers,* 15—17.

a 2 Sam. vii. 9.

NOW [a] after this it came to pass, that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them, and took [b] Gath and her towns out of the hand of the Philistines.

b 2 Sam. viii. 1. *Metheg-ammah.*

2 And [c] he smote Moab; and the Moabites became David's servants, *and* [d] brought gifts.

c Num. xxiv 17. 2 Sam. viii. 2. Ps lx. 8.

d 1 Kings x. 2. 5. 2 Kings iii. 4. 5. Ps lxviii 29, 30. lxxii. 8—10. Is. xvi. 1.

3 And David smote [e] Hadarezer king of [f] Zobah unto Hamah, as he went to stablish his dominion [g] by the river Euphrates.

e 2 Sam viii. 3. *Hadadezer.*

f 1 Sam. xiv. 47. 2 Sam. x. 6. Ps lx. *title*

g Gen. xv. 18. Ex xxiii. 31

4 And David took from him a thousand chariots, and [h] seven thousand horsemen, and twenty thousand footmen: David also [i] houghed all the chariot-*horses*, but reserved of them [k] an hundred chariots.

h 2 Sam. viii. 4. *seven hundred.*

i Deut. xvii 16. Josh. xi. 6 9. Ps. xx. 7. xxxiii. 16, 17.

k 1 kings ix. 19. x. 26.

5 And when [l] the Syrians of * Damascus came [m] to help Hadarezer king of Zobah, David slew of the Syrians two and twenty thousand men.

l 2 Sam. viii. 5. 6.

* Heb. *Darmesek.*

m Is. viii. 9. 10.

6 Then David put *garrisons* in Syria-damascus; and the Syrians [n] became David's servants, *and* brought gifts. [o] Thus the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went.

n 2. Ps. xviii. 43, 44.

o xvii. 9. Ps. cxxi. 8. Prov xxi. 31.

7 And David took [p] the shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadarezer, and brought them to Jerusalem.

p 1 Kings x. 16, 17. xiv. 26.

8 Likewise from [q] Tibhath, and from Chun, cities of Hadarezer, brought David very much brass, [r] wherewith Solomon made the brazen sea, and the pillars, and the vessels of brass.

q 2 Sam viii. 8 *Betah. Berotha.*

r xxii. 14. 1 Kings vii. 15. &c. 40—47. 2 Chr. iv. 2—6. 12—18. Jer. lii. 17—23.

9 ¶ Now when [s] Tou king of Hamath heard how David had smitten all the host of Hadarezer king of Zobah,

s 2 Sam. viii. 9. *Toi.*

10 He sent * Hadoram his son to king David, to † inquire of his welfare, and to ‡congratulate him, because he had fought against Hadarezer, and smitten him: (for Hadarezer ∮ had war with Tou;) and *with him* [t] all manner of vessels of gold, and silver, and brass.

* *Joram.* 2 Sam. viii. 10.

† Or, *salute him.*

‡ Heb. *bless him.*

∮ Heb. *was the man of wars.*

t 2 Chr. ix. 1. 23. 24. Is. xxxix. 1.

11 Them also king David [u] dedicated unto the LORD, with the silver and the gold that he brought from all *these* nations; from Edom, and from Moab, and

u xxii. 14. xxvi. 20. 26, 27. xxix. 14. Ex. xxxv. 5. 21—24. 2 Sam. viii. 11, 12. 2 Chr. v. 1. Mic. iv. 13.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The repetitions in the word of God may be considered as tacit reproofs of our negligence, forgetfulness, and unteachableness. Indeed we are very backward to get familiarly acquainted with *every part* of the sacred volume, and very prone to forget what we have read; so that we need to be taught again what we seem to have already learned: and for all these reasons it is very useful to have the same important truths, precepts, and examples enforced on us, in different parts of the Scriptures. If, in reading any chapter, or hearing any sermon, we learn nothing new; yet are reminded of those things of which we had lost sight, and stirred up to the exercise of faith and holy affections, and to the more diligent, fervent, and delightful practice of our several duties; very important purposes are answered. It may, however, suffice to observe in this place, that persons of eminent piety will still be devising and attempting one service after another for the honour of God, and to promote the best interests of mankind: accounting themselves to have done nothing, whilst so much remains to be done: that Christ alone begins and finishes his work, and perpetually unites in his own person all those offices which are requisite for the welfare of his church; but that mere men have, for a short space, certain portions of service allotted them, which they cannot exceed; that God accepts and rewards those good desires, which he is pleased for wise reasons to frustrate; that his favour and his image ennoble the meanest of his people, above the estate of men of high degree: that we cannot possibly desire more for ourselves, or for the church, than he hath promised: that true grace desires all this, and wants no more; and true faith, in vigorous exercise, seeks, asks, expects, and waits for it all, in the way which God hath prescribed: and that, if we serve the Lord, as a God, *over us*, in dependence on his mercy through Jesus Christ, he will be a God *to us;* and they whom he blesseth, will be blessed for evermore. For this blessedness may we look, with patient submission and joyful expectation, amidst the trials of life, and in the hour of death; and may the same be continued to our children and posterity after us, through successive generations!

NOTES.

CHAP. XVIII. V. 1. In the parallel passage Gath is called *Metheg-ammah*, or the *bridle of Ammah*, as built on a natural strong hold, called Ammah, and intended to bridle, or keep in subjection, the adjacent country. The rest of this chapter has already been commented on. (*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* viii.—*Marg. Ref.*)

x xx. 1, 2.
y Ps. lxxxiii. 6, 7.
* Heb. *Abshai.* xix. 11. 15
z 2 Sam. viii. 13. Ps. lx. *title.* 8, 9.
a 2 Kings xiv. 7.
b 6.
c Gen. xxv. 23. xxvii. 29. 37. 40. Num. xxiv. 18.
d Ps. xviii. 48—50.
e xii. 38.
f 2 Sam. viii. 15. Ps lxxviii. 71, 72. Is. ix. 7. xxxii. 1, 2. Jer. xxii. 15. xxiii. 5, 6. xxxiii. 15.
g xi. 6. 2 Sam. viii. 16.
h 1 Kings iv. 3.
† Or, *remembrancer.*
i 2 Sam. viii. 17. *Ahimelech.*
k 2 Sam xx. 25. 1 Kings ii. 35.
l 2 Sam. viii. 17. *Seraiah.* xx. 25. *Sheva.* 1 Kings iv. 3. *Shisha.*
m 2 Sam. viii. 18. xv. 18. xx. 7. 23. 1 Kings i 38.
n Zeph. ii. 5.
‡ Heb. *at the hand of.*

x from the children of Ammon, and from the Philistines, and from y Amalek.

12 Moreover * Abishai the son of Zeruiah z slew of the Edomites in a the valley of salt eighteen thousand.

13 And he put b garrisons in Edom; and all the Edomites c became David's servants. d Thus the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went.

14 ¶ So e David reigned over all Israel, and f executed judgment and justice among all his people.

15 And g Joab the son of Zeruiah *was* over the host; and h Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud † recorder.

16 And Zadok the son of Ahitub, and i Abimelech the son of k Abiathar, *were* the priests; and l Shavsha was scribe;

17 And m Benaiah the son of Jehoiada *was* over the n Cherethites and the Pelethites; and the sons of David *were* chief ‡ about the king.

CHAP. XIX.

David sends ambassadors to comfort the king of Ammon, who abuses and insults them, 1—5. *The Ammonites and Syrians are vanquished by Joab and Abishai,* 6—15. *The king of Syria sends another army, which David conquers, slaying its commander,* 16—18. *The Syrians submit to David,* 19.

B. C. 1037.
a 1 Sam. xi. 1, 2. 2 Sam x. 1—3.

NOW it came to pass after this, that a Nahash the king of the children of Ammon died, and his son reigned in his stead.

2 And David said, b I will shew kindness unto Hanun the son of Nahash, because his father shewed kindness to me. And David sent messengers to comfort him concerning his father. So the servants of David came into the land of the children of Ammon, to Hanun, to comfort him.

3 But the princes of the children of Ammon said to Hanun, * Thinkest thou that David doth honour thy father, d that he hath sent comforters unto thee? are not his servants come unto thee for e to search, and to overthrow, and to spy out the land?

4 Wherefore f Hanun took David's servants, and g shaved them, and h cut off their garments in the midst, hard by their buttocks, and i sent them away.

5 Then there went *certain,* and told David how the men were served. And he sent to meet them: for the men were greatly ashamed. And the king said, k Tarry at Jericho until your beards be grown, and *then* return.

6 And when the children of Ammon saw that they had made themselves † odious to David, Hanun and the children of Ammon sent l a thousand talents of silver, to hire them chariots and horsemen out of Mesopotamia, and out of Syria-maachah, and out of m Zobah.

7 So they n hired thirty and two thousand chariots, and o the king of Maachah and his people; who came and pitched before p Medeba. And the children of Ammon gathered themselves together from their cities, and came to battle.

b 1 Sam xxx 26. 2 Sam. ix. 1. 7.
c Deut. xxiii. 3—6 Neh. iv. 3. 7. xiii. 1.
* Heb. *In thine eyes doth David.*
d 1 Cor. xiii. 5—7.
e Gen. xiii. 9. Josh. ii. 1—3. Judg i 23, 24. xviii. 2. 8—10.
f Ps xxxv. 12. cix. 4, 5.
g Lev. xix. 27. Is. xv. 2. Jer xli. 5. xlviii. 37.
h Is xx. 4 xlvii. 2, 3.
i 2 Sam. x. 4, 5. 2 Chr xxxvi. 16. Mark xii. 4.
k Josh. vi. 24—26. 1 Kings xvi. 34.
† Heb. *to stink.* Gen. xxxiv. 30. Ex. v. 21. 1 Sam. xiii. 4. xxvii. 12. Luke x. 16.
l 2 Chr. xvi 2, 3. xxv. 6.
m xviii. 5. 9.
n xviii. 4. Ex. xiv. 9. Judg iv. 3. 1 Sam. xiii. 5. 2 Chr xiv. 9. Ps xx. 7—9.
o 2 Sam. x. 6. *king Maacah.*
p Num. xxi. 30. Josh. xiii. 9. Is. xv. 2.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

They, who seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, shall, in due time and manner, have all other things added unto them. Communion with God, and his consolations, are intended to animate us to diligence in our proper work, and vigour in our spiritual warfare. Earthly possessions are often lost by attempting to establish them: and sinners ruin themselves by encouraging and assisting one another, in rebellion against God, and opposition to his cause. Our good fight of faith, under the Captain of our salvation, will assuredly issue in everlasting triumph and peace. But the happiness of Israel, through David's victories and equitable administration, very faintly shadowed forth the felicity of the redeemed in the realms above, when the last enemy shall be destroyed, and Jesus shall reign in the midst of them for ever and ever, and they shall behold and share the joy and glory of his kingdom. Let us then, without delay, join ourselves to him, trusting and serving him constantly and faithfully, that at length we may be for ever with him.

NOTES.

CHAP. XIX. V. 1. (*Notes,* 2 *Sam.* x.)

V. 6. *Syria-maachah,* or *Aram-macha.* Maachah lay to the east of Jordan, and had been allotted to Manasseh: but it is probable, that the Syrians had gotten possession of it; and that it was thence called Syria-maachah. (*Deut.* iii. 14. *Josh.* xiii. 5.)

V. 7. Thirty-two thousand *soldiers,* (exclusive of those sent by the king of Maachah,) are mentioned in the parallel passage: but thirty-two thousand *chariots* are here

8 And when David heard *of it*, he sent [q] Joab and all the host of the mighty men.

9 And the children of Ammon came out, and [r] put the battle in array before the gate of the city: and [s] the kings that were come *were* by themselves in the field.

10 Now when Joab saw that the * battle was [t] set against him before and behind, he chose out of all the † choice of Israel, and put *them* in array against the Syrians.

11 And the rest of the people he delivered unto the hand of ‡ Abishai his brother, and they set *themselves* in array against the children of Ammon.

12 And he said, [u] If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me: but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will help thee.

13 [x] Be of good courage, and let us behave ourselves valiantly for our people, and for the cities of our God: and [y] let the LORD do *that which is* good in his sight.

14 So Joab, and the people that *were* with him, drew nigh before the Syrians unto the battle; and [z] they fled before him.

15 And when the children of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fled, [a] they likewise fled before Abishai his brother, and entered into the city. Then Joab came to Jerusalem.

16 ¶ And when the Syrians saw that they were put to the worse before Israel, they sent messengers, and [b] drew forth the Syrians that *were* beyond the * river: and [c] Shophach the captain of the host of Hadarezer *went* before them.

17 And it was told David; and he gathered all Israel, and passed over Jordan, and came upon them, [d] and set *the battle* in array against them. So when David had put the battle in array against the Syrians, they fought with him.

18 But the Syrians [e] fled before Israel; and David slew of the Syrians seven thousand *men, which fought in* chariots, and forty thousand [f] footmen, and killed Shophach the captain of the host.

19 And when [g] the servants [h] of Hadarezer saw that they were put to the worse before Israel, they made peace with David, and became his servants: neither [i] would the Syrians help the children of Ammon any more.

q xi. 6. 10, &c. 2 Sam. xxiii. 8, &c.
r 2 Sam. xviii 4. Is. xxviii. 6 Matt. xvi 18.
s 2 Sam. x 8. 1 Kings. xx. 1. 24. Dan. ii. 37.
* Heb. *face of the battle was.* 2 Sam. x. 9—14
t Josh viii 22 Judg. xx. 42, 43
† Or, *young men.*
‡ Heb. *Abshai.* xi. 20. xviii. 12.
u Neh. iv. 29. Ec. iv. 9—12. Gal. vi. 2. Phil, i. 27, 28.
x Deu. xxxi. 6, 7. 1 Sam. iv. 9. xiv 6—12. xvii. 32. 2. Neh. iv. 14. 1 Cor. xvi. 13.
y Judg. x. 15. 2 Sam iii. 18 xv. 26. xvi. 10, 11. Job i. 21.
z 1 Kings xx. 13, 14. 19—21. 28—30. 2 Chr. xiii. 5—16.
a Lev. xxvi. 7. Beut. viii. 31.
b Ps ii 1. Is. viii. 9, 10. Mic iv. 11, 12 Zech. xiv 1—3.
* *Euphrates.* 6.
c 2 Sam. x. 16. *Shobach.*
d Is. xxii. 6, 7.
e 13, 14 Ps. xviii. 32. xxxiii. 16. xlvi. 11.
f 2 Sam. x. 18. *horsemen.*
g 2 Sam. x. 19.
h Gen. xiv. 4, 5. Josh. xi. 10.
i xiv. 17. Ps xlviii. 3—6.

CHAP. XX.

Rabbah is taken and spoiled, and the inhabitants are treated with severity, 1—3. *Three giants are slain by David's servants, in three battles against the Philistines,* 4—8.

AND [a] it came to pass, that * after the year was expired, at the time that kings go out *to battle,* Joab led forth the power of the army, and [b] wasted the country of the children of Ammon, and came and besieged Rabbah. But David

B. C. 1035.
a 2 Sam. xi. 1.
* Heb *at the return of the year.* 1 Kings xx. 22. 26.
b Is. vi. 11. Hos 16.

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reckoned up. Either some trivial mistake has crept into the text, in respect of the number, or kind, of these auxiliaries; or they were used in general to fight, some on foot and others on horseback; yet on some occasions they all could drive and fight from chariots of war.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We may expect, that in this world our kindest actions will often be requited with the basest returns, and our best intentions expose us to the most injurious suspicions. Even in our most implicit obedience to our great and gracious Lord, when we most sincerely desire to do good to our fellow creatures, we must lay our account with ingratitude, contempt, and abuse. But these things should not discourage us; for he will plead our cause, and both comfort us, and kindly recompense all that we endure for his sake: and after his example *we also* should endeavour to make up to those that serve us, every loss that they are exposed to in executing our orders. In every case the servants of God, though here disgraced, will finally be honoured: but none of his enemies will bring upon themselves more sudden and terrible vengeance, than they who insult his ambassadors, when sent with a message of peace and salvation. The only safety of us sinners consists in submitting to God, making our peace with him, and becoming his servants: thus separating from those who persist in their opposition and rebellion, we may escape their doom. When prudence, vigilance, courage, and diligence, have been used in a good cause, and we have mutually assisted each other; we may confidently leave the event to the Lord, "Let him do what "seemeth him good." But we may sometimes fear, lest being instruments of good to others, we should ourselves be found to come short of salvation, through unbelief and impenitent continuance in sin.

c 2 Sam. xii. 26—31.

tarried at Jerusalem. And [c] Joab smote Rabbah, and destroyed it.

2 And David took the crown of their king from off his head, and found * it to weigh a talent of gold, and *there were* precious stones in it; and it was set upon David's head: and he brought also exceeding much spoil out of the city.

* Heb. *the weight of it.*

3 And he brought out the people that *were* in it; [d] and cut *them* [e] with saws, and with harrows of iron, and with axes. Even so dealt David with all the cities of the children of Ammon. And David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

d xix 2—5 Ps. xxi. 8. 9.
e Ex. i 14. Josh. ix. 23. Judg. viii 6, 7. 16. 17. 1 Kings ix. 21.

B. C. 1018.

4 ¶ And it came to pass after this, that [f] there † arose a war at [g] Gezer with the Philistines: at which time [h] Sibbechai the Hushathite slew [i] Sippai, *that was* of the children of the ‡ giant: and they were subdued.

f 2 Sam. xxi. 15.
† Or, *continued.* Heb *stood.*
g 2 Sam. xxi. 18. *Gob.*
h xi. 29. *Sibbecai.*
i 2 Sam xxi. 18. *Saph.*
‡ Or, *Rapha.*

5 And there was war again with the Philistines; and Elhanan the son of [k] Jair slew Lahmi, the brother of Goliath the Gittite, whose spear's staff *was* like a weaver's beam.

k 2 Sam. xxi. 19. *Jaare-oregim.*

6 And yet again there was war at Gath, where was a man § of *great* stature, whose fingers and toes *were* four and twenty, six *on each hand,* and six *on each foot:* and he also was ‖ the son of the giant.

§ Heb. *of measure.* 2 Sam. xxi. 20.
‖ Heb. *born to the giant,* or, *Rapha.*

7 But when [l] he * defied Israel, Jonathan the son of [m] Shimea David's brother slew him.

l 1 Sam. xvii. 10. 26. 36. Is. xxxvii. 23.
* Or, *reproached.*
m ii. 13. *Shimma.* 1 Sam. xvi. 9. *hammah.*

8 These were born unto the giant in Gath; and [n] they fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants.

n Josh. xiv. 12. Ec ix 11. Jer. ix. 23. Rom. viii. 31.

CHAP. XXI.

David, tempted by Satan, requires Joab to number the people, 1—4. *The number is returned to the king,* 5, 6. *God is displeased; and David owns his fault,* 7, 8. *The Lord, by Gad the prophet, proposes three judgments to David, who chooses three days' pestilence,* 9—13. *Seventy thousand are cut off; and David, seeing the destroying angel intercedes for the people,* 14—17. *Directed by Gad, he buys Ornan's threshing-floor; he sacrifices, fire consumes the oblation, and the plague is stayed,* 18—27. *He again sacrifices there, fearing to go unto Gibeon,* 28—30.

AND [a] Satan stood up against Israel, and [b] provoked David to number Israel

a 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. 1 Kings xxii. 20—22. Job i 6—12. ii. 4—6. Zech. iii. 1. Matt iv. 3. Luke xxii 31. John xiii. 2. Acts v. 3 Sam. i. 13 Rev. xii. 10.
b Luke xi 53. Heb x 24.

2 And David said to [c] Joab and to the rulers of the people, Go, number Israel, from [d] Beer-sheba even to Dan; and [e] bring the number of them to me, [f] that I may know *it.*

c 2 Sam. xxiv. 2—4.
d Judg xx. 1. 2 Sam xvii. 11.
e xxvii 23, 24.
f Deut viii 13—17. 2 Chr. xxxii. 25, 25. Prov. xxix. 23. 2 Cor. xii. 7.

3 And Joab answered, [g] The LORD make his people an hundred times so many more as they *be:* but, my lord the

g xix. 13. Ps. cxv. 14. Prov. xiv. 28. Is. xxvi. 15. xlviii. 19.

NOTES.

CHAP. XX. V. 1—3. The whole account of David's adultery, and the sins and sufferings consequent upon it, is here entirely omitted. (*Notes,* 2 *Sam.* xii. 26—31. xxi. 15—22. *Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

A pious, and benevolent mind cannot possibly *delight* in mentioning the transgressions of useful and eminent men. So that if truth and candour will permit, and if no good purpose can be answered by speaking, persons of this character will choose to be silent: though they will by no means set themselves to deny, excuse, or extenuate the sins of any man, when they cannot honestly conceal them. It however, proves a malignant or an unfeeling mind, to be always raking into the miscarriages of others, especially those of superior reputation in the world or in the church. —The conflicts of believers, like those of David, will be successive, as long as they live here, and sometimes the sharpest are reserved till the last: and their victories will be gradual, as their enemies will still be renewing their assaults, and recovering their strength. Though the Lord severely correct the sins of his own believing people, he will not leave them in the hands of their enemies. His assistance far more than counterbalances all the advantages in number and strength of those that defy his Israel; and all that trust in him shall be made more than conquerors, through him that loved them.

NOTES.

CHAP XXI. V. 1. (*Notes,* 2 *Sam.* xxiv.) 'God, 'being angry with Israel, suffered Satan to move David to 'number them. The phrase *stood up* is to be observed; 'which was the posture of those who charged or accused 'any person of a crime, in a court of justice. Thus 'Satan is represented as *the accuser of the brethren,* in the 'book of the Revelation; and here to lay some sin to the 'charge of the Israelites, which he represented to God as 'a reason to punish them. For it is the way of the holy 'Scripture, thus to bring down these things, and accom-'modate them to the lowest capacities.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

king, *are* they not all my lord's servants? why then doth my lord require this thing? [h] why will he be a cause of trespass to Israel?

4 Nevertheless [i] the king's word prevailed against Joab. [k] Wherefore Joab departed, and went throughout all Israel, and came to Jerusalem.

5 And Joab gave the sum of the number of the people unto David. And all *they of* Israel were [l] a thousand thousand and an hundred thousand men that drew sword: and Judah *was* four hundred threescore and ten thousand men that drew sword.

6 But [m] Levi and Benjamin counted he not among them: for the king's word was [n] abominable to Joab.

7 * And [o] God was displeased with this thing; therefore [p] he smote Israel.

8 And David said unto God, [q] I have sinned greatly, because I have done this thing: but now, I beseech thee, [r] do away the iniquity of thy servant; for [s] I have done very foolishly.

9 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Gad, [t] David's seer, saying,

10 Go and tell David, saying, Thus saith the LORD, I † offer thee three *things;* [u] choose thee one of them that [x] I may do *it* unto thee.

11 So Gad came to David, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD,‡ Choose thee,

12 Either [y] three years famine; or [z] three months to be destroyed before thy foes, while that the sword of thine enemies overtaketh *thee;* or else [a] three days [b] the sword of the LORD, even the pestilence, in the land, and [c] the angel of the LORD destroying throughout all the coasts of Israel. [d] Now therefore advise thyself, what word I shall bring again to him that sent me.

13 And David said unto Gad, [e] I am in a great strait: [f] let me fall now into the hand of the LORD; for very ‖ great *are* his mercies: but [g] let me not fall into the hand of man.

14 ¶ So [h] the LORD sent pestilence upon Israel: and there fell of Israel [i] seventy thousand men.

15 And God sent an angel [k] unto Jerusalem to destroy it: and as he was destroying, the LORD beheld, and he [l] repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed, [m] It is enough, stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD stood by the threshing floor of [n] Ornan the Jebusite.

16 And David lifted up his eyes and [o] saw the angel of the LORD stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders *of Israel, who were* [p] clothed in sackcloth, [q] fell upon their faces.

17 And David said unto God, [r] *Is it* not I *that* commanded the people to be numbered? even I it is that have sinned and done evil indeed: but *as for* [s] these sheep, [t] what have they done? [u] Let thine hand, I pray thee, O LORD my God, be on me, and [x] on my father's house; but not on thy people, [y] that they should be plagued.

18 ¶ Then [z] the angel of the LORD commanded Gad to say to David, that David should go up, and set up an altar unto the LORD in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

19 And David went up at the saying of Gad, which he spake in the name of the LORD.

20 * And Ornan turned back, and saw the angel; and his four sons with him hid themselves. Now Ornan was threshing wheat.

21 And as David came to Ornan, Ornan looked and saw David, and went out of the threshing floor, and [a] bowed himself to David with *his* face to the ground.

22 Then David said to Ornan, † Grant me the place of *this* threshing floor, that I may build an altar therein unto the LORD; [b] thou shalt grant it me for the full price: [c] that the plague may be stayed from the people.

h Gen. xxi. 9. Ex. xxxii. 21. Num. xxxii. 9, 10.
i Ec. viii. 4.
k Ex. i. 17. Dan. iii. 18. Acts v. 29.
l xxvii. 23, 24. 2 Sam. xxiv. 9.
m Num. i. 47—49.
n 2 Sam. iii. 27. xi. 15—21. xx. 9, 10.
* Heb. *And it was evil in the eyes of the LORD concerning this thing*
o 2 Sam. xi. 27. 1 Kings xv. 5.
p 14. Josh. vii. 1. 5. 13. xxii. 16—26. 2 Sam. xxi. 1. 14. xxiv. 1.
q 2 Sam. xii. 13. Ps. xxv. 11. xxxii. 5. Jer. iii. 13. Luke xv. 18, 19. 1 John i. 9.
r Ps. li. 1—3. Hos. xiv. 2. John i. 29.
s Gen. xxxiv. 7. 1 Sam. xiii. 13. xxv. 21. 2 Sam. xiii. 13. 2 Chr. xvi. 9.
t xxix. 29. 1 Sam. ix. 9. 2 Sam. xxiv. 11.
† Heb. *stretch out.*
u Josh. xxiv. 15. Prov. i. 29—31.
x Num. xx. 12. 2 Sam. xii. 10—12. 1 Kings xiii. 22. Prov. iii. 12. Rev. iii. 19.
‡ Heb. *Take to thee.*
y Lev. xxvi. 26—29. 2 Sam. xxi. 1. 1 Kings xvii. 1. 2 Kings viii. 1. Lam. iv. 9.
z Lev. xxvi. 17, 36, 37. Deut. xxviii. 25, 51, 52.
a Lev. xxvi. 16, 25. Deut. xxviii. 22, 27, 35. Ps. xci. 6.
b Jer. xii. 12. Ez. xiv. 18—21.
c 16, 17. Ex. xii. 23. 2 Kings xix. 35. Matt. xiii. 49, 50. Acts xii. 23. Rev. vii. 1—3.
d 2 Sam. xxiv. 13, 14.
e 2 Kings vi. 15. Esth. iv. 11, 16. John xii. 27. Phil. i. 23.
f Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. Ps. lxxxvi. 6, 15. ciii. 8. cxxx. 7. Lam. iii. 32. Jon. iii. 9. iv. 2. Hab. iii. 2.
‖ Or. *many*
g 2 Chr. xxviii. 9. Prov. xii. 10. Is. xlvii. 6.
h Num. xvi. 46—49. 2 Sam. xxiv. 15.
i Ex. xii. 30. Num. xxv. 9. 1 Sam. vi. 19. 2 Kings xix. 35.
k 2 Sam. xxiv. 16. Jer. vii. 12. xxvi. 9, 18. Matt. xxiii. 37, 38.
l Gen. vi. 6. Ex. xxxii. 14. Judg. ii. 18. x. 16. Ps. lxxviii. 38. Jer. xviii. 7—10.
m Ps. xc. 15. Mark xiv. 41.
n 2 Sam. xxiv. 18. *Araunah.* 2 Chr. iii. 1.
o Ex. xiv. 19, 20. 2 Kings vi. 17.
p 1 Kings xxi. 27. 2 Kings xix. 1. Ps. xxxv. 14, 15. Jon. iii. 6—8.
q Num. xiv. 5. xvi. 22.
r 8. 2 Sam. xxiv. 17. Ps. li. 4. Ez. xvi. 63.
s 1 Kings xxii. 17. Ps. xliv. 11.
t 2 Sam. xxiv. 1.
u Gen. xliv. 33. Ex. xxxii. 32, 33. John x. 11, 12. Rom. ix. 3. 1 John iii. 16.
x Ex. xx. 5. 2 Sam. xii. 10. Ps. li. 14. Is. xxxix. 8.
y Josh. xxii. 18.
z 2 Sam. xxiv. 18. 2 Chr. iii. 1. Acts viii. 26.
* Or *When Ornan turned back and saw the angel, then he and his four sons with him hid themselves.*
a 1 Sam. xxv. 23. 2 Sam. xxiv. 18—20.
† Heb. *Give.* 1 Kings xxi. 21.
b 2 Sam. xxiv. 21.
c Num. xvi. 48. xxv. 8.

V. 20. The destroying angel was rendered visible, not only to David and the elders of Israel, but to Ornan and his sons also. Indeed it is probable, that this awful vision of the angel with a "drawn sword in his hand, stretched out over Jerusalem," continued apparent to all the inhabitants, till David had offered the appointed sacrifices.

d Gen. xxiii. 4—6.

23 And Ornan said unto David, [d] Take *it* to thee, and let my lord the king do *that which is* good in his eyes: lo, I give *thee* the oxen *also* for burnt-offerings, and the threshing instruments for wood, and the wheat for the meat-offering; I give it all.

24 And king David said to Ornan, [e] Nay, but I will verily buy it for the full price; for I will not take *that* which *is* thine for the LORD, nor offer burnt-offerings without cost.

e Gen. xiv. 23. xxiii. 13. Mal. i. 12—14. Rom. xii. 17.

f 2 Sam. xxiv. 24, 25.

25 So [f] David gave to Ornan for the place six hundred shekels of gold by weight.

26 And David built there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt-offerings, and peace-offerings, and called upon the LORD; and he answered him from heaven [g] by fire upon the altar of burnt-offering.

g Lev. ix. 24. Judg. vi. 21. xiii. 20. 1 Kings xviii. 38. 2 Chr. iii. 1. vii. 1.

27 And [h] the LORD commanded the angel; and he put up his sword again into the sheath thereof.

h 2 Sam. xxiv. 16.

28 At that time when David saw that the LORD had answered him in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, then he sacrificed there.

29 For [i] the tabernacle of the LORD which Moses made in the wilderness, and the altar of the burnt-offering, *were* at that season in the high place at [k] Gibeon.

i Ex. xl. 1, &c.

k xvi. 39. 1 Kings iii. 4. 2 Chr. i. 3.

30 But David could not go before it to inquire of God: for [l] he was afraid, because of the sword of the angel of the LORD.

l Ps. cxix. 120. Heb. xii. 28, 29.

V. 26. The fire from heaven was an emblem of divine vindictive justice against sinners: but its consuming the sacrifices, and sparing the offenders, who thus pleaded guilty and sought mercy, was the highest token of the Lord's acceptance, and a type of our salvation by the propitiatory sufferings of Christ for us. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 28—30. David in general had been used to sacrifice at Gibeon: but on this emergency he was afraid to leave Jerusalem, lest the angel should smite the inhabitants: and having been accepted at the the threshing floor of Ornan, he continued afterwards to offer sacrifices there.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Whilst we remain on earth Satan has access to us through the remains of sin, especially of pride, in our hearts: and the Lord hath wise and righteous reasons for permitting this enemy, under certain restrictions, to tempt his servants. As far as he obtains this permission, he is unwearied in his malicious efforts to deceive, to defile, or to distress us; and he can vary his devices in numerous plausible ways: But he does us more harm as a seducer than as an accuser, as a subtle serpent than as a roaring lion. We are therefore called upon to be sober and vigilant, and to pray always that we enter not into temptation: and as men advance in rank and reputation, authority, or usefulness, they have need to redouble their guard, and to be more watchful and instant in prayer than ever; for the enemy levels his assaults especially against those that are eminent in character, or fill up public stations, in the church or the community; because their falls involve numbers either in sin or suffering. It is a mercy to be speedily made sensible of our guilt, when we have been left to transgress: but no confession or humiliation can secure us from present sufferings, when we have committed such crimes, as appear abominable even to ungodly men, and bring an open scandal upon our profession.—By thus yielding to temptation we bring ourselves into dreadful straits, from which we can by no means extricate ourselves; yet even in this case, there is encouragement for us to leave ourselves in the hand of the Lord, that he may do with us as he pleases; for very great are his mercies. Of all the painful consequences of our transgressions, none in this world can be more distressing to an ingenuous mind, than to see those whom we most love, and desire the most to do good to, suffering heavily through our sins. But even under the anguish of this trial we must not allow ourselves to murmur, or to despond. The Lord hath righteous reasons for his dispensations, though mysterious to us; and therefore they, who are reciprocally suffering through each other's sins, should unite together in humiliation before him, and in fervently deprecating the effects of his indignation from each other. This forms the proper business of every individual, in times of public calamity: and when public honour has thus been rendered to the righteous Author of national sufferings, his merciful interposition may be expected. He knoweth how to educe good from evil, and to over-rule our sufferings, nay, even our sins, for the good of our souls, and the promotion of true religion.—The fear of impending vengeance, from the wrath of an offended God, is naturally calculated to drive men *from him*. But in subserviency to the gospel, and through the influence of the Spirit of God, it concurs in showing sinners the preciousness of Christ, in disposing them to forsake all for him, and afterwards in enlarging the mind in grateful obedience to him, who hath saved them from so great a destruction. They who shelter their souls, as it were, under the atonement of his sacrifice, who "suffered once for sins, the "just for the unjust," will be safe from danger even in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment: and none are losers by being willing to part with all for the sake of Christ, or to dedicate all to his service.—When the urgency of our affairs constrains us to act contrary to our judgment and inclination, we shall frequently learn afterwards, that by so doing, we were preparing the way for some important benefit from the Lord to us or to others: and in the observance of his directions, we may confidently expect acceptance and returning comfort.

CHAP. XXII.

David makes large preparations for the temple, 1—5. *He instructs Solomon, and charges him to build one,* 6—16. *He commands the elders of Israel to assist him,* 17—19.

a xxii. 18—26. Deut. xii. 5—7. 11. 2 Sam. xxiv. 13. 2 Chr. iii. 1. vi. 5. 6. Ps. lxxviii. 60. 67—69. cxxxii. 13, 34. John iv. 20—23.

THEN David said, [a] This *is* the house of the LORD God, and this *is* the altar of the burnt-offering for Israel.

b 1 Kings ix. 20, 21. 2 Chr. viii. 7, 8. Is. lxi. 5. 6. Eph. ii. 12. 19—22

2 And David commanded to gather together [b] the strangers that *were* in the land of Israel: and he set [c] masons to hew wrought stones to build the house of God.

c 1 Kings v. 17, 18. vi. 7. vii. 9—12.

3 And David prepared iron in abundance for the nails for the doors of the gates, and for the joinings: and brass in abundance [d] without weight;

d 14. 1 Kings vii. 47. 2 Chr. iv. 18. Jer. lii. 20.

4 Also [e] cedar-trees in abundance: for the Zidonians, and they of Tyre, brought much cedar-wood to David.

e 2 Sam. v. 11. 1 Kings v. 1. 6—10. 2 Chr. ii. 3.

5 And David said, [f] Solomon my son *is* young and tender, and the house *that is* to be builded for the LORD *must be* [g] exceeding magnifical, of fame and of glory throughout all countries: I will *therefore* now make preparation for it. [h] So David prepared abundantly before his death.

f xxix. 1. 1 Kings iii. 7.

g 1 Kings ix. 8. 2 Chr. ii. 5. Is. lxiv. 11. Ez. vii. 20. Hag. ii. 3. 9. Luke xxi. 5.

h Deut. xxxi. 2, &c. Sc. ix. 10. John i. 30. iv. 37. 38. ix. 4. xiii. 4. 2 Pet. i. 13—15.

6 Then he called for Solomon his son, and [i] charged him to build an house for the LORD God of Israel.

i Num. xxvii. 18. 19. 23. Deut. xxxi. 14. 23. Matt. xxviiii. Acts i. 2. xx. 25—31. 1 Tim. iv. 1—6. v. 21. vi. 13. 17.

7 And David said to Solomon, My son, as for me, [k] it was in my mind to build an house [l] unto the name of the LORD my God:

k xvii. 1. xxviii. 2. xxix. 3. 2 Sam. vii. 2. 1 Kings viii. 17—19. 2 Chr. vi. 7—9. Ps. cxxxii. 5. Acts vii. 46.

8 But the word of the LORD came to me, saying, [m] Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: [n] thou shalt not build an house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight.

l Deut. xii. 5. 11. 21.

m xxviii. 3. Num. xxxi. 19, 20. 24. 1 Kings v. 3.

n 2 Sam. vii. 4, &c.

9 Behold, [o] a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and [p] I will give him rest from his enemies round about: for his name shall be * Solomon, and [q] I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days.

o xvii. 11. xxviii. 5—7. 2 Sam. vii. 12, 13.

p 1 Kings iv. 20. 25. v. 4. Ps. lxxii. 7. Is. ix. 6. 7.

* *Peaceable.*

q 2 Sam. xii. 24, 25. Job xxxiv. 29.

10 [r] He shall build an house for my name, and [s] he shall be my son, and I *will be* his father; and [t] I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever.

r xvii. 12, 13. xxviii. 6. 1 Kings v. 5. viii. 19, 20. Zech. vi. 12, 13.

s Ps. lxxxix. 26, 27. Heb. i. 5.

t xvii. 14. xxviii. 7. Ps. lxxxix. 36, 37. Is. ix. 7.

11 Now, my son, [u] the LORD be with thee; and prosper thou, and build the house of the LORD thy God, as he hath said of thee.

u 16. xxviii. 20. Is. xxvi. 12. Matt. xxviii. 20. Rom. xv. 33. 2 Tim. iv. 22.

12 Only [x] the LORD give thee wisdom and understanding, and give thee charge concerning Israel, that thou mayest keep the law of the LORD thy God.

x 1 Kings iii. 9—12. Ps. lxxii. 1. Prov. ii. 6, 7. Luke xxi. 15. Jam. i. 5.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXII. V. 1. The Lord having pointed out the place, where he would have sacrifice offered for averting the pestilence, and having "answered by fire from heaven;" David was assured it was his will, that the temple should be built by Solomon on this very spot. It had immediately before been in the possession of a *Jebusite*, which was an intimation of mercy intended for the Gentiles through Jesus Christ. It does not appear, whether David removed the ark thither with its tent, or whether they remained in their former place. Henceforth this became the spot, which God had "chosen to place his name there," and where sacrifices were regularly offered, as long as that dispensation lasted.

V. 2—5. David, though denied the honour of building the temple, yet out of love to so good a work, employed himself in making every kind of preparation for it. The *strangers* here mentioned seem to have been the remnant of the old inhabitants who, having submitted to David, had their lives spared and had been reduced to slavery. David had procured much cedar-wood for the temple; but Solomon had occasion for a great deal more. According to the nature of that introductory dispensation, and for an emblem of the spiritual glory of Christ and his church, Solomon's temple was built with great magnificence: that, being renowned through all countries, strangers might be induced to visit it, and thus become acquainted with JEHOVAH, and his true worship. Solomon also would need every encouragement and assistance for so great a work; that he might not be retarded from entering upon it in an early period of his reign.

V. 8—10. David was a type of Christ in his conflicts, victories, and the destruction of his obstinate enemies: but Solomon represented the Saviour triumphant, glorified, and giving peace and felicity to his willing subjects. In this latter character the Prince of peace erects his spiritual temple; and it more accorded to the nature of the Christian dispensation, and to the character of Jesus, both of which were represented in this transaction, that the temple should be built by a peaceable prince, than by a successful warrior. Yet David in his wars did the work, and sought the honour of God, and was eminently serviceable to his people. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 12. David had given Solomon exhortations and instructions; but the powerful influence of divine grace alone could form him to that wisdom, piety, and zeal, which such a work required.

13 [y] Then shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfil the statutes and judgments, which the LORD charged Moses with concerning Israel: [z] be strong, and of good courage; dread not, nor be dismayed.

14 Now, behold, in my * trouble I have prepared for the house of the LORD [a] an hundred thousand talents of gold, and a thousand thousand talents of silver; and of brass and iron [b] without weight: for it is in abundance: timber also and stone have I prepared; and thou mayest add thereto.

15 Moreover *there are* workmen with thee in abundance, † hewers and workers of stone and timber, and [c] all manner of cunning men for every manner of work.

16 Of the gold, the silver, and the brass, and the iron, *there is* no number. [d] Arise *therefore*, and be doing, and the LORD be with thee.

17 ¶ David also commanded [e] all the princes of Israel to help Solomon his son, *saying*,

18 [f] *Is* not the LORD your God with you? [g] and hath he *not* given you rest on every side? for he hath given the inhabitants of the land into mine hand; and the land is subdued [h] before the LORD, and before his people.

19 Now [i] set your heart and your soul to seek the LORD your God: arise therefore, and build ye the sanctuary of the LORD God, [k] to bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and the holy vessels of God, into the house that is to be built [l] to the name of the LORD.

y xxviii. 7. Josh. i. 7, 8. 1 Kings ii. 3. Jer. xxii. 3, 4.
z xxviii. 10. 20. Deut. xxxi. 7, 8. Josh. i. 6—9. 18. 1 Cor. xvi. 13. Eph. vi. 10. 2 Tim. ii. 1.
* Or, *poverty*.
a xxix. 4. 7. 1 Kings x. 14.
b 3.
† Or, *masons and carpenters*. 2—4.
c Ex. xxviii. 6. xxxi. 3-5 xxxv. 32—35. 1 Kings vi. 7. 14.
d Josh. i. 2. 5. 9. Judg. iv. 14 xviii. 9, 10 2 Chr. xx. 17 1 Cor. xv. 58. Eph. v. 14. Phil. ii. 12, 13 iv. 13.
e xxviii. 20. xxix. 6 2 Chr. xxiv. 17, 18. Rom. xvi 2, 3. Phil. iv. 3. 3 John 8.
f Judg. vi 12—14 Rom. viii. 31.
g xxiii 25 Deut. xii. 10, 11 Josh. xxii. 4. xxiii. 1. 2 Sam. vii 1. Acts ix 31.
h Deut. xx 4. Josh. x 42. 1 Sam. xxv. 28. 2 Sam. v. 19. 20. Ps. xliv. 1—5.
i xvi 11. xxviii. 9. Deut. iv. 29. xxxii 46, 47. 2 Chr. xx 3. Dan. ix. 3. Acts xi 23.
k 1 Kings viii. 6. 21 2 Chr. v. 7. vi. 11.
l 7. 1 Kings v. 3.

V. 13. Conscientious obedience to the commands of God, on scriptural principles, both secures final success, and inspires present courage and confidence.

V. 14. The gold and silver here mentioned, if computed by the ordinary weight of the talent, would amount to eight or nine hundred millions sterling: and this enormous quantity would more than have sufficed to erect an edifice, as large as the temple itself, apart from its courts, of solid gold and silver. Compared therefore with the size of the temple, and with the gains of Solomon, when the precious metals became common at Jerusalem; it is generally concluded, either that some mistake hath taken place in the numeral letters, or that a talent of inferior weight and value is meant. David had collected this wealth for the temple in his trouble, or in his poverty. He had set out in his life very poor; he had passed through a constant succession of trials and troubles; and all his prosperity was the result of the Lord's singular kindness in making him a gainer by all the attempts of all his numerous enemies.—He seems also to speak of his preparation as a small matter, whether compared with the greatness of the Lord to whom it was dedicated, or with his own obligations to him.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—10.

When the grace of God possesses the heart, a man's falls and mistakes will eventually be over-ruled to form him to such a humble and watchful frame of mind, as must exceedingly increase the simplicity, purity, and activity of his zeal in the service of God. The most eminent servants of the Lord are apt sometimes to abate of their diligence; and alarming providences often concur with the warnings and rebukes of the Scripture, to stir them up to greater earnestness: especially when they are reminded of the approach of death, and perceive that much remains to be done, and that probably they have only a short time in which to do it. When the Lord refuses to employ us in those kinds, and in that measure, of service to his church, which we desired and hoped to have performed; we must not on that account yield to indolence or discouragement: but we should be doing what we can, in a subordinate sphere, and upon a smaller scale; and rejoice in affording any little assistance to those who are honoured with more extensive usefulness. The "spirit indeed that is in us, powerfully "lusteth to envy;" but we must seek unto Him, who giveth more grace, that this evil may be mortified and subdued. We are not likely on earth to witness those glorious times which are foretold in the scriptures, when Satan shall no more deceive the nations, but the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea: yet it is possible that we may be, as it were, collecting materials for that work. Whatever is done towards rendering the word of God more generally known, understood, and attended to in the world, is like bringing a stone, perhaps an ingot of gold, towards erecting the edifice. Whatever tends to bring the rising generations, in succession, acquainted with the Gospel of Jesus Christ in its purity and energy, is, as it were, enlisting soldiers for that decisive conflict, in which the armies of Christ shall obtain such glorious victories. These considerations should encourage us, when we are grieved that we see no more fruits of all our labours. Much good may appear after our death, which was hidden from us, "lest we should be exalted "above measure:" "let us not then be weary of well "doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."—Above all, they who are aged, and expect shortly to be removed to a better world, should diligently instruct, encourage, charge, and caution those, who are young and inexperienced, and who are likely to succeed them in their work. The service is arduous and important, being intimately connected with the honour of God, and the salvation of souls: and who is sufficient for these things? Indeed all our sufficiency must be of God. He allots

CHAP. XXIII.

David makes Solomon king, 1. *The Levites are numbered, and classed for different services,* 2—6. *The sons of Gershon,* 7—11. *Of Kohath,* 12—20. *Of Merari,* 21—23. *The several offices of the Levites,* 24—32.

SO when David was [a] old and full of days, [b] he made Solomon his son king over Israel.

[a] Gen. xxv. 8. 1 Kings i. 1.
[b] xxxviii. 5. xxix. 22-25 1 Kings i. 33—39.

2 And [c] he gathered together all the princes of Israel, with the priests and the Levites.

[c] xiii. 1. xxviii. 1.

3 Now [d] the Levites were numbered from the age of thirty years and upward: and their number by their polls, man by

[d] Num. iv. 347, 43.

various services to his people; and that which qualifies for one kind of usefulness, may unfit for another; we should then all acquiesce in his will; and fill up our proper place for the common benefit, as the members do in the human body. But peace is in its own nature preferable to the most successful war; and the shedding of human blood, though sometimes necessary, should always be done with reluctance, and thought of with horror: for even when the Lord commanded it, he was pleased to speak of it, as shed *in his sight*, and as what he had no pleasure in beholding. We should therefore be more ambitious of the honour of giving rest and quietness to those around us, than of the conqueror's applause: "Blessed are the peace-"makers; for they shall be called the children of God." Among other unspeakable advantages of public peace, this is peculiarly important, that it affords the fairest opportunities of executing useful designs to promote true religion: and then we should be active and earnest to seize the favourable opportunity, by forming or assisting every design of general utility. But especially peace among Christians is conducive to this most desirable end; which is grievously counteracted by the animosities, divisions, and vehement controversies that, alas! prevail and are multiplied. Did all real believers "endeavour to keep the unity "of the Spirit in the bond of peace;" and to *strive together* "for the faith of the Gospel;" such effects would follow, as seem at present to exceed our largest expectations or conceptions. The work is, however, in the hands of the Prince of peace: May he compose all our differences, and build the spiritual temple so magnificent and glorious, that the fame of it may be spread into all countries, till all the nations of the earth become his willing subjects, and live ni peace with one another!

V. 11—19.

Even the young, and weak, and inexperienced, when called forth to service by the Lord, may expect that he will be with them; and that he will give them upright zealous minds, with true wisdom and understanding, and then cause them to prosper in their work. No abilities or diligence can render us durably and extensively useful to others, if we do not take heed to our own conduct, that it be regulated according to the word of God. Whilst we trust in his grace and mercy, and obey his commandments, we need fear no difficulties or opposition; the things, which seem to be against us, will work together for our good; we may be strong in the Lord, and of good courage, and not dread, or be dismayed, at the prospect of any temptations, troubles, or persecutions, which may meet us in the way of our duty. In such an age and nation as this, we of course enter, in many respects, into the labours of others: but to all the preparation hitherto made in any place, we shall find it requisite to add more; for much, very much, remains to be done to render us "a peculiar people, zealous "of good works." All our advantages, and all the promises of the Gospel, are intended to encourage our activity, and not to excuse our sloth. And whether we seek our own salvation, or that of other men, we must "arise, and "be doing." The whole weight of public services should not be laid upon those that sustain public characters. Others are commanded to assist them in proportion to their talents and abilities; and they are exhorted to set their hearts and souls thus to seek and serve the Lord, that the good works, which have been devised, may be completed without needless delay. Thus nobles, senators, magistrates, and indeed every subject in his place, should concur with the king, in every measure for checking immorality and profaneness, and for promoting the fear of God, and a regard to his truths, ordinances, and commandments: first they should lead the way by a good example; then they should proceed to employ their authority and influence to give effect to such endeavours; and finally they should seek the blessing of God upon them by fervent prayers. Thus likewise the leading persons in congregations should second to the uttermost the labours of the minister for the good of souls: their unanimity, forbearance, and cordiality; their pious examples, family-religion, and earnest prayers, should never be wanting, that they may add weight to his exhortations, strengthen his hands, encourage him in his arduous work, and bring a blessing upon it. But, alas, how contrary is the conduct of too many, who would be thought friends to the Gospel! In the church, in their families, and in their worldly concerns, they act as if they meant to counteract the labours of ministers; to weaken their influence, to discourage their hearts, to prejudice men's minds against the blessed truths which they preach, and to embolden all around them to disregard their warnings and exhortations! But surely, if "the LORD indeed be with us," and hath given us rest from our enemies; we shall turn our hearts and souls to seek him, and by every means in our power, to glorify his name, and promote the peace and prosperity of his church.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIII. V. 1, 2. This transaction seems to have preceded David's last sickness, and Adonijah's usurpation; which was thus rendered more inexcusable; for it is evident that David acted as a prophet, as well as with the full concurrence of his people.

man, was [e] thirty and eight thousand.

4 Of which twenty and four thousand *were* to * set forward the work of the house of the LORD; and six thousand *were* [f] officers and judges.

5 Moreover four thousand *were* [g] porters; and four thousand [h] praised the LORD with [i] the instruments which I made, (*said David,*) to praise *therewith.*

6 And David [k] divided them into † courses among the sons of Levi, *namely,* [l] Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

7 ¶ Of the [m] Gershonites *were* [n] Laadan and Shimei.

8 The sons of Laadan; the chief *was* [o] Jehiel, and Zetham, and [p] Joel, three.

9 The sons of Shimei; Shelomith, and Haziel, and Haran, three. These *were* the chief of the fathers of Laadan.

10 And the sons of Shimei *were* Jahath, [q] Zina, and Jeush, and Beriah. These four *were* the sons of Shimei.

11 And Jahath was the chief, and [r] Zizah the second: but Jeush and Beriah ‡ had not many sons; therefore they were in one reckoning, according to *their* father's house.

12 ¶ The [s] sons of Kohath; Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, four.

13 The [t] sons of Amram; Aaron and Moses: and Aaron was [u] separated, that he should [x] sanctify the most holy things, he and his sons for ever, [y] to burn incense before the LORD, to minister unto him, and [z] to bless in his name for ever.

14 Now *concerning* Moses [a] the man of God, [b] his sons were named of the tribe of Levi.

15 The sons of Moses *were,* [c] Gershom and Eliezer.

16 Of the sons of Gershom, [d] Shebuel *was* the chief.

17 And the sons of Eliezer *were,* Rehabiah § the chief. And Eliezer had none other sons; but the sons of Rehabiah ‖ were very many.

18 Of the sons of Izhar; [e] Shelomith the chief.

19 Of the sons of [f] Hebron; Jeriah the first, Amariah the second, Jehaziel the third, and Jekameam the fourth.

20 Of the sons of Uzziel; Micah the first, and Jesiah the second.

21 ¶ The sons of [g] Merari; [h] Mahli and Mushi. The sons of Mahli; Eleazar and Kish.

22 And Eleazar died, and [i] had no sons, but daughters: and their * brethren the sons of Kish [k] took them.

23 The sons of Mushi; Mahli, and Eder, and [l] Jeremoth, three.

24 ¶ These *were* [m] the sons of Levi after the house of their fathers: *even* the chief of the fathers, [n] as they were counted

e Num. iv. 48.
* Or, *oversee.* 28—32. vi 48 ix. 28—32. xxvi. 20—27.
f xxvi. 29—32. Deut. xvi. 18. xvii. 8—10. 2 Chr. xix. 8. Mal. ii. 7.
g ix. 17—27. xv. 23, 24. xxvi. 1—12.
h vi. 31—48. ix. 33. xv. 16—22. xvi. 41, 42. xxv. 1—7. 2 Chr. xx. 19—21. Ps. lxxxvii 7.
i 2 Chr xxix. 25. 26. Amos vi. 5.
k 2 Chr. viii. 14. xxix. 25.
† Heb. *divisions.* xxiv. 1. xxvi. 1.
l vi 1. 16 *Gershom.* Ex. vi. 16. Num. xxvi. 57, 58.
m vi. 17 20. xv. 7. xxvi 21.
n Ex. vi. 17. *Libni. Shimi.*
o xv. 18. 20, 21.
p xv. 5. 11. 17.
q 11. *Zizah.*
r 10. *Zina.*
‡ Heb. *did not multiply sons.*
s vi. 2 Ex. vi. 18. Num. iii. 27. xxvi 58
t vi. 3. Ex. vi. 20. Num iii. 27 xxvi. 59.
u Ex. xxviii. 1. Num. xviii. 1. Ps. xcix. 6. cvi. 16. Gal. i. 15. Heb. v. 4.
x Ex. xxix. 33—37. 44. xl. 9—15. Lev. x. 10. 17, 18. xvi. 11—19. 32, 33. xvii. 2—6. Num. xviii. 3—8.
y Ex. xxx. 6—10. 34—38. Lev. x. 1, 2 xvi. 12, 13. Num. xvi. 16—18. 35—40. 46, 47. 2 Chr xxvi. 18—21. Luke i. 9. Rev. viii 3.
z Lev. ix 22, 23. Num ix. 23—27. Deu. xxi. 5.
a Deu. xxxiii. 1. Ps. xc. *title.*
b xxvi 23—25.
c Ex. ii. 22. iv. 20. xviii. 3, 4.
d xxiv. 20. *Shubael.*
§ Or, *the first* xxvi. 25.
‖ Heb. were *highly multiplied*
e xxiv 22. *Shelomoth.* xxvi. 26.
f 12. xv. 9. xxiv. 23.
g 6. vi. 29, 30 xxiv. 26—30.
h Ex. vi 19 *Mahali.*
i xxiv. 28.
* Or, *kinsmen.*
k Num. xxxvi. 6—8.
l xxiv. 30 *Jerimoth.*
m Num. x. 17. 21
n Num. ii. 32. iii. 22 39. iv. 34—49.

V. 3—6. The ark being now stationed at Jerusalem, the place of the temple appointed, and great preparations made for the building of it; David proceeded to reduce the whole service of the priests and Levites to method, which seems before to have been conducted with less regularity. The Israelites had been greatly increased; and we may suppose that, towards the close of David's reign, the occasional sacrifices were far more numerous than they had been. The priests and Levites also were greatly multiplied; and it was of importance to make every thing ready for conducting the service, with proportionable splendour and solemnity, as soon as the temple was finished. David therefore began his arrangements with numbering the Levites, from thirty years of age, as in the time of Moses; but it does not appear, that such as were above fifty years old were omitted. The priests, who were very numerous, were not included in the sum total here mentioned: so that this tribe had increased in greater proportion, than the others. Twenty-four thousand Levites were employed to *set forward the work of the house of the* LORD: that is, to assist the priests in every thing pertaining to the sacrifices, and in removing from the temple and its courts, whatever might be polluting and offensive; that the whole service might be performed with expedition and exactness, and every thing preserved entirely clean and beautiful; and it is probable, that while the temple was building, they were employed in superintending the workmen. They served in rotation by courses; every week a thousand came in, and a thousand went out. (*Marg. Ref.*) Doubtless it was also intended, that they should be instructers of the people, in their several districts, when not employed at the sanctuary. Six thousand were employed as magistrates, in the different parts of the country, and perhaps they likewise acted in rotation. Four thousand kept the doors of the sanctuary, that no unclean or improper person might enter the courts, that none but priests might go into the temple, and that no one might rob the treasures there deposited: and four thousand were appointed as singers and musicians, to keep up that part of divine worship continually. They also were divided into twenty-four courses, and changed weekly.

V. 13. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 14. As the sons of Moses were excluded from the priesthood; no other person, not of Aaron's race, could on any account reasonably think of intruding into that sacred office.

by number of names by their polls, that did the work for the service of the house of the LORD, from the age of [o] twenty years and upward.

25 For David said, [p] The LORD God of Israel hath given rest unto his people, * that they may dwell in Jerusalem for ever;

26 And also unto the Levites: they shall no *more* [q] carry the tabernacle, nor any vessels of it for the service thereof.

27 For [r] by the last words of David, the Levites *were* † numbered from twenty years old and above:

28 Because their ‡ office *was* to wait on the sons of Aaron [s] for the service of the house of the LORD, in the courts, and [t] in the chambers, and in the [u] purifying of all holy things, and the work of the service of the house of God;

29 Both for [x] the shew-bread, and for [y] the fine flour for meat-offering, and for the [z] unleavened cakes, and for *that which is baked in* the ‖ pan, and for that which is fried, and for all manner of [a] measure and size;

30 And to [b] stand [c] every morning to thank and praise the LORD, and likewise at even;

31 And to offer all burnt-sacrifices unto the LORD [d] in the sabbaths in the new-moons, and on the [e] set feasts, by number, according to the order commanded unto them continually before the LORD:

32 And that they should [f] keep the charge of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the charge of the holy *place*, and [g] the charge of the sons of Aaron their brethren, in the service of the house of the LORD.

o 27. Num. i. 3. iv. 3. viii. 24. Ezra iii. 8.
p xxii. 18. 2 Sam. vii. 1. 11.
* Or, *and he dwelleth in Jerusalem*, &c. 1 Kings viii. 13. 27. Ps lxviii 16—18. cxxxii. 13, 14. 2 Cor vi. 16. Col ii 9.
q Num. iv. 5, &c.
r 2 Sam xxiii. 1.
† Heb. *numbers.*
‡ Heb. *station* was *at the hand of* Neh. xi 24.
s Num. iii. 6—9. viii. 11—22. 26. xviii. 2—6.
t ix. 26. 1 Kings vi. 5. 2 Chr. xxxi. 11. Ezra viii. 29. Neh. xiii. 4, 5. 9.
u ix. 28, 29. 2 Chr. xxix. 5 18, 19. xxxv. 3—6. 11—14.
x ix. 31, 32. Ex. xxv. 30. Lev. xxiv. 5—9.
y Lev. vi. 20—23.
z Lev. ii. 4—7.
‖ Or, *flat plate.*
a Lev. xix. 35, 36. Num. iii 50.
b vi 31 33. ix. 33 xvi. 37—42. xxv. 1—7. 2 Chr. xxix. 25—28. xxxi. 2. Ezra iii. 10, 11. Ps cxxxv 1—3. 19, 20 cxxxvii. 2—4. Rev. v. 8—14. xiv. 3.
c Ex xxix. 39—42. Ps. xcii 1—3. cxxxiv 1, 2.
d Lev. xxiii. 24. 39. Num. x. 10. Ps. lxxxi 1—4. Is i 13, 14.
e Lev. xxiii. Num. xxviii. xxix.
f ix. 27. Num. i. 53. 1 Kings viii. 4.
g Num. iii. 6—9. 33.

V. 25—27. The work of the Levites was not so hard at this time, as when the tabernacle was carried by them, along with Israel in their journeys; and perhaps numbers of the young Levites, being out of employ, contracted bad habits, or set bad examples; and therefore David, *as a prophet*, ordered this change. Twenty-five years of age had been the earliest term of their entering upon their probationary services, but now they were to be employed from twenty years old: and as a matter of importance David confirmed it with his last words.

V. 29. *All manner*, &c. Those Levites, who acted as magistrates, had the inspection of weights and measures of every kind, that no fraud might in this way be committed. Honesty is nearly connected with piety; and therefore the Levites, being sufficiently numerous, were employed to superintend the former as well as the latter. They probably kept standard-weights and measures at the temple, by which all those allowed in traffic, were tried and approved.

V. 31. The Levites assisted the priests, in offering the sacrifices; though some parts of that service were performed by the priests alone. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

If we be prepared for death, having accomplished our measure of service, and seeing others raised up to succeed us in our stations in the church or community, we surely may be full of days, whatever our term of life may be: and satisfied with living in this world of sin and sorrow, of vanity and temptation, we may rejoice to leave all below, and even to be absent from our bodies, that we may go to heaven and be present with the Lord. We should be thankful, in declining years, to be eclipsed by men of real integrity, piety, and useful endowments, who are coming forward upon the stage of action: yet we ought still to endeavour to do all we can, to promote the common cause of religion; and sometimes the sagacity and experience of old age, when incapable of much bodily exertion, may suggest and effect more real good, than the vigour and activity of youth. —The increase of ministers is of great importance, provided they be men of God, zealous for his glory, and earnestly seeking the salvation of souls. In this case they will desire employment, and in one way or other they will be usefully active.—But it is expedient that every one should know his proper place, to help forward the work of the house of the Lord, to promote equity and justice, to instruct the people in the truths and precepts of God's word, to take care that his ordinances be duly administered, and to excite and assist the people in his sacred worship.—Every method should be used to prevent the irregularity, indolence, and worldly lusts, of this order of men, whose example, influence, and conversation are more useful, or more pernicious, than those of any other; and who are commonly either better or worse employed than other orders in society.—Though it be generally inexpedient, that the more arduous part of the sacred ministry should be performed by very young men: yet they who are intended for this service, ought by no means to waste their youth in inactivity or dissipation; but to employ their time in preparatory and initiatory studies and exercises.—A constant succession of religious duties, stated or occasional, public or private, must engage the *true* minister's attention, day by day continually: and if a man cannot take pleasure in such employments, he must soon be weary of the work as a drudgery; and will either neglect it, or attend upon it unwillingly for the sake of his wages. *A new heart, a spiritual mind*, which delights greatly in God's commandments, is the first and most essential qualification for the ministry; (as indeed it forms the great distinction betwixt the true Christian, and all other men in the world.) To the spiritual man every successive service will yield

CHAP. XXIV.

The priests are divided by lot into twenty-four orders, 1—19. *The rest of the Kohathites, and the Merarites divided in like manner,* 20—31.

NOW *these are* the divisions of the sons of Aaron. [a] The sons of Aaron; Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar.

2 But [b] Nadab and Abihu [c] died before their father, and had no children: therefore [d] Eleazar and Ithamar executed the priest's office.

3 And David distributed them, both [e] Zadok of the sons of Eleazar, and [f] Ahimelech of the sons of Ithamar, according to their offices in their service.

4 And there were more [g] chief men found of [h] the sons of Eleazar than of the sons of Ithamar: and *thus* were they divided. Among the sons of Eleazar *there were* sixteen chief men of the house of *their* fathers, and eight among the sons of Ithamar according to the house of their fathers.

5 Thus were they divided by [i] lot, one sort with another; for [k] the governors of the sanctuary, and governors *of the house* of God, were of the sons of Eleazar, and of the sons of Ithamar.

6 And Shemaiah the son of Nethaneel [l] the scribe, *one* of the Levites, wrote them before the king, and the princes, and Zadok the priest, and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, and *before* the chief of the fathers of the priests and Levites: one * principal household being taken for Eleazar, and *one* taken for Ithamar.

7 Now the first lot came forth to [m] Jehoiarib, the second [n] to Jedaiah,

8 The third to [o] Harim, the fourth to Seorim,

9 The fifth to Malchijah, the sixth to [p] Mijamin,

10 The seventh to Hakkoz, the eighth to [q] Abijah,

11 The ninth to [r] Jeshuah, the tenth to Shecaniah,

12 The eleventh to [s] Eliashib, the twelfth to Jakim,

13 The thirteenth to Huppah, the fourteenth to Jeshebeab,

14 The fifteenth to Bilgah, the sixteenth to [t] Immer,

a vi. 3. Ex. vi. 33. xxviii 1. Lev. x. 1. 6. Num. iii. 2. xxvi 60.
b Ex. xxiv. 1. 9.
c Lev. x. 2. Num iii. 4. xxvi. 61.
d Lev. x. 12 Num. xvi. 40. xviii. 7.
e 6. 31. vi. 4—8. 50—53. xii. 27. 28. xv. 11. xvi. 39. 2 Sam. xx. 25. 1 Kings ii. 35.
f 2 Sam. viii. 17.
g xv. 6—12. 16.
h Num. xxv. 11—13. 1 Sam. ii. 30—33.
i Josh. xviii. 10. Prov. xvi. 33. Acts i. 26.
k ix 11. Acts iv. 6. v. 24.
l 1 Kings iv. 3. Neh. viii. 1. Matt. xxiii. 1. 2.
* Heb. *house of the father.*
m ix 10 Neh. xii. 19 *Joiarib*
n Ezra ii. 36 Neh. vii 39. xi 10.
o Ezra ii. 39. x. 21 Neh vii. 35. xii 15.
p Neh xii. 17. *Minjamin.*
q Neh. xii. 4. 17. Luke i 5. *Abia.*
r Ezra ii 36. Neh. vii 39 xii. 10.
s Neh. xii. 10.
t Ezra ii. 37. x. 20. Neh. vii. 40.

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renewed satisfaction; and he will be unwearied, and always abounding and delighting in the work of the Lord; being never so happy, as when employed for such a good Master in so pleasant a service. With him the work itself, and the success of his labours, are the principal objects: the emolument or maintenance, (though he has a right to it, and perhaps cannot live without it,) is a very subordinate consideration: nor will he much regard whether he be called to take the lead, or whether he keep the charge of others who are placed over him, provided they do not bind his hands, or impede his usefulness. These are "men "of God;" may he supply his church with numbers of them; in the place of those hirelings, who have in all ages swarmed in the professing church, to the scandal of religion and the ruin of their own souls! Such ministers, as have been described, will be accepted and useful in the most obscure situations; and will subserve the interests of morality most effectually, as well as promote the spiritual worship of God through Jesus Christ. And should they leave their families in poverty and obscurity, after their decease: this circumstance will be a testimony before the world of their disinterestedness; and the Lord will surely provide for them and theirs, as far as is truly good for them. He advances, and abases, as in his infinite wisdom he sees good, whatever our cares or desires may be. May we then seek and serve him uprightly, and leave all the rest to his disposal, by faith in his word and resignation to His will.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIV. V. 4. We may suppose that the house of Ithamar, in consequence of the sentence denounced against them in the days of Eli, had decreased in numbers and eminency, before Zadok was constituted high-priest: so that there were twice as many flourishing families and principal persons in the line of Eleazar, as in that of Ithamar.

V. 5. *Governors,* &c. Or *principal ministers in holy things; and rulers of God,* or superior magistrates.

V. 6. The regulation of these courses of the priests was made by casting lots before the king, and all the chief persons in the land, in a most solemn manner; and a record was made of the transaction, to prevent any future contest. First one household was taken of Eleazar's race, and then one of Ithamar's, till sixteen had been completed; and then the remaining eight of Eleazar's sons, were arranged according to the order in which their lots came forth.

V. 8. It was thought by the Jews in after ages, a great honour to be descended from Jehoiarib. The Maccabees were descended from him; (1 *Mac.* ii. 54:) and Josephus thought himself noble, because he sprang from the first of these twenty-four courses.

V. 10. *Abijah.* The courses of the priests, established by David, were continued with some alterations till the days of Christ: these records must therefore have been very useful to the Jews, after their return from the Babylonish captivity. (*Marg. Ref.*)

15 The seventeenth to Hezir, the eighteenth to Aphses,

16 The nineteenth to Pethahiah, the twentieth to Jehezekel,

17 The one and twentieth to Jachin, the two and twentieth to Gamul,

18 The three and twentieth to Delaiah, the four and twentieth to Maaziah.

u ix. 25. 2 Chr xxiii. 4. 8. 1 Cor. xiv. 40. 19 These *were* [u] the orderings of them in their service to come into the house of the LORD, according to their manner, x 1. Heb. vii. 11. [x] under Aaron their father, as the LORD God of Israel had commanded him.

20 ¶ And the rest of the sons of Levi y vi. 18. xxiii. 12—14. *were these:* Of the sons of [y] Amram; z xxiii. 16. xxvi. 24. *Shebuel.* [z] Shubael: of the sons of Shubael; Jehdeiah.

a xxiii. 17. 21 Concerning [a] Rehabiah: of the sons b xxvi. 25. *Jeshaiah.* of Rehabiah, the first *was* [b] Isshiah.

c xxiii. 18 xxvi. 26. *Shelomith.* 22 Of the Izharites; [c] Shelomoth: of the sons of Shelomoth; Jahath.

d xxiii. 19. xxvi. 31. *Jerijah.* 23 And the sons *of Hebron;* [d] Jeriah *the first,* Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, Jekameam the fourth.

e xxiii. 20 *Micah.* 24 *Of* the sons of Uzziel: [e] Michah: of the sons of Michah; Shamir.

f xxiii. 20. *Jesiah.* 25 The brother of Michah *was* [f] Isshiah; of the sons of Isshiah; g xv. 18. 20. [g] Zechariah.

h vi. 19. xxiii. 21. Ex. vi. 19. Num. iii. 20. 26 ¶ The [h] sons of Merari *were* Mahli and Mushi: the sons of Jaaziah; Beno.

27 The sons of Merari by Jaaziah; Beno, and Shoham, and Zaccur, and Ibri.

i xxiii. 22. 28 Of Mahli *came* Eleazar, [i] who had no sons.

29 Concerning Kish: the son of Kish *was* Jerahmeel.

k vi. 47. xxiii. 23. 30 The sons also of [k] Mushi; Mahli, and Eder, and Jerimoth. These *were* the sons of the Levites after the house of their fathers.

l 5, 6. Num. xxvi. 56. 31 These likewise cast [l] lots over against their brethren the sons of Aaron in the presence of David the king, and Zadok, and Ahimelech, and the chief of the fathers of the priests and Levites, m xxv. 8. xxvi. 13. even [m] the principal fathers over against their younger brethren.

CHAP. XXV.

The names and offices of the principal singers and musicians, 1—7. *They are divided by lot into twenty-four orders,* 8—31.

a xii. 22. xxiii. 2 xxiv. 5, 6. 2 Chr. xxiii. 1. 9. MOREOVER David and [a] the captains of the host separated to the service, of the sons of b vi. 33 39. 44. xv. 16—19. [b] Asaph, and

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V. 19. *Under Aaron.* All the priests were considered as Aaron's successors, and as filling up his place, in whose person the whole priesthood was originally vested, and from him it was derived to his posterity. These arrangements having been made by David, acting under the divine direction, and according to the commandment given by Moses concerning the priesthood; the courses of the priests attended a week at a time for the ordinary services; though at the great festivals, and on other public occasions, numbers of the rest would be present and assist.

V. 20—30. These persons seem to have been the heads of those twenty-four thousand Levites, who in twenty-four courses waited on the priests in their ministrations. (xxiii. 4.) But they all appear to have been of the families of Kohath and Merari, and none of Gershon's line.

V. 31. *The principal,* &c. The whole company being ranged according to their families into the proper number of divisions, the order of their courses was assigned them by lot, without respect to rank or seniority.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord will certainly perform all his promises and threatenings; and if they do not take effect suddenly, and with observation, they will gradually and silently. Sin ruins men's characters, comforts, and families; and it will destroy the immortal souls of all those, who do not obtain salvation by faith in Jesus Christ. In all cases we ought to act with exact impartiality, as far as we are able: and when human prudence fails of discerning a reason of preference, where it must be given, it is right, in one way or other, to refer the determination to the Lord.—Much wisdom and equity is requisite to exclude occasions of envy, jealousy, and contention, in the regulation of public affairs, where numbers are concerned: but what is done fairly and openly, and in the fear of God, is placed upon the most permanent basis. The solemn appointment and orderly attendance of ministers is of considerable importance; but they are all under the hand of Jesus, from whom they receive their commission and instructions, as well as qualifications; and to whom they are all accountable. Difference of age, learning, piety, reputation, and other circumstances may give external precedency to some ministers; but they are all brethren, and none ought to lord it over the others. Thus in Jesus Christ, there is neither male nor female, bond or free; but all believers are one in him, being children of God, fellow-heirs of eternal life, and brethren to each other. May they all on earth emulate that love, peace, and harmony, which will subsist in the heavenly world!

of Heman, and of Jeduthun, who should prophesy with [d] harps, with psalteries, and with cymbals: and the number of the workmen according to their service was:

2 Of the sons of [e] Asaph; Zaccur, and Joseph, and Nethaniah, and [f] Asarelah, the sons of Asaph, under the hands of Asaph, which prophesied * according to the order of the king.

3 Of [g] Jeduthun: the sons of Jeduthun; [h] Gedaliah, and [i] Zeri, and [k] Jeshaiah, Hashabiah, and [l] Mattithiah, six, under the hands of their father Jeduthun, who prophesied with a harp, [m] to give thanks and to praise the LORD.

4 Of [n] Heman: the sons of Heman; [o] Bukkiah, [p] Mattaniah, [q] Uzziel, [r] Shebuel, and [s] Jerimoth, [t] Hananiah, [u] Hanani, [x] Eliathah, [y] Giddalti, and [z] Romamti-ezer, [a] Joshbekashah, [b] Mallothi, [c] Hothir, *and* Mahazioth:

5 All these *were* the sons of Heman [d] the king's seer in the † words of God, to lift up the horn. And [e] God gave to Heman fourteen sons and three daughters.

6 All these *were* [f] under the hands of their father [g] for song *in* the house of the LORD, with cymbals, psalteries, and harps, for the service of the house of God, ‡ according to the king's order to Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman.

7 So the number of them, with their brethren, that were instructed in the songs of the LORD, *even* all that were cunning, *was* two hundred fourscore and eight.

8 ¶ And they [h] cast lots, [i] ward against *ward*, as well the small as the great, [k] the teacher as the scholar.

9 Now the first lot came forth for Asaph to [l] Joseph: the second to Gedaliah, who with his brethren and sons *were* twelve:

10 The third to [m] Zaccur, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

11 The fourth to [n] Izri, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

12 The fifth to [o] Nethaniah, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

13 The sixth to Bukkiah, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

14 The seventh to [p] Jesharelah, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

15 The eighth to Jeshaiah, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

16 The ninth to Mattaniah, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

17 The tenth to Shimei, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

18 The eleventh to [q] Azareel, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

19 The twelfth to [r] Hashabiah, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

20 The thirteenth to [s] Shubael, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

21 The fourteenth to Matithiah, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

22 The fifteenth to Jeremoth, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

c 3. 1 Sam. x. 5. 2 Kings iii. 15. 1 Cor xiv. 24—26
d xv. 16—21. xvi. 4, 5, 42. xxiii. 5—7 2 Chr xxiii. 13. xxix 25. 26 xxxi. 2. xxxiv. 12. Ezra iii 10, 11. Neh xii. 24. 27. 43—46. Ps. lxxxi 2. cl 3—5. Rev. xv. 2—4. xix 1—6.
e vi. 39. xv. 17. xvi 5. Ps lxxiii. lxxiv. See *titles*.
f 14 *Jesharelah.*
* Heb. *by the hands of the king* 6
g ix 16. xvi. 41, 42 2 Chr. xxix. 14.
h 9.
i 11 *Izri.*
k 15.
l 21. xv. 18. 21. *with Shimei.* 17.
m Ps. xcii. 1 Jer. xxxiii. 11.
n vi. 33 xv. 17. 19. xvi. 41, 42, Ps. lxxxviii. *title.*
o 13.
p 16.
q 18. *Azareel.* xxiv 24.
r 20. xxiv. 20. *Shubael.*
s 22. xxiv.
t 23.
u 25.
x 27.
y 29.
z 31.
a 24.
b 26.
c 28.
d xxi. 9. 1 Sam. ix. 9.
† Or, *matters.*
e xxviii. 5 Gen. xxxiii. 5. Ps. cxxvii. 3. Is. viii. 18.
f 2, 3. xv. 22. xxiii 5 Ps. lxviii. 25. Eph. v. 19. Col. iii. 16.
g 1—3.
‡ Heb. *by the hands of the king.*
h xxiv. 5.
i xxiv. 31. xxvi. 13. 16. Neh. xii. 24.
k xv. 22. 2 Chr. xxiii. 13.
l 2.
m 2.
n 3. *Zeri.*
o 2.
p 2. *Asarelah.*
q 4. *Uzziel.*
r 3.
s 4. *Shebuel.*

NOTES.

CHAP. XXV. V. 1—6. *The captains of the host* seem to mean the leaders, or heads, of the several courses of the priests and Levites. Jeduthun was either the same person, who before was called Ethan; or Ethan was dead, and Jeduthun succeeded him. The word *prophesy*, in this place, seems to mean no more, than praising God by singing inspired prophetical hymns, with great earnestness and devout affections, under the influences of the Holy Spirit. As the prophets in Samuel's days used music and singing; it hath been conjectured, that he first introduced them into the regular worship of Israel, and that David reduced to order what he found already established. These persons are said to have prophesied according "to the order of the "king;" because he instituted the order of their services. Only five sons of Jeduthun are here named: but Shimei, afterwards mentioned, is supposed to have been the sixth. (17.) Perhaps, though as Jeduthun's son, he was chosen to be the head of one course; he was at this time young, and not fit for present service. Heman seems to have been a *prophet*, or *seer*, in the common acceptation, and was much consulted by David: "he lifted up the horn," or presided over those who used wind-instruments of music.

V. 7. These two hundred and eighty-eight being twenty-four courses of twelve each, were more skilful than the other Levites; and being placed under the twenty-four sons of the chief singers, they had the four thousand before mentioned divided among them, to perform by courses, according to their instructions.

V. 8. Even among the twenty-four leaders some were more expert than others; some were *teachers* and others *scholars:* but every one was taken by the solemn casting of lots, without any regard to these distinctions. (*Marg. Ref.*)

23 The sixteenth to Hananiah, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

24 The seventeenth to Joshbekashah, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

25 The eighteenth to Hanani, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

26 The nineteenth to Mallothi, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

27 The twentieth to Eliathah, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

28 The one and twentieth to Hothir, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

29 The two and twentieth to Giddalti, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

30 The three and twentieth to [u] Mahazioth, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve:

31 The four and twentieth to Romamti-ezer, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, *were* twelve.

CHAP. XXVI.

The divisions of the porters, 1—12. *The gates assigned to them by lot*, 13—19. *The Levites who had the charge of the treasures*, 20—28. *Those who were officers and judges*, 29—32.

CONCERNING the divisions of [a] the porters: of the [b] Korhites *was* [c] Meshelemiah the son of Kore, of the sons of [d] Asaph.

2 And the sons of Meshelemiah *were*, Zechariah the first born, Jediael the second, Zebadiah the third, Jathniel the fourth,

3 Elam the fifth, Jehohanan the sixth, Elioenai the seventh.

4 Moreover the sons of [e] Obed-edom *were*, Shemaiah the first-born, Jehozabad the second, Joah the third, and Sacar the fourth, and Nethaneel the fifth,

5 Ammiel the sixth, Issachar the seventh, Peulthai the eighth: for [f] God blessed him.

6 Also unto Shemaiah his son were sons born, that ruled throughout the house of their father: for they *were* [g] mighty men of valour.

7 The sons of Shemaiah; Othni, and Rephael, and Obed, Elzabad, whose brethren *were* strong men, Elihu, and Semachiah.

8 All these of the sons of Obed-edom: they and their sons and their brethren, able men for strength for the service, *were* threescore and two of Obed-edom.

a ix. 17—27. xv. 18. 23, 24. 2 Chr. xxiii. 19.
b Num. xxvi. 9. Ps. xliv. xlv. *titles.*
c 14. *Shelemiah.*
d vi. 37. ix. 19. *Ebiasaph.*
e xv. 18. 21. 24. xvi. 5. 38.
f xiii. 14. *Obed-edom.*
g 8 xii. 28. 2 Chr. xxvi 27. Neh. xi. 14. 1 Tim. vi. 12. 2 Tim. ii. 3.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord is in himself exalted far above all blessing and praise, and our obligations to him are infinite: we ought therefore to give him thanks, and to praise him, with our noblest powers; and to render every kind and degree of capacity, ingenuity, or skill that we possess, subservient to that highest end: but especially our best and most lively affections are his due. Every part of his service is delightful in proportion as we are properly disposed: yet we should apply our minds to instruction, that we may become workmen that need not be ashamed, as capable of performing our several duties with propriety and readiness.—Human prudence must regulate certain circumstances relative to religious worship; and every society, larger or smaller, should order such matters *for themselves* to the best of their judgment: but without the Spirit of God put life and fervour into our devotions, they will, however appointed, be a lifeless worthless form.—We should all be ready to give or to receive instructions, without self-preference, or accounting ourselves degraded: for in God's sight the teachable scholar is nearly as honourable as the able instructer.—It is pleasant to receive all our temporal and domestic comforts, as given unto us of God, and then to devote them all to his service: and it is a singular mercy to have a large family, all employed and accepted by him. But whether our children and connexions be few or many, may we all be his, and meet in his temple above to sing his praises for ever! Whatever Providence may allot us here, may this be the lot and portion of our inheritance hereafter!

NOTES.

CHAP. XXVI. V. 4, 5. The numerous and prosperous family of Obed-edom was the effect of the divine blessing, by which his reverential regard to the ark was recompensed.

V. 6. *Mighty men*, &c. The porters, and treasurers of the temple had occasion for strength and valour, both to oppose such as improperly attempted to enter the courts or sanctuary, or to raise any disturbance there; and also to guard the sacred treasures of money, vessels, flour, frankincense, wine, and oil, there deposited, and of which some of them were appointed to keep an account. (*Marg. Ref.*) Josephus speaks of the gates of the temple being so massy, as to require twenty persons to open or shut them: this too would find employment for the strength of the porters.

The temple indeed was not yet built; but David had received from the Lord a pattern of what it was to be, and he arranged every thing with reference to it.

h 1. 14. 9 And [h] Meshelemiah had sons and brethren, strong men, eighteen.

i xvi. 38. 10 Also [i] Hosah, of the children of Merari, had sons: Simri the chief, (for *though* he was not the first-born, yet k v. 1, 2. [k] his father made him the chief;)

11 Hilkiah the second, Tebaliah the third, Zechariah the fourth: all the sons and brethren of Hosah *were* thirteen.

12 Among these *were* the divisions of the porters, *even* among the chief men, l xxv. 8. *having* [l] wards one against another, to minister in the house of the LORD.

* Or, *as well for the small as for the great.* xxiv. 31. xxv. 8. 13 ¶ And they cast lots, * as well the small as the great, according to the house of their fathers, for every gate.

m 1. *Meshelemiah.* 14 And the lot eastward fell to [m] Shelemiah. Then for n 2. [n] Zechariah his son (a wise counsellor,) they cast lots; and his lot came out northward.

15 To Obed-edom southward; and to his sons, the house of † Asuppim.

† Heb. *gatherings.* 17. o 10, 11. 16 To Shuppim and [o] Hosah *the lot came forth* westward, with the gate p 1 Kings x. 5. 2 Chr. ix. 4. Shallecheth, by the [p] causeway of the q 12. xxv. 8. Neh. xii. 24. going up, [q] ward against ward.

r ix. 24. 2 Chr. viii. 14. 17 [r] Eastward *were* six Levites, northward four a day, southward four a day, and toward Asuppim two *and* two.

18 At Parbar westward, four at the causeway, *and* two at Parbar.

s Num. xxvi. 11. *Korah.* 22. ix. 26—30. xxii. 3, 4. 14—16. xxviii. 12—19. xxix. 2—8. t 1 Kings xiv. 26. xv. 18. Mal. iii. 6. 19 These *are* the divisions of the porters among the sons of [s] Kore, and among the sons of Merari.

20 ¶ And of the Levites, Ahijah *was* over the [t] treasures of the house of God, and over the treasures of the ‡ dedicated things.

‡ Heb. *holy.* 26—28. xviii. 11. 1 Kings vii. 51. 2 Chr. xxxi. 11, 12. u vi. 17. *Libni.* xxiii. 7. 21 *As concerning* the sons of [u] Laadan; the sons of the Gershonite Laadan, chief fathers, *even* of Laadan the Gershonite, *were* [x] Jehieli.

x xxiii. 8 xxix. 8. *Jehiel.* 22 The sons of Jehieli; Zetham, and Joel his brother, *which were* [y] over the treasures of the house of the LORD.

y 20. Neh. x. 38. 23 Of the [z] Amramites, *and* the Izharites, the Hebronites, *and* the Uzzielites:

z xxiii. 12. Num. iii. 19. 27 a xxiii. 15, 16. xxiv. 20. *Shubael.* 24 And [a] Shebuel the son of Gershom, the son of Moses, *was* ruler of the treasures.

b xxiii. 15. Ex. xviii. 4. c xxiii. 17. 25 And his brethren by [b] Eliezer; [c] Rehabiah his son, and Jeshaiah his son, and Joram his son, and Zechri his son, and [d] Shelomith his son:

d xxiii. 18. 26 Which Shelomith and his brethren *were* [e] over all the treasures of the dedicated things, which David the king, and the chief fathers, the captains over thousands and hundreds, and the captains of the host had dedicated.

e xviii. 11. xxii. 14. xxix. 6—9. Num xxxi. 50—52. 27 Out of the ∮ spoils won in battles did they dedicate, [f] to maintain the house of the LORD.

∮ Heb. *battles and spoils* f 2 Kings xii. 14. Neh. x. 32—34. 28 And all that [g] Samuel the seer, and Saul the son of Kish, and [h] Abner the son of Ner, and [i] Joab the son of Zeruiah, had dedicated; *and* whosoever had dedicated *any thing*, *it was* under the hand of Shelomith, and of his brethren.

g 1 Sam. ix. 9. h 1 Sam. xiv. 47—51. xvii. 55. i 2 Sam. x. 9—14. 29 ¶ Of the [k] Isharites, Chenaniah and his sons *were* for [l] the outward business over Israel, for [m] officers and judges.

k 23. xxiii. 12. 18. l 2 Chr xxxiv. 13. Neh. xi. 16. m xxiii. 4. 2 Chr. xix. 8—11.

V. 13. *And they*, &c. The porters seem to have been divided into courses, by a method different from the other Levites. The different families or divisions of them cast lots at which gates they should keep ward; and then the individuals of those divisions attended in rotation; but whether their order of succession was determined by lot, or by agreement, does not appear.

V. 14. *A wise*, &c. It seems that Zechariah was for his wisdom preferred to be the king's counsellor. The office of porter in the temple was a place of great trust, and therefore honourable.

V. 15. *Asuppim*, signifying *gatherings:* it is supposed that the house of Asuppim was a building erected to contain the collections made for the service of the sanctuary.

V. 24—26. These are the only persons among the descendants of Moses, who have been mentioned hitherto, as appointed to any office of honour and distinction.

V. 28. *Samuel*, &c. It had been customary from the time of Abraham, and probably from the beginning of the world, for persons to dedicate a portion of their gains to the service of God, as an acknowledgment that all came from him: but it is uncertain whether Samuel, or the other persons here mentioned, had an expectation of a temple being built, for which they desired to make preparation.

V. 29. *The outward business*, &c. These Levites seem not to have performed any service within the sanctuary; and their employment on that account is called "the out-"ward business." In general it may be supposed, that as well as the other Levites, they were expected to be instructers of the people in the law of God: and in particular they were made magistrates of different orders, to administer justice to the people. As the Levites were more numerous than could be employed in the sanctuary; and as they ought to be, and had opportunities of being better acquainted with the law than the other Israelites; they were appointed to this service, along with the elders of every tribe. From these, the scribes, lawyers, or doctors of the law, mentioned in the New Testament, seem to have arisen.

n xxiii. 12—19.

30 *And* of the [n] Hebronites, Hashabiah and his brethren, men of valour, a thousand and seven hundred, *were* * officers among them of Israel on this side Jordan westward, in all the business of the LORD, and in the service of the king.

* Heb. *over the charge.*

o xxiii. 19. *Jeriah.*

31 Among the Hebronites *was* [o] Jerijah the chief, *even* among the Hebronites, according to the generations of his fathers. In the [p] fortieth year of the reign of David they were sought for, and there were found among them mighty men of valour, at [q] Jazer of Gilead.

p xxix 27. 1 Kings ii. 11.

q Josh. xxi. 39. Is. xvi. 9. r 6—9.

32 And his brethren, [r] men of valour, *were* two thousand and seven hundred [s] chief fathers, whom king David made rulers over the [t] Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, for every matter [u] pertaining to God, and † affairs of the king.

s xv. 12. xxiii 24. xxiv. 31. t xii. 37.

u 2 Chr. xix. 11. † Heb. *thing.*

CHAP. XXVII.

David's twelve captains one for each month, 1—15. *The princes of the twelve tribes,* 16—22. *The numbering of the people hindered,* 23, 24. *David's several officers and counsellors,* 25—34.

NOW the children of Israel after their number, *to wit,* the chief fathers and [a] captains of thousands and hundreds, and their officers that [b] served the king in [c] any matter of the courses, which came in and went out [d] month by month throughout all the months of the year of every course, *were* twenty and four thousand.

a xiii. 1. Ex. xviii. 25. Deut. i. 15. 1 Sam. viii. 12. Mic. v. 2. b xxviii. 1. 2 Chr. xvii. 12—19. xxvi. 11—13. c 1 Kings v. 14. d 1 Kings iv. 7. 27.

2 Over the first course for the first month *was* [e] Jashobeam the son of Zabdiel: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

e xi. 11. 2 Sam. xxiii. 8. *Adino the Eznite.*

3 Of the children of [f] Perez, *was* [g] the chief of all the captains of the host for the first month.

f Gen. xxxviii. 29. Num. xxvi. 20. *Pharez.* g Gen. xlix. 8—10. Num. vii. 12. x. 14.

4 And over the course of the second month *was* [h] Dodai an Ahohite, and of his course *was* Mikloth also the ruler: in his course likewise *were* twenty and four thousand.

h xi. 12. 2 Sam. xxiii. 9. *Dodo.*

As the office of the magistracy reaches only to the regulation of the *outward conduct;* whilst the ministry of the word forms the means of regulating *the affections of the heart;* the former may in this sense also be called "*the outward business.*" The lawyers before mentioned made the whole of religion a mere outward business; and they have always had abundance of disciples in this respect.

V. 30—32. Hebron was first assigned to the priests, but it was afterwards occupied by Levites, perhaps as tenants whilst the priests were but few. The Levites here mentioned, lived there till they had acquired the name of Hebronites, and then removed over Jordan into the land of Gilead. But being sought out, they were appointed judges, on each side Jordan in two divisions: though the larger proportion was assigned to those who lived east of that river; perhaps because being more remote from the sanctuary, and the seat of government, they needed more attention to keep them to their duty, both to God and to the king.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The blessing of God renders individuals happy, and families flourishing; and they that have been faithful in a little, will be made rulers over many things. Wisdom, courage, strength of faith, holy affections, and constancy of mind in our duty, are requisite for every station. But they who minister in the house of the Lord, and are required, without respect of persons, to prevent the profanation of holy things, have peculiar need of these qualifications. They are the porters of the spiritual house, the stewards of the mysteries of God; a charge is committed to their trust, infinitely more valuable than all the treasures of the temple; and they need to be watchful and faithful. Their office requires them rightly to divide the word of truth, and to administer divine ordinances according to it; that the hungry souls may be fed and feasted from the provisions of the Lord's house; and that he may be glorified by their spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to him through Jesus Christ. Great integrity, firmness, and discretion, are necessary to do this according to the mind of the great Master of the family, and to prevent abuses and prostitution of sacred ordinances to secular purposes by ungodly men. From these sacred treasuries, the unsearchable riches of Christ, all our wants are supplied: but receiving from his fulness, and being victorious over our enemies by his grace, we must give him the glory, and endeavour to dispose of the whole of our abilities and substance according to his will; allotting a proportion to maintain the expense of his worship, as well as to provide for the poor. Many unbelievers, however, join in these external services, and we must not in any wise rest our hopes on them.—The work of the ministry requires the whole man: *internal* renovation is immediately its object; and the *outward* business of external order in society properly belongs to the magistrate. These services are therefore best preserved distinct; yet particular circumstances may warrant exceptions. However, both magistrates and ministers should concur in leading people, by different means, to fear God and honour the king, and to do justice and show kindness to their brethren.—It is very wrong for able men to get out of the way, when their help is wanted; but they should be sought out, and set to work: and as our end approaches, we should be more earnest to render our last services to mankind.

5 The third captain of the host for the third month *was* [i] Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, * a chief priest: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

i xviii. 17. 1 Kings iv. 4.
* Or, *principal officer.* 1 Kings iv. 5.

6 This *is that* Benaiah, *who was* [k] mighty *among* the thirty, and above the thirty: and in his course *was* Ammizabad his son.

k xi. 22—25. 2 Sam. xxiii. 20—23.

7 The fourth *captain* for the fourth month *was* [l] Ashel the brother of Joab, and Zebadiah his son after him: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

l xi. 26. 2 Sam ii. 18—23. xxiii. 24.

8 The fifth captain for the fifth month *was* [m] Shamhuth the Izrahite: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

m xi. 27. *Shammoth the Harorite.* xxvi. 29. 2 Sam xxiii. 25. *Shammah the Harodite.*

9 The sixth *captain* for the sixth month *was* [n] Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

n xi. 28. 2 Sam. xxiii. 26.

10 The seventh *captain* for the seventh month *was* [o] Helez the [p] Pelonite, of the children of Ephraim: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

o xi. 27.
p 2 Sam. xxiii. 26. *Paltite.*

11 The eighth *captain* for the eighth month *was* [q] Sibbecai the Hushathite, of the [r] Zarhites: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

q xi. 29. 2 Sam. xxi. 18. *Sibbechai.*
r Num. xxvi. 20.

12 The ninth *captain* for the ninth month *was* Abiezer the [s] Anetothite, of the Benjamites: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

s xi. 28. *Antothite.* 2 Sam. xxiii. 27. *Anethothite.*

13 The tenth *captain* for the tenth month *was* [t] Maharai the Netophathite, of the [u] Zarhites: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

t xi. 30. 2 Sam. xxiii. 28.
u 11.

14 The eleventh *captain* for the eleventh month *was* [x] Benaiah the Pirathonite, of the children of Ephraim: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

x xi. 31. 2 Sam. xxiii. 30.

15 The twelfth *captain* for the twelfth month *was* [y] Heldai the Netophathite, of [z] Othniel: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

y xi. 30. *Heled.* 2 Sam xxiii. 29. *Heleb.*
z iv. 13. Judg. iii. 9.

16 ¶ Furthermore over the tribes of Israel: the ruler of the Reubenites *was* Eliezer the son of Zichri: of the Simeonites, Shephatiah the son of Maachah:

17 Of the Levites, [a] Hashabiah the son of Kemuel: [b] of the Aaronites, Zadok:

a xxvi. 30.
b xii. 27, 28 xxiv. 4 31.

18 Of Judah, [c] Elihu, *one* of the brethren of David: of Issachar, Omri the son of Michael:

c 1 Sam. xvi. 6 xvii. 13. 28 *Eliab.*

19 Of Zebulun, Ishmaiah the son of Obadiah: of Naphtali, Jerimoth the son of Azriel:

20 Of the children of Ephraim, Hoshea the son of Azaziah: of the half tribe of Manasseh, Joel the son of Pedaiah:

21 Of the half *tribe* of Manasseh in Gilead, [d] Iddo the son of Zechariah: of Benjamin, Jaasiel the son of [e] Abner:

d 1 Kings iv. 14
e 1 Sam. xiv. 50, 51. 2 Sam. iii. 27. 37.

22 Of Dan, Azareel the son of Jeroham. These *were* the princes of the tribes of Israel.

23 ¶ But David took not the number of them [f] from twenty years old and under: because the LORD had said [g] he would increase Israel like to the stars of the heavens.

f Num. i. 18.
g Gen. xv. 5. Heb. xi. 12.

24 Joab the son of Zeruiah [h] began to number, but he finished not, because there fell wrath for it against Israel; neither * was the number put in the account of the chronicles of king David.

h xxi. 1—17. 2 Sam. xxiv. 1—15.
* Heb. *ascended.*

NOTES.

CHAP. XXVII. V. 1—15. When David was not actually engaged in war, twenty-four thousand men seem to have been continually kept under military discipline. These were exchanged every month for others; so that two hundred and eighty-eight thousand men were every year exercised as a regular militia; but they were not kept from their other engagements, more than a month at once. These were mustered from all the tribes of Israel, under commanders, perhaps not always of the same tribe; but with inferior officers from among themselves. All the twelve captains are named amongst David's mighty men; (xi.)—The word translated *priest*, and applied to Benaiah, evidently means and should be rendered *Ruler*. Asahel, whom Abner slew, is numbered among these captains, and upon his death, his son succeeded him: hence we learn, that this order was at least begun to be established before David ruled over the whole land. Joab was the commander in chief. (34.)

V. 16—22. These rulers seem to have been *civil rulers* over their several tribes, not entirely unlike the lord lieutenants of counties in England.—Gad and Ashur are not mentioned, probably because they were joined to their neighbouring tribes. Elihu, or Eliab, was David's elder brother. The son of Abner was probably advanced upon his father's death, as an expression of David's unfeigned concern for that event.

V. 23, 24. It seems probable from this passage, that Joab began by David's order to number the children, as well as the grown men, but was prevented from finishing the account. The numbering of the effective men might have been deemed politically expedient: but ostentation alone could dictate the numbering of minors and infants;

i 2 Kings xviii. 15. 2 Chr. xvi 2.
k Gen. xli. 49. Ex. i. 11. 2 Chr. xxvi. 10. Jer. xli. 8.

25 And over [i] the king's treasures *was* Azmaveth the son of Adiel: and over [k] the store-houses in the fields, in the cities, and in the villages, and in the castles, *was* Jehonathan the son of Uzziah;

26 And over them that did the work of the field for tillage of the ground *was* Ezri the son of Chelub:

27 And over the vineyards *was* Shimei the Rameathite; over * the increase of the vineyards for the wine-cellars *was* Zabdi the Shiphmite:

* Heb. *that which was of the vineyard.*

l 1 Kings iv. 7.

28 And [l] over the olive-trees and the sycamore-trees that *were* in the low plains, *was* Baal-hanan the Gederite: and over the cellars of oil *was* Joash:

29 And over the herds that fed in Sharon [m] *was* Shitrai the Sharonite: and over the herds *that were* in the valleys *was* Shaphat the son of Adlai:

m v. 16. Is. lxv. 10.

n Job i. 3.
o Gen xlvii. 6.

30 Over [n] the camels also *was* Obil [o] the Ishmaelite: and over the asses *was* Jehdeiah the Meronothite:

31 And over the flocks *was* Jaziz the Hagarite. All these *were* the rulers of the substance which *was* king David's.

p 2 Sam. xxiii. 3. xxi. 21. *Nephew.*
† Or, *Secretary.*
‡ Or, *Hachmonite.* v. 11.

32 Also Jonathan David's [p] uncle *was* a counsellor, a wise man, and a † scribe: and Jehiel the ‡ son of Hachmoni *was* with the king's sons:

q 2 Sam xv. 12. xvi 23 xvii. 23.

33 And [q] Ahithophel *was* the king's counsellor; and [r] Hushi the Archite *was* the king's [s] companion:

r 2 Sam. xv. 32. 37. xvi. 16
s 2 Sam. xvi. 17. Ps. lv. 12. Zech. xiii, 7.

34 And after Ahithophel *was* Jehoiada the son of Benaiah, and Abiathar: and [t] the general of the king's army *was* Joab.

t xi. 6.

CHAP. XXVIII.

David assembles the chiefs of Israel, shows them how his purpose of building a temple had been disallowed, and relates the Lord's special favour to him, and his promises to Solomon, 1—8. *He charges Solomon to serve God, and to build the temple,* 9, 10. *He gives a pattern for the form, (as God had showed him,) and gold and silver for the materials,* 11—19. *He encourages Solomon with the assurance of help, both from God and his people,* 20, 21.

AND David [a] assembled all the princes of Israel, [b] the princes of the tribes, and the [c] captains of the companies that ministered to the king by course, and the captains over the thousands, and captains over the hundreds, and [d] the stewards over all the * substance and possessions of the king, † and of his sons, with [e] the ‡ officers, and with [f] the mighty men, and with all the valiant men, unto Jerusalem.

a xxiii. 2. Josh. xxiii. 2. xxiv. 1.
b xxvii. 16—22.
c xxvii. 1—15.
d xxvii. 25—31.
* Or, *cattle.*
† Or, *and his sons.*
e xxvii. 32—34.
‡ Or, *eunuchs.*
f xi. 10, &c.

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especially as God had pronounced the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, innumerable. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 25—31. We do not read here of sinecure places, or officers of State, merely to make a show of magnificence. Luxury, ambition, and venality have multiplied these attendants on courts; and selfish opposers will so impede the most unexceptionable measures of government, in limited monarchies, that without a number of retainers, whose interest it is to support the crown, the public business must move heavily, if it could at all proceed. Yet ancient simplicity was preferable to modern refinement; and the useful productions of the earth, to all the devices of luxury and indulgence.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The prudent management of secular affairs subserves the interests of godliness; provided it be kept in its proper place, and the favour and glory of God have a decided preference. In the kingdoms of this world, habitual readiness for war forms a better security of peace, than any treaties or alliances: in like manner, nothing so much encourages Satan's assaults, as our unwatchfulness; and while we stand armed with the whole armour of God, in the exercise of faith and preparation of heart for the conflict, we shall certainly be safe, and probably enjoy inward peace. When we have exposed ourselves to wrath and chastening for our sins, we ought humbly to confess them, and to desist from them: this will not make atonement for our crimes; but it is a frame of mind, that prepares us for receiving the atonement made by the Saviour. Usefulness is the proper standard of valuableness; and he who estimates by this rule, will give the word of God, the salvation of Christ, and true religion, a decided preference to all other things; because infinitely more useful. Well chosen counsellors prove the wisdom of princes: yet, some will be found wise men and scribes, and eminent for worldly policy and plausibility, who are in fact very wicked characters. But the faithful, the upright, and godly, should be our friends and chosen companions; and no king will be well advised in all things, or in those of the greatest importance, who doth not make the testimonies of God his delight and his counsellors, however he may be surrounded by powerful family connexions, faithful friends, and able politicians.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXVIII. V. 1. This transaction seems to have occurred in the time of David's last sickness, which, notwithstanding remissions, he was aware would terminate in death. He therefore summoned the several descriptions

2 Then David the king [g] stood up upon his feet, and said, Hear me, [h] my brethren, and my people: *As for me,* [i] I *had* in mine heart to build an house of [k] rest for the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and for [l] the footstool of our God, and [m] had made ready for the building:

3 But God said unto me, [n] Thou shalt not build an house for my name, because thou *hast been* a man of war, and hast shed § blood.

4 Howbeit the LORD God of Israel [o] chose me before all the house of my father, to be king over Israel for ever: for he hath [p] chosen Judah *to be* the ruler; and of [q] the house of Judah the house of my father; and [r] among the sons of my father he liked me to make *me* king over all Israel:

5 And of [s] all my sons, (for the LORD hath given me many sons,) [t] he hath chosen Solomon my son [u] to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel.

6 And he said unto me, Solomon thy son, [x] he shall build my house and my courts: for [y] I have chosen him *to be* my son, and I will be his father.

7 Moreover [z] I will establish his kingdom for ever, [a] if he be * constant to do my commandments and my judgments, [b] as at this day.

8 Now therefore [c] in the sight of all Israel the congregation of the LORD, and [d] in the audience of our God, [e] keep and seek for all the commandments of the LORD your God: [f] that ye may possess this good land, and leave *it* for an inheritance for your children after you for ever.

9 And thou, Solomon, my son, [g] know thou [h] the God of thy father, and [i] serve him with a perfect heart, and with [k] a willing mind: for [l] the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all [m] the imaginations of the thoughts: [n] if thou seek him, he will be found of thee: but [o] if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.

g Gen. xlviii. 2. 1 Kings i. 47.
h xi. 1—3 Deut. xvii. 15 20. Ps. xxii. 22 Heb. ii 11, 12
i xvii. 1, 2 2 Sam. vii. 1. 1 Kings viii. 17, 18.
k vi. 31. Ps. cxxxii. 3—5. 8. 14.
l Ps. xcix. 5. cxxxii. 7. Is. lxvi. 1 Lam ii. 1. Acts vii. 49
m xviii. 7—11. xxii. 2—5 14.
n xvii. 4. xxii. 8. 2 Sam vii. 5—13 1 Kings v. 3. 2 Chr vi. 8, 9.
§ Heb. *bloods.*
o 1 Sam xvi 6—13. 2 Sam. vii 8—16. Ps lxxviii. 68—72. lxxxix. 19—27.
p v. 2. Gen. xlix 8—10. Ps. lx 7 cviii 8
q 1 Sam. xvi. 1
r 1 Sam xvi 12, 13. Ps xviii 19. cxlvii. 10, 11.
s iii. 1—9. xiv. 4—7.
t xxii. 9 xxiii 1.
u xvii 14 xxix. 23. § 2 Chr. i. 8, 9. Ps. lxxii. *title.* 1, &c Is. ix. 6, 7.
x xvii 11—14. xxii 10. 2 Sam. vii. 3. 1 Zech. vi. 12, 13. Heb iii 3. 6
y Heb. i. 5.
z Ps lxxxix. 28—37. cxxxii. 12. Dan. ii 44.
a xxii. 13 1 Kings vi. 12. 13. ix. 4, 5. xi. 9—13.
* Heb *strong.* 10. Josh. i 6, 7. 1 Kings ii. 2—4.
b 1 Kings viii. 61. xi. 4.
c Deut. iv. 6. Mat. v. 16. Phil ii. 15, 16. Heb xii 1, 2.
d Deut iv. 26. xxix 10. 15. Acts x. 33.
e Ps cxix 4. 10, 11. 27 33, 34 44. Prov. ii. 1—5. iii 1
f Deut iv. 1 v. 32, 33. vi. 1, 2.
g Deut iv 35. 1 Kings viii. 43. Ps ix 10. Jer. ix. 24. xxii 16. xxiv. 37. xxxi. 34 Hos iv 1. 6 John viii 55. xvii. 3 Acts xvii. 23 30. Rom i. 28. 1 Cor xv. 34. 2 Cor. iv. 6.
h Gen xxviii. 13. Isa iii 16. xv. 2. 1 Kings iii 6. Ps xviii. 2. lxxxix 26.
i xxix 9 17—19. 1 Kings viii 61. 2 Kings xx. 3. xxii. 2 Ps. ci. 2. John i. 47.
k 2 Cor. viii 12. ix. 7. 1 Pet. v. 2.
l xxix 17. 1 Sam xvi. 7. 1 Kings viii. 39. Ps. vii. 9. Prov xvii. 3. Jer xi 20 xvii 10. xx. 12. John ii. 25. xxi 17. Acts i 24. Rev. ii. 23.
m Gen. vi. 5. viii. 21. Deut. xxxi. 21 Ps. cxxxix. 2. Ez xxxviii 10
n 2 Chr xv. 2 Prov. ii 1—6. Is xlv. 19. lv. 6, 7. Jer xxix. 13 Matt vii 7, 8 Jam iv. 8—11
o Deut. xxxi. 16, 17. 1 Kings ix 6—9. Ezra viii. 22. Is. i. 28. Heb. x 38, 39.

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of men, which were mentioned in the preceding chapter, and which formed a convention of the states, or representatives of the people; that he might declare to them the will of God as revealed to him, and engage them to a hearty concurrence in those public measures, which, in obedience to that will, he had resolved on. Many of the chief priests and Levites generally risided with David at Jerusalem: but it is not expressly said, that they were present on this occasion.

V. 2. David, finding himself able, and being animated by the solemn occasion, stood up on his feet, to express his earnestness in this address, and his affection and respect for the people; and especially intending to honour the Lord, by whose authority and commission he spake. Moses and Joshua had, just before their death, assembled the people for similar purposes. David used the most endearing language in this parting interview, begging their attention, as his brethren and his people. The ark is here called "the footstool of our God." Heaven, where the Lord unveils his glories to his holy angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, is his *throne:* the earth is his *footstool;* and the place of the ark was, as it were, the *centre of that footstool,* where the gracious presence of God on earth was chiefly displayed, and before and toward which all his people worshipped. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 4. *For ever.* That is, permanently in his posterity, and to the end of the world, yea, to eternity in Christ, of whom David and Solomon were remarkable types. It was not known till David's time, from which family in Judah the Messiah would descend.

V. 7, 8. David had committed several great transgressions, and he every where speaks the language of conscious sinfulness. Yet the people had been preserved from idolatry, and retained in the worship and service of God, during his reign; and at this time they, as well as Solomon, appeared well disposed to true religion. If therefore they continued constant, *as at that day,* to keep the Lord's commandments and judgments; their national covenant remaining unviolated, would secure their possession of Canaan, and other national advantages. Yet they were exhorted not only to keep, but *to seek for,* all the commandments of the Lord; that they might know them more exactly, and perform them more entirely from day to day. David therefore exhorted the princes to engage themselves to this conduct, as "in the sight of all Israel, even the "congregation of the LORD; and as in audience of their "God," who was especially in that solemn assembly: that they might be the more impressed, and that their example might have a salutary effect on others also.

V. 9. The being and perfections of God are made known by his works, and by his word: and we ought diligently to seek the knowledge of him from both these sources. That discovery of some of the divine perfections, which may be made by studying the works of creation and providence, may be naturally delightful to man; because it gratifies his love of knowledge, and excites his surprise, without affronting his pride, alarming his conscience, or offending his prejudices. But revelation gives us the whole character of God, connected with the mysterious manner of his subsistence: and this not only in plain declarations, but in an historical and prophetical view of his providential government of the universe; in his holy law, the ministra-

10 [p] Take heed now; for the LORD hath chosen thee to build an house for the sanctuary: be strong, and do *it*.

11 ¶ Then David gave to Solomon his son [q] the pattern of [r] the porch, and of [s] the houses thereof, and of [t] the treasuries thereof, and of the [u] upper-chambers thereof, and of the inner parlours thereof, and of [x] the place of the mercy-seat.

12 And the pattern of all * that he had by the Spirit, of the courts of the house of the LORD, and of all the chambers round about, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of [y] the treasuries of the dedicated things:

13 Also for [z] the courses of the priests and the Levites, and for all the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and for all [a] the vessels of service in the house of the LORD.

14 *He gave* of gold by weight for *things* of gold, for all instruments of all manner of service; *silver also* for all instruments of silver by weight, for all instruments of every kind of service:

15 Even the weight for [b] the candlesticks of gold, and for their lamps of

p 6. xxii. 16—19. 1 Tim iv. 16
q 19. Ex. xxv. 40. xxvi. 30. xxxix. 42, 43. 2 Chr iii. 3. Ez. xliii. 10, 11. Heb viii. 5
r 1 Kings vi. 3. 2 Chr iii. 4. Ez. xl. 8, 9. 15. 48, 49.
s 1 Kings vi. 16—20 2 Chr. iii. 5—10. Ez. xli. 13, &c. Heb. ix. 2—8.
t ix. 26—29. xxvi. 20—27. Luke xxi. 1.
u 1 Kings vi. 5, 6. 10. 2 Chr. iii. 9. Neh. x. 38, 39. xiii. 5. Jer. xxxv. 2. Ez. xli. 6, &c.
x Ex. xxv. 17—22.
y xl. 20, 21. 1 Kings vi. 19. 2 Chr. v. 7. Heb. ix. 5.
* Heb. *that was with him by.*

y xxvi. 26—28. 1 Kings xiv. 26. xv. 15. 18. 2 Kings xvi. 8. xviii. 15.
z xxiv. 1, &c. xxv. 1, &c.
a ix. 29. Ezra viii. 25—30. 33.
b Ex xxv. 31—39. 1 Kings. vii. 49. 2 Chron. iv. 7. Zech. iv. 2, 3. 11—13. Rev. i. 12. 20. ii. 1.

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tion of condemnation to all sinners, and in his blessed Gospel, the ministration of righteousness and of the Spirit to all believers. This knowledge of God the natural man cannot receive. It implies the infinite justice and holiness of God, and the entire apostacy, rebellion, pollution, and misery of man; and shows every person on earth to be a criminal condemned to everlasting punishment, from which he can only be delivered by the unmerited mercy of the Father, through the atonement of the Son, and by the sanctification of the Holy Ghost. All men therefore oppose, neglect, or abuse this knowledge of God, except as they are taught of him. Some notions of these things may be attained by a carnal unhumbled sinner: but he sees them not as they really are, according to their nature and value; and his ideas no more agree to the true meaning of his own words, than the words of a man born blind do to his ideas when he speaks about light and colours. This knowledge therefore will have no effect, unless a bad one, on the state of his heart, and the conduct of his life. But where God is truly known, he is also feared, believed, trusted, loved, worshipped, and obeyed, in proportion to that knowledge. Self-abasement, hatred of sin, indifference about worldly objects, and general benevolence, from the purest principle, will uniformly attend and grow with it; and all true religion may be resolved into it. (*Marg. Ref.*) It is received by faith simply crediting the testimony of God, and diligently appropriating the information which he communicates in Scripture. As far as acquired, this knowledge of God regulates the understanding, judgment, conscience, will, affections, and all the powers and operations of the soul; and consequently, all the intentions, dispositions, words, and actions. It brings a man acquainted with God in Christ, as a Father and Friend, in a way of experience and communion. It discovers what we may expect from him, and what he must approve or abhor in us; and consequently what is requisite to his honourably saving sinners, and to our being capable of happiness in his favour and service. Thus we learn the inestimable value of the Saviour's atonement, and of the sanctification of the Holy Ghost, and are influenced to walk conscientiously in all his ordinances and commandments. It brings a sinner to his proper place, at the foot of the cross, and prostrate before the mercy-seat of a forgiving God, as a poor helpless worthless worm, an ignorant child, a poor suppliant, a condemned criminal, deserving nothing but wrath, yet expecting every thing needful or desirable, from the infinitely free mercy and grace of God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Having been forgiven much, and receiving much, the pardoned sinner learns to love much: and experiencing the blessed effects of this knowledge of God on his own soul, he declares his excellency to others, that they too may seek and find so inestimable a treasure. Thus David had known the Lord; and having for many a year feared, trusted, loved, and worshipped him, he was about to remove to that better world, where knowledge, holiness, love, and felicity are perfected: but before he went, he desired to give it as his parting counsel to his beloved Solomon, to cultivate the acquaintance of so kind, merciful, faithful, and powerful a Friend; (*Job* xxii. 21:) and to serve him with a perfect heart and a willing mind, or inward delight. But he also reminded him at the same time of the Lord's heart-searching knowledge, and of his justice and holiness, as well as of his mercy. A formal service therefore would not profit: if he sought God in a proper manner, he would be found of him; but if he finally renounced his service, he would cast him off for ever, notwithstanding all his former kindness for him.

V. 12. David was divinely instructed, either by immediate revelation, or by some prophet, (perhaps Nathan,) in what form the temple was to be built and how to regulate every thing respecting it, and its chambers, courts, and treasuries. "The LORD made him understand it in writing by his hand upon him." (19.) And in what way soever this writing was made and sent to him, he gave it to Solomon just before his death; so that nothing was left even to the *wisdom and discretion of Solomon*, but all was done by rule, even to the quantity of metal used in each vessel. Moses had been instructed in the same manner in erecting the tabernacle. For both the tabernacle and temple were typical of Christ, and heavenly things. (*Note, Ex.* xxv. 9.) In vain do men of opposite sentiments contend for such uniformity in the circumstances of our worship, under the New Testament; seeing it is evident, that exact, precise, and express rules are no where to be found, in respect of every particular. It is, however, most evident, that to model divine ordinances according to man's imagination, would have been the height of presumption even in Solomon himself.

gold, by weight for every candlestick, and for the lamps thereof; and for the candlesticks of silver by weight, *both* for the candlestick, and *also* for the lamps thereof, according to the use of every candlestick.

16 And by weight *he gave* gold for the [c] tables of shew-bread, for every table; and *likewise* silver for the tables of silver.

17 Also [d] pure gold for the flesh-hooks, and [e] the bowls, and the cups: and for the golden basons *he gave gold* by weight for every bason; and *likewise silver* by weight for every bason of silver;

18 And for [f] the altar of incense refined gold by weight, and gold for the pattern of [g] the chariot of the cherubims, that spread out *their wings*, and covered the ark of the covenant of the LORD.

c Ex. xxv 23—30. 1 Kings vii. 48. 2 Chr. iv. 8. 19.
d 1 Sam. ii. 13, 14. 2 Chr. iv. 20—22.
e Num vii. 13, 14 1 Kings vii. 49—50. x. 21 2 Chr. iv. 20—22.
f Ex. xxx. 1—10. 1 Kings vii. 48.
g Ex. xxv. 18—22. 1 Sam. iv 4. 1 Kings vi 23—30. Ps. xviii. 10. lxviii. 17. lxxx. 1. xcix. 1. Ez. i. 15—24. x. 2, &c.

19 All *this, said David,* [h] the LORD made me understand in writing [i] by *his* hand upon me, *even* all the works of this pattern.

h 11, 12. Ex. xxv. 40. xxvi. 30.
i Ez. i. 3. iii. 14, 2.

20 ¶ And David said to Solomon his son, [k] Be strong, and of good courage, and do *it:* [l] fear not, nor be dismayed; for the LORD God, *even* my God, *will be* with thee; [m] he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD.

k 10. xxii. 13. Deu xxxi. 7, 8. Josh. i. 6—9. 1 Cor xvi 13.
l Ps. xxvii. 1, 2. Is. xli. 10. 13. Rom. viii. 31.
m Josh i. 5. Heb. xiii 5.

21 And, behold, [n] the courses of the priests and the Levites, *even they shall be with thee* for all the service of the house of God: and *there shall be* with thee, for [o] all manner of workmanship, every [p] willing skilful man, for any manner of service: [q] also the princes and all the people *will be* wholly at thy commandment.

n xxiv. xxvi. xxvi.
o Ex. xxxi. 3.
p Ex. xxxv. 25, 29. 35. xxxvi. 1—4. Ps. cx. 3.
q xxii. 17, 18. Tit. iii. 1.

V. 15, 16. The candlesticks of silver, and tables of silver, are not elsewhere mentioned, and we do not know to what use they were put. It seems there were in the temple several tables of gold for the shew-bread, and the vessels belonging to that part of the stated service.

V. 17. The word, rendered *basons*, seems to be derived from the *atonement* made by the blood of the sacrifices, which was received into them till it was sprinkled.

V. 18. Above the ark, between the cherubim, the glory of the Lord appeared, as a mighty warrior riding in the chariot of war, to the assistance of Israel his people. (*Marg. Ref.*) (*Notes, Ex.* xxv. 10—21.) As the cherubim of gold made by Moses seem to have been joined to the mercy-seat, which covered the ark; it has been thought, that Solomon was directed to make two additional cherubim, after the same pattern. These must, however, be distinguished from those made of olive-trees covered with gold. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* vi. 23—28.) And it is not absolutely certain, that, amidst the many removals of the ark which had taken place, the cherubim had not been separated from it; and whether Solomon did any thing more than make two others in the stead of them.

V. 21. There appeared, in all the several orders of men, a promising disposition to harmony amongst themselves, and loyalty to their prince; and David foresaw that God would dispose them to cordial obedience to Solomon, though a younger brother, and in his youth.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—10.

Whist life continues, it is desirable to spend it in promoting the peace, prosperity, and spiritual good, of those who may remain behind. To treat inferiors with a condescending respect and affection, is the way to gain love, without losing any due honour: and to address subjects as rational creatures, showing them the propriety and advantage of proposed measures, and persuading them to a willing concurrence, is far preferable to the exercise of despotic authority. Indeed kings and their meanest subjects are all brethren in fallen Adam: and believers on a throne or in a cottage are all brethren in Jesus Christ, and should mutually seek each other's welfare. In that monarchy which God established in Israel and sanctioned by his approbation, we see no traces of the unalterable *right of primogeniture*, or of ruling with absolute authority. Rather we perceive a resemblance of that limited, moderate, and equitable authority, which a kind providence hath established over these kingdoms; for which we can never be sufficiently thankful, and for the continuance of which to our latest posterity, we should most fervently pray. The wickedness of man indeed, and the experience of ages, have taught the friends of liberty to secure that blessing by many regulations, which were not thought of, nor needful, in the happy days of the man after God's own heart: and prudence dictates the *general expediency of hereditary succession.* Yet surely the conduct of David at the beginning, in the middle, and at the close of his reign, greatly resembled that of a British monarch meeting his Parliament, and doing all things by their concurrence and assistance. It may be comfortable to us in a dying hour, to recollect the plans that we had framed to promote true religion, though we have been unable to accomplish them: for hence we may infer that we are the chosen and called of God; as such designs prove, that he hath given us a heart to account his service a delightful privilege, and to long and love to be employed in it. But, in the nature and measure of our services, we must learn acquiescence in his will, whose choice of us is the source of all our grace, comfort, or usefulness: he liketh to make us Christians or ministers, and to employ us in various ways; but he doth not generally acquaint us with the reason of it. Happy are they,

CHAP. XXIX.

David shows the princes and people what he had prepared for the building and service of the temple, 1—5. *After his example they offer liberally,* 6—9. *He adores and blesses God, and prays for the people and for Solomon,* 10—19. *The people worship, sacrifice, and feast with joy; and then make Solomon king the second time,* 20—22. *He reigns in majesty and prosperity,* 23—25. *David's long and prosperous reign, and happy death,* 26—30.

FURTHERMORE David the king said [a] unto all the congregation, Solomon my son, [b] whom alone God hath chosen, *is yet* [c] young and tender, and the work *is* great: [d] for the palace *is* not for man, but for the LORD God.

a xxviii. 1. 8.
b xxviii. 5, 6. 1 Kings viii. 19, 20.
c xxii. 5. 1 Kings iii. 7. 2 Chr. xiii. 7. Prov. iv. 3. Jer. i. 6, 7.
d xxviii 10. 2 Chr ii 4, 5.

2 Now [e] I have prepared [f] with all my might for the house of my God: [g] the gold for *things to be made* of gold, and the silver for *things* of silver, and the brass for *things* of brass, the iron for *things* of iron, and wood for *things* of wood; [h] onyx-stones, and *stones* to be set, glistering stones, and of divers colours, and all manner of precious stones, and marble stones in abundance.

e xxii. 3, 4. 14—16.
f 2 Chr. xxxi. 20, 21 Ec. ix. 10. 2 Cor. viii. 3. Col. iii. 23. 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11.
g xxviii. 14—18.
h Gen. ii. 12. Ex. xxviii. 20. xxxix. 13. Job. xxviii. 16. Is. liv. 11, 12. Rev. xxi. 18—21.

3 Moreover, because [i] I have set my affection to the house of my God, [k] I have of mine own proper good, of gold and silver, *which* I have given to the house of

i Ps xxvi. 8. xxvii. 4. lxxxiv. 1. 10. cxxii. 1—9.
k xxi 24. Prov. iii. 9, 10.

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whom he hath chosen in Christ "to the adoption of children "unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will:" from their almighty Father they will receive a kingdom that cannot be moved, and he will establish it to them for ever. This their privilege will appear, by their constancy in keeping his commandments, and doing their proper work in his church, after the example and by the grace of the Saviour. Let us then give diligence to make our calling and election sure: and as in the presence of God, and in the sight of his people, let us *seek out that we may do* all his commandments, sincerely, unreservedly, and in humble imitation of our perfect pattern. Let us seek the knowledge of God, as the most valuable of all treasures; and acquaint ourselves with him, as the God of all those who through faith and patience have inherited the promises. Let us seek grace from him by earnest prayer, that we may serve him with an upright undivided heart, and a willing cheerful mind. Let us beware of hypocrisy; "for the "LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the "imaginations of our thoughts." Let us fear coming short, growing negligent, or turning aside; for "if we forsake "him, he will cast us off for ever." But let us hope also in his mercy; for if we seek him he will be found of us: and we shall be strong to do our work, shall live in some measure in possession of our privileges, and may hope to leave them for an inheritance to our children. In this fear of the Lord, there is strong confidence: and by attaining to an assurance that we are his people, we may be assured also that he will not fail us nor forsake us: we may then bid defiance to all our enemies, and be of good courage in the prospect of difficulties and dangers.

V. 11—21.

If the Lord employ us and be with us, he will raise us up helpers, both willing and skilful, as far as we want them: and thus he will carry us through our work, and that being finished, will receive us unto himself.—Nobles, ministers, and people should be wholly at the command of those rulers especially who boldly endeavour to promote true religion; using their influence and authority to lead all their subjects to a willing attendance to things evidently scriptural, and of acknowledged excellency and importance. —But we should never forget, that the whole contrivance, purchase, and revelation of salvation for sinners are of the Lord: the way of access, the ministry of the Gospel, the written word, the throne of grace, the public ordinances, the sacramental seals, and every thing pertaining to our reconciliation and walk with God, are from him; and may not be modelled by any human authority. Even mere circumstances, which must be regulated by man's discretion, and in which every society has a right to judge for its *willing* members, are not to be imposed on our brethren: and we are accountable to God, though not to man, for that judgment and practice which we ourselves form and adopt. We should therefore in every thing be circumspect, and not leave the Scripture in any particular, where it affords us directions; yet we should not endanger the peace of the church, for the sake of minute external regulations. Hitherto much has been amiss in every age, in every state, and in every division of the church: ere long our Prince of peace, the Builder of the true temple, the Son of God, will come and set all right. In the mean time let us judge for ourselves, and bear with each other; let us cease from self-confident boastings, and acrimonious controversies; and in our several places, let us endeavour to serve God, and to help one another, and to promote the common cause of truth and holiness.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIX. V. 1. *Whom alone God,* &c. David by this expression declared that God had chosen Solomon, in preference to the rest of his sons; and that this was the sole reason of his succession to the throne, and not any partial affection of his own towards him. This would tend to satisfy the people, and to induce David's other sons to submit to the divine appointment. (*Note,* xxii. 5.)

V. 2. The peculiar use made of the precious stones of various kinds, mentioned in this verse, in decorating the temple, or in adding to the magnificence of the service there performed, is not known. (*Marg. Ref.*)

my God, [l] over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house,

4 *Even* three thousand talents of gold, of the [m] gold of Ophir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver, to overlay the walls of the houses *withal:*

5 The gold for *things* of gold, and the silver for *things* of silver, and for all manner of work *to be made* by the hands of artificers. And [n] who *then* is willing to * consecrate his service this day unto the LORD?

6 ¶ Then [o] the chief of the fathers and princes of the tribes of Israel, and the captains of thousands and of hundreds, with the rulers over the king's work, offered willingly,

7 And gave for the service of the house of God, of gold five thousand talents and ten thousand drams, and of silver ten thousand talents, and of brass eighteen thousand talents, and one hundred thousand talents of iron.

8 And they with whom *precious* stones were found gave *them* to the treasure of the house of the LORD, by the hand of [p] Jehiel the Gershonite.

9 Then the people rejoiced, for that [q] they offered willingly; because with [r] perfect heart they offered willingly to the LORD; and [s] David the king also rejoiced with great joy.

10 ¶ Wherefore [t] David blessed the LORD before all the congregation: and David said, [u] Blessed *be* thou, [x] LORD God of Israel, [y] our Father, for ever and ever.

l xxii. 4, 5. 14—16.
m 1 Kings ix. 28.
n Ex. xxv. 2—9. xxxv. 5, &c. Num. vii. 2, 3. 10—14. & Ezra i. 4—6. ii. 68, 69. vii. 15, 16.
* Heb. *to fill his hand.*
o xxvii. 1. Is. lx. 5—18.
p xxvi. 21, 22 *Jehieli.*
q Deut. xvi. 10, 11. Judg. v. 9. Ezra ii. 68—70. Ps. cx. 3. 2 Cor. viii. 3. ix. 7, 8.
r 17. 1 Kings viii. 61.
s Prov. xxiii. 15, 16. Luke xv. 6. John xv. 11. Phil. ii. 15—17. iv. 1. 10. 1 Thes. iii. 6—9.
t 20. 2 Chr. xx. 26, 27. Ps. ciii. 1, 2. cxxxviii. 1. cxlvi. 2.
u 1 Kings viii. 15. 2 Chr. vi. 4. Ps. lxxii. 18, 19. Ez. iii. 12. Eph. i. 3, 1 Pet. i. 3.
x Gen. xxxii. 29. xxxiii. 20.
y Is. lxiii. 16. Matt. vi. 9. Luke xi. 2. Rom. i. 7. viii. 15. Phil. iv. 20. 2 Thes. ii. 16.

11 Thine, O LORD, [a] *is* the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and [d] the victory, and [e] majesty: for [f] all *that is* in the heaven and in the earth *is thine;* [g] thine *is* the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art [h] exalted as head above all.

12 Both [i] riches and honour *come* of thee, and thou [k] reignest over all; and in thine hand *is* [l] power and might; and in thine hand *it is* to make great, and to [m] give strength unto all.

13 Now therefore, our God, [n] we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name.

14 But [o] who *am* I, and what *is* my people, [p] that we should * be able to offer so [q] willingly after this sort? for [r] all things *come* of thee, and of † thine own have we given thee.

15 For [s] we *are* strangers before thee, and sojourners, as *were* all our fathers: [t] our days on the earth *are* as a shadow, and *there is* none ‡ abiding.

16 O LORD our God, [u] all this store, that we have prepared to build thee an house for thine holy name, *cometh* of thine hand, and *is* all thine own.

17 I know also, my God, that thou [x] triest the heart, and [y] hast pleasure in uprightness. As for me, [z] in the uprightness of mine heart I have willingly offered all these things: and now have I seen with [a] joy thy people, which are ◊ present here, to offer willingly unto thee.

c Dan. iv. 30. 34, 35. Matt. vi. 13. 1 Tim. i. 17. vi. 15, 16. Jude 25. Rev. iv. 10, 11. v. 12, 13. vii. 9—12. xix. 1.
d 1 Sam. xv. 29. *Marg.* Ps. xcviii. 1.
e Job xxxvii. 22. Ps. xxix. 4. xlv. 3, 4. civ. 1. cxlv. 12. Is. ii. 10. Heb. i. 3.
f Gen. i. 1. xiv. 20. 22. Ps. cxv. 15, 16. Is. xlii. 5. lxvi. 1. Jer. x. 10—12. xxvii. 5. Dan. iv. 32. 34, 35.
g Ps. xcvii. 1. xcix. 1. cxlv. 1. 12, 13. Dan. iv. 3. Rev. xi. 15.
h Neh. ix. 5. Ps. xxi. 13. xlvi. 10. xlvii. 9. lvii. 5. 11. xcvii. 9. Is. ii. 11. xii. 4.
i Deut. viii. 18. 1 Sam. ii. 7, 8. Job xlii. 10. Ps. lxxv. 6, 7. cxiii. 7, 8. Prov. x. 22. Luke i. 51—53. Rom. xi. 35, 36.
k Dan. vi. 26.
l Job ix. 19. Ps. lxii. 11. Is. xliii. 13. xlvi. 10. Dan. vi. 16—21. Matt. xxviii. 18. John xix. 11. Eph. iii. 20. Rev. xi. 17.
m 2 Chr. xvi. 9. Ps. xviii. 31, 32. xxviii. 8. xxix. 1. 11. lxviii. 34, 35. cxliv. 1, 2. Is. xlv. 24. Eph. iii. 16. Phil. iv. 13. Col. i. 11.
n Ps. cv. 1. cvi. 1. Dan. ii. 23. 2 Cor. ii. 14. viii. 16. ix. 15. 1 Thes. ii. 13.
o Gen. xxxii. 10. 2 Sam. vii. 18. Dan. iv. 30. 1 Cor. xv. 9, 10. 2 Cor. iii. 5. xii. 9—11.
p Ps. cxv. 1, 2. Rev. iv. 10.
* Heb. *retain, or obtain strength.*
q 9. Phil. ii. 13. Jam. i. 17.
r Gen. xxviii. 22. Ps. l. 10—12. Rom. xi. 36. 1 Cor. xvi. 2.——† Heb. *of thine hand.*——s Gen. xlvii. 9. Ps. xxxix. 12. cxix. 19. Heb. xi. 13—19. 1 Pet. ii. 11.——t Job xiv. 2. Ps. xc. 9. ciii. 11. cxliv. 4. Ec. vi. 12. Jam. iv. 14.——‡ Heb. *expectation.*——u 14. 2 Chr. xxxi. 10. Ps. xxiv. 1. Hos. ii. 8. Luke xix. 16.——x xxviii. 9. Deut. viii. 2. 1 Sam. xvi. 7. Ps. vii. 9. l. 6. Prov. xvi. 2. xxi. 2. Jer. xvii. 10. Heb. iv. 12. Rev. ii. 23.——y Prov. xi. 20. xv. 8, 9. John i. 47.——z Acts xxiv. 16. 2 Cor. i. 12. 1 Thes. ii. 10.——a 9. Philem. 7. 20——◊ Heb. *found.*

V. 3—9. David seems to have dedicated a certain proportion of all his spoils and gains to God, before he considered the residue as his own; and this proportion constituted the treasures before spoken of; (xxii. 14:) but besides this, he gave, from his own treasury, above eighteen millions sterling of gold and silver. This he offered, not by constraint, or from ostentation; but because "he "had set his affection to the house of his God," and thought he could never do enough towards promoting that good work. He was likewise desirous to see his subjects "abound in this grace also;" as they had been enriched by his victories, and never burdened with taxes; and he knew that it would be "fruit, which would abound to their own "account." Having set them the example, he only inquired who was willing to assist, and to consecrate his service unto the Lord, by contributing part of his wealth to that holy use? and immediately they offered about thirty millions of gold and silver, besides brass, iron, and precious stones: and instead of grudging the expense, the king and people all rejoiced together; for they were cordial in it, and offered willingly themselves, and rejoiced to see all the others offering with similar liberality. The prosperity of Israel must have been immense, under the reign of David; and it seems that there was also much true piety amongst them, especially towards the close of his reign. We can scarcely form a conception of the magnificence of the temple and adjacent edifices, about which such immense quantities of gold and silver were employed. But the unsearchable riches of Christ excel the splendour of the temple, infinitely more than that surpassed the meanest cottage on earth.—The *refined silver* seems to have been used in covering the inner walls of the chambers, and other parts of out-buildings, as distinct from the temple; for those of the temple itself were plated with gold.

18 O [b] LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, [c] keep this for ever [d] in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and * prepare their heart unto thee.

19 And [e] give unto Solomon my son a perfect heart, to keep thy commandments, thy testimonies, and thy statutes, and to do all *these things*, and to build the palace, *for* [f] the which I have made provision.

20 ¶ And David said to all the congregation, [g] Now bless the LORD your God. And all the congregation blessed the LORD God of their fathers, and [h] bowed down their heads, and [i] worshipped the LORD, and the king.

21 And they [k] sacrificed sacrifices unto the LORD, and offered burnt-offerings unto the LORD, on the morrow after that day, *even* a thousand bullocks, a thousand rams, *and* a thousand lambs, with their [l] drink-offerings, and sacrifices in abundance for all Israel;

22 And did [m] eat and drink before the LORD on that day with great gladness. And they made Solomon the son of David king [n] the second time, [o] and anointed *him* unto the LORD *to be* the chief governor, and [p] Zadok *to be* priest.

23 Then Solomon [q] sat on the throne of the LORD as king instead of David his father, and [r] prospered; and [s] all Israel obeyed him.

24 And [t] all the princes, and the mighty men, and [u] all the sons likewise of king David, * submitted themselves unto Solomon the king.

25 And the LORD [x] magnified Solomon exceedingly in the sight of all Israel, and [y] bestowed upon him *such* royal majesty, as had not been on any king before him in Israel.

b Ex. iii 6. 15. iv 5. Matt. xxii. 32. Acts iii 13.
c Deut. xxx. 6. Ps. lii. 10. cxix. 116, 117. Jer. x. 23. xxxii 39, 40. Phil. i 6. 9—11. 1 Thes. iii 11. 12. Heb. xiii 21.
d xxviii. 9. Gen. vi 5. Ps. cxix. 113.
* Heb. *stablish.* Ps. x. 17. 2 Thes. ii. 16, 17. 1 Pet. v. 10.
e xxviii. 9. Ps. lxxii 1. cxix 80. James i. 17.
f 2. xxii. 14.
g xvi. 36. 2 Chr. xx. 21. Ps. cxxxiv. 2. cxxxv. 19—21. cxlvi 1, 2. cxlviii. 13, 14, &c.
h Gen. xxiv 26. 48. Ex. iv. 31. Ps. xxix 1, 2. xcv 6.
i Ex. xiv. 31. 1 Sam. xii 18. Prov. xxiv. 21. 1 Pet. ii. 17.
k 1 Kings viii 62—65. 2 Chr. vii 4. 9. Ezra vi. 17.
l Lev. xxiii 18. Num. xv. 5. 7. 10.
m Ex. xxiv 11. Deut. xii 7. 11, 12. xvi 14. 17. 2 Chr. vii 9. Neh. viii 12. Ec. ii. 24. iii 12, 13. viii. 15. ix. 7. 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18.
n xxiii 1.
o 1 Kings i 25—39.
p 1 Kings ii. 35.
q xvii. 11. 12. xxviii. 5. Ps. cxxxii. 11. Is. ix. 6, 7.
r xxii. 11.
s Ec. viii. 2—5. Rom. xiii. 1.
t xxii 17. xxviii. 21.
u iii. 3—9. 1 Kings i 50—53. ii 24, 25.
* Heb. *gave the hand under.* Gen. xxiv. 2. xlvii. 29. 2 Chr. xxx. 8. *Marg.* Ez. xvii 18.
x Josh. iii. 7. iv. 14. 2 Chr. i. 1. Job vii. 17. Acts xix 17.
y 1 Kings iii. 13. 2 Chr. i. 12. Ec. ii. 9. Dan. v. 18, 19. Heb. ii. 9.

V. 10—19. Instead of boasting of these extraordinary oblations; (*Num.* xxiii. 4;) David gave solemn thanks to the Lord, with vast enlargement of heart and copiousness of expression: and in this act of joyful adoration, we meet with the first scriptural instance of any person addressing God in prayer by the words "Our Father," which are the language of the spirit of adoption, and found chiefly in the New Testament. (*Marg. Ref.*) As king of Israel, David was become great, powerful, and honourable; he had obtained victories, taken spoils, and been crowned with royal majesty: but what was all this, before him who "inhabiteth eternity," and filleth immensity, and is underived, and independent of all; who possesses immutably every glorious and adorable perfection, and exercises almighty power and absolute universal authority; and who, victorious over all his enemies, reigns in majesty which exceeds all description or imagination! for "his is the kingdom, the power, and the glory for ever, Amen." From this God alone David had received his wealth, honour, and power: this he acknowledged with grateful praise; but contemplating the infinite glories of his great Benefactor, and then turning his thoughts to himself and his people, the comparison affected him with a deep conviction of their meanness, weakness, and unworthiness; and he could not but wonder, that the glorious God would condescend to notice such indigent and sinful creatures. "LORD," says he, "what are we, that we should offer so willingly after this sort!" Their existence was derived from God: he had graciously given them these treasures, and had disposed their hearts willingly to make this use of them; so that in every way the whole praise belonged to him. As for them, they were strangers and sojourners; *dying* because *sinful* creatures. Indeed all that they gave to the Lord to build his temple, was his own before; if they had attempted to keep it, death would soon have removed them: so that the only use which they could make of it, to their own real advantage, was thus to consecrate it to the service of Him who gave it, and whose gracious acceptance of their oblation would add still more to their obligations. At the same time David was conscious of his own uprightness and willingness in this oblation, as in the presence of that heart-searching God who hath pleasure in uprightness; and with great joy he beheld his people showing every token of the same disposition. He well knew that this, as far as genuine, was the effect of the grace of God: and he most fervently prayed that it might be evermore kept there by the same grace; that the hearts of them all, but especially of Solomon, might be prepared for the Lord; and that he might accomplish the arduous important service before him. Such is this address of David to the LORD God of Israel; and nothing on this side heaven can be conceived, more humble, pure, evangelical, spiritual, devout, or exalted, than the praise, adoration, gratitude, confidence, love, zeal, and philanthropy, which it breathes throughout. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 20. David, having concluded his worship, called upon the people to bless the LORD with him: and when they had rendered their adoring praises to God, they performed obeisance to their aged and pious king.

V. 21—25. Besides the burnt-offerings which were entirely consumed on the altar, numerous peace-offerings were sacrificed, on the flesh of which the assembled multitudes joyfully feasted. Solomon had been hastily, and by a few persons, anointed king during Adonijah's usurpation: but he was at this time anointed in a more solemn and public manner. As Abiathar was removed from the high priesthood, and Zadok substituted in his place after David's death, it has been thought that the second anointing of Solomon was also subsequent to that event: but that does not seem to have been the case. He was "anointed unto

26 ¶ Thus David the son of Jesse
z xviii. 14 Ps. lxxviii. 71, 72. reigned z over all Israel.
27 And the time that he reigned over
a iii. 4. 2 Sam. v. 4, 5. 1 Kings ii. 11. Israel *was* a forty years; seven years
reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and
b Gen. xv. 15. xxv. 8. Job v. 26. Prov. xvi. 31. Acts xiii. 36. three *years* reigned he in Jerusalem.
28 And he died in b a good old age,
c full of days, riches, and honour: and c xxiii. 1. Gen. xxxv 29.
Solomon his son reigned in his stead.
29 Now d the acts of David the king, d 1 Kings xi. 41. xiv 29. Heb. xi. 32, 33.
first and last, behold, they *are* written
in the † book of e Samuel the seer, and † Or, *History*. Heb *words*
in the book of f Nathan the prophet, and e 1 Sam. ix. 9. f 2 Sam vii. 2—4 xii. 1—7
in the book of g Gad the seer, g xxi. 9—11.

"the Lord to be the chief governor," and "he sat on the "throne of the Lord." For the Lord was in an especial manner the king of Israel; the princes received their authority from him by particular designation; and they were expressly required to support his worship and law by it. They also were all types of Christ, who "sat down with "his father on his throne."—We may suppose that every kind of personal accomplishment united with justice, wisdom, and prosperity, in that royal majesty which the Lord bestowed upon Solomon, and by which he magnified him in the sight of all Israel.

V. 26—28. When we read the eleventh chapter of the second book of Samuel, and the sequel of that melancholy narration, we could scarcely have expected to behold David appear so illustrious in his closing scene, in which every thing heavenly and excellent is combined; and the people seem to have considered him with a veneration and affection which language fails to express. But his repentance had been as remarkable as his sins; and his conduct during his affliction, and towards the end of his life, seems to have had more effect upon his subjects, than all that they had before witnessed. It is indeed hard to say which shines the brightest in this chapter, the *rising or the setting sun:* but it is better to rise behind clouds, and to be much obscured in the course of our lives, and to set, like David, with splendour: than with Solomon to arise very bright, and shine very splendid, and then to set behind an almost impenetrable cloud.

V. 29, 30. It is plain, from these verses, that the contemporary prophets were the historians, or annalists of God's people; and that they left far more copious records of public transactions, both in respect of Israel and the adjacent countries, than have come down to us. Learned men may indeed regret the loss of these histories; but 'God 'knows better than we, what was most fit to be preserved 'for the use and benefit of the church.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

The due support and promotion of religion, is always more important, and in many cases more arduous, than the administration of civil government: because the honour of God, and the most essential interests of immortal souls, are concerned in it; compared with which objects all other interests are trivial. They alone, whom the Lord hath chosen for such a work, will prosper in it; and it is the duty of all to assist by every proper means in their power. —Strong affection to God, and to all that relates to him for his sake, will constrain men to the most disinterested, self-denying, and liberal services; and they will never think, that they have done, or can do, enough to promote his glory; but with all their might, will be preparing for and abounding in every good work. They who would excite others to consecrate their service to the Lord, either in feeding his poor children, or in spreading his truth and supporting his worship, must set the example: and then a hint from them will go further than a laboured and eloquent oration from a man, who pretends to persuade others to those things which he himself evidently does not practise. —Our holy joy in God will commonly bear proportion to the willingness, uprightness, and liberality, with which we devote our all to him: and that rejoicing is peculiarly pure and heavenly, which springs from beholding those we love, giving evidence of their real devotedness to God, and their delight in his ways. The bodily pain and infirmities of age, and the chilling hand of death, whilst they indispose us for or separate us from all other enjoyments, cannot preclude or extinguish this, which emulates that of angels, who rejoice over one sinner that repenteth.

V. 10—19.

They who are zealous for *real* good works, will never boast of them, or trust in them. Sensible of their indigence as creatures, and conscious of their guilt and defilement as sinners, they will allow that 'it is of the Lord's 'mercy they are not consumed.' To them it appears an unspeakable favour, that a holy God will accept any worship or service from such polluted creatures: they know that all their ability of every kind is from him: and they account it their chief pleasure, honour, and privilege, to be employed by him, who needeth not and cannot be profited by their services. They are conscious that their best needs forgiveness, falls infinitely beneath his glorious majesty, and is utterly unworthy of his acceptance, "whose is the kingdom, "and who is exalted as Head above all." 'In like manner 'we ought to acknowledge God in all spiritual things: 'referring every good thought, good purpose, good work, 'to his divine grace, from whom we receive it; beseeching 'him, as David does, to preserve it in us.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) Thus our best and most useful works will issue in admiration of his inconceivable majesty, goodness, power, and holiness; in unfeigned praises and thanksgivings, and in the deepest self abasement before him. This is genuine grace: but when we are proud of our services, (which we are very prone to be,) what is it, but sacrilegiously to steal the Lord's dues, and sacrifice them to the vilest of our own lusts? We may indeed rejoice in the testimony of our consciences, when we have acted with simplicity and godly sincerity, in the presence of that God who trieth the heart, and hath pleasure in uprightness; and should joyfully observe the indications of the same disposition in others: but we must remember that this also is the gift of God; and

i 2 Kings x. 34. xiv. 28.
k Dan. ii. 21.

30 With all his reign and [i] his might, and [k] the times that went over him, and over Israel, and over all the kingdoms of the countries.

that we can no more offer the sacrifice of a broken or a thankful heart, than we can present ten thousands of bulls and goats, except as we give unto him his own, which he hath previously conferred upon us. All cometh from him, and to him belongeth "the kingdom, the power, and the glo-"ry for ever!" Whilst we bless the Lord for putting good desires into our hearts, or the hearts of others, we should never forget to pray to him to keep them there, and to bring them to good effect. When we feel that there is no abiding for us on earth, but that we are departing as a shadow, and following our fathers, who have been strangers and sojourners before us; we should be peculiarly fervent in our prayers that they who are to succeed us, or whom we consider as having profited by our instructions, may have their hearts prepared unto the Lord, and disposed for the work to which they are called. Parents and ministers also, when they perceive any of their children or people under serious impressions, should "travail in birth for them till Christ be formed "in them," by earnest constant prayer, that "the LORD "would keep for ever in the imaginations of the thoughts "of their hearts," those good desires which he hath excited, and prepare their hearts unto himself. We should also call upon them to pray and to bless the Lord for themselves: and when our example proves that we are in earnest, we may hope that our exhortations will have the desired effect.

V. 20—30.

They, who render God the honour due unto his name, will seldom fail duly to respect those who have been the instruments of his kindness to them. All our obedience and communion with God must have a believing reference to that one great sacrifice, which more honours his law and justice, than the multiplied oblations which shadowed it forth to ancient believers: thus, peace with him, peace of conscience, and gladness of heart, will make sacred ordi nances pleasant to us; and even render our ordinary meals subservient to our spiritual improvement and the honour of God; whilst they are attended with gratitude, temperance, liberality, and a heavenly mind. These are the pleasures and employments which add dignity to prosperity, rank, and eminency for wisdom; which adorn every personal accomplishment, and increase the enjoyment of sprightly youth and vigorous health. These are essential to that royal majesty, which God bestows on those whom he loves: an without these there can be no durable prosperity, honou comfort, or usefulness. Unless we have some acquaintanc with these pious exercises, riches, honour, and prosperit only render the king of terrors more unwelcome; but thes are sufficient to deprive death of his sting: and when w read or hear of one, who hath been taken away from th midst of such employments, we readily conceive of his sou as escaped out of prison, mounting up to heaven, and join ing immediately with ineffable delight in the worship c angels. May we "die the death of the righteous, and ma "our latter end be like his!" Blessed be God, the chief c sinners may hope for such a glorious exit, when brought t repent and to flee for refuge to the Saviour's atoning blood Nay, even they who have grievously sinned after a lon profession of godliness, to the triumphing of the wicked and their own severe correction, may possibly retrieve all may have their broken bones made to rejoice, may recove "the joy of God's salvation; may have their lips opene "to show forth his praises, that sinners may be converte "unto him;" and may regain the entire confidence of thos who had been the most offended by their fall. But thi cannot be done without deep humiliation before God an man, resigned patience under correction, and redouble watchfulness and diligence in the Lord's ways. Let us the mark the difference between the spirit and character of th man after God's own heart, living and dying: and those c such worthless professors as resemble him in nothing bu his sin, and who apologize for their crimes by his example Let us also compare him with those presumptuous caviller who profanely carp at the blemishes in illustrious scriptura characters; but never raise their minds to an idea of suc exalted excellency, piety, and philanthropy, as they show ed living and dying. We cannot too closely imitate the ge neral example of this most eminent saint: but let us watc and pray, lest we be overcome by temptation and overtake with sin, to the dishonour of God, and the wounding of ou own consciences: and if we have offended, let us copy hi example of repentance and patience, still hoping to clos our days like him; and having served our generation afte the will of God, to fall asleep, with the sure and certain hop of a glorious resurrection, through our Lord and Saviou Jesus Christ! Amen.

THE SECOND BOOK

OF THE

CHRONICLES.

THIS book is a continuation of the history begun in the former book. It in some respects coincides with the books of Kings. But there the histories of Judah and Israel are carried on together; as those of England and Scotland are by some of our historians: here the affairs of Judah are more fully and distinctly recorded, while those of Israel are only mentioned occasionally, when required by the main subject; as an English historian would sometimes digress concerning the affairs of France or Germany, in elucidating his narrative. The history opens with the accession of Solomon, and contains a narrative of the several kings of his race, who reigned in succession, till the Babylonish captivity; and it concludes with an intimation of Cyrus's decree for the restoration of the Jews and the rebuilding of the temple, about four hundred and eighty years after. Besides the additional practical instruction, especially in respect of the different effects of piety, or profaneness, in the affairs of nations favoured with revelation, here afforded; this history throws great light on the prophetical writings, which can by no means be so well understood without constantly adverting to it. The prophecies contained in it either were fulfilled soon after they were spoken, or coincide with those before considered: and it is not always easy to determine, concerning scriptural references, whether they relate to this book or to the books of Kings.

B. C. 1015.

CHAP. I.

Solomon, established as king, calls on his nobles and people to join in sacrificing at Gibeon, 1—7. The Lord appears to him there by night, and allows him to choose what blessing to ask: he asks wisdom, and is promised also riches and honour, 8—12. Solomon's forces, riches, and commerce, 13—17.

AND Solomon the son of David[a] was strengthened in his kingdom, and [b] the LORD his God *was* with him, and [c] magnified him exceedingly.

2 Then Solomon spake unto all Israel, [d] to the captains of thousands and of hundreds, and to the judges, and to every governor in all Israel, [e] the chief of the fathers.

3 So Solomon and all the congregation with him, went to the high place that *was* at [f] Gibeon; for there was [g] the tabernacle of the congregation of God, which Moses [h] the servant of the LORD had made in the wilderness.

4 But [i] the ark of God had David brought up from Kirjath-jearim, to *the place which* David had prepared for it: [k] for he had pitched a tent for it at Jerusalem

5 Moreover [l] the brazen altar that [m] Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, had made, * he put before the tabernacle of the LORD: and Solomon and the congregation sought unto it.

6 And Solomon went up thither to the brazen altar before the LORD, which *was* at the tabernacle of the congregation, and offered [n] a thousand burnt-offerings upon it.

7 [o] In that night did God appear unto Solomon, and said unto him, [p] Ask what I shall give thee.

8 And Solomon said unto God, [q] Thou hast shewed great mercy unto David my

a 1 Kings ii. 12. 46.
b Gen. xxi. 22. xxxix. 2. 21. Ex. iii. 1 Chr. xvii. 3. Matt. xxviii. 20.
c 1 Chr. xxix. 25 Phil. ii. 9—11
d xxix. 20. xxx 2. xxxiv 29. 30 1 Chr. xiii. 1 xv. 3 xxviii. 1 xxix 1.
e 1 Chr xv. 12. xxiv 4 31.
f 1 Kings iii. 4. 1 Chr xvi. 39. xxi. 29.
g Ex. xxvi. 1, &c xl. 2. 34. Lev. i. 1.
B C 1015.
h Deu. xxxiv. 5.
B. C. 1015
i 2 Sam vi. 2. 17. 1 Chr. xii 5, 6. xv 25—28
k 1 Chr. xvi. 1. Ps. cxxxii. 5, 6.
l Ex xxvii. 1—8. xxxviii 1—7.
m Ex xxxi 2. 1 Chr. ii. 19 20.
* Heb. was *there*.
n 1 Kings iii. 4 viii. 63. 1 Chr. xxix. 21 Is. xl. 16.
o 1 Kings iii. 5—15 Pro. iii 5. 6.
p Mat vii 7. 8. Mark x. 36 37. 51. John xvi. 23. 1 John v 14, 15.
q 2 Sam. vii 8, 9. xii 7, 8. xxii. 51 xxiii. 1. Ps. lxxxvi. 13. lxxxix 20—28. 49. Is lv. 3.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 2. This seems to have taken place a short time after David's decease: when Solomon, being established in his kingdom, convened his chief men, and spake to them concerning the solemn sacrifice, in honour of God, which he purposed. (*Note, 1 Kings* iii. 4, 5.)

father, and hast made me [y] to reign in his stead.

9 Now, O LORD God, [s] let thy promise unto David my father be established: for thou hast made me king over a people, * like the dust of the earth in multitude.

10 [t] Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may [u] go out and come in before this people: [x] for who can judge this thy people *that is so* great?

11 And God said to Solomon, Because [y] this was in thine heart, and thou hast not asked riches, wealth, or honour, nor the life of thine enemies, neither yet hast asked long life; but hast asked wisdom and knowledge for thyself, [z] that thou mayest judge my people, over whom I have made thee king;

12 Wisdom and knowledge *is* granted unto thee; and [a] I will give thee riches, and wealth, and honour, [b] such as none of the kings have had, that *have been* before thee, neither shall there any after thee have the like.

13 ¶ Then Solomon came *from his journey* to the high place that *was* [c] at Gibeon to Jerusalem, from before the tabernacle of the congregation, and [d] reigned over Israel.

14 And [e] Solomon gathered chariots and horsemen: and he had a thousand and four hundred chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen, which he placed in the chariot cities, and with the king at Jerusalem.

15 And [f] the king † made silver and gold at Jerusalem *as plenteous* as stones, and cedar-trees made he as the [g] sycamore-trees that *are* in the vale for abundance.

16 And ‡ Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt, and linen yarn: the king's merchants received the linen yarn at a price.

17 And they fetched up, and brought forth out of Egypt a chariot for six hundred *shekels* of silver, and an horse for an hundred and fifty: and so brought they out *horses* for all [h] the kings of the Hittites, and for the kings of Syria, by their ◊ means.

1 Chr. xxviii. 5. xxix. 23.
s 2 Sam. vii. 12—16. 25—29. 1 Chr. xvii. 11—14. 23-27. xxviii. 3, 7 Ps. lxxxix. 35—37. cxxxii 11, 12.
* Heb. *much as the dust of the earth.* Gen xiii. 16. xxii 17. Num. xxiii. 10.
t Ps. cxix. 34. 73. Prov. ii. 3—6. iii 13—18. Jam. i. 5.
u Num. xxvii. 17. Deut. xxxi. 2. 2 Sam. v 2.
x 2 Cor. ii. 16. iii. 5.
y 1 Sam. xvi. 7. 1 Kings viii. 18. 1 Chr. xxviii. 2. xxix. 17, 18. Acts v. 4.
z 1 Kings iii. 23. Prov. xiv. 8. Jam. iii. 13. 17.
a Matt. vi. 33. Eph. iii. 20.
b ix. 22. 1 Chr. xxix. 25. Ec. ii. 9.
c 3.
d 1 Kings iv. 24, 25.
e ix. 25. Deut. xvii. 16. 1 Kings iv. 26. x 26.
f 12 ix 27. 1 Kings x. 27. Job xxii 24. 25 Is lx. 17.
† Heb. *gave.*
g ix 27 Is. ix 10. Am vii. 14.
‡ Heb. *the going forth of the horses which was Solomon's.* ix 28. 1 Kings x 28, 29.
h 2 Kings vii. 6.
◊ Heb. *hand.*

CHAP. II.

Solomon purposes to build the temple and a palace, 1. *His workmen,* 2. *He sends to Huram for skilful artificers, and for timber,* 3—10. *Huram's friendly answer,* 11—16. *Solomon employs strangers as labourers, and overseers,* 17, 18.

AND Solomon [a] determined to build an house [b] for the name of the LORD, and [c] an house for his kingdom.

a 1 Kings v. 5.
b Deut. xii. 5. 11. xxviii 58. 1 Kings viii 18. 20 1 Chr xxii. 10. Matt. vi. 9. 10.
c 1 Kings vii. 1. ix. 1.

V. 11. The expression, "this was in thine heart," does not occur in Kings: and it implies, that the request of Solomon, as arising from a spiritual judgment and heart, was peculiarly acceptable to that God who searches, and regards, and demands, the heart.

V. 12. God promised Solomon all the things he had not asked, except the life of his enemies: but he was to be a peaceable king, a type of the Prince of peace.

V. 14—17. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* x. 26—29.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The presence and blessing of God give strength, honour, happiness, and stability; and to whom he hath given much, from them he requires the more. It would be a comely sight to the spiritually-minded, to behold kings and nobles, and the chief estates of their dominions, assembling together for the purpose of religious worship, vying with each other in the fervency of their devotions, and giving evident demonstrations how generally and deeply their hearts were engaged in the sacred service. Alas! even in Christian countries, such scenes are very seldom exhibited. But the example, the influence, and the exhortations of princes, who greatly fear and love the Lord, who are eminent for piety and wisdom, and succeed each other in the same steps, may effect very great things: and all who love the truths and service of God should unite in praying, *not formally* but *fervently*, for all in authority; that being enriched with grace and wisdom, they may become instruments of such extensive good to their dominions. *To us* the desires of men's hearts can only be known by their habitual conduct; but in themselves they as certainly distinguish characters, as their actions do: and if the Lord see, that it is in our heart to desire wisdom and grace, more than riches, honour, or pleasure, he will delight to fulfil all our mind. His promises should form the rule of our prayers: and when they respect any important end, they may be pleaded as engaging him to grant all things requisite in order to it. To know and to do our duty in the station of life assigned us, to the glory of God and the benefit of our connexions in society, requires much wisdom, and is one principal exercise and evidence of it: and if we humbly feel our need of this wisdom, and faithfully ask it of God, he will give it liberally, and not upbraid our former folly. Those secular employments, that are commenced by the worship and service of God, are likely to be well managed and to be prosperous: and as he "gives grace and glory; so he will withhold no good thing "from them that walk uprightly." But, alas! prosperity

2 And Solomon [d] told out threescore and ten thousand men to bear burdens, and fourscore thousand to hew in the mountains, and three thousand and six hundred to oversee them.

3 And Solomon sent to [e] Huram the king of Tyre, saying, [f] As thou didst deal with David my father, and didst send him cedars to build him an house to dwell therein, *even so deal with me.*

4 Behold, [g] I build an house to the name of the LORD my God, [h] to dedicate *it* to him, *and* [i] to burn before him * sweet incense, and for [k] the continual shew-bread, and for [l] the burnt-offerings morning and evening, on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on [m] the solemn feasts of the LORD our God. This *is an ordinance* for ever to Israel.

5 And the house which I build *is* [n] great: for [o] great *is* our God above all gods.

6 But [p] who is † able to build him an house, seeing the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain him? [q] who *am* I then, that I should build him an house, [r] save only to burn sacrifice before him?

7 Send me now therefore a man [s] cunning to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in iron, and in purple, and crimson, and blue, and that can skill ‡ to grave with the cunning men that *are* with me in Judah and in Jerusalem, [t] whom David my father did provide.

8 [u] Send me also cedar-trees, fir-trees, [x] and § algum-trees, out of Lebanon: for I know that thy servants can skill to cut timber in Lebanon: and, behold, my servants *shall be* with thy servants,

9 Even to prepare me timber in abundance: for the house which I am about to build *shall be* ‖ wonderful great.

10 And, behold, [y] I will give to thy servants, the hewers that cut timber, twenty thousand measures of beaten wheat, and twenty thousand measures of barley, and twenty thousand [z] baths of wine, and twenty thousand baths of oil.

11 ¶ Then Huram the king of Tyre answered in writing, which he sent to Solomon, [a] Because the LORD hath loved his people, he hath made thee king over them.

12 Huram said moreover, [b] Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, [c] that made heaven and earth, who hath given to David the king a wise son, * endued with prudence and understanding, that might build [d] an house for the LORD, and an house for his kingdom.

13 And now I have sent a cunning man, endued with understanding, [e] of Huram my father's,

14 [f] The son of a woman of the daughters of Dan, and his father *was* a man of Tyre, [g] skilful to work in gold, and in silver, in brass, in iron, in stone, and in timber, in purple, in blue, and in fine linen, and in crimson; also to grave any manner of graving, and to find out every device which shall be put to him, with

d 18. 1 Kings v. 15, 16.
e 1 Kings v. 1. *Hiram.*
f 2 Sam. v. 11. 1 Chr. xiv. 1.
g 1. 1 Kings viii. 18.
h 1 Kings viii. 63.
i Ex. xxx. 7.
* Heb. *incense of spices.*
k Ex. xxv. 30. Lev. xxiv. 8.
l Ex. xxix. 40—42. Num. xxviii. 3, 4. 9—11.
m Lev. xxiii. Num. xxviii. xxix.
n 9. 1 Kings. ix. 8. 1 Chr. xxix. 1. Ez. vii. 20.
o Ex. xv. 11. 1 Chr. xvi. 25. Ps. lxxxvi. 8, 9. cxxxv. 5. cxlv. 3. Jer. x. 6.
p vi. 18. 1 Kings viii. 27. Is. lxvi. 1. Acts vii. 48, 49.
† Heb. *hath retained*, or, *obtained strength.*
q i. 10. Ex. iii. 11. 2 Sam. vii. 18. 1 Chr. xxix. 14. 2 Cor. ii. 16. Eph. iii. 8.
r Deut. xii. 5, 6. 11. 14. 26.
s Ex. xxxi. 3—5. 1. Kings vii. 14. Is. xxviii. 26. 29, lx. 10.
‡ Heb. *to grave gravings.*
t 1 Chr. xxii. 15, 16.
u 1 Kings v. 6.
x 1 Kings x. 11 *almug-trees.*
§ Or, *algummim*
‖ Heb. *great and wonderful.* 5. vii. 21. 1 Kings ix. 8.
y 1 Kings v. 11 Luke x. 7. Rom xiii. 7, 8.
z 1 Kings vii. 28 38. Ezra vii. 22
a ix. 8. Deut. vii 7, 8. 1 Kings x 9.
b 1 Kings v. 7. 1 Chr. xxix. 20. Ps. lxxii. 18, 19. Luke i. 68. 1 Pet. i. 3.
c Gen. i. ii. Ps. xxxiii. 6. cii. 25. cxxiv. 8 cxxxvi. 5, 6. cxlvi. 5, 6. Jer. x. 11. Acts iv. 24. xiv. 15. Col. i 16, 17. Rev iv. 11. x. 6.
* Heb. *knowing prudence*, &c. i. 10—12.
d 1.
e iv 16.
f 1 Kings vii. 13, 14.
g 7. Ex. xxxi. 3, 4.

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is always dangerous, because our hearts are deceitful: and it is with great propriety, that we pray, 'in all time of our 'wealth,—good Lord deliver us,' from pride, ostentation, indolence, self-indulgence, and a worldly mind. Let us then improve our present talent, seek heavenly blessings, and be contented without those great things which men generally covet, but which commonly prove fatal snares to their souls!

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 3—6. We have here a more particular account of Solomon's message to Huram, or Hiram, king of Tyre, than was before given; (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* v:) and it appears, that he thought it no impropriety to speak freely upon religious subjects, in treating with a heathen prince about secular business. On the contrary, he laboured to give him very high and honourable thoughts of Israel's God, as great above all gods, and as one whom the heaven of heavens could not contain: he particularly explained to him his intentions in building a temple to the name of the Lord; viz. that it was to be the stated place of those instituted ordinances, which were required by the law of God given to Israel; that he might not misapprehend him, as if he supposed that JEHOVAH could be circumscribed in a temple, like the idols of the heathen: and he represented to him his own inability and unworthiness for such a service, except as mercifully assisted, and accepted in it by that gracious God, who had chosen him for the work.

V. 11, 12. The just sentiments contained in these verses, with the pious and benevolent spirit which they breathe, leave no doubt, but that Huram was a spiritual worshipper of the true God.

V. 13. *Of Huram my father's.* Or, *Huram-abi.* It seems that this man, being the most eminent in his line of business, was called *father*, or *my father Huram.* King Huram called him so, and Solomon did the same. (iv. 16.) For it is evident that the artist's name is here meant, and not that of the king's father.

thy cunning men, and with the cunning men of my lord David thy father.

15 Now therefore the wheat, and the barley, the oil, and the wine, [h] which my lord hath spoken of, let him send unto his servants:

16 And [i] we will cut wood out of Lebanon, as * much as thou shalt need; and we will bring it to thee in floats by sea to † Joppa, and thou shalt carry it up to Jerusalem.

17 And Solomon [k] numbered all ‡ the strangers that *were* in the land of Israel, [l] after the numbering wherewith David his father had numbered them; and they were found an hundred and fifty thousand, and three thousand and six hundred.

18 And he set [m] threescore and ten thousand of them *to be* bearers of burdens, and fourscore thousand *to be* hewers in the mountain, and three thousand and six hundred overseers to set the people a-work.

h 10. 1 Kings v. 11.
i 1 Kings v. 8, 9.
* Heb. *according to all thy need.*
† Heb. *Japho.* Josh. xix. 46. Ezra iii 7. Jon. i. 3. Acts ix. 36. x. 32.
k 2. viii. 7, 8. 1 Kings. v. 13—16. ix. 20, 21.
‡ Heb *the men the strangers.*
l 1 Chr. xxii. 2.
m 2.

CHAP. III.

The place of the temple, and the time when the building of it was begun, 1, 2. *Its dimensions and ornaments,* 3—7. *Those of the most holy place,* 8—10. *The cherubim placed in it,* 11—13. *The veil,* 14. *The two pillars,* 15—17.

THEN [a] Solomon began to build the house of the LORD at Jerusalem [b] in mount Moriah, * where *the LORD* appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshing-floor of [c] Ornan the Jebusite.

2 And he began to build [d] in the second *day* of the second month, in the fourth year of his reign.

3 ¶ Now these *are the things wherein* [e] Solomon was † instructed for the building of the house of God. [f] The length by cubits, after the first measure *was* threescore cubits, and the breadth twenty cubits.

4 And the porch that *was* in the front *of the house,* the length *of it was* according to the breadth of the house, twenty cubits, and the height *was* an hundred and twenty: and he overlaid it within with pure gold.

a 1 Kings vi. 1. &c.
b Gen. xxii. 2 14.
* Or, *which was seen of David.*
c 2 Sam. xxiv. 28. &c. *Araunah* 1 Chr. xxi. 28. xxii. 1.
d 1 Kings vi. 1.
e 1 Chr. xxviii. 11—19.
† Heb. *founded.*
f 1 Kings vi 2, 3

V. 17, 18. (*Marg. Ref. Notes,* 1 *Kings* v. ix. 20—22.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We ought always to attend to the work of God, in preference to our own indulgence or accommodation: and our hearts should be resolved for every service, that we may endure hardship, and struggle with difficulties, and not yield to weariness or discouragement. The greatest monarchs upon earth are as nothing, in comparison with the God of heaven; and they should deem it their highest honour to be his servants, and to speak of his glorious majesty. —The genuine love of God, abounding in the heart, would intermix the savour of piety in the ordinary concerns and converse of life. Indeed we should be neither afraid nor ashamed to embrace every opportunity of speaking honourably of God, and of impressing the minds of men with a deep sense of his majesty and excellency, and of the importance of his favour, worship, and service. It is a great part of our "wisdom towards them that are without," so to explain our meaning in every doctrine and ordinance, and so to guard our discourses about them, as may best prevent misapprehension or prejudice: and the neglect of this rule is not boldness, or faithfulness, as some well meaning zealots suppose, but indiscretion and folly. In pleading the cause of God and religion, we should always speak humbly of ourselves; but except we be humbled, our temper and conduct will betray the hypocrisy of our self-abasing language; may the Lord himself therefore clothe us with humility! Possessions, endowments, or royal authority, are given men for the sake of others; and a wise and pious king is an evidence of the Lord's special love to the people: who then can express the greatness of his love to his believing people, in giving them his only begotten Son, to be their Prince and Saviour! It is also a great mercy to have children endued with wisdom and understanding: and we should all desire to be blessings to those among whom we live, that they may bless God for us. We ought also to praise him for those blessings which are exclusively bestowed on others: and it is pleasant to observe how the friendship of pious men becomes the means of bringing those that were far off, to know, love and worship our God and Saviour. Let us then be unwearied in spreading the knowledge of his name and truth; let us devote our several talents to his service; let us endeavour to be helpful to one another in this good work; and let us be thankful that poor heathens, and the meanest slaves, may be usefully and acceptably employed by our great and gracious Lord!

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1. (*Notes, Gen.* xxii. 2. 1 *Chr.* xxii. 1.) It is thought that the temple and its courts were situated, partly in the lot of Judah, and partly in that of Benjamin.

V. 3, 4. *The first measure* seems to mean the *original*

g 1 Kings vi. 15—17. 21, 22.

5 And [g] the greater house he ceiled with fir-tree, which he overlaid with fine gold, and set thereon palm-trees and chains.

‡ Heb. *covered.*

6 And he ‡ garnished the house with [h] precious stones for beauty: and the gold *was* gold of Parvaim.

h 1 Chr. xxix. 2. 8. Is. liv. 12. Rev. xxi. 19, 20.

i Ex. xxvi. 29. 1 Kings vi. 20—22. 30. Ez. vii. 20.

7 He [i] overlaid also the house, the beams, the posts, and the walls thereof, and the doors thereof, with gold; and [k] graved cherubims on the walls.

k Ex. xxvi. 1. 1 Kings vi. 35.

l Ex. xxvi. 33. 1 Kings vi. 19, 20. Heb. ix. 3. 8. x. 19.

8 And he made [l] the most holy house, the length whereof *was* according to the breadth of the house, twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof twenty cubits: and he overlaid it with fine gold, *amounting* to six hundred talents.

9 And the weight of the nails *was* fifty shekels of gold. And he overlaid the upper chambers with gold.

10 And in the most holy house he made [m] two cherubims of ◊ image-work, and overlaid them with gold.

m 1 Kings v. 23—28.

◊ Or, *moveable work*

n 1 Kings 6. 24.

11 And the [n] wings of the cherubims *were* twenty cubits long: one wing *of the one cherub was* five cubits, reaching to the wall of the house; and the other wing *was likewise* five cubits, reaching to the wing of the other cherub.

12 And *one* wing of the other cherub *was* five cubits, reaching to the wall of the house; and the other wing *was* five cubits *also* joining to the wing of the other cherub.

13 The wings of these cherubims spread themselves forth twenty cubits: and they stood on their feet, and their faces *were* * inward.

* Or, *toward the house.* Ex xxv. 20.

14 ¶ And he made [o] the veil *of* blue, and purple, and crimson, and fine linen, and † wrought cherubims thereon.

o Ex. xxvi. 31—35 Mrt. xxvii 51. Heb. ix 3. x. 20.

† Heb. *caused to ascend.*

15 Also he made before the house [p] two pillars of thirty and five cubits ‡ high, and the chapiter that *was* on the top of each of them *was* five cubits.

p 1 Kings vii. 15—24. Jer. lii. 21—23.

‡ Heb. *long.*

16 And he made [q] chains *as* in the oracle, and put *them* on the heads of the pillars; and made [r] an hundred pomegranates, and put *them* on the chains.

q 1 Kings vi. 21.

r 1 Kings vii. 20, 21.

17 And he [s] reared up the pillars before the temple, one on the right hand, and the other on the left; and called the name of that on the right hand ◊ Jachin, and the name of that on the left ‖ Boaz.

s 1 Kings vii. 21.

◊ *He shall establish.*

‖ *In it is strength*

CHAP. IV.

The altar of brass, 1. *The molten sea supported by twelve oxen,* 2—5. *The lavers, candlesticks, and tables,* 6—8. *The two courts of the temple,* 9, 10. *The vessels, furniture, and instruments of brass,* 11—18. *Those of gold,* 19—22.

MOREOVER he made [a] an altar of brass, twenty cubits the length thereof, and twenty cubits the breadth thereof, and ten cubits the height thereof.

a i 5. Ex. xxvii. 1—8. 1 Kings viii. 22. 64. ix. 25. 3 Kings xvi. 14, 15. Ez. xliii. 13—16.

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plan. The height of the porch is not mentioned in Kings; but the description given of the temple, in the exposition, takes in this account.

V. 6. It is not known on what account the gold, here mentioned, is called gold of Parvaim; that word not elsewhere occurring in Scripture.

V. 9. Some, by the word rendered *the upper chambers,* suppose the ceiling of the most holy place to be meant: but perhaps some of the upper chambers, on the outside of the temple, were thus decorated; the lower being used for more common purposes.

V. 10. The meaning of the word rendered *image-work* is not well known; but it implies something highly ornamented.

V. 12—16. (*Notes,* 1 *Kings* vi.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Proper instructions, well understood, enable us to go about our work without hesitation or uncertainty, and to proceed in it with confidence and comfort. Blessed be God, the sacred Scriptures are sufficient to render the man of God thoroughly furnished for every good work: and all our mistakes and embarrassments in matters of importance, arise from inattention to this our heavenly rule. Let us then search it daily; and beseech the Lord to enable us to understand, believe, remember, and obey his whole word; that our way may be made plain before us! Let us endeavour that all our works may be begun, continued, and ended in him; let us seek his grace to adorn our souls with the beauties of holiness, and his strength to establish us in faith and steady obedience, and to prosper our labours for his glory! Beholding God in Christ, his true temple, infinitely more glorious than that of Solomon, may we too become a spiritual house, "an habitation of God through the "Spirit;" and a holy priesthood, that here on earth we may begin to join the worship of cherubim and seraphim before the throne, and at length, in his courts above, sing "praises to him who sitteth upon the throne, and to the "Lamb for ever and ever!"

2 Also he made [b] a molten sea of ten cubits from * brim to brim, round in compass, and five cubits the height thereof; and a line of thirty cubits did compass it round about.

3 And under it *was* [c] the similitude of oxen, which did compass it round about: ten in a cubit, compassing the sea round about. Two rows of oxen *were* cast, when it was cast.

4 It [d] stood upon twelve oxen, [e] three looking toward the north, and three looking toward the west, and three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east: and the sea *was set* above upon them, and all their hinder parts *were* inward.

5 And the thickness of it *was* an handbreadth, and the brim of it like the work of the brim of a cup, * with flowers of lilies: *and* it received and held [f] three thousand baths.

6 ¶ He made also [g] ten lavers, and put five on the right hand, and five on the left, to wash in them: † such things as they offered for the burnt-offering they washed in them; [h] but the sea *was* for the priests to wash in.

7 And he made [i] ten candlesticks of gold [k] according to their form, and set *them* in the temple, five on the right hand, and five on the left.

8 He made also [l] ten tables, and placed *them* in the temple, five on the right side, and five on the left. And he made an hundred ‡ basons of gold.

9 ¶ Furthermore he made [m] the court of the priests, and the great court, and doors for the court, and overlaid the doors of them with brass.

10 And [n] he set the sea on the right side of the east end, over against the south.

11 And Huram made [o] the pots, and the shovels, and the § basons. And Huram ‖ finished the work, that he was to make for king Solomon for the house of God;

12 *To wit,* [p] the two pillars, and [q] the pommels, and the chapiters *which were* on the top of the two pillars, and the two wreaths to cover the two pommels of the chapiters which *were* on the top of the pillars;

13 And [r] four hundred pomegranates on the two wreaths; two rows of pomegranates on each wreath, to cover the two pommels of the chapiters which *were* upon the * pillars.

14 He made also [s] bases; and † lavers made he upon the bases;

15 [t] One sea, and twelve oxen under it:

16 The [u] pots also, and the shovels, and the [x] flesh-hooks, and all their instruments, did [y] Huram [z] his father make to king Solomon, for the house of the LORD, of † bright brass.

17 In the plain of Jordan did the king cast them, in the § clay-ground between Succoth and [a] Zeredathah.

18 Thus Solomon made all these vessels in great abundance: for [b] the weight of the brass could not be found out.

19 And Solomon made [c] all the vessels that *were for* the house of God, [d] the golden altar also, and [e] the tables whereon the shew-bread *was set;*

b Ex. xxx. 18—21. 1 Kings vii. 23—26. Zech. xiii. 1. Tit iii 5. Rev. vii. 14.
* Heb. *his brim to his brim.*
c Ez. i. 10 x. 14. 1 Cor. ix. 9, 10. Rev. iv. 7.
d Matt xvi. 18. Eph ii 20. Rev. xxi. 14.
e Matt xxviii 19, 20. Mark xvi 15. Luke xxiv. 46, 47. Acts ix. 15.
* Or, *like a lily-flower.*
f 1 Kings vii. 26.
g Ex. xxx. 18—21. 1 Kings vii. 38. 40 Ps li. 2. 1 Cor. vi. 11. 1 John i 7.
† Heb. *the work of burnt-offering.* Ex. xxix. 4. Lev. i. 9. 13. Ez. xl. 38. Rev. vii 14
h 2. Heb. ix. 14.
i 1 Kings vii. 49. 1 Chr. xxviii. 15. Zech. iv 2. 3. 11—14 Matt. v. 14—16 John viii. 12. Rev i. 20.
k Ex. xxv. 31—40.
l Ex. xxv 23-30. xxxvii. 10—16. 1 Kings vii. 48 Is. xxv. 6 Ez. xliv. 16. Mal i 12. 1 Cor x. 21.
‡ Or, *bowls.* Jer. lii. 18, 19.
m 1 Kings vi. 36. vii. 12.
n 1 Kings vii 39.
o 1 Kings vii. 40. 45
§ Or, *bowls.*
‖ Heb *finished to make.*
p iii. 15—17.
q 1 Kings vii. 41.
r Ex. xxviii. 33, 34. 1 Kings vii. 42. Cant. iv. 13. Jer. lii. 23.
* Heb. *face of the.*
s 1 Kings vii. 27—43.
† Or, *caldrons.* 6.
t 2—5.
u 11. Ex. xxvii. 3. xxxviii. 3. Zech. xiv. 20, 21.
x 1 Sam. ii 13, 14. 1 Chr xxviii. 17.
y 1 Kings vii. 14. 45 *Hiram.*
z ii 13.
† Heb. *made bright,* or, *scoured.*
§ Heb. *thicknesses of the ground.*
a 1 Kings vii. 46. *Zarthan.*
b 1 Kings vii. 47. 1 Chr. xxii. 3. 14. Jer. lii 20.
c 1 Kings vii. 48—50. 2 Kings xxiv. 13. xxv. 14, 15. 2 Chr. xxxvi 10. 18. Ezra i. 7—11. Jer. xxviii. 3. lii. 18, 19. Dan. v. 2, 3. 23
d xxvi. 16—18. Ex. xxx. 1—10. xxxvii 25—29. Rev. viii. 3. ix. 13.
e Ex. xxv. 23—30. Lev. xxiv. 6—8. 1 Chr. xxviii. 16.

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1. This altar is not mentioned in the book of kings. It was four times as long and as broad as that made by Moses. (*Notes, Exod.* xxviii. 1—8;) and formed a scaffold, above eleven yards square, and five yards high. It might be supposed that the Israelites, now that they were settled, multiplied, and enriched in Canaan, would bring vastly more sacrifices than they could have done in the wilderness; and the altar was formed accordingly, to be capable of containing many more. As it was so high, all the worshippers in the most distant parts of the courts of the temple, might behold, and be affected with, this representation of the Lord's wrath against sinners, and his way of showing mercy through the sufferings of the promised Saviour. This was continually shadowed forth by the innocent animals consumed by the fire which came down from heaven, while the guilty offerers were spared.

V. 2. (*Notes,* 1 *Kings* vii.)

V. 7. *Form.* Or, the *form* in which Moses had been taught to make the golden candlestick for the tabernacle. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 12. *Pommels.* Or *Globes.* These are not mentioned in the parallel passage. Perhaps they were globes placed above the chapiters, which were seen through the ornaments with which they were decorated. (*Note,* 1 *Kings* vii. 15—22.)

V. 16. 'Some think, Solomon calls him *his father,* out 'of great respect to him, or because he was the inventor of 'this excellent work.' (*Gen.* iv. 20, 21.) (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 19. It is probable, that but one table was used for the shew-bread: but the rest might be placed near to it,

20 Moreover [f] the candlesticks with their lamps, that they should [g] burn after the manner, before [h] the oracle of pure gold;

21 And [i] the flowers, and the lamps, and the tongs, *made he of* gold, *and* that * perfect gold;

22 And the [k] snuffers, and the † basons, and the spoons, and the censers, *of* pure gold: and [l] the entry of the house, the inner doors thereof for the most holy *place*, and the doors of the house of the temple, *were of* gold.

f 7. Ex. xxv. 31—37.
g Ex. xxvii. 20, 21.
h 1 Kings vi. 5, 16, 17. viii. 6. Ps. xxviii. 2.
i 5. Ex. xxv. 31. xxxvii. 20. 1 Kings vi. 18. 29. 35.
* Heb. *perfections of.*
k Ex. xxxvii. 23. 1 Kings vii. 50. 2 Kings xii. 13. xxv. 14. Jer. lii. 18.
† Or, *bowls.*
l 1 Kings vi. 31, 32.

CHAP. V.

The temple is finished, and the dedicated treasures deposited in it, 1. *The ark is brought into the most holy place,* 2—10. *Whilst the Levites sing praises to God, a cloud fills the temple,* 11—14.

THUS all the work that Solomon made for the house of the LORD was finished: and Solomon [a] brought in *all* the things that David his father had dedicated; and the silver, and the gold, and all the instruments, put he among the treasures of the house of God.

a 1 Kings vii. 51. 1 Chr. xxii. 14. xxvi. 26—28.

2 [b] Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, [c] the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel, unto Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD [d] out of [e] the city of David, which *is* Zion.

3 Wherefore all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto the king, [f] in the feast which *was* in the seventh month.

4 And all the elders of Israel came; and [g] the Levites took up the ark.

5 And they brought up the ark, and [h] the tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy vessels that *were* in the tabernacle, these did the priests *and* the Levites bring up.

6 Also [i] king Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel that were assembled unto him before the ark, sacrificed sheep and oxen, which could not be told nor numbered for multitude.

7 And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD unto his place, [k] to the oracle of the house, into the most holy *place, even* under the wings of the cherubims.

8 For the cherubims spread forth *their* wings over the place of the ark, and the

b i. 2. 1 Kings viii. 1—11. 1 Chr. xxix. 1.
c 1 Chr. xv. 12. xxiv. 6. 31. xxvi. 26.
d i. 4. 2 Sam. vi. 12. 1 Chr. xvi. 1.
e 2 Sam. v. 7.
f vii. 8—10. Lev. xxiii. 34—36. 1 Kings viii. 2.
g Num. iv. 15. Josh. iii. 6. vi. 6. 1 Kings viii. 3. 1 Chr. xv. 2. 12—14.
h i. 3. 1 Kings viii. 4. 6.
i 2 Sam. vi. 13. 1 Kings viii. 5. 1 Chr. xvi. 1, 2. xxix. 21.
k iv. 20. Ex. xxxvii. 6—9. 1 Kings vi. 23—28. viii. 6, 7.

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for other purposes; or perhaps some of them kept against future emergencies.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The furniture of the temple, compared with that of the tabernacle, plainly instructed God's ancient people that his church would be gradually enlarged, and his worshippers immensely multiplied: and, blessed be God, in the person, sacrifice, and offices of Christ, there is an abundant sufficiency for any multitudes who can ever come to the Father through him. May the preaching of the Gospel hold him forth, as crucified for sinners, to all the nations of the earth; and may his Spirit prepare the hearts of all the inhabitants to welcome his salvation: for all things else are now ready. Whilst we thus pray for others, may we be found humble penitents, by faith beholding Jesus as "the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world:" may we daily wash our souls and our services in that "fountain which he hath opened for sin and for unclean-"ness:" may we find continual access to the Father through our heavenly Advocate, and receive continual supplies of his Spirit: may we walk in the light of his word, feast upon the provisions of his house, and be "constrained "by his love to live no longer to ourselves, but unto him "who died for us and rose again." Nothing can be too precious to be consecrated to his service; and he will not reject the meanest abilities, the feeblest endeavours, or the most trivial oblations, which are offered in faith and love: yet he requires the very best of our affections and of all we have; and he will sooner bear with external meanness in our services, than with an insincere heart, however covered with specious and pompous professions and performances. The nearer we approach him in privilege and external worship, the more holy we should be; and the nearer we really approach to him in knowledge and communion, the more holy we shall be: till at length faith shall be exchanged for vision, and we shall become perfectly and eternally like him, and fitted for the full fruition of his favour and glory.

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 4. Perhaps the Levites, of the family of Kohath carried the ark into the courts of the temple, and then the priests conveyed it into its proper place. (*Notes, Num.* iv. 1 *Kings* viii. 1—11.)

V. 6. 'The observation of Victorinus Strigelius upon 'this history is very pious: That nothing is more lovely 'in human things, than such concord as here appeared 'among all orders of men; both of teachers and learners, 'magistrates, soldiers, and people, who were all combined 'to promote the honour and service of God. Such unity 'ought to be studied by Christian people, that we may be 'all one, as our Saviour prayed.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

cherubims covered the ark and [1] the staves thereof above.

9 And they drew out the staves *of the ark*, that [m] the ends of the staves were seen from the ark before the oracle; but they were not seen without. And * there it is unto this day.

10 *There was* nothing in the ark [n] save the two tables which Moses put *therein* at Horeb, † when [o] the LORD made *a covenant* with the children of Israel, when they came out of Egypt.

11 ¶ And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy *place;* (for all the priests *that were* ‡ present were [p] sanctified, *and* did not *then* [q] wait by course:

12 Also [r] the Levites *which were* the singers, all of them of [s] Asaph, of Heman, of Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, *being* [t] arrayed in white linen, having [u] cymbals and psalteries and harps, stood at the east end of the altar, and with them [x] an hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets:)

13 It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers *were* [y] as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD, and when they lifted up *their* voice with [z] the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the LORD, *saying*, For [a] *he is* good; for his mercy *endureth* for ever; that [b] *then* the house was filled with a cloud, *even* the house of the LORD;

14 So that [c] the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for [d] the glory of the LORD had filled the house of God.

1 Ex. xxv 12—15. xxxvii. 3—5. Num. iv. 6.
m 1 Kings viii. 8, 9.
* Or, *they are there.*
n Ex. xxxi. 18. xxxii. 15, 16. 19. xxxiv. 1. xl. 20. Deut. x. 2—5. Heb. ix. 4
† Or, *where.*
o Ex. xix 5. xxiv. 7, 8. Deu. xxix. 1 10—14. Jer. xxxi. 31—34.
‡ Heb *found.*
p xxix 5. 15 34. xxx. 15. 17—20. Ex. xix. 10. 14, 15. Job i. 5.
q xxxv. 4. 1 Chr. xxiv.
r xxix. 25. 1 Chr. xv. 16—22. xvi. 4—6. 41. 42. xxiii. 5. 30. xxv. 1—7. Ezra iii. 10, 11.
s 1 Chr. vi 33.39. xxv. 6. Ps. 1. lxii. lxxxviii. *titles.*
t 1 Chr xv. 27. Rev. xv. 6. xix. 3.
u Ps.xcii.3 cxlix. 3. cl. 3—5.
x Num. x. 1—10. Josh. vi. 6—20 1 Chr. xv. 24. xvi. 6
y Ps xcv. 1, 2. c. 1, 2. Is. lii. 8. Jer xxxii. 39. Acts iv. 32. Rom xv. 6. Rev. v. 11—14.
z Ps. lxviii. 25, 26.
a vii. 3. xx. 21. 1 Chr. xvi 34. 41. Ezra iii. 11. Ps. cxxxvi. 1, &c. Jer. xxxiii. 11.
b Ex. xl. 34, 35. 1 Kings viii. 10—12.
c vii. 2. 1 Tim. vi. 16.
d Ex. xl. 35. Is. vi. 1—4. Ez. x. 4 Rev. xv. 8.

CHAP. VI.

Solomon blesses the people, and praises God, 1—11. *His prayer at the dedication of the temple,* 12—39. *He concludes by earnestly entreating the Lord's special presence and blessing,* 40—42.

THEN said Solomon, [a] The LORD hath said that he would dwell in the thick darkness.

2 But [b] I have built an house of habitation for thee, and a place for thy dwelling for ever.

3 And the king [c] turned his face, and [d] blessed the whole congregation of

a Ex.xx.21.xxiv. 15—18. Jer. xvi. 2. Deut. iv. 11. 1 Kings viii 12. Ps. xviii. 8—11. xcvii. 2. Nah. i. 3. Heb. xii. 18.
b ii. 4—6. 2 Sam. vii. 13. 1 Kings viii. 13. 1 Chr. xvii. 12. xxii. 10, 11. xxviii. 6, 20. Ps. cxxxii. 5. 13, 14. John iv. 21—23. Heb. ix. 11, 12 Rev. xxi. 3.
c 1 Kings viii. 14.
d Josh. xxiii. 6. 1 Kings viii. 55—61. 1 Chr. xvi. 2. 2 Chr. xxix. 29. Luke xxiv 50.

V. 9. *Unto this day.* That is, *The day when these events were recorded;* not the day when these extracts were made, after the captivity.

V. 11. So great a multitude of sacrifices were offered on this occasion, that the whole body of the priests, who were capable of service, were employed at once; and not only those who attended in their courses. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 13. It is remarkable, that the Lord took possession of his temple by the cloud, at the moment when, with one consent, the Levites were singing the praises of his everlasting goodness and mercy.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The gracious presence of God renders his ordinances far more glorious, and is more essential to their efficacy, than any conceivable external order or magnificence: and he is as really present with two or three humble worshippers in a mean obscure corner, as with tens of thousands assembled with every possible accommodation. Yet on some occasions the concurrence of vast multitudes, under the direction of pious princes, has been made extensively useful to mankind, and greatly honourable to and honoured by God. The eye of our faith must, in every service, be primarily directed to the atoning sacrifice of Christ: but in subordination to it, our sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving are peculiarly well pleasing unto God, if the harmony of our voices, or musical instruments, be really accompanied with the sweet melody of a humble and grateful heart. All the divine perfections are glorious in themselves: but his goodness and ever enduring mercy are peculiarly endearing to the broken-hearted sinner; and the Lord especially delights in the exercise and in the glory of his mercy, in harmony with his wisdom, truth, and justice, through the merits of the Saviour. This should encourage all who feel their need of abounding mercy: being conscious that their sins have greatly abounded. The ministers of God should always be ready, both in body and soul, for every service, ordinary or extraordinary: and it looks ill, when they are loath to exceed that measure which entitles them to their emoluments. When the worshippers of God are of one mind, as well as in one place, they may expect the more immediate presence and blessing of God: if he take possession of our hearts to sanctify them, he will exclude whatever interferes with his design of filling them with his glory: and though darkness now rests upon our views of heavenly things; yet in the temple above, the Lord himself will be our everlasting Light, and we shall know even as we are known. May he prepare us for, and bring us to, that land of perfect knowledge, purity, and felicity!

NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1. This chapter varies so little from the parallel passage, (1 *Kings* viii. 12—53;) that the reader must in general be referred to the exposition already given.

Israel: and [e] all the congregation of Israel stood.

4 And he said, [f] Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, [g] who hath with his hands fulfilled *that* which he spake with his mouth to my father David, saying,

5 [h] Since the day that I brought forth my people out of the land of Egypt, I chose no city among all the tribes of Israel to build an house in, that [i] my name might be there; [k] neither chose I any man to be a ruler over my people Israel:

6 But I have [l] chosen Jerusalem, that my name might be there; and have [m] chosen David to be over my people Israel.

7 Now [n] it was in the heart of David my father to build an house for the name of the LORD God of Israel.

8 But the LORD said to David my father, Forasmuch as it was in thine heart to build an house for my name, [o] thou didst well in that it was in thine heart:

9 Notwithstanding thou shalt not build the house; but [p] thy son which shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house for my name.

10 The LORD therefore hath [q] performed his word that he hath spoken: for [r] I am risen up in the room of David my father, and am set on the throne of Israel, [s] as the LORD promised, and have built the house for the name of the LORD God of Israel:

11 And in it have I put the ark, wherein *is* [t] the covenant of the LORD, that he made with the children of Israel.

12 ¶ And [u] he stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and [x] spread forth his hands:

13 (For Solomon had made a brazen [y] scaffold, of five cubits * long, and five cubits broad, and three cubits high, and had set it in the midst of [z] the court: and upon it he stood, and [a] kneeled down upon his knees before all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven,)

14 And said, [b] O LORD God of Israel, *there is* [c] no god like thee in the heaven, nor in the earth; which [d] keepest covenant, and *shewest* [e] mercy unto thy servants, that [f] walk before thee with all their hearts:

15 Thou which hast kept with thy servant David my father that which thou hast promised him; and [g] spakest with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled *it* with thine hand, as *it is* this day.

16 Now therefore, O LORD God of Israel, [h] keep with thy servant David my father that which thou hast promised him, [i] saying, † There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit upon the throne of Israel; yet so that thy children take heed to their way [k] to walk in my law, as thou hast walked before me.

17 Now then, [l] O LORD God of Israel, [m] let thy word be verified, which thou hast spoken unto thy servant David.

18 But [n] will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? Behold, [o] heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee: [p] how much less this house which I have built!

19 [q] Have respect therefore to the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O LORD my God, [r] to hearken unto the cry and the prayer, which thy servant prayeth before thee:

20 That [s] thine eyes may be open upon this house day and night, upon the place whereof thou hast said that thou wouldest [t] put thy name there; to hearken unto the prayer which thy servant prayeth ‡ toward this place.

21 Hearken therefore unto the supplications of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, which they shall ◊ make toward this place: hear thou from [u] thy dwelling-place, *even* from heaven; and, when thou hearest, [x] forgive.

22 ¶ If a man [y] sin against his neighbour, ‖ and an oath be laid upon him to

c 1 Kings viii. 14. Neh. viii. 5–7. Mat. xiii. 2.
f 1 Kings viii. 15 1 Chr. xxix. 10 2 Ch. Ps lxviii 4 32–35 lxxii 18, 19. Luke i. 68 Eph i. 3.
g 1 Chr xvii. 12. Ps. cxxxviii 1, 2. Matt xxiv. 35. Luke i. 70
h 2 Sam. vii 6, 7. 1 Kings viii. 16.
i Ex xx 24 xxiii. 21. Deut. xii 5. 11 Dan. ix. 19.
k 1 Sam x. 24 xiii. 13, 14 xv 23. 2 Sam vii. 15.
xii.13 Ps xlviii. 1. lxxviii. 68—70 cxxxii. 13.
m 1 Sam. xvi. 1 Ps. lxxxix. 19, 20.
n 2 Sam vii. 2, 3. 1 Kings v 3. viii. 17. 1 Chr. xxii. 7. xxviii 2.
o 1 Kings viii. 18—21. Mark xiv. 8. 2 Cor. viii.12.
p 2 Sam. vii. 12. 1 Chr. xvii. 4. 11.
q 4.
r i. 1. 1 Kings ii. 12. iii. 6, 7. 1 Chr. xxix. 15. 23. Ec. i. 4. ii. 18, 19.
s 1 Chr. xxviii. 5.
t v. 10. Ex. xl.20. 1 Kings viii 9. 21. Heb ix. 4.
u 1 Kings viii. 22. 2 Kings xi. 14. xxiii. 3. Ps. xxix 1, 2.
x Ex. ix. 33. Job xi.13. Ps xxviii. 2. lxiii. 4. cxli. 2. Is. i. 15 1 Tim. ii. 8
y Neh. viii. 4
* Heb. *the length thereof.*
z iv 9. 1 Kings vi. 36. vii. 12
a 1 Kings viii. 54. Ezra ix. 5. Ps. xcv 6 Dan. vi. 10 Luke xxii. 41 Acts xx. 36. xxi. 5.

b Gen. xxxiii. 20. xxxv. 10. Ex. iii. 15. 1 Kings viii. 23. xviii.36. 1 Chr. xxix. 10. 20
c Ex. xv. 11. 2 Sam vii. 22. Ps. lxxxvi. 8. lxxxix. 6. Jer x. 6. 16.
d Deut vii. 9. Neh. i. 5. Ps. lxxxix. 28 Dan. ix. 4 Mic. vii. 18—20. Luke i. 72.
e Ps. ciii. 17. 18. Luke i. 50. 54. 55.
f Gen v. 24. xvii. 1 1 Kings iii. 6. vi. 12. Luke i. 6. 1 Thes. ii. 12.
g 2 Sam vii. 12. 1 Kings viii. 24. 1 Chr xxii.9, 10.
h Ex xxxvi. 37. John xv 14, 15.
i vii. 18 2 Sam. vii. 12. 16. 1 Kings ii. 4. Ps cxxxii 12.
† Heb *There shall not a man be cut off.*
k Ps xxvi. 3. cxix. 1.
l Ex xxiv 10. Is. xli 17. xlv 3.
m 2 Sam. vii.25—29 Jer xi. 5.
r 1 Kings viii. 27. Ps cxiii. 5, 6. Is. lvii. 15. lxvi 1. Acts vii. 48, 49. xvii 24
o ii 6 Ps cxxxix. 7—10 Jer.xxiii. 24 2 Cor xii. 2.
p xxxii. 15 Job iv 19. ix. 14. xxv. 4—6. Mat. vii 11
q 1 Kings viii 28. Ps lxxiv 20.
c xx 2 Dan. ix 17—19 Luke xviii 1—7
r Ps. iv 1. v. 1, 2. xx 1—3. John xvii. 20.
s xvi 9. 1 Kings viii 29, 30. 2 Kings xix. 16. Neh i 6. Ps. xxxiv. 15.
t 6. Deut. xxvi.2. Col. ii 9
‡ Or, *in this place.* Dan vi 10.
◊ Heb *pray*
u 39. Job xxii. 12—14. Ps xxiii. 1. Ec v. 2. Is lvii. 15 Mat vi 9.
x Ps lxxxv 2, 3. cxxx. 3, 4. Is. xliii.25 xliv. 22. Dan ix 19 Mic. vii. 18, 19 Mat. vi. 12
y 1 Kings viii 31, 32
‖ Heb *and he require an oath of him.* Ex. xxii.11. Lev. v. 1. Prov. xxx. 9

V. 5. *Neither chose*, &c. The judges and Saul were chosen of God, for a season, to be rulers of Israel; but not *to establish a permanent and hereditary authority over that people*, as was the case of David.

V. 6. On this occasion Jerusalem was expressly marked out, as the centre of the worship of Israel; as the Lord had before spoken by Moses: (*Marg. Ref.*)

make him swear, and [z] the oath come before thine altar in this house;

23 Then hear thou [a] from heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, by [b] requiting the wicked, by recompensing his way upon his own head; and by [c] justifying the righteous, by giving him according to his righteousness.

24 ¶ And if thy people Israel be * put to the worse before the enemy, [d] because they have sinned against thee; and [e] shall return and confess thy name, and [f] pray and make supplication before thee † in this house;

25 Then hear thou from the heavens, and [g] forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them again unto the land, [h] which thou gavest to them and to their fathers.

26 ¶ When [i] the heaven is shut up, and [k] there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; *yet* [l] if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and [m] turn from their sin, when [n] thou dost afflict them;

27 Then hear thou from heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, [o] when thou hast taught them the [p] good way wherein they should walk; and [q] send rain upon thy land, which thou hast given unto thy people for an inheritance.

28 ¶ If there be [r] dearth in the land, if there be pestilence, if there be blasting, or mildew, [s] locusts, or caterpillars; if [t] their enemies besiege them in the ‡ cities of their land; [u] whatsoever sore or whatsoever sickness *there be:*

29 *Then* [x] what prayer *or* what supplication soever shall be made of any man, or of all thy people Israel, when every one shall [y] know his own sore and his own grief, and shall [z] spread forth his hands in this house:

30 Then hear thou from heaven thy dwelling-place, and forgive, and [a] render unto every man according unto all his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for [b] thou only knowest the hearts of the children of men:)

31 That they may [c] fear thee, to walk in thy ways, § so long as they live in the land which thou gavest unto our fathers.

32 ¶ Moreover concerning [d] the stranger, which is not of thy people Israel, but [e] is come from a far country for thy great name's sake, and [f] thy mighty hand, and thy stretched-out arm; [g] if they come and pray in this house;

33 Then hear thou from the heavens, *even* from thy dwelling-place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for; [h] that all people of the earth may know thy name, and fear thee, as *doth* thy people Israel, and may know that ‖ this house which I have built is called by thy name.

34 ¶ If [i] thy people go out to war against their enemies [k] by the way that thou shalt send them, and [l] they pray unto thee [m] toward this city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name;

35 Then [n] hear thou from the heavens their prayer and their supplication, and [o] maintain their * cause.

36 ¶ If [p] they sin against thee, ([q] for *there is* no man which sinneth not,) and [r] thou be angry with them, and deliver them over before *their* enemies, and † they carry them away captives unto a land far off or near;

37 Yet [s] *if* they ‡ bethink themselves in the land whither they are carried captive, and turn and pray unto thee in the land of their captivity, saying, [t] We have sinned, we have done amiss, and have dealt wickedly:

38 If they [u] return to thee with all their heart and with all their soul, in the land of their captivity, whither they have carried them captives, and [x] pray towards their land which thou gavest unto their fathers, and *towards* [y] the city which thou hast chosen, and toward the house which I have built for thy name:

39 Then hear thou from the heavens, *even* from thy dwelling-place, their prayer and their supplications, and maintain their § cause, and [z] forgive thy people which have sinned against thee.

40 Now, [a] my God, let, I beseech thee, [b] thine eyes be open, and *let* [c] thine ears *be* attent unto the prayer ‖ *that is made* in this place.

z Num. v. 19—22. Matt. xxiii. 18.
a 21.
b Num. v. 27. Prov. i. 31. Is. iii. 11. Rom. ii. 9.
c Deut. xxv. 1. Prov. xvii. 15. Is. iii. 10. Ez. xviii. 20. Rom. ii. 10.
* Or, *be smitten.* Lev. xxvi. 17. 37. Deut. xxviii. 25. 48. Josh. vii. 8. 1 Kings viii. 33, 34. Ps. xliv. 10.
d Josh. viii. 11, 12. Judg. ii. 11. 14, 15. 2 Kings xvii. 7—18.
e Lev. xxvi. 40—42. Deut. iv. 29—31. xxx. 1—6. Neh. i. 8, 9. Prov. xxviii. 13. Jer. iii. 12, 13.
f Ezra ix. 5, &c. Neh. ix. 1, &c. Is. lxiii. lxiv. Dan. ix. 3, &c.
† Or, *toward.* 20
g Ezra i. 1—6. Ps. cvi. 47. Jer. xxxiii. 6—13.
h Gen. xiii. 15. Ex. vi. 8. Josh. xxi. 43.
i Lev. xxvi. 19. Deut. xi. 17. xxviii. 23. 1 Kings xvii. 1. Luke iv. 25.
k Is. i. 1, 2. Ez. xiv. 13. Amos iv. 4—9. Rev. xi. 6.
l Jer. xiv. 7—9. Joel i. 13—20. ii. 15—17.
m Prov. xxviii. 13. Ez. xviii. 27—32.
n xxxiii. 12, 13. Hos. v. 15. vi. 1.
o 1 Kings viii. 35, 36. Ps. xxv. 3, 4. 8. 12. xciv. 12. cxix. 33. Mic. iv. 2. John vi. 45.
p Is. xxx. 21. Jer. vi. 16. xlii. 3.
q 1 Kings xviii. 40—45. Job xxxvii. 11—14. Ps. lxviii. 9. Jer. xiv. 22. Joel ii. 23. Zech. x. 1. Jam. v. 17, 18.
r Lev. xxvi. 16. 25, 26. Deut. xxviii. 21—61. Ruth i. 1. 1 Kings viii. 37—40. 2 Kings vi. 25—29. viii. 1.
s Ex. x. 12—15. Joel i. 4—7. ii. 25. Rev. ix. 3—11.
t xii. 2—5. xx. 9—13. xxxii. 1. Lev. xxvi. 25. Deut. xxviii. 52—57.
‡ Heb. *land of their gates.*
u 1 Kings viii. 37, 38.
x. Ps. xxxiii. 12. 13. 1. 15. xci. 15.
y Prov. xiv. 10.
z 12, 13. Is. i. 15.
a Ps. xviii. 20—26. Jer. xvii. 10. Ez. xviii. 30. Matt. xvi. 27.
b 1 Kings viii. 39. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. xxix. 17. Ps. xi. 4, 5. John ii. 25. Heb. iv. 13. Rev. ii. 23.
c Ex. xx. 20. 1 Sam. xii. 24. Job xxviii. 28. Ps. cxxviii. 1. cxxx. 4. Acts ix. 31.
§ Heb. *all the days which they live upon the face of the land.*

d Ex. xii. 48, 49. Ruth i. 16. ii. 11. 1 Kings viii. 41—43. x. 1, 2. Is. lvi. 3—7. Matt. ii. 1. viii. 10, 11. John xii. 20. Acts viii. 27. x. 1—4. Eph. ii. 12, 13.
e Ex. xviii. 8—12. Josh. ii. 9. ix. 9. 2 Kings v. 3. 8. 15. Is. lx. 1—10. Zech. viii. 22. Matt. xii. 42.
f Ex. iii. 19, 20. xiii. 14. Ps. lxxxix. 13.
g Is. lxvi. 20. Zech. xiv. 16, 17. Acts ii. 10.
h 1 Sam. xvii. 46. 2 Kings xix. 19. Ps. xxii. 27. lxvii. 2. cxxxviii. 4, 5. Is. xi. 10. xlix. 6. liv. 1—3. Rev. xi. 15.
‖ Heb. *thy name is called upon this house.* Num. vi. 27. 1 Kings viii. 16.
i Deut. xx. 1—4. Josh. i. 2—5. 1 Kings viii. 41, 45.
k Num. xxxi. 1, &c. Josh. viii. 1—8. Judg. i. 1, 2. 1 Sam. xv. 3. 18.
l xiv. 9—12. xviii. 31. xx. 6—13. xxxii. 20, 21.
m 6. 1 Kings viii. 13. Is. xiv. 32. Dan. vi. 10.
n Dan. ix. 17—19.
o Is. xxxvii. 21—36.
* Or, *right.* Ps. ix. 4. Jer. v. 28.
p 1 Kings viii. 46. 50.
q Job xv. 14—16. cxxx. 3. cxliii. 2. Prov. xx. 9. Ec. vii. 20. Jam. iii. 2. 1 John i. 8—10.
r Lev. xxvi. 34—44. Deut. iv. 26, 27. xxviii. 36. 64—68. xxix. 24—29. 2 Kings xvii. 6. 18. 23. xxv. 21. Dan. ix. 7—14. Luke xxi. 24.
† Heb. *they that take them captive, carry them away.*
s Lev. xxvi. 40—45. Deut. iv. 29, 30. xxx. 1—3. Luke xv. 17.
t Heb. *bring back to their heart.*
t Ezra ix. 6, 7. Neh. i. 6. ix. 26—30. Job xxxiii. 27, 28. Ps. cvi. 6. Is. lxiv. 6—12. Jer. iii. 12—14. xxxi. 18—20. Dan. ix. 5—11. Luke xv. 18, 19.
u Deut. xxx. 2—6. Jer. xxix. 12—14. Hos. xiv. 1—4. Joel ii. 12, 13.
x xxxiii. 11—13. Dan. ix. 3, 4.
y 34.
§ Or, *right.* 35. Zech. i. 15, 16.
z Ps. xxv. 18, 19. Mic. vii. 18—20.
a Ps. vii. 3. xiii. 3. xxii. 1, 2. lxxxviii. 1.
b vii. 15. xvi. 9. 1 Kings viii. 52. Ps. xxxiv. 15. Is. xxxvii. 17. Dan. ix. 17—19.
c Ps. xvii. 1. xxxi. 2. cxvi. 2.
‖ Heb. *of this place.*

41 Now therefore [d] arise, O LORD God, into [e] thy resting-place, thou, and the ark of thy strength: let [f] thy priests, O LORD God, be clothed with salvation, and let [h] thy saints rejoice in goodness.

42 O LORD God, turn not away the face of [i] thine anointed; [k] remember the mercies of David thy servant.

d Ps. cxxxii. 8—10. 16.
e 1 Chr. xxviii 2.
f Josh. iii. 13. vi. 4, 5. 1 Chr. xvi. 24. Ps. cx. 2. Rom. i. 15.
g Is. lix. 16—18. lxi. 3. 6. 10. Rom xiii. 14. Gal. iii. 27. Eph. iv. 22—24. Rev. xix. 8. 14.
h Neh. ix. 25. Is. lxv. 18. 19. Phil. iii. 3 iv. 4
i 1 Kings i. 34. Ps. ii 2. Is. lxi 1.
k Ps. cxxxii 1. Is lv. 3. Acts xiii 34.

V. 41, 42. These concluding words are not in the book of Kings; but are taken with some variation from the hundred and thirty-second Psalm, which probably was composed with reference to the former removal of the ark.—The temple was called the resting-place of the ark, because it there had a permanent settlement. The temple typified the human nature of Christ, "in whom dwelleth all the "fulness of the Godhead bodily;" the ark typified his meritorious obedience and sufferings, by which the holy law was magnified, and through which believing sinners approach and hold communion with, a reconciled God. The ark, the sacramental pledge of JEHOVAH's strength, engaged for Israel's help, would not avail without his actual presence. This might be expected, and indeed would be visible in its effects, if "his priests were clothed with sal-"vation," or righteousness. If they were partakers of salvation in their souls, and brought forth the fruits of it in their holy lives and conversations: then their example, instructions, and ministrations, would be extensively useful. They who, as penitent believers, have obtained mercy, and are separated from the love and spirit of the world, under the influences of the sanctifying Spirit of God, are *saints*. Their edification, comfort, and joy, in subserviency to the glory of God, and in connexion with the conversion of sinners, forms the great object of religious ordinances; and the faith and piety of ministers, the purity and solemnity of their services, and the flourishing of true religion, cause them "to rejoice in the goodness" of the LORD; by enlarging and gratifying all their holy, pious and benevolent affections. These seem, therefore, the blessings peculiarly intended; though the outward protection and prosperity of both priests and people might also be implied. Solomon further prayed, that God would not reject his prayer, which he made for a blessing on that work to which he had called him, and for which he had caused him to be *anointed:* for that would be to turn away his face, and to send him away ashamed and discouraged. But in this he was a type of, and probably had reference to, the promised Messiah.—He also entreated the Lord to remember the mercies that he had promised to David, and through him to his people and posterity; and to continue and perfect them. This also may be applied to the mercies of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of God the Father through him.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—17.

It is a great mercy to be enabled to go through important services to the church, in simple obedience, and dependence on the Lord; and to witness their accomplishment with humble gratitude to the giver of both the will, the ability, and the success: adoring his power, faithfulness, and goodness in every part of it, without expressing self-importance or self-complacency. For pride and ostentation, if allowed to intrude, rob God of his glory, and mar the acceptance, or the comfort, of the most useful and excellent undertakings. Here then the main guard should be placed, by those who are employed as instruments for the good of others: this, this above all the rest, should dictate their constant prayers; and all, that wish success to their attempts, should join in prayer for them, that they may be kept humble, in proportion as they are honoured of God for usefulness. When a good work is well finished, it is not done with: when the sermon is preached, the letter written, or the book sent to the press, or even well received by the public, its real utility depends on the Lord's *consequent* blessing. Then it should be dedicated to him, committed to his hands, and his blessing sought upon it; and in this case we may confidently expect that the fruit which by his grace we have produced, will remain for the durable good of many when we are gone to our long home.

V. 18—42.

The more we know of God and religion, *spiritually and experimentally*, the more humbly we shall think of ourselves, and of all our performances; the more reverentially we shall adore the infinitely glorious God, and the more entirely we shall trust to his covenant of mercy and grace, made with believing sinners in Jesus Christ. We may and ought, unworthy as we are, to expect large answers to all our prayers, which we present for ourselves and others through the Saviour's intercession. They are greatly favoured who have pious friends to pray for them; and it is a mercy for us all that "we have an Advocate with the "Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who is the propitia-"tion for the sins of the world;" (1 *John* ii. 1, 2.) Yet this will not prevent the destruction of any that never pray for themselves: not that the Saviour pleads in vain, but that the event shows he does not intercede for them.—In times of prosperity, personal or public, we should expect adversity, and pray with reference to it: and in seasons of deep distress and temptation, we should still hope and pray for deliverance and comfort. Blessed be God, sinners of every description, when they bethink themselves, and humbly pour out their prayers, in dependence on the Saviour's merits, may be assured of forgiveness, acceptance, and all the blessings of salvation. JEHOVAH hath made our nature his resting-place for ever, in the person of Emmanuel, and through him he dwells and delights in his church of redeemed sinners. May all his ministers of every name be clothed with righteousness and salvation; may all his saints be made joyful in his goodness; may the numbers of both be continually increasing, till the boundaries of his church extend as wide as those of the human species. May the heart of the writer, and of every reader, become his resting place; may Christ dwell there by faith, casting out every idol, cleansing them from all filthiness, consecrating them as his temples, and shedding abroad his love therein: may the Father look upon us, in and through his Anointed, whose face he never turns away, and whose petitions meet with no repulse; and may he

CHAP. VII.

God testifies his acceptance of Solomon's prayer by fire from heaven; the glory fills the temple, and the people worship, 1—3. *Solomon's sacrifices at the dedication,* 4—7. *The congregation keep the feast of tabernacles, and the feast of the dedication, fourteen days,* 8, 9. *He dismisses the people joyful, and is prospered,* 10, 11. *God again appears to Solomon, and makes a covenant with him,* 12—23.

NOW [a] when Solomon had made an end of praying, [b] the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt-offering and the sacrifices; and [c] the glory of the LORD filled the house.

2 And [d] the priests could not enter into the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD's house.

3 And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the LORD upon the house, [e] they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped, and praised the LORD, *saying,* [f] For *he is* good; for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

4 Then the king and all the people offered sacrifices before the LORD.

5 And king Solomon offered [g] a sacrifice of twenty and two thousand oxen, and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep: so the king and all the people dedicated the house of God.

6 And [h] the priests waited on their offices: [i] the Levites also with instruments of music of the LORD, [k] which David the king had made to praise the LORD, [l] because his mercy *endureth* for ever, when David praised by their * ministry; and [m] the priests sounded trumpets before them, and all Israel stood.

7 Moreover Solomon [n] hallowed the middle of the court that *was* before the house of the LORD: for there he offered burnt-offerings, and the fat of the peace-offerings, because [o] the brazen altar which Solomon had made was not able to receive the burnt-offerings, and the meat-offerings, and the fat.

8 Also at the same time Solomon [p] kept the feast seven days, and all Israel with him, [q] a very great congregation, from [r] the entering in of Hamath, unto the river of Egypt.

9 And in the eighth day they made a † solemn assembly: for they kept the dedication of the altar [s] seven days, and the feast seven days.

10 And on the [t] three and twentieth day of the seventh month he sent the people away into their tents, [u] glad and merry in heart [x] for the goodness that the LORD had shewed unto David, and to Solomon, and to Israel his people.

11 Thus [y] Solomon finished the house of the LORD, and the king's house: and [z] all that came into Solomon's heart to make in the house of the LORD, and in his own house he prosperously effected.

12 ¶ And [a] the LORD appeared to Solomon by night, and said unto him, [b] I have heard thy prayer, and [c] have chosen this place to myself, for [d] an house of sacrifice.

13 If I [e] shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if [f] I command the locusts to devour the land, or if [g] I send pestilence among my people;

14 If [h] my people, ‡ which are called by my name, shall [i] humble themselves,

a 1 Kings viii. 54. Dan. ix. 20
b Gen. xv. 17. Lev. ix. 24. Judg. vi. 21. 1 Kings xviii. 24. 38. 1 Chr. xxi. 26.
c v. 13, 14. Ex. xl. 34, 35. Lev. ix. 23. 1 Kings viii. 10, 11. Is. vi. 1—4. Ez. x. 3, 4.
d v. 14. Ex. xxiv. 17. Is. vi. 5. Rev. xv. 8.
e Ex. iv. 31. Lev. ix. 24. Num. xiv. 5. xvi. 22. 1 Kings xviii. 39. 1 Chr. xxix. 20. Ps. xcv. 6.
f v. 13. xx. 21. Ezra iii. 11. Ps. cviii. 17. cxxxvi. 1, &c. Is. lxiii. 7. Jer. xxxiii. 11. Luke i. 50.
g i. 6. v. 6. xv. 11. 1 Kings viii. 62, 63. 1 Chr. xxix. 21. Ezra vi. 16, 17. Ez. xlv. 17. Mic. vi. 7.
h 1 Chr. xvi. 39, 40. xxiv. 1—3.
i xxix. 25. 1 Chr. vi. 31, 32. xv. 16—21. xvi. 4—6. 41, 42. xxv. 1—7.
k Amos vi. 5.
l 1 Chr. xvi. 34. Ps. cvi. 1. cvii. 1. cxviii. 1—4. cxxxviii. 8.

* Heb. *hand.*
m 12. Num. x. 1—10. 1 Chr. xv. 24. Ps. lxxxix. 15.
n 1 Kings viii. 64. Ez. xx. 20. Heb. xiii. 10—12.
o iv. 1.
p Lev. xxiii. 34—43. Num. xxix. 12—36. Deut. xvi. 13—15. 1 Kings viii. 65. Neh. viii. 13—18. Zech. xiv. 16—19. John vii. 2. 37—39.
q xxx. 13.
r Gen. xv. 18. Num. xxxiv. 5—8. Josh. xiii. 3—5. 1 Kings iv. 21—25. Am. vi. 14.
† Heb. *restraint.*
s xxx. 23. 1 Kings viii. 65.
t 1 Kings viii. 66.
u xxix. 36. xxx. 26. Deut. xii. 7. 12. 18. xvi. 11. 14. Neh. viii. 10. Ps. xxxii. 11. xxxiii. 1. xcii. 4.
c 2. cv. 3. cvi. 5. Acts ii. 46. xvi. 34. Phil. iv. 4.
x Is. lxiii. 7.
y ii. 1. 1 Kings ix. 1.
z Ec. ii. 4. 10, 11.
a i. 7. Gen. xvii. 1. 1 Kings ix. 2.
b 2 Kings xx. 5. Ps. x. 17. lxvi. 19. Luke i. 13. Acts x. 31. 1 John v. 14, 15.
c 16. Deut. xii. 5. 11. Ps. lxxviii. 68, 69. cxxxii. 13, 14.
d ii. 6.
e vi. 26—28. Deut. xi. 17. Job xi. 10. xii. 14. Luke iv. 25. Rev. iii. 7. xi. 6.
f Ex. x. 4—6. Ps. cv. 34. Joel i. 4—7. ii. 25.
g Num. xiv. 12. xvi. 46, 47. 2 Sam. xxiv. 13—16. Ez. xiv. 19—21.
h Is. lxiii. 19.
‡ Heb. *upon whom my name is called.*
i vi. 37—39. xxxiii. 12, 13. 18, 19. Lev. xxvi. 40, 41. Deut. iv. 29, 30. xxx. 1—6. Ez. xxxiii. 11. Jam. iv. 9, 10.

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remember and bless us in all things, according to his mercies to sinners in and through him!

NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 1—3. Fire, descending and consuming the sacrifices, was the customary token of divine acceptance; (*Marg. Ref.*) This represented the righteous displeasure of God against man's sin, as the cause of the sufferings of our holy Surety; and perhaps, the sanctification of our souls by the power of the Holy Spirit, like purifying fire consuming our carnal and corrupt affections. The visible displays also of the divine glory still continued, or were renewed after some intermission; or perhaps were sensibly augmented. But as it is probable, that the people expected these tokens of the Lord's acceptance, the awful sight did not terrify them, but only disposed them to the most reverential adoration, united with reiterated praises of his goodness and mercy that endure for ever.

V. 4—10. (*Notes,* 1 *Kings* viii. 63—66. *Marg. Ref.*)

and pray, and seek my face, and [k] turn from their wicked ways; then [l] will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will [m] heal their land.

15 Now [n] mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attent unto the prayer * *that is made* in this place.

16 For now [o] have I chosen and sanctified this house, that my name may be there for ever: and [p] mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually.

17 And as for thee, [q] if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, and do according to all that I have commanded thee, and shalt [r] observe my statutes and my judgments;

18 [s] Then will I stablish the throne of thy kingdom, according [t] as I have covenanted with David thy father, saying, There shall not † fail thee a man *to be* ruler in Israel.

19 But [u] if ye turn away, and forsake my statutes and my commandments, which I have set before you, and [x] shall go and serve other gods, and worship them;

20 Then [y] will I pluck them up by the roots out of my land which I have given them: and this house, which I have sanctified for my name, will I cast out of my sight, and will make it *to be* [z] a proverb and a by-word among all nations.

21 And this house, which is high, [a] shall be an astonishment to every one that passeth by it; so that he shall say, [b] Why hath the LORD done thus unto this land, and unto this house?

22 And it shall be answered, [c] Because they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, and laid hold on other gods, and worshipped them, and served them: [d] therefore hath he brought all this evil upon them.

k Pro. xxviii. 13. Is. lv. 6, 7. Ez. xviii 27—30. l vi. 39.
m Ps. lx. 2. Jer. viii. 22. xxxiii. 6. li. 9.
n vi. 20. 40. Deu. xi. 12. Ps. lxv. 2. 1 Pet. iii. 12.
* Heb. *of this place.* vi. 40.
o vi. 6. 33. xxxiii. 4. 7. 1 Kings ix. 3. 2 Kings xxi. 4. 7, 8.
p Matt. iii. 17. John ii. 19—21. Col. ii. 9.
q Deu. xxviii 1, &c. 1 Kings ii. 3. viii. 14. viii. 25. xi. 38. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. Zech. iii. 7.
r Deu. iv. 40. Ps. cv 45. Ez. xxxvi. 27. John xiv. 21
s 2 Sam. vii. 13—16.
t Ps. lxxxix 28—40. cxxxii. 11, 12.
† Heb. *be cut off to thee.* vi. 16.
u Lev xxvi 14, &c. Deu. xxviii. 15, &c. 1 Sam. xii. 25. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9.
x Deu. iv 23—27. Josh. xxiii. 15, 16. 1 Kings ix 6, 7. xi 4—8
y 2 Kings xvii. 20. Ps. lii. 5. Jer. xii. 17. xviii. 7. xxxi. 28 Jude 12.
z Deu. xxviii. 37. 1 Kings ix 7. Neh iv. 1—4. Ps. xliv. 14. Jer. xxiv 9. Lam ii. 15, 16.
a xxix. 8. Jer. xix 8. xlix. 17. 1. 13.
b Deut. xxix 24—28. 1 Kings ix. 8, 9. Jer. v. 19. xiii. 22. xvi 10—12. xxii 8, 9. 28
c Judg ii. 12, 13. Jer. ii. 13. Lam. ii. 16, 17. iv. 13—15. Ez. xxxvi. 17—20.
d xxxvi. 17. Dan. ix. 12.

CHAP. VIII.

The cities built by Solomon, 1—6. *The remnant of the devoted nations are subjected to tribute; and the Israelites employed in honourable services,* 7—10. *Pharaoh's daughter removes to her house,* 11. *Solomon's daily and festival sacrifices,* 12, 13. *He appoints the priests and Levites to their services in order,* 14, 15. *The work finished,* 16. *Solomon's navy brings gold from Ophir,* 17.

AND it came to pass [a] at the end of twenty years, wherein Solomon had built the house of the LORD, and his own house,

2 That [b] the cities which Huram had restored to Solomon, Solomon built them, and caused the children of Israel to dwell there.

3 And Solomon went to [c] Hamath-zobah, and prevailed against it.

B. C. 992.
a 1 Kings ix. 10.
b 1 Kings ix. 11—13.
c Num. xiii. 21. xxxiv. 8. 2 Sam. viii. 3. 1 Kings xi. 23. 1 Chr. xviii. 3

V. 11—22. (*Notes,* 1 *Kings* ix. 1—9. *Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The mercies of God to sinners are communicated in a manner suited to impress all who receive them with the most profound reverence of his majesty, justice, and holiness: thus leading them to unite humble confidence with fear of offending so holy a God. So that whoever beholds with true faith the divine Saviour agonizing and dying for man's sin, will by that view find his godly sorrow enlarged, his hatred of sin increased, his soul made more watchful, and his life more holy: and they are mere speculating hypocrites, who profess to expect salvation by the cross of Christ, whilst the world has their hearts, and sin is allowed in their habitual conduct. The Lord's ready answers to our prayers should animate us to repeat, with deeper reverence and livelier gratitude, our praises of his mercy.—The most endearing displays of the love of God, rightly understood, speak terror to hypocrites and presumptuous offenders: but the most tremendous discoveries of his righteous vengeance need not discourage the upright humble believer. Every token of his favour should enlarge our hearts in his service: and they who are inspired with zeal for his glory, and taste the joy of his salvation, will never think too much time or expense can be bestowed in communion with him and his saints, provided other duties be not neglected. In the best state of nations, favoured with revelation, there hath hitherto been a succession of prosperity, ingratitude, corrections, repentance, forgiveness, renewed mercies, prosperity, &c. Yet the Lord delights in those places where his ordinances are maintained and attended on, in some measure of purity and consistency. But in case of apostacy, or general profaneness, or hypocrisy, he will glorify his justice upon those who have thus abused his mercies and so forfeited their privileges. Let us then stand in awe of him, and watch against all sin; and copy the examples of the most approved of his saints, in the brightest parts of their characters.

4 And [d] he built Tadmor in the wilderness, and all the store cities, which he built in Hamath.

5 Also he built [e] Beth-horon the upper, and Beth-horon the nether, fenced cities, with walls, gates, and bars;

6 And [f] Baalath, and all [g] the store-cities that Solomon had, and all the [h] chariot-cities, and the cities of the horse-men, and *all that Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, and in Lebanon, and throughout all the land of his dominion.

7 ¶ *As for* [i] all the people *that were* left of [k] the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which *were* not of Israel,

8 *But* of their children who were left after them in the land, [l] whom the children of Israel consumed not, them did Solomon make [m] to pay tribute until this day.

9 But [n] of the children of Israel did Solomon make no servants for his work: but [o] they *were* men of war and chief of his captains, and captains of his chariots and horsemen.

10 And these *were* the chief of king Solomon's officers, *even* [p] two hundred and fifty, that bare rule over the people.

11 ¶ And Solomon [q] brought up the daughter of Pharoah out of the city of David, unto the house that he had built for her: for he said, My wife shall not dwell in the house of David king of Israel, because *the places are* † holy whereunto the ark of the LORD hath come.

12 ¶ Then Solomon offered burnt-offerings unto the LORD, [r] on the altar of the LORD, which he had built before the porch;

13 Even after a certain rate [s] every day, offering according to the commandment of Moses, on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on the solemn feasts, [t] three times in the year, *even* in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles.

14 And he appointed, according to the order of David his father, [u] the courses of the priests to their service, and [x] the Levites to their charges, to praise and minister before the priests, as the duty of every day required: the porters also by their courses at every [y] gate: for ‡ so [z] had David [a] the man of God commanded.

15 And they departed not from the commandment of the king unto the priests and Levites concerning any matter, or concerning [b] the treasures.

16 Now [c] all the work of Solomon was prepared unto the day of the foundation of the house of the LORD, and until it was finished. *So* the house of the LORD was perfected.

17 ¶ Then went Solomon to [d] Ezion-geber, and to [e] Eloth, at the sea-side in the land of Edom.

18 And [f] Huram sent him by the hands of his servants, ships, and servants that had knowledge of the sea; and they went with the servants of Solomon to Ophir, and took thence four hundred and fifty talents of gold, and brought *them* to king Solomon.

d 1 Kings ix. 17—19.
e Josh. xvi. 3. 5. 1 Chr. vii. 24.
f Josh xviii. 14. 2 Sam. vi. 2. 1 Chr. xiii. 6.
g 1 Kings ix. 19.
h 1 14. 1 Kings x. 26.
* Heb. *all the desire of Solomon which he desired to build.* 1 Kings ix. 19. Ec. ii. 10.
i 1 Kings ix. 20—22.
k Gen. xv. 19—21. Deut. vii. 1.
l Judg. i. 21—36. Ps. cvi. 34.
m ii. 17. 1 Kings v. 13, 14.
n Ex. xix. 5, 6. Gal iv. 26. 31.
o 1 Sam. viii. 11, 12.
p ii. 18. 1 Kings v. 16. ix. 23.
q 1 Kings iii. 1. vii. 8. ix. 24.
† Heb. *holiness.* Ex. iii. 5. xxix. 33. 2 Pet. i. 18.
r iv. 1.
s Ex. xxix. 38—42. Lev xxiii. Num. xxviii. xxix. Ez. xlv. 17. xlvi. 3—15
t Ex. xxiii. 14. Deut. xvi. 16. 1 Kings ix. 25.
u 1 Chr. xxiv. 1—19.
x 1 Chr. vi. 31, 32, &c. xv. 16—22. xvi. 4—6. 42 xxiii. xxiv. 20—31. xxv.
y xxvi.
‡ Heb. *so was the commandment of David.*
z 2 Sam. xxiii. 2. 1 Chr. xxviii. 19. Acts xiii. 22. 36
a Deut. xxxiii. 1. 1 Kings xiii. 1.
b 1 Kings vii. 51. 1 Chr ix. 29. xxvi. 20—26.
c 1 Kings v. 18. vi. 7.
d xx. 36. 1 Kings ix. 26.
e Deut. ii. 8. 2 Kings xiv. 22. xvi. 6. *Elath.*
f ix 10—13. 1 Kings ix. 27, 28. x. 22.

NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1—3. Perhaps *Hamath-zobah* had revolted: but Solomon regained possession of it. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* ix. 1, 2. 11—14. xi. 23—25.)

V. 4—9. *Notes*, 1 *Kings* ix. 13—22.

V. 10. (*Marg. Ref.*) Three hundred overseers, omitted in one place, are added in another of the places referred to.

V. 11. Pharaoh's daughter is supposed to have been a proselyte to the true religion: but she was of heathen extraction, and perhaps attended by many who were not proselyted. If there were no open idolatry or profaneness in her court, there might be many things inconsistent with spiritual religion; and Solomon did not think it right that she should reside where the ark had been situated, and so near the continual temple worship. Perhaps he wanted resolution entirely to suppress all that he did not entirely approve.

V. 14, 15. Solomon exactly adhered to all David's regulations: not only because he was his father; but because he was a *man of God*, and acted by his authority in forming them.

V. 16. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* v. 7.)

V. 18. *Ships*, &c. The materials perhaps were ready prepared, and the workmen sent, that the ships might be constructed at the Red sea; for vessels could not sail from Tyre to Ezion-geber, or Eloth.—(*Note*, 2 *Kings* ix. 26—28.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Some difficulty or conflict must be expected in every state on earth: but they whom the Lord loveth will prevail;

CHAP. IX.

The queen of Sheba's visit to Solomon; her admiration of his wisdom and magnificence, her presents and return, 1—12. *Solomon's annual revenue in gold,* 13, 14. *His golden shields and targets,* 15, 16. *His ivory throne, and rich vessels of gold,* 17—22. *The honour paid him by other kings,* 23, 24. *His stalls, horses, and chariots,* 25. *The extent and wealth of his dominions,* 26—28. *He dies, and is succeeded by Rehoboam,* 29—31.

a 1 Kings x. 1, &c Matt. xii. 42. Luke xi. 31.
b Gen. x. 7. 28. xxv. 3.
c i. 1. 12. 1 Kings iv. 31.
d Ps. xlix. 4. lxxviii 2 Prov. i 6. Matt xiii. 11. 35.
e Ps. lxxii. 10. 15. Is. lx. 6.
f 9. Matt. ii. 11.
g 1 Sam. i. 15. Ps. cxlii 2. Matt xii. 34.
h Prov. xiii. 20. Mark iv. 11. 34. John xv. 15.
i 1 Kings iii. 12. iv. 29. Col. ii. 3. Heb. iv. 12, 13.
k 1 Kings x. 2—4. Mark ii. 5. Acts xi 23
l iii. iv. 1 Kings vi vii.

AND [a] when the queen of [b] Sheba heard of [c] the fame of Solomon, [d] she came to prove Solomon with hard questions at Jerusalem, with a very great company, and [e] camels that bare [f] spices, and gold in abundance, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, [g] she communed with him of all that was in her heart.

2 And Solomon [h] told her all her questions: and [i] there was nothing hid from Solomon which he told her not.

3 And when the queen of Sheba had [k] seen the wisdom of Solomon, and [l] the house that he had built,

m 1 Kings iv. 22, 23. Prov ix. 5. John vi. 53—57.
n 1 Kings x. 5. Luke xii. 37. Rev. iii. 20.
* Or, *butlers.* Neh i. 11.
o xxiii. 13. 2 Kings xvi. 18. 1 Chr ix. 18. Ez. xliv. 3 xlvi. 2
p Ps. cxix. 81. cxliii. 7. Cant. v. 8. Dan x. 17. Rev. i 17.
† Heb. *word.* 1 Kings x. 6.
‡ Or, *sayings.*
q John xx. 25 29.
r 1 Kings x. 7. Ps. xxxi. 19. Zech. ix. 17. 1 Cor. ii 9. 1 John iii. 2.
s 5. 1 Kings iv. 31. 34. Cant. v. 9—15.
t Deut. xxxiii. 29. 1 Kings x 8 Ps. xxxvii. 4. lxxxiv. 10—12 Prov. iii. 13, 14. viii. 34 x. 21 xiii. 20. Luke x. 39—42 xi. 28.
u 1 Kings x. 9. 1 Chr xxix. 10. 20. Ps. lxxii. 18. 19. 2 Cor. ix. 12—15.
x 2 Sam xv 25, 26. Ps. xviii. 19. xxii. 8. Is. xlii 1. lxii 4.
y ii. 11. Deut vii. 8. 1 Chr xvii. 22.
z 2 Sam viii. 15. xxiii. 3. Ps lxxii 2 xcix. 4. Is ix. 7 xi 1—5 xxxii 1, 2. Jer xxxiii. 15, 16 Heb. i. 8, 9.
a 14. 1 Kings ix. 14. x. 10.
b i. Gen xliii 11. Ex. xxx. 34.

4 And [m] the meat of his table, and [n] the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel; his * cup-bearers also, and their apparel; and [o] his ascent by which he went up into the house of the LORD; [p] there was no more spirit in her.

5 And she said to the king, *It was* a true † report which I heard in mine own land of thine ‡ acts and of thy wisdom:

6 Howbeit [q] I believed not their words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen *it:* and, behold, [r] the one half of the greatness of thy wisdom was not told me: *for* thou [s] exceedest the fame that I heard.

7 [t] Happy *are* thy men, and happy *are* these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom.

8 [u] Blessed be the LORD thy God, [x] which delighted in thee to set thee on his throne, *to be* king for the LORD thy God: [y] because thy God loved Israel, to establish them for ever, therefore made he thee king over them, [z] to do judgment and justice.

9 And [a] she gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and [b] of spices great abundance, and precious stones: neither was there any such spice, as the queen of Sheba gave king Solomon.

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and in heaven their peace will be perfect and eternal.—We shall never be satisfied with our possessions, enjoyments, or achievements, except we limit our desires by the precept and providence of God: yet he indulges his people in things indifferent, as far as is consistent with their real good.—His service is perfect liberty, all else is bondage: but if we poor condemned criminals and strangers be brought nigh, pardoned, and employed by our merciful Lord, we shall surely render him our tribute of praise and grateful obedience, though the lowest and most laborious service in his house be allotted to us.—It is hard to keep up a proper distinction betwixt things sacred and common in the palaces of the great, or in the courts of kings: and it sometimes requires more wisdom and resolution to govern a large family in the fear of God, without conniving at abuses, than it does to govern a large kingdom, with reputation, and in prosperity: and the difficulty is increased, when by any means a man hath got a hinderance instead of a helper in the wife of his bosom. But the truths, worship, and honour of God should be nearer our hearts than any relative comforts: and we ought to offend or grieve any one, rather than disobey God and grieve his people, by allowing his ordinances to be profaned. In all things, which are *expressly directed* in scripture, our religious diligence should be exactly regulated by it: every part of the Lord's service should be attended to, in due succession, order, and proportion; and then we shall not find any vacant time lie heavy upon our hands. In beginning and conducting every undertaking, we should keep the end in view: and from our entrance upon life we should look forward, and be preparing for the close of it; that then we may have peace, and a happy entrance into a better state. Nor should we allow ourselves in any pursuit or indulgence, which interferes with that grand object. Thus "known "unto the Lord are all his works from the beginning "of the world:" every thing respecting his spiritual temple was planned and determined before he began to work; and "his counsel shall stand, and he will do all "his pleasure." As men risk much, and undergo great hardship, in obtaining an earthly treasure: may we remember how much better wisdom is than gold; and leaving the children of this world to scramble for the toys of this world; may we, as the children of God, lay up our treasure in heaven, that where our treasure is there our hearts also may be!

NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 8. The throne on which Solomon reigned, was the throne of God: for he was God's vicegerent, and thus "king for the LORD his God," to promote his glory and support religion. (*Notes,* 1 *Kings* x.)

10 And the servants also of Huram, and the servants of Solomon, [d] which brought gold from Ophir, brought [d] algum-trees, and precious stones.

11 And the king made *of* the algum-trees * terraces to the house of the LORD, and to the king's palace, and [e] harps, and psalteries for singers: and there were none such seen before in the land of Judah.

12 And king Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba, [f] all her desire, whatsoever she asked, besides *that* which she had brought unto the king. So she turned, and went away to her own land, she and her servants.

13 ¶ Now [g] the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year, was six hundred and threescore and six talents of gold;

14 Beside *that which* chapmen and merchants brought. And all the kings of Arabia, and † governors of the country brought gold and silver to Solomon.

15 And king Solomon made [h] two hundred targets *of* beaten gold: six hundred *shekels* of beaten gold went to one target.

16 And three hundred shields *made he of* beaten gold: three hundred *shekels* of gold went to one shield. And the king put them [i] in the house of the forest of Lebanon.

17 Moreover the king made [k] a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with pure gold.

18 And *there were* six steps to the throne, with a foot-stool of gold, *which were* fastened to the throne, and ‡ stays on each side of the sitting place, and [l] two lions standing by the stays:

19 And [m] twelve lions stood there on the one side and on the other upon the six steps. There was not the like made in any kingdom.

20 And all [n] the drinking vessels of king Solomon *were of* gold; and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon *were of* § pure gold: ‖ none *were of* silver; it was *not* any thing accounted of in the days of Solomon.

21 For the king's ships went to [o] Tarshish with the servants of Huram: every three years once came the ships of Tarshish bringing gold, and silver, * ivory, and apes, and [p] peacocks.

22 ¶ And king Solomon [q] passed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom.

23 And all the kings of the earth [r] sought the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom, that [s] God had put in his heart.

24 And they brought every man his present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and raiment, harness, and spices, horses and mules, a rate year by year.

25 And Solomon had [u] four thousand stalls for horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen; whom he bestowed in the chariot-cities, and with the king at Jerusalem.

26 And he [x] reigned over all the kings, from † the river even unto the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt.

27 And [y] the king ‡ made silver in Jerusalem as stones, and cedar-trees made he as the sycamore-trees that *are* in the low plains in abundance.

28 And they [z] brought unto Solomon horses out of Egypt, and out of all lands.

29 ¶ Now [a] the rest of the acts of Solomon, first and last, *are* they not written in the § book of [b] Nathan the prophet, and in the prophecy of [c] Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the vision of [d] Iddo the seer, against Jeroboam the son of Nebat?

30 And [e] Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years.

31 And Solomon slept with his fathers, and he was buried in the city of David his father: and Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead.

c viii. 13.
d 1 Kings x. 11, 12. *almug-trees.*
* Or, *stays.* Heb. *high-ways.*
e 1 Chr. xxiii. 5. xxv. 1. Ps. xcii. 1—3. cl. 3—5.
f 1 Kings x. 13. Ps. xx. 4. Eph. iii. 20.
g 1 Kings x. 14, 15. Ps. lxviii. 29. lxxii. 10. 15.
† Or, *captains.*
h xii. 9, 10. 1 Kings x. 16, 17.
i 1 Kings vii. 2.
k 1 Kings x. 18—20. Ps. xlv. 6. Rev. xx. 11.
‡ Heb. *hands.*
l Gen. xlix. 9, 10. Num. xxiii. 24. xxiv. 9. Rev. v. 5.
m Matt. xix. 28. Rev. xxi. 12.
n 1 Kings x. 21. Esth. i. 7. Dan. v. 2, 3.
§ Heb. *shut up.*
‖ Or, there was *no silver* in them.
o 1 Kings x. 22. xxii. 48. *Tharshish.*
* Or, *elephants' teeth.* Amos iii. 15.
p Job xxxix. 13.
q i. 12. 1 Kings iii. 12, 13. iv. 30, 31. x. 23, 24. Ps. lxxxix. 27. Col. ii. 2, 3.
r 1 Kings iv. 34. Is. xi. 2, 10.
s 1 Kings iii. 28. Prov. ii. 6. Dan. i. 17. ii. 21—23. v. 11. Luke xxi. 15.
t 9. 1 Sam. x. 27. Job xlii. 11.
u i. 14. Deut. xvii. 16. 1 Kings iv. 26. x. 26.
x 1 Kings iv. 21, 24. Ps. lxxii. 8—11. Dan. vii. 14. Rev. xix. 16.
† *Euphrates.* Gen. xv. 18. Ex. xxiii. 31. Josh. xiii. 2—7.
y i. 15. 1 Kings x. 27. Job xxii. 24, 25.
‡ Heb. *gave.*
z i. 16. 1 Kings x. 28.
a 1 Kings xi. 41, 42.
§ Heb. *words.*
b 1 Sam. vii. 1—3. xii. 1. 1 Kings i. 8. 38.
c 1 Kings xi. 29. xiv. 2.
d xii. 15. xiii. 22.
e 1 Kings xi. 42, 43.
B. C. 975.

V. 21. The imports here mentioned indicate, that prosperity had enervated the minds of Solomon and his subjects, and led them to love things curious and uncommon, though useless in themselves: and indeed the East-india trade hath rendered every nation luxurious and self-indulgent, which hath prospered in it, from the beginning to this day.

V. 29—31. Solomon's apostacy and idolatry are not at all hinted at in this narration: and this forms a cogent

CHAP. X.

The Israelites, at Shechem, make Rehoboam king; and with Jeroboam require him to lighten their yoke, 1—5. *Rehoboam, rejecting the advice of his father's counsellors, and consulting with the young men, answers very roughly,* 6—15. *The ten tribes revolt, kill Hadoram, and drive away Rehoboam,* 16—19.

AND [a] Rehoboam went to Shechem: for to [b] Shechem were [c] all Israel come to make him king.

2 And it came to pass, when [d] Jeroboam the son of Nebat, (who *was* in Egypt, whither he had fled from the presence of Solomon the king,) heard *it*, that Jeroboam returned out of Egypt.

3 And they sent and called him. So Jeroboam and all Israel came, and spake to Rehoboam, saying,

4 [e] Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore ease thou somewhat the grievous servitude of thy father, and his heavy yoke that he put upon us, and we will serve thee.

5 And he said unto them, [f] Come again unto me after three days. And the people departed.

6 And king Rehoboam [g] took counsel with the old men that had stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, saying, [h] What counsel give ye *me* to return answer to this people?

7 And they spake unto him, saying, [i] If thou be kind to this people, and please them, and [k] speak good words to them, they will be thy servants for ever.

8 But [l] he forsook the counsel which the old men gave him, and took counsel with the young men that were brought up with him, that stood before him.

9 And he said unto them, [m] What advice give ye that we may return answer to this people, which have spoken to me, saying, Ease somewhat the yoke that thy father did put upon us?

10 And the young men that were brought up with him spake unto him, saying, [n] Thus shalt thou answer the people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou *it* somewhat lighter for us: thus shalt thou say unto them, [o] My little *finger* shall be thicker than my father's loins.

11 For whereas [p] my father * put a heavy yoke upon you, [q] I will put more to your yoke: my father chastised you with whips, but I *will chastise you* with [r] scorpions.

12 So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, as the king bade, saying, [s] Come again to me on the third day.

13 And the king [t] answered them

a 1 Kings xii. 1. 1 Chr. iii. 10. Matt. i. 7. *Rehoboam.*
b Gen. xii. 6. *Sichem.* Josh. xxiv. 1 Judg. ix, 1
c 1 Chr. xii 38
d 1 Kings. xi. 40. xii. 2.
e 1 Sam. viii. 11—18. 1 Kings xii. 4. Matt. xi. 29, 30.
f 1 Kings xii. 5. Prov. iii. 28.
g Job. xii. 12, 13. xxxii. 7. Prov, xxvii. 10. Jer. xlii. 2—5.
h 2 Sam. xvi. 20.
i 1 Kings xii. 7, 8. Prov. xv. 1.
k Gen. xlix. 21. 2 Sam. xv 2—6.
l xxv. 15, 16. Prov. i. 25. ix. 9. xix. 20. xxv. 12. Ec. x. 2, 3. 16.
m 2 Sam. xvii. 5. 6. 1 Kings xxii. 6—8.
n 2 Sam. xvii. 7—13.
o 1 Kings xii 10 11. Prov. x. 14. xiii. 16 xiv 16. xviii. 6, 7. xxviii. 25. xxix. 23.
p 4.
* Heb. *laded.*
q Ex. i. 13, 14 v. 5—9. 18. 1 Sam. viii 18. Is. xlvii. 6 lviii. 6. Jer. xxviii 13, 14. Matt. xi 29.
r Ez. ii. 6 Luke x. 19. Rev. ix. 3. 5. 10.
s 5 1 Kings xii. 12—15
t Gen. xlii. 7. 30. Ex. x. 28. 1 Sam xxv. 10, 11. 1 Kings xx. 6—11. Prov. xv. 1.

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argument, that, being repented of and forgiven, they would never be remembered against him to his condemnation; though they were in one place recorded for a warning to others in all future ages.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In proportion as we possess true wisdom, we shall perceive its excellency, and labour to attain an increase of it: and in the same proportion we shall become more indifferent about worldly wealth, and more liberal in our use of it to good purposes, if God hath bestowed it upon us. For true wisdom and happiness are inseparably connected; but no such alliance is formed between riches and the enjoyment even of this present life. It is therefore far more desirable to be connected with those who can teach us wisdom, than with those that can give us wealth; let us then acquaint ourselves with the divine Saviour, that becoming his disciples and servants, we may find rest for our souls; and we shall in that case see more glory, experience more pleasure, and appropriate more riches, than our hearts can previously conceive. He will do for us exceedingly abundantly above all that we can ask or think; and the meanest of his servants will be great above all the ungodly princes of the earth: nor can they be separated from him; though, whilst present with the body they are absent from the Lord, as to the full enjoyment of his presence and communion with him. Next to this, let us value the acquaintance of those who love and serve him, that we may hear the wisdom that God hath put into their hearts: and let us follow them as far as they follow Christ, but no further, whatever may be their reputation in the church. —Seeing God buries in the depth of the sea the sins of his believing servants, we should be tender of their reputations, as well as careful to avoid their mistakes and falls. As to worldly grandeur, what is it, that we should covet it? Neither authority, wealth, magnificence, nor reputation for wisdom, can ward off, or prepare us for, the stroke of death. But thanks be to God, who giveth victory to the true believer, even over this dreaded enemy, through Jesus Christ our Lord!

roughly; and king Rehoboam forsook the counsel of the old men,

14 And answered them after [u] the advice of the young men, saying, [x] My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add thereto: my father chastised you with whips, but I *will chastise you* with scorpions.

15 So the king hearkened not unto the people: for [y] the cause was of God, [z] that the LORD might perform his word, which he spake by the hand of [a] Ahijah the Shilonite, to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

16 ¶ And when all Israel *saw* that the king would not hearken unto them, the people answered the king, saying, [b] What portion have we in David? and *we have* none inheritance in [c] the son of Jesse: every man to your tents, O Israel: *and* now, [d] David, see to thine own house. [e] So all Israel went to their tents.

17 But *as for* the children of Israel that dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them.

18 Then king Rehoboam sent [f] Hadoram, that *was* over the tribute; and [g] the children of Israel stoned him with stones, that he died. But king Rehoboam * made speed to get him up to *his* chariot, to flee to Jerusalem.

19 And [h] Israel rebelled against the house of David [i] unto this day.

u xxii. 4. Prov. xii. 5. Dan vi. 7.
x Prov. xvii. 14. Ec. ii. 19. vii. 8.
x. 16. Jam. iii. 14—18. iv. 1, 2.
y xxv. 16—20. Deut. ii. 30. Judg. xiv. 4. 1 Sam. ii. 25. 1 Kings xxii. 25. Acts ii. 23. iv. 28.
z 1 Kings xi. 29—39.
a ix. 29.
b 2 Sam. xx. 1. 1 Kings xii. 16, 17.
c 1 Sam. xxii. 7.
d 2 Sam. vii. 15, 16. 1 Kings xi. 13. 35—39. Ps. ii. 1—6. lxxvi. 10. lxxix. 29—37. cxxxii. 17. Luke xix. 14, 27.
e Judg. viii. 35. 2 Sam. xv. 13. xvi. 11. John vi. 66. vii. 53.
f 1 Kings iv. 6. v. 14. *Adoniram.* xii. 18. *Adoram.*
g xxiv. 21. Acts vii. 57, 58.
h 1 Kings xii. 19. 2 Kings xvii. 21—23.
i v. 9.
* Heb. *strengthened himself.*

CHAP. XI.

Rehoboam, preparing to reduce Israel, is forbidden by the prophet Shemaiah, 1—4. *He builds and fortifies several cities,* 5—12. *The priests and Levites, being cast off by Jeroboam, resort to Jerusalem, attended by other pious Israelites,* 13—17. *Rehoboam's wives and children,* 18—23.

AND [a] when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he gathered of the house of Judah and Benjamin [b] an hundred and fourscore thousand chosen *men,* which were warriors, to fight against Israel, that he might bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam.

2 But the word of the LORD came [c] to Shemaiah [d] the man of God, saying,

3 Speak unto Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to all Israel in Judah and Benjamin, saying,

4 Thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not go up nor fight [e] against your brethren:

a 1 Kings xii. 21—24.
b Ps. xxxiii. 10. 16. Prov. xxi. 30, 31.
c xii. 7. 15.
d viii. 14. 1 Sam. ii. 27. 1 Tim. vi. 11.
e Gen. xiii. 8. 2 Sam. ii. 26. Acts vii. 26. 1 Cor. vi. 5—8. Heb. xiii. 1. 1 Pet. iii. 8. 1 John iii. 11—13.

NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1—19. (*Notes,* 1 *Kings* xii. 1—19.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The wisest of mere men in some things act imprudently, especially when by sin they provoke God to leave them to themselves: nay, the most equitable princes may be betrayed into partial, oppressive, or unwarrantable measures; and this is the general consequence of being drawn, by their favourites or their passions, into lavish expenses. Thus, some cause of complaint will exist in every kingdom, of which turbulent and ambitious men will avail themselves. For whilst we all need so many allowances *for ourselves,* we are all naturally indisposed to make allowances *for others.* Indeed very many would be dissatisfied, even if God were to place over them perfectly wise and righteous governors: for do not they murmur against his most righteous dispensations? do they not regard his holy law as a heavy yoke, a grievous servitude? and are not they ungrateful for his manifold goodness? Nay, the very kingdom of the Prince of peace, though his throne is established in mercy, doth not give satisfaction: numbers "will not have him to reign "over them:" numbers neglect his service because they think him an austere Lord; numbers renounce their professed subjection to him, and prefer the yoke of sin and Satan; and, alas! the impatience, the negligence, the reluctancy to his professed service, which most christians discover, evince that they want somewhat to be eased even of his yoke. Yet his wisdom, righteousness, truth, goodness, and mercy, are infinite; "his yoke is easy, and his "burden light;" and the whole blame of our uneasiness rests upon ourselves alone. This reflection should teach us to abhor ourselves, and to pray continually, "turn thou "me, and so shall I be turned." And being so culpable ourselves, we should learn to bear with the perverseness of others, and to prefer lenient to violent measures. But nothing manifests greater folly than affronting menacing language, when united with indecision and weakness in perilous circumstances. No man can bequeath his prosperity, any more than his wisdom, to his heirs; though our children will generally be affected by our conduct. Let us then seek those good things, which will be our own for ever; and implore the blessing of God upon our posterity, in preference to wealth, or worldly exaltation: let us lay our account with vicissitudes and vexations on earth, and with fickleness and ingratitude from man: and let us learn to depend on the power, faithfulness, and love of that God, who, in correcting his children, or punishing his enemies, will never fail of performing his largest promises to those who trust in him.

f x. 16. 1 Kings xxii 36
g x. 15. Gen 1.20. 1 Kings xi 29—38. Hos. viii. 4.
h xxv. 7—10. xxviii. 9—15.

f return every man to his house; g for this thing is done of me. And h they obeyed the words of the LORD, and returned from going against Jeroboam.

5 ¶ And Rehoboam dwelt in Jerusalem, and i built cities for defence in Judah.

i viii. 2—6. xiv 6, 7. xvi. 6. Is xxii. 8—11.
k Gen. xxxv. 19. Matt. ii. 5, 6.
l Judg xv. 8. 1 Chr. iv 32
m xx. 20. Jer. vi 1.
n Josh. xv. 58
o Josh. xv. 35. *Socho.*
p Mic. i. 15
q 1 Cor. xviii. 1.
r Josh. xv. 44.
s 1 Sam. xxiii. 14. 19.
t Josh. x. 5. 11. xv. 35. 39.
v Josh. xv. 33. *Zoreah* xix. 41, 42. *Ajalon.*
x Gen. xxiii. 2. Josh. xiv. 14.

6 He built even k Beth-lehem, and l Etam, and m Tekoa,

7 And n Beth-zur, and o Shoco, and p Adullam,

8 And q Gath, and r Mareshah, and s Ziph,

9 And Adoraim, and t Lachish, and Azekah,

10 And u Zorah, and Aijalon, and x Hebron, which *are* in Judah and in Benjamin fenced cities.

y 23. xvii. 19.

11 And he fortified the strong-holds, and put y captains in them, and store of victual, and of oil and wine.

12 And in every several city *he put* shields and spears, and made them exceeding strong, having Judah and Benjamin on his side.

13 ¶ And the priests and the Levites that *were* in all Israel * resorted to him out of all their coasts.

* Heb. *presented themselves to him.*

14 For the Levites left z their suburbs and their possession, and came to Judah and Jerusalem: for a Jeroboam and his sons had cast them off from executing the priest's office unto the LORD.

z Num. xxx. 2—5 Josh, xxi. 20, &c 1 Chr vi 66—81
a xiii. 9. 1 Kings xii. 28—38. xiii. 33.

15 And he ordained him priests for the high places, and b for the devils, and c for the calves which he had made.

b Lev. xvii. 7. Deut. xxxii 17 1 Cor. x 20, 21. 1 Tim. iv 1. Rev. xvi 14.
c Ex. xxxii 4—8. 31. 1 Kings xii. 28. xiv 6. Hos viii. 5, 6. xiii 2.

16 And d after them out of all the tribes of Israel, such as e set their hearts to seek the LORD God of Israel, came to Jerusalem, f to sacrifice unto the LORD God of their fathers.

d xv. 9. xxx. 11. 18, 19. Josh. xxii 19.
e 1 Sam vii 3, 4. 1 Chr xxii 19. Ps. cviii. 1. Acts xi. 23
f 1 Chr. xvi 29.

17 So they g strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and made Rehoboam the son of Solomon strong three years: for three years h they walked in the way of David and Solomon

g xii 1.
B. C. 971.
h i. 1—12 vii. 17—19. viii. 13—16. Hos. vi. 4. Mat. xiii. 20, 21.

NOTES.

CHAP. XI. V. 1—4. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xii. 21—24.)

V. 5—12. Though the Lord did not permit Rehoboam to wage war against the newly erected kingdom of Israel: yet it was allowable and prudent for him to take all proper measures for the *defence* of his remaining dominions: this he did by repairing and fortifying several cities, to obstruct the entrance, or retard the progress of Jeroboam and his troops, in case he should attempt an invasion. Perhaps he was become weary of his young counsellors, and disposed to hearken to more sage advisers; and his remaining subjects were very hearty and united in his interests.

V. 13—17. When Jeroboam had established the worship of the golden calves, and prevented his subjects from going to Jerusalem; (*Notes*, &c. 1 *Kings* xii. 25—33.) it is probable that all the priests and Levites unanimously protested against this idolatry; and were therefore laid aside, to make way for a more compliant priesthood. As Jeroboam established no other idolatry than that of the calves; the language here employed teaches us, that the worship paid to them was actually rendered to devils; though he professed, and probably intended, by them to worship the God of Israel. For it was in a way which he had expressly prohibited, and which was infinitely dishonourable to him; and therefore it was only acceptable to Satan, and his detestable associates in rebellion. (*Note*, *Lev.* xvii. 3—7.) It is not certain whether Jeroboam had deprived the priests and Levites of their dues, to maintain his new priesthood: but it seems, that for the present they might have retained their cities, suburbs, and possessions, if they would have remained inactive; yet their situation, would have been extremely ensnaring and perilous, and it afforded them little or no prospect of usefulness. In the days of David and Solomon, they had become generally attached to the worship of God at the sanctuary, as well as to the royal family of Judah; and as a body, they seem to have been more pious and zealous, than at any other period: they therefore magnanimously determined with one consent to desert their cities and possessions, and entirely to leave the apostate Israelites, thus "shaking "off the very dust of their feet for a testimony against them." —Jeroboam probably was glad to be rid of them, but they were cordially welcomed by the king and people of Judah; and doubtless were provided for among their brethren, whose emoluments must thus have been greatly reduced. It is probable, that scarcely any either of the priests or Levites remained behind on this occasion, for we read nothing of them in the subsequent history of Israel: and this must be allowed to have been as noble a testimony for the cause of God, against apostates and idolaters, as any history hath recorded of a whole body of professed ministers. Along with them numbers of the pious Israelites left their estates, and came to unite with the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. They might bring away with them many of their effects: and as the land afforded room enough for them, their numbers and treasures greatly strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and rendered it almost equal in force to that of Israel. But the chief advantage was, that nearly all the true religion of the nation was concentred in that division of it. Accordingly for three years the kingdom of Judah was greatly strengthened; whilst the king and the people in general adhered to the worship of God, as in the days of David, and in the best times of Solomon: but afterwards matters took another turn. It is not probable that Solomon would have been thus joined with David, as the good pattern which Rehoboam and his subjects followed, if he had persevered and perished in his apostacy.

18 ¶ And Rehoboam took him Mahalath the daughter of Jerimoth the son of David, to wife, *and* Abihail the daughter of [i] Eliab the son of Jesse;

19 Which bare him children; Jeush, and Shamariah, and Zaham.

20 And after her he took [k] Maachah the daughter of [l] Absalom; which bare him [m] Abijah, and Attai, and Ziza, and Shelomith.

21 And Rehoboam loved Maachah the daughter of Absalom above all his wives and his concubines: (for he took [n] eighteen wives, and threescore concubines; and begat twenty and eight sons, and threescore daughters.)

22 And Rehoboam [o] made Abijah the son of Maachah the chief, *to be* ruler among his brethren: for *he thought* to make him king.

23 And [p] he dealt wisely, and [q] dispersed of all his children throughout all the countries of Judah and Benjamin, unto [r] every fenced city: and he gave them victual in abundance. And he desired * many wives.

i 1 Sam. xvi. 6 xvii. 13. 28. 1 Chr. ii. 13. xxvii. 18. *Elihu.*
k xiii. 2. *Michaiah the daughter of Uriel.*
l 1 Kings xv. 2. *Abishalom.*
m 1 kings xv. 1. *Abijam.* Matt. i. 7. *Abia.*
n 23. Deut. xvii. 17. 1 Kings xi. 3. 1 Chr. iii 1—9. Cant vi. 8, 9.
o Deut. xxi. 15—17. 1 Chr. v. 1, 2. xxix. 1.
p x. 8—15. Luke xvi. 8.
q xxi. 3. Gen. xxv. 6. 1 Kings x. 5, 6.
r 11.
* Heb. *multitude.*

CHAP. XII.

Rehoboam, forsaking God, is punished by Shishak's invasion, 1—4. *He, and his princes, being warned by Shemaiah, humble themselves; and though spoiled, are not destroyed,* 6—12. *Rehoboam's reign and death. Abijah succeeds him,* 13—16.

AND it came to pass, [a] when Rehoboam had established the kingdom, and had strengthened himself, [b] he forsook the law of the LORD, and [c] all Israel with him.

a 14. xi. 17. 1 Kings xiv 22—24
b xxvi. 13—16. Deut. vii 10—12. viii 10—14. xxxii 15 Jer. ii 31. Hos. xiii. 6—8.
c 1 Kings xii. 17. Hos. v. 11. Mic. vi. 16

V. 18—21. Rehoboam imitated his father in multiplying wives, but not to the same enormous excess: and he does not appear to have married any heathen women. Absalom here mentioned seems to have been a Benjamite: for Gibeah belonged to the tribe of Benjamin. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 22, 23. Rehoboam acted from partial affection, and by his own authority, in advancing Abijah above his elder brethren: whereas God himself chose Solomon to be king in preference to David's other sons. It is probable, that Rehoboam's conduct gave umbrage to his other sons; and that he dispersed them, in the fenced cities, in honourable and affluent situations, to prevent their uniting against Abijah: but perhaps he also confided in them to retain these cities in their duty, and to defend them against the common enemy. Whatever was his motive, it was deemed good policy by his contemporaries.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is commonly more prudent to manage moderate possessions well, than to risk them by grasping at greater advantages: and when an egregious error has exposed us to some heavy loss, it is generally wisest to sit down by it, lest we be betrayed into still more fatal mistakes. It is in vain to contend with the purpose of God when he makes it known unto us: and as his word declares that none shall enjoy durable peace in the practice of wickedness, it is madness to expect it: yet by this rule of judgment, what a mad world do we live in!—Even they, who are destitute of true faith and grace, frequently pay some regard to the word of God, and for a time are restrained by it from actions to which they are inclined, and do many things disagreeable to them: and even this temporary faith and external obedience, are often recompensed with temporary and external advantages. In seasons of prevailing ungodliness and public disturbances, the ministers of religion will be exposed to peculiar trials; as they must either act contrary to their consciences, or expose themselves to great loss and peril. This is the time when God puts the sincerity of their faith and love to the proof: on these great occasions he peculiarly calls upon them to bear testimony to his truth, and to protest at all events, against enormous abuses by whomsoever patronized. As connivance and silence in such a case are very criminal; so, it is peculiarly honourable to God, and convincing to the consciences of men, when they readily renounce their secular interests, and stand up boldly for the cause of God, without regarding consequences: nor will such behaviour ever lose its reward.—It may be their duty to retire from such places as will not receive their testimony, where they can do no good, where their temptations are great, and where they may be exposed to still fiercer persecutions: and in that case no possessions or connexions ought to be regarded.—When the ministers and ordinances of God are driven from any place, it is time for them, "who set their hearts "to seek the LORD," to come out and be separate, that they may not be seduced to have fellowship with the worshippers and servants of Satan. Trials like these, serve to separate the chaff from the wheat; and indeed untried faith is not much to be depended on: but when we have been proved, and it appears that we are willing to renounce our worldly interests as far as called to it, for the sake of Christ and the Gospel, we have got one good evidence that we are truly his disciples. Those ministers should be welcomed and encouraged, who evidently prefer their work, with a good conscience, to their possessions; and if things were as *they should be*, their more affluent brethren would readily share their emoluments with them, if they saw them destitute. It is genuine policy for any kingdom to entertain such as are willing to leave their estates and native country, purely for conscience sake; for they will prove the strength and bulwark of the state,

2 And it came to pass, *that*, in the fifth year of king Rehoboam, [d] Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, [e] because they had transgressed against the LORD,

3 With [f] twelve hundred chariots, and threescore thousand horsemen: and the people *were* [g] without number that came with him out of Egypt; the [h] Lubims, the Sukkiims, and the [i] Ethiopians.

4 And he took [k] the fenced cities which *pertained* to Judah, and [l] came to Jerusalem.

5 Then came [m] Shemaiah the prophet to Rehoboam, and *to* the princes of Judah that were gathered together to Jerusalem because of Shishak, and said unto them, Thus saith the LORD, [n] Ye have forsaken me, and therefore have I also [o] left you in the hand of Shishak.

6 Whereupon the princes of Israel and the king [p] humbled themselves; and they said, [q] The LORD *is* righteous.

7 And when [r] the LORD saw that they humbled themselves, the word of the LORD came to Shemaiah, saying, They have humbled themselves; *therefore* I will not destroy them, but I will grant them * some deliverance; and my wrath shall not be poured out upon Jerusalem by the hand of Shishak.

8 Nevertheless [s] they shall be his servants; that [t] they may know my service, and the service of the kingdoms of the countries.

9 So [u] Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, and [x] took away the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house; he took all: he carried away also [y] the shields of gold which Solomon had made.

d 1 Kings xiv. 24—26.
e Judg. ii. 13. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. Ps. cvi. 43, 44. Jer. ii. 19.
f Judg. iv. 12. 2 Sam. x. 18.
g xiv. 9. Judg. vi. 5.
h xvi. 8. Ez. xxx. 5. Nah. iii. 9.
i Gen. x. 6—8.
k xi. 5—12. Is. xxxvi. 1. Jer. v. 10.
l 2 Kings xviii. 17. Is. viii. 6. x. 11
m xi. 2. 1 Kings xii. 22.
n xv. 2. Deut. xxviii. 15, &c. Judg. x. 9—14. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. Jer. ii. 19. iv. 18. v. 19. xxiii. 33.
o 2 Sam. xxiv. 14. Ps. xxxvii. 33.
p xxxii. 26. xxxiii. 12. 19. 23. Ex. x. 3. Lev. xxvi. 40, 41. 1 Kings viii. 37—39. Ps. lxxviii. 34, 35. Hos. v. 15. Jam. iv. 10.
q Ex. ix. 27. Job xxxiii. 27. Rom. x. 3.
r 1 Kings xxi. 28, 29. Jer. iii. 13. Luke xv. 18—21.
* Or, *a little while*. 2 Kings xiii. 4—7. 23. Am. vii. 6—8.
s Is. xxvi. 13.
t Deut. xxviii. 47, 48. Judg. iii. 1, 2. Jer. x. 24. Hos. viii. 10.
u 1 Kings xiv. 25, 26.
x 1 Kings xv. 18. 2 Kings xvi. 8. xviii. 15, 16.
y ix. 15, 16. 1 Kings x. 16, 17.

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that gives them a comfortable asylum. But "*Ichabod*, the "glory is departed," may be written on that kingdom which drives them away, by superstitious or idolatrous impositions and persecutions. Nothing can injure us, whilst we keep close to the worship and service of God: but without true faith and grace, all apparent zeal and external profession at length will wither. Yet many deem themselves passing good, because they are circumstantially not so faulty, in the best part of their character, as some eminently godly persons were in the greatest blemishes of their lives! It is, indeed, well when they, who begin foolishly, grow wiser by experience: but, alas! that wisdom is of little value, which is engrossed by the care of secular interests, to the neglect of the immortal soul, through the indulgence of worldly lusts, and departing from the living God.

NOTES.

CHAP. XII. V. 1. Rehoboam's religion seems to have proceeded wholly from his fears of being given up into the hands of Jeroboam: when therefore he was become so strong that, as he supposed, he had nothing to apprehend from that quarter, he became openly irreligious and idolatrous. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xiv. 21—24.) And the leading men, and the bulk of the nation, so generally and openly renounced the worship of God at the temple, that it was adjudged a national apostacy. The ten tribes had before apostatized with Jeroboam; and when Rehoboam, with Judah and Benjamin, followed their example, "all Israel," as a nation, "had forsaken the law of the "LORD:" and the pious remnant were a few exceptions to the general rule.

V. 2. It is probable that Shishak was of another family than Pharaoh, whose daughter Solomon had married; and was excited to this invasion by the reports of the immense treasures which that prince had collected at Jerusalem, the division in his dominions, and the weakness of Rehoboam's administration. But the Lord gave him power to execute his rapacious purposes; which he would not have done, if the people had not transgressed against him.

V. 4. It is likely, that several of Rehoboam's sons were slain, or taken captive, by Shishak, when he took the cities in which they governed.

V. 5, 6. Whilst the king and his nobles were consulting what measures to adopt in this dangerous extremity, and perhaps were about to surrender to the conqueror, the prophet in a few words reminded them, that Shishak's power over them was the effect of the Lord's righteous indignation, who was contending with them for their apostacy. The time and circumstances indeed of their affliction, evidently proclaimed this truth, yet they had not before attended to it: but this message had an immediate effect upon them; for they humbled themselves, and acknowledged the justice of God in their punishment. An external reformation, and a regard to the temple-worship during the remainder of Rehoboam's reign, were consequent to this humiliation; but it went no further, at least with him.

V. 7—9. It is probable, that Shishak had intended to give up the city to be plundered by his army: but God suddenly disposed him to greater moderation and clemency, than could possibly have been expected from such a man in his circumstances. So that he contented himself with emptying the treasures of the temple and of the king, and carrying away the golden shields which Solomon had made for magnificence rather than for use; and he did not proceed to rob the temple of its sacred vessels. Neither did he deprive the inhabitants of their private property; but perhaps he exacted a sum of money in token of their becoming his servants. He was, however, permitted thus far to prevail, that Rehoboam and his subjects might experience the different effects of keeping close to the worship of God, as in the prosperous days of David and Solomon; and of re-

10 Instead of which king Rehoboam made [z] shields of brass, and committed *them* to the hands of [a] the chief of the guard, that kept the entrance of the king's house.

11 And when the king entered into the house of the LORD, the guard came and fetched them, and brought them again into the guard-chamber.

12 And [b] when he humbled himself, the wrath of the LORD turned from him, that he would not destroy *him* altogether: and * also in Judah things went well.

13 So king Rehoboam strengthened himself in Jerusalem, and reigned: for [c] Rehoboam *was* one and forty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, [d] the city which the LORD had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, [e] to put his name there. And his mother's name *was* Naamah [f] an Ammonitess.

14 And he did evil, because [g] he † prepared not his heart [h] to seek the LORD.

15 Now the acts of Rehoboam, [i] first and last, *are* they not written in the ‡ book of [k] Shemaiah the prophet, and of [l] Iddo the seer concerning genealogies? And *there were* [m] wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually.

16 And Rehoboam slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David: and [n] Abijah his son reigned in his stead.

z 1 Kings xiv. 27, 28. Lam. iv. 1.
a 2 Sam. viii. 18.
b 6, 7. Lam. iii. 22. 33. 42.
* Or, *yet in Judah there were good things.* xix. 3. Gen. xviii. 24. 1 Kings xiv. 13. Is. vi. 13.
c xiii. 7. 1 Kings xiv. 21.
d vi. 6. Ps. xlviii. 1—3. lxxviii. 68. 69.
e Ex. xx. 24. Deu. xii. 5. Ez. xlviii. 35.
f Deut. xxiii. 3. Neh. xiii. 1.
g xi. 16. xxx. 19.
† Heb. *fixed.* Ps. lvii. 7. lxxviii. 37. 1 Cor. xv. 58. xvi. 13.
h Is. lv. 6, 7. Matt. vii. 7.
i ix. 29.
‡ Heb. *words.*
k 5. 1 Kings xii. 22.
l xiii. 22.
m 1 Kings xiv. 30.
n 1 Kings xiv. 31. *Abijam.* Matt. i. 7. *Abia.*

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nouncing his service, and in consequence being reduced under the power of the conqueror and preserved from entire ruin, merely by his unexpected clemency on their unreserved submission. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xii. 25—27.)

V. 12. *Things went*, &c. Or in *Judah there were good things:* that is, there were a number of true believers, spiritual worshippers, and servants of God, especially such as came out of Israel; for whose sake Rehoboam and the kingdom were spared: so that we read no more of Shishak, who, by one means or other, was kept from coming to extort any further tribute or services from them. (*Notes, Gen.* xxxii. 6—8. 28. xxxiii. 4.)

V. 13. *The city*, &c. It was a peculiar honour conferred on Rehoboam for his father's sake, and his greatest advantage, that he reigned in that city which the LORD had chosen for his temple and instituted worship; but it seems to be here mentioned as an aggravation of the guilt of his ungodliness.

V. 14. Rehoboam's religion was a reluctant formal service; his heart was not engaged, he never called upon all that was within him to praise the Lord: he neither desired, nor endeavoured after, that preparation of a humble, believing, and pious disposition of heart, which is requisite in order to worship God spiritually and with delight. Therefore he was easily drawn into open ungodliness and wickedness.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is a very common but most lamentable case, that men who in distress, or danger, or apparently near death, seem very much engaged in seeking God, often throw aside their religion when they have received a merciful deliverance. But the warning, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come "unto thee," deserves the most serious consideration of all who are tempted to such vile ingratitude. The Lord can soon arrest them by renewed afflictions, reduce them to still greater extremities, and bring trouble upon them from those quarters whence it was least expected. Ungodly prosperity serves only to increase vain confidence and to invite rapacity, without affording any real security; and, all methods of defence prove ineffectual, when an angry God "arises to that judgment which he hath commanded." —Every affliction has a voice, and delivers a message from the Lord; but sinners do not regard or understand: it is therefore a singular mercy when he sends them *an interpreter*, to explain the voice of his rod by that of his word: (*Job* xxxiii. 23.) Humiliation before God for sin, and cordial acknowledgments that he is just in all that he inflicts or threatens, are essential to true repentance: but this may be counterfeited both by word and deed. Yet, when there are merely external appearances of contrition, our merciful God will often grant respites, in order to encourage true penitents, by showing his readiness to forgive. This is especially the case in his dealings with sinful nations: for, a general external humiliation before God, under national judgments, is a good evidence that their iniquities are not yet full: and when there is a number of true believers among them, who are protected from oppression and persecution; the Lord will grant some deliverance, and his wrath shall not be poured out upon them as yet. Amidst all our abounding iniquity, impiety, and infidelity, these kingdoms seem hitherto to have been spared on these accounts: may he reform, and not destroy us! When the Lord is pleased to show mercy, he can dispose the hardest hearts to compassion, the most rapacious to moderation, or the most impious to fear profaning sacred things: for he rules the impetuous lusts of men as he does the raging ocean, saying, "Hitherto shalt thou go, and no further, "and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." But his wrath may occasion many painful effects, when not poured out unto the uttermost. These are however often intended in mercy, and are of salutary tendency: for it is good to be convinced by any sufferings, short of eternal misery, that by forsaking the Lord we are cruel to ourselves: and that his service, which is but another name for liberty, peace, and felicity, cannot be renounced without our becoming the miserable slaves of the worst of tyrants and oppressors: and whenever the heart is truly humbled, the afflictions will be removed, or alleviated by divine consolations. Sin always debases those who commit it: it robs them of substantial blessings, and substitutes a mere empty worthless show of

CHAP. XIII.

Abijah and Jeroboam, with vast preparations, make war against each other, 1—3. *Abijah shows the right of his cause,* 4—12. *Judah, relying on God, gains a signal victory, with immense slaughter of the Israelites,* 13—19. *Jeroboam dies,* 20. *Abijah's wives and children,* 21, 22.

a 1 Kings xv. 1, 2.

NOW [a] in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam began Abijah to reign over Judah.

2 He reigned three years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also *was* [b] Michaiah the daughter of Uriel of [c] Gibeah. [d] And there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam.

b xi. 20 *Maachah the daughter of Absalom*
c Josh xviii 28. *Gibeath.* Judg. xix. 14 16. 1 Sam x. 26. B C 957
d 1 Kings xv. 6, 7.

3 And Abijah set * the battle in array with an army of valiant men of war, *even* [e] four hundred thousand chosen men: Jeroboam also set the battle in array against him, with [f] eight hundred thousand chosen men, *being* mighty men of valour.

* Heb. *bound together.* 1 Sam. xvii 1—3.
e xvii. 14—18. 1 Chr. xxi. 5.
f xiv. 9.

4 ¶ And Abijah stood up upon mount [g] Zemaraim, which *is* in mount Ephraim, and said, [h] Hear me, thou Jeroboam, and all Israel:

g Gen. x. 18. Josh. xviii 22.
h Judg. ix 7. Ps. xx. 7.

5 [i] Ought ye not to know that [k] the LORD God of Israel gave the kingdom over Israel to David for ever, *even* to him and to his sons by [l] a covenant of salt?

i Neh v. 9 Prov i. 29. 2 Pet. iii. 5
k Judg. xi. 21—24. 2 Sam. vii. 12. 16. Ps lxxxix. 19—37 Jer xxvii. 5—7 Dan. iv 25—32 v 18
l Lev ii 13. Num. xviii. 19. Ez. xliii. 24. Mark ix. 49. 50.

6 Yet Jeroboam the son of Nebat, the servant of Solomon the son of David, is risen up, and hath [m] rebelled against his lord.

m 1 Kings xi. 26. xii. 20. 27.

7 And there are gathered unto him [n] vain men, [o] the children of Belial, and have strengthened themselves against Rehoboam the son of Solomon, when Rehoboam was [p] young and tender-hearted, and could not withstand them.

n Judg. ix. 4. xi. 3. Job xxx. 8. Prov. xii. 11. Acts xvii. 5.
o Deut. xiii. 13. 1 Kings xxi. 10. 13
p xii. 13. Ec. x. 16. Is. iii. 4. 1 Cor. xiv. 20 Heb. v. 12.

8 And now ye think to withstand [r] the kingdom of the LORD in the hand of the sons of David; and ye *be* [s] a great multitude, and *there are* [t] with you golden calves, which Jeroboam made you for gods.

q xi. 1—4.
r ix. 8 Ps ii. 6 Is vii. 6, 7. ix. 7, 8.
s xx. 6. 12. Ps. xxxiii. 16
t 1 Kings xii. 28. xiv. 9. Hos viii. 6.

9 Have ye not [u] cast out the priests of the LORD, the sons of Aaron, and the Levites, and have [x] made you priests after the manner of the nations of *other* lands? so that whosoever cometh to † consecrate himself with a young bullock and seven rams, *the same* may be a priest of *them that are* [y] no gods.

u xi. 14, 15.
x 1 Kings xii. 31—33. xiii. 33.
† Heb. *fill his hand.* Ex xxix. 1. 35. Lev viii. 2. Num xvi. 40.
y Deu xxxii 17. Hos. viii. 6. Acts xix 26

10 But as for us, [z] the LORD *is* our God, and we have not forsaken him; and [a] the priests, which minister unto the LORD, *are* the sons of Aaron, and the Levites *wait* upon *their* business:

z xi 16, 17. xii. 6. Ex. xix. 5, 6. Jer xxxi. 33. Zech xiii. 9.
a Ex. xxix. 1, &c. Num. xviii. 1—7.

11 And [b] they burn unto the LORD, every morning and every evening, burnt-sacrifices, and [c] sweet incense: the [d] shew-bread also *set they in order* upon the pure table; and [e] the candlestick of gold with the lamps thereof, to burn every evening: for [f] we keep the charge of the LORD our God; but ye have forsaken him.

b ii. 4. Ex. xxix. 38—42
c Ex. xxx. 1—10. Lev. ii. 2, 3. Num. xvi 6, 7. 46, 47. Luke i. 9. Rev. viii 3, 4.
d Ex. xxv. 30. Lev xxiv. 6.
e Ex. xxv. 31—39. xxvii. 20, 21. Lev. xxiv. 3, 4.
f Gen. xxvi. 5. Num. ix 19. 23.

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good; and whatever else be preserved or obtained, it will ruin the immortal soul, except true repentance intervene. —Unless *the heart be prepared* to seek the Lord, we must perish; and if convinced, that we are unable of ourselves to effect this *preparation*, let us pray fervently, according to the language of Scripture, "Turn thou me, and so shall "I be turned;" "Create in me a clean heart, and renew "a right spirit within me." If we do this in sincerity, using the other means of grace, and watching against sin and temptation, our endeavours will not be in vain. Where these things are wanting, formality and hypocrisy form a man's highest attainments; his chief advantages prove an aggravation of his crimes, and a life of vanity and vexation will be closed by a miserable death. May we then look to our hearts, and keep them with all diligence; for the Lord especially regards them: and may he prepare our hearts unto himself, that we may serve him with perseverance and delight whilst we live; and have a strong consolation and joyful hope, when we are called to walk through the valley of the shadow of death, and so have an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of Jesus Christ! Amen.

NOTES.

CHAP. XIII. V. 1, 2. (*Notes*, xi. 21. 1 *Kings* xv. 1, 2.)

V. 3. The kingdom of the ten tribes had been given to Jeroboam; but both he and his people had by their apostacy and idolatry merited the severest punishment which Abijah was permitted to execute. Rehoboam had aimed to recover dominion over all Israel; but perhaps Abijah only endeavoured to secure his own kingdom. The numbers which they brought into the field were immense; but when every man was a soldier, small kingdoms could raise vast armies upon any great emergency. Five hundred thousand had been numbered of Judah in the time of David, and it had received a great increase upon the division of the kingdom: yet Israel raised an army twice as large out of all their tribes.

12 And, behold, [g] God himself *is* with us [h] for *our* captain, and [i] his priests with sounding trumpets to cry alarm against you. O children of Israel, [k] fight ye not against the LORD God of your fathers; for ye shall not prosper.

13 ¶ But [l] Jeroboam caused [m] an ambushment to come about behind them: so they were before Judah, and the ambushment *was* behind them.

14 And when Judah [n] looked back, behold, the battle *was* before and behind: and they [o] cried unto the LORD, and the priests sounded with the trumpets.

15 Then the men of Judah gave a shout: and [p] as the men of Judah shouted, it came to pass, that [q] God smote Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah.

16 And the children of Israel fled before Judah: And God delivered them into their hand.

17 And Abijah and his people slew them with a great slaughter: so there fell down slain of Israel [r] five hundred thousand chosen men.

18 Thus the children of Israel were brought under at that time, and the children of Judah prevailed, [s] because they relied upon the LORD God of their fathers.

19 And Abijah pursued after Jeroboam, and [t] took cities from him, Beth-el with the towns thereof, and Jeshanah with the towns thereof, and [u] Ephraim with the towns thereof.

20 Neither did Jeroboam recover strength again in the days of Abijah: and [x] the LORD struck him, and [y] he died.

21 But Abijah [z] waxed mighty, and married [a] fourteen wives, and [b] begat twenty and two sons, and sixteen daughters.

22 And the rest of the acts of Abijah, and his ways, and his sayings, *are* written in the * story of the prophet [c] Iddo.

g Num. xxiii 21. 1 Sam. iv 5—7. Rom. viii 31.
h Deut xx. 4 Josh. v. 13—15 Ps. xx. 7. Heb ii. 10.
i Num x. 9. xxxi. 6 Josh vi. 20.
k Job ix. 4 xv 25, 26 xl 9. Is xlv 9. Acts v 39 ix 4, 5.
l Ps cxx. 7.
m Josh. viii. 4 Prov. xxi. 30. Jer. iv. 22.
n Ex xiv 10 Josh. viii. 20. 2 Sam. x. 8—14.
o xiv. 11 xviii. 31. Ps. l. 15.
p xx. 21. Josh vi. 16. 20 Judg vii. 18—22 Ps xlvii 1 5
q xiv. 12 Josh xi. 9. Judg iv. 15. 2 Kings v. 1. Ps. c xviii. 4—7.
r 3 12 xxviii. 6. Is x. 16—19. xxxvii 36. Nah. i 6. 1 Cor. x. 22.
s xvi. 8, 9. xx. 20. 2 Kings xviii. 5. 1 Chr. v 20 Ps. xxii. 45. cxlvi 5. Dan. iii 28. Eph. i. 12.
t Josh. x. 19. 39. xi. 12. 1 Sam. xxxi 7.
u xv. 8. Josh xv. 9. *Ephron.* Josh xi. 54.
x 1 Sam. xxv. 38. xxvi. 19. Ez. xxiv. 16. Acts xii. 23.
y 1 Kings xiv. 20. xv. 9.
z 2 Sam. v. 12, 13.
a xi. 21.
b Judg. viii. 30, 31. ix 5. x. 4.
* Or *commentary.*
c ix 29. xii. 15.

V. 4—12. Jeroboam seems to have been the aggressor in this war: yet Abijah had marched into his country; and from a hill, whence Jeroboam and many of the Israelites could hear him, he spake to them as one who wished to bring the contest to an amicable conclusion. At least this seems to have been his *ostensible* design; though his speech was well suited to encourage his own troops, and to dismay those of Jeroboam. Abijah bears a bad character in the first of Kings: yet on this occasion he spake religiously; and he seems to have had a kind of confidence in God, grounded on the maintenance of his ordinances, and the number of pious worshippers, in his kingdom. The *basis* of his address was truth; but there was much false colouring in his manner of stating it, according to the general custom of eloquent orators. For the covenant respecting the kingdom made with David in behalf of his posterity, (except as it related to the Messiah,) was *conditional*, and neither Solomon, Rehoboam, nor Abijah, had been attentive to the restipulations. *A covenant of salt* is one solemnly ratified by a sacrifice and a feast, at both of which salt was used; that is to say, an *unchangeable covenant:* but the Lord evidently did not consider himself irreversibly engaged to continue the kingdom of all Israel to David's posterity. Jeroboam had indeed acted wickedly in his manner of seizing and governing the kingdom of Israel; yet it had been granted to him by God himself, and Abijah never mentioned that circumstance. The persons, who revolted from Rehoboam and made Jeroboam king, had acted with great precipitation and ingratitude; but perhaps it was not candid to call them indiscriminately *vain men and children of Belial.* Rehoboam had given them no small provocation; he was surely old enough to have behaved more wisely, if he had not been actuated by a proud domineering disposition: and it was not so much owing either to his lenity, his timidity, or his weakness, that he had not prosecuted his pretensions by war, as to the divine prohibition. But Abijah's words were more forcible when he exposed the apostacy and idolatry of the kingdom of Israel; their impiety and sacrilege in excluding the priests of the Lord from their possessions; and the shameful manner in which any worthless man was made a priest, who could and would bring the sacrifice appointed by way of consecration: for by these crimes Jeroboam and his subjects were drawing down the vengeance of heaven upon them. But what Abijah urged, concerning the state of true religion in Judah, was not strictly just; and, as spoken by him, it savoured of ostentation. Abijah himself was not a godly man; and idolatry was evidently connived at in his days; (xiv. 5.) Yet it was true, that the men of Judah had the priests, ordinances, and worship of God among them; that there were numbers of pious worshippers in the land; that their's was the more righteous cause; that the LORD was on their side, and their Captain, whilst the Israelites fought against him; and that the presence of the priests blowing the sacred trumpets, according to the law, was a token of his presence with them and favour to them. The expression, "after the manner of the "nations," (9,) shows that the laws of Moses were not made according to the customs of the Gentiles, as many suppose; but entirely distinct from them: and that the similarity which in many instances has been traced, actually arose from the idolaters in several particulars adopting, or imitating the usages of Israel.

V. 13—22. Jeroboam, like a profane politician, disregarded all Abijah's pleas, and rested his whole dependence on the valour of his troops, and the skillfulness of his ar-

CHAP. XIV.

Abijah dies, and Asa succeeds him, 1. *He abolishes idolatry,* 2—5. *Enjoying peace, he fortifies his kingdom, and establishes a large army,* 6—8. *Being attacked by Zerah, with an immense army of Ethiopians, he calls on God, is victorious, and acquires much spoil,* 9—15.

SO Abijah [a] slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David: and [b] Asa his son reigned in his stead. In his days the land was quiet ten years.

a ix. 31. 1 Kings ii. 10.
b 1 Kings xv. 8. 1 Chr. iii. 10. Matt. i. 7, 8.

rangements. Whilst Abijah therefore was speaking about peace, he was preparing for action: and to make, as he supposed, sure of the event, to the superiority of his numbers he added an ambushment, that he might surround and destroy the whole army of Judah, probably intending to seize upon that kingdom also. But the people cried unto the Lord in this extremity, as expecting help and deliverance from him alone; whilst the sounding of the sacred trumpets caused numbers to shout with confidence of success; and according to their hope, it pleased God to smite the Israelites in such a manner, that they were unable to resist or to flee; and thus five hundred thousand were slain in one day, which is the largest slaughter that history records to have been ever made in any one battle. This decisive blow gave Judah so great a superiority, that we can only ascribe it to a divine interposition, that the kingdom of Israel was not entirely subverted. Many cities however were subdued, and amongst the rest Beth-el fell into the hands of the victor; yet we do not read that he removed the golden calf, and probably the city was soon conceded to Jeroboam. But that prince never recovered from this blow, for the Lord soon after smote him, and he died: yet Abijah died near two years before him, and did not long enjoy the fruits of his victory, for which he made very ungrateful returns. He seems to have possessed great vigour and capacity, though destitute of piety. During his short reign he became very powerful; he had a numerous family; and his ways and sayings were so remarkable as to be particularly recorded by the prophet Iddo, of whom we have no further knowledge; (*Notes,* 1 *Kings* xv. 3—9.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

The promptitude of mankind to war, lamentably proclaims the depravity of our nature, and the influence that the great murderer of bodies and souls has upon the minds of men, even in the determinations of senates and in the cabinets of kings. Nor can vain-glorious commanders more delight in seeking renown, power, or revenge, by the destruction of the human species, than their inferiors do, in listing under their banners, seconding their aims, and rushing upon danger and death, that they may attempt the slaughter of those who never injured or even saw them! Such stubborn facts stand in the page of every history, a confutation of the ridiculous encomiums, which self-flattering speculators have passed upon the sufficiency of human reason, for every purpose of virtue and religion, and the philanthropy of the human heart. The annals of mankind form one continued narration of blood shed in the most wanton and unnecessary manner, in pursuit of that bubble honour, or in seeking to wrest the sword of vengeance from the hands of the Supreme Judge! The millions that have thus perished miserably, "hateful, "and hating one another," exceed almost imagination: and to crown the whole, the chief actors in this bloody tragedy have almost engrossed the applause of their fellow mortals; or shared it with the poets, orators, and historians, who have excited them by infamous panegyrics to such destructive pursuits. Compare the whole with the short command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy-"self:" and then bring in an impartial verdict concerning the heart of man, and the state of human nature. Yet all the blood thus shed must be one day accounted for, as for murder, on whomsoever that load of guilt may fall. Surely then, war should be always considered as the last resource, a desperate remedy, never to be used when the welfare of the state can be otherwise secured! A righteous cause, a willingness for peace on reasonable terms, and a well grounded confidence in God, should be considered as the grand requisites, in the management of this direful appeal to the supreme arbiter of kings and nations. But it is easy to speak on these topics, without the fear of God possessing the heart. Many presume upon external privileges, who disregard his precepts: they boast of the form of godliness, without the power of it: they are justly severe upon the crimes of other men, yet do not amend their own; but palliate the offences of their own party, whilst they aggravate the misconduct of their adversaries. These are not only the arts of those who purposely frame *manifestos* to varnish their ambition with the show of equity, but are often employed by such as really have justice on their side, yet forget that real beauty is disgraced and rendered suspected, by being painted. It is, however, obvious that ungodly princes have often prospered, because their enemies have been still more abandoned; because they had justice on their side; because many of their subjects were pious; because more external honour was paid to the truth and ordinances of God among them; or because the appeal to him and professed reliance on him, was more openly made in the decision of the contest.

V. 13—22.

The wise politicians of the world generally treat with contempt all arguments grounded on the state of religion, and the favour of God towards his worshippers; their whole dependence is upon an arm of flesh; and if their confidence be disappointed, they ascribe it only to fortune, or to the chance of war. But the God of battles gives victory to whom he pleases, against him all courage and conduct are vain; and he will appear for them, who rely on and call

2 And Asa did *that which was* [c] good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God:

3 For he took away [d] the altars of the strange *gods*, and [e] the high places, and [f] brake down the * images, and [g] cut down the groves:

4 And [h] commanded Judah to [i] seek the LORD God of their fathers, and [k] to do the law and the commandment.

5 Also he took away out of all the cities of Judah, the high places and the † images: and the kingdom was quiet before him.

6 And [l] he built fenced cities in Judah; [m] for the land had rest, and he had no war in those years; because [n] the LORD had given him rest.

7 [o] Therefore he said unto Judah, Let us build these cities, and make about *them* walls and towers, gates and bars, [p] while the land *is* yet before us; because we have sought the LORD our God, [q] we have sought *him*, and [r] he hath given us rest on every side. So they built and prospered.

c xxxi. 20. 1 Kings xv. 11. 14. Luke i 75.
d Deut vii 5. 2 Kings xi 7. 8 xiv 22. 24
e xv. 17 Lev xxvi 30 1 Kings xv. 14.
f xxxiv 4 Ex. xxxiv 13 Deut vii 5. 25.
* Heb. *statues*
g Judg. vi. 25—38 2 Kings xviii. 4. xxiii 6. 13. 14.
h xxix. 21. 27. 30. xxxi. 21. xxxiii 16. xxxiv. 32, 33 Gen. xviii. 19. Josh. xxiv. 15. 1 Sam. iii. 13. Ezra x. 7, &c. Neh. xiii. 9, &c Ps. ci. 2. 8.
i xi. 16. xxx. 19. Is. lv. 6, 7.
k Neh. x. 29, &c. Ps. cxix. 10.
† Heb. *sun-images.*
l xiii. 2—6 xi. 5—12.
m Judg iii. 11. 30. v. 31 1 Kings v. 4.
n xv. 15. Job xxxiv. 29. Ps. xlvi 9.
o xxxii. 5. Acts ix. 31.
p John ix 4. xii 35, 36. Heb. iii. 13—15.
q 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. Ps. cv. 3, 4. Jer. xxix 12—14. 1 Pet. iii 12
r Josh. xxiii. 1. Matt. xi. 28, 29.

8 And Asa had an army *of men* that bare targets and spears: [s] out of Judah three hundred thousand; and out of Benjamin, that bare shields and drew bows, two hundred and fourscore thousand: all these *were* mighty men of valour.

9 ¶ And there came out against them [t] Zerah the Ethiopian with an host of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots; and came unto [u] Mareshah.

10 Then Asa went out against him, and they set the battle in array in the valley of [x] Zephathah at Mareshah.

11 And Asa [y] cried unto the LORD his God, and said, LORD, *it is* [z] nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with [a] them that have no power: help us, O LORD our God; for we [b] rest on thee, and [c] in thy name we go against this multitude. O LORD, thou *art* our God; [d] let not ‡ man prevail against thee.

12 So [e] the LORD smote the Ethiopians before Asa, and before Judah; and the Ethiopians fled.

s xi. 1. xlii. 3. xvii. 14—19. xxv. 5.
t xii. 2, 3. xvi. 8. 2 Kings xix. 9. Is viii. 9, 10. Ez. xxx. 5 Rev. xvi. 14.
u Josh. xv. 44. Mic. i 15.
x Judg. i. 17. *Zephath.*
y xiii. 14. xviii. 31. xxxii. 20. Ex. xiv 10 1 Chr. v. 20. Ps. xxii. 5. xxxiv. 6 1. 15 xci. 15. Acts ii 21
z Lev. xxvi. 8. Deut xxxii. 30. Judg vii. 7. 1 Sam. xiv. 6. 1 Kings xx. 27—30. Amos v. 9. 2 Cor. xii 9, 10.
a xx. 12 Deut. xxxii. 36. Is. xl. 29-31.
b xxxii. 8 1 Sam. xvii. 35, 36. Ps. xxxvii. 5. Prov. xxiii 10. Is. xxvi. 3, 4. xli. 10—14. John xiv 1 27. Rom. viii 31.
c xiii 12. 18. 1 Sam xvii 45, 46. 1 Sam. xx. 5. 7. Is xxvi. 13. Acts iii. 16.
d Deut. xxxii. 27. Josh vii 8. 9. 1 Sam ii. 9. Ps. ix 19. lxxix. 9. 10 Jer i 19. Zech ii 8. Matt. xvi 18. Acts iv. 4.
‡ Or, *mortal man.* Is. ii 22.
e xiii. 15. xx. 22. Ex. xiv. 25.

Deut. xxviii 7. xxxii. 39. Ps. lx. 12. cxxxvi. 17, 18. 1 Cor. ix. 26, xv. 57.

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upon him in the time of distress. He hath often brought his people into imminent danger, to exercise their faith, and to put vigour into their prayers, which will be sure to terminate in shouts of victory. But to triumph in those contests, which cause so many thousands of the human species to expire in agony, and their immortal souls to be sent to the tribunal of God and an eternal state, can give little pleasure to a feeling heart; except as his justice and faithful care of his people, are seen and adored in them. And least of all can success in *civil wars*, which are commonly conducted with the most unrelenting rancour, and most tremendous slaughter, give satisfaction to any benevolent mind. Nor are the victories acquired in those fierce, though unbloody, contests which rend the church of Christ, to the disgrace of the common cause, and the joy of the common enemy, to be more rejoiced in. But to conquer our passions, to prevail against the tempter and the world, and to overcome evil with good, are victories to be gained by faith, patience, and prayer, in which we may safely and purely rejoice. And when the conquerors and the conquered in bloody battles will join in execrating their own and each other's madness; "when the earth "shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her "slain;" then shall we receive the unsullied palm, the conqueror's noblest crown. Nay, death and the grave, which so dreadfully triumph over those whom the Lord smites in his anger, and so speedily wrench the prosperous from all their grandeur, will never hurt us; indeed we shall *then* gain a final victory over that last enemy, and mortality shall be swallowed up of life.

NOTES.

CHAP. XIV. V. 1. *The land*, &c. Abijah's vigour and success laid the foundation of Asa's peace and prosperity. Jeroboam and his son Nadab, remained quiet during the short time which they reigned over Israel, after Abijah's victory. Baasha began to reign before the close of Asa's third year; but though "there was war between "him and Asa all their days;" (1 *Kings* xv. 16;) it did not for some time occasion much disturbance to the peace of Judah, through the enfeebled state of Israel.

V. 2—5. Asa not only behaved so well as to approve his conduct to man, but he aimed to act as in the sight of Him who seeth the secret intentions of the heart; and accordingly "he had this testimony that he pleased God." He began his reign by abolishing those idolatries which had been connived at in the preceding reigns; and by using his authority to retain the people in the worship of God at the temple, and to enforce obedience to his commandments. He afterwards carried his reformation still further (xv.;) yet, at last, the high places where JEHOVAH was irregularly worshipped, were not removed, though the idolatrous altars were destroyed. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 6—8. The union of piety and prudence, in Asa's conduct, is worthy of notice and commendation. We may suppose that his army generally served in divisions by rotation, but could be marshalled all together upon occasion. The number of his soldiers was great, especially that of Benjamin: but probably many from the other tribes were numbered among them.

13 And Asa and the people that *were* with him pursued them unto [f] Gerar: and the Ethiopians were overthrown, that they could not recover themselves; for they were * destroyed [g] before the LORD, and before [h] his host; and they carried away very much spoil.

14 And they smote all the cities round about Gerar; for [i] the fear of the LORD came upon them: and they spoiled all the cities; for there was [k] exceeding much spoil in them.

15 They smote also [l] the tents of cattle, and [m] carried away sheep and camels in abundance, and returned to Jerusalem.

f Gen. x. 19. xx. 1. xxvi. 1.
* Heb. *broken.*
g Job vi. 9. ix. 4.
h Josh. v. 14. 1 Sam. xxv 28. 1 Chr xii. 22. Ps. cviii. 11.
i xvii 10. xx. 29. Gen. xxxv. 5. Deut ii. 25. Josh. ii 9—11. v. 1. 1 Sam xiv. 15. 2 Kings vii. 6. Job xv. 21.
k xx 25. Judg. xiv. 4. 2 Kings vii. 7, 8. 16. Rom viii. 37.
l 1 Chr. iv. 41.
m Num xxxi 9 30—47 1 Sam xxx. 20. 1 Chr v. 21

CHAP. XV.

The prophecy of Azariah before Asa, 1—7. *Asa puts away idolatry, assembles the people, and enters into covenant with God,* 8—15. *He removes his mother from being queen, for her idolatry; yet the high places are not taken away,* 16, 17. *He brings the dedicated things into the temple, and enjoys a long peace,* 18, 19.

AND [a] the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Obed:

2 And he went out * to meet Asa, and

a xx. 14. xxiv. 20 Num xxiv. 2 Judg iii. 10. 2 Sam. xxiii. 2. 2 Pet i. 21.
* Heb. *before Asa*

V. 9—15. It is by no means certain, whether the Ethiopians or Cushites of Africa, or those near Arabia, are here intended: but they who suppose the former to be meant, conjecture that Zerah had subjugated his neighbours, the Egyptians; had taken possession of the cities and territories in Asia, near to that kingdom: and that he intended still further to extend his conquests, when he had seized upon the kingdom of Judah. Asa's army was formidable, though not equal to Zerah's immense preparations. He however placed no confidence in them, but relied only on the protection of God. His prayer is the genuine language of faith. He was conscious that his aim had been to glorify the Lord and promote his worship, in the time of his prosperity; and this encouraged him to look upon him as his reconciled Friend and Father. Having put himself and his people under God's protection; he was persuaded, that none could prevail against them, without *seeming* at least to prevail against God. If his army had been superior to that of the enemy, it could not have secured the victory; if it had consisted of a few enfeebled dispirited troops, the Lord could have helped by them: for it was "nothing with him to help with many, or with them that "had no power." Either way he desired to confide wholly in God, and to give him the glory of the victory. The event accorded to his faith: the Lord fought by Asa's subjects as *his* host; the Ethiopians were entirely overthrown, and dispersed: the spoil, which had been deposited in Gerar of the Philistines, and in other cities in that vicinity, was taken; and this most formidable invasion greatly enriched Judah.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The active talents and outward success of ungodly men sometimes make way for the peace and prosperity of those, whose leading aim it is to glorify God and promote true religion: and thus they, whose hearts are not prepared to seek the Lord, may be serviceable to others: but nothing will profit our own souls, except that religion, which induces us to "do that which is good and right in "the eyes of the LORD." Indeed, this alone can prepare us for arduous and perilous services; and influence us to undertake, to pursue without weariness, and by cheerful perseverance to accomplish, designs of usefulness in our various situations: and when men in authority, (or others according to the duties of their station;) properly attempt reformation, they often find less difficulty than they expected: for they are approved by the consciences of those men whose lusts oppose their designs. In all our prosperity we should notice and acknowledge the Lord's hand: if he give rest, none can cause trouble; and they who uprightly seek him shall find peace and comfort. Yet, while in this world, we must prepare for trials and conflicts; we can never be safe except we are watching; the grace of God will indeed be sufficient for his people, but none of them will have any strength to spare. Our utmost watchfulness and diligence will not secure us from tribulation: but the consciousness of having heartily served God in our prosperity, will turn to us for a testimony, that we are indeed his people and he our God; and this will encourage our confidence in him in the hour of trouble and temptation. When we can clearly see that "God is for us," we shall be enabled to rest in him, and call upon him with more vigorous faith and enlarged expectation: and then we shall perceive, that our own weakness, or the power of our assailants, are no good reasons for discouragement. Improbabilities, and *impossibilities to us*, of help and deliverance, are perfectly easy to an almighty arm: and if his glory engage him on our side, no created power can prevail against us. Indeed it is our duty to employ every prudent precaution, to use all proper means, and to exert the whole strength that he hath given us; and in this way he commonly helps us, both in our temporal and spiritual concerns: but he can as readily work without us, as by us; and when we go forth in his name, and are disposed to give him the glory, we shall certainly have all desirable success. —They whom the Lord smites, cannot recover their strength, nor they whom he intimidates, their courage; and all things work together for the good of those whom he favours. However he may deal with us in temporal things, if the soldiers of Jesus Christ, we must be enriched by every conflict, and prove gainers by all our losses; and the approaching victory over our last enemy, death, will make way for our entrance into "his presence, where is fulness "of joy, and pleasures for evermore."

said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; [b] The LORD *is* with you, while ye be with him; and [c] if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but [d] if ye forsake him, he will forsake you.

3 Now for [e] a long season Israel *hath been* without the [f] true God, and without [g] a teaching priest, and [h] without law.

4 But when they [i] in their trouble did turn unto the LORD God of Israel, and sought him, he was [k] found of them.

5 And in those times *there was* [l] no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but [m] great vexations *were* upon all the inhabitants of the countries.

6 And [n] nation was * destroyed of nation, and city of city: for [o] God did vex them with all adversity.

7 Be [p] ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for [q] your work shall be rewarded.

8 ¶ And when Asa heard these words, and the prophecy of [r] Oded the prophet, he took courage, and put away the † abominable idols out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin, and out of [s] the cities which he had taken from mount Ephraim, and renewed [t] the altar of the LORD, that *was* before the porch of the LORD.

9 And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and [u] the strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon: for they fell to him out of Israel in abundance, when [x] they saw that the LORD his God *was* with him:

10 So they gathered themselves together at Jerusalem in [y] the third month, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa.

11 And they [z] offered unto the LORD ‡ the same time, of the spoil *which* they had brought, [a] seven hundred oxen and seven thousand sheep.

12 And [b] they entered into a covenant to [c] seek the LORD God of their fathers with all their heart, and with all their soul;

13 That [d] whosoever would not seek the LORD God of Israel should be put to

b xiii. 12 xxxii. 8. Deut. xx. 1. Jam iv 8
c 4. 15. xxxiii. 12, 13. Is. lv 7, 8. Jer. xxix. 13, 14. Matt vii 7, 8.
d xii 1—3. xxiv 20 2 Kings xxi. 14. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. Rom xi 1, 2. Heb. xii. 25.
e 1 Kings xii. 28—33 Hos. iii 4
f Jer. x 10. John xvii. 3. 1 Thes. i. 9. 1 John v. 20.
g xvii. 8, 9. Lev. x. 11. Deut. xxxiii. 10 Neh. viii. 9 Ez. xliv. 21—23. Mic. iii. 11. Mal ii. 7. Matt ii 4, 5. 1 Tim. iii. 2.
h Rom. ii. 12 vii. 8, 9. 1 Cor. ix. 21
i Deut iv. 29, 30. Judg. iii. 9, 10
k 10—16 Ps. cvi. 44. Hos vi 1. xiv. 1—3.
l Is lv. 6. lxv. 1, 2. Rom. x 20
m Judg. v. 6. 1 Sam xiii. 6 Ps cxxi 8.
n Matt. xxiv. 6, 7. Luke xxi. 25.
n xii 15. xiii. 17. Mark xiii. 8. Luke xxi. 9, 10.
* Heb *beaten in pieces.*
o xxxiii. 11. xxxvi. 17. Judg ii. 14. Ps. cvi 41. Is. x. 6 Am. iii 6. Luke xxi. 22—24.——p Josh i. 7. 9. 1 Chr. xxviii. 20. Ps. xxvii 14 Dan x. 19. 1 Cor. xvi 13. Eph vi 10 ——q Gen xv. 1. Ruth ii 12 Ps. xix 11 lviii. 11 Mat v. 12. 46 vi. 1. 4. 6. 18. x 41, 42 Luke vi. 35 Rom. iv. 4, 5. 1 Cor. iii. 8. 14. ix. 17, 18. xv. 58. Col iii. 24. Heb. vi. 10. x. 35 2 John 8 ——r 1.

† Heb. *abominations* 2 Kings xxiii 13.
s xiii. 19.
t iv. 1. viii. 19
u 2 Chr. xxx 11 25.
x Zech. viii. 21—23 Acts vii 9. 10 ix. 31
B. C. 941.
y Esth. viii 9
z xiv. 13—15. Numb. xxxi. 28, 29. 50. 1 Chr xxvi 26, 27.
‡ Heb *in that day*
a i. 6. vii 5.
b xxiii. 16 xxix 10 xxxiv. 31, 32 Deut. xxix 1. 12. Neh ix. 38 x. 29. Jer 1 5. 2 Cor. viii. 5.
c 4. Deut. iv. 29. x. 12 1 Kings viii. 48 Jer xxix. 12, 13
d Ex. xxii. 20 Deut. xiii. 5. 9 16. xvii. 2—5. 1 Kings xviii. 40.

NOTES.

CHAP. XV. V. 3—6. It is not easy to determine what times or events were intended by the prophet, in these verses. Some think, that he referred to the state of Israel in the days of the judges, when the people for a long time generally forsook, and almost forgot, the true God, the priests were not public teachers as they ought to have been, and the law was greatly neglected; and at the same time the people were exposed to the invasions of various enemies, who destroyed each other, yet alternately harassed and oppressed them: because for their sins "God did vex them "with all adversity;" and consequently there was no peace to those who journeyed or went out upon business. Now these times of trouble and vexation seemed to be returning again, (after the prosperity and peace enjoyed under David and Solomon,) in the divisions, apostacies, idolatries, and calamities of the preceding reigns. And they might be assured, that the Lord would deal with them by the same measure as he had dealt with their fathers: if they forsook his worship, and ran into idolatry and impiety, they would be left to all their former miseries; but if they returned to God and served him, he would protect and prosper them: even as when Israel under the judges, in their trouble, sought the Lord, he was always ready to remove their afflictions. Others suppose that the prophet referred to the state of the kingdom of Israel: they had rejected the true God, expelled the teaching priesthood, and cast off the law of the Lord; and their subsequent calamities were intended as a warning for Judah: yet even whenever Israel should repent and seek God, he would be found of them. Others again suppose the passage to be prophetic of the Babylonish captivity, and even of the present dispersion and future conversion of the Jews, to which the words are doubtless applicable. Perhaps the prophet had some reference to God's general method of dealing with Israel in all ages, and then no wonder that his expressions are descriptive of several distinct transactions. It is however plain, that warning and encouragement were intended for Asa and his subjects; and the prophet's scope was to excite them properly to improve their present success, by attempting a more effectual reformation, which would assuredly be rewarded with proportionable prosperity.

V. 8. Perhaps the prophet was called Oded, as well as his father, (1;) and *Azariah* by way of distinction; though some think, that Oded confirmed the words of his son by a prophecy to the same effect. The work of complete reformation appeared to Asa so difficult and perilous, through the inveterate propensity of the people, and of the chief persons, to idolatry, that he had not courage to attempt it, till thus assured of the divine assistance and acceptance. Accordingly when he proceeded in his work, many abominable idols were found in every part of the land; which he removed, with those that were in the cities taken from Israel: but as the golden calf was not removed from Bethel, it is probable that that city had been previously ceded to the king of Israel.

V. 9. *Simeon*, &c. The situation of this tribe, in part of the lot of Judah, had not prevented them from joining the general revolt. But many of them now submitted to Asa, and probably a great part of that tribe from this time adhered to Judah.

death, [e] whether small or great, whether man or woman.

14 And [f] they sware unto the LORD with a loud voice, and with shouting, and [g] with trumpets, and with cornets.

15 And all Judah [h] rejoiced at the oath: for they had [i] sworn with all their heart, and [k] sought him with their whole desire; and he was found of them: and [l] the LORD gave them rest round about.

16 ¶ And also *concerning* [m] Maachah [n] the mother of Asa the king, [o] he removed her from *being* queen, because she had made an * idol in a grove; and Asa [p] cut down her idol, and stamped *it*, and burnt *it* at the brook Kidron.

17 But [q] the high places were not taken away out of Israel: nevertheless [r] the heart of Asa was perfect all his days.

18 And he [s] brought into the house of God the things that his father had dedicated, and that he himself had dedicated, silver, and gold, and vessels.

19 And there was no *more* war unto the [t] five and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa.

e Gen. xix. 11. Ex. xii. 29. Job iii. 19. xxxiv. 19. Ps. cxv. 13. Acts xxvi. 22. Rev. vi. 15. xx. 12.
f Neh. v. 13. x. 29.
g Ps lxxxi. 1–4.
h xxiii. 16–21. xxix. 10. 36 Deut. xxvi. 11. Neh. viii. 9. Ps. xxxii. 11. cxix. 111 Prov. iii. 17. 2 Cor. i. 12.
i Ps. cxix. 166.
k 2. 4. Is. xlv. 19.
l Josh. xxiii. 1. Job xxxiv. 29.
m 1 Kings xv. 13.
n 1 Kings xv. 1. 10. *Grandmother.*
o xiv. 3–5. Ex. xxxii 27, 28. Deut. xiii. 6–8. xxxiiii. 9. Zech. xiii. 3. Mark iii 21. 31–35 2 Cor. v.16.

* Heb. *horror.*
p xxxiv. 7. Ex. xxxii. 20. Lev. xxvi. 30. Deut. vii. 5. 25, 26. ix. 21. 2 Kings xxiii 6. 12. 15.
q xiv. 3–5. Deu. xii. 13, 14. 1 Kings iii. 2–4. xxii. 43. 2 Kings xii. 3. xiv. 4.
r xvi. 7–12. 1 Kings xi. 4.
s 1 Kings vii. 51. xv. 14, 15. 1 Chr. xxvi. 20–26.
t xvi. 1. 1 Kings xv. 16.

V. 12—15. The people voluntarily covenanted to seek the Lord, each for himself, with all earnestness: and also without respect of persons, to execute the law of God on idolaters: and on those who disregarded the sabbaths and solemn feasts, or refused their attendance on the public ordinances of religion. This covenant they entered into in the most cheerful and open manner; and every one ratified it with a solemn oath, with a loud voice, in the presence of all the people: for they were deeply impressed with the kindness which they had experienced, and numbers were very sincere and earnest in their religion.

V. 16. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xv. 10—13.)

V. 17. *Out of Israel*, &c. Some have thought that this only relates to the cities that had been taken from the kingdom of Israel: but it is probable that some high places at least were still connived at in Judah, perhaps as *a human device*, to render the people more willing to renounce idolatry. Yet upon the whole Asa meant well and did well, and was cordial in his endeavours for reformation.

V. 19. Baasha died in the twenty-sixth year of Asa's reign; and as there were wars between Asa and Baasha, (*Marg. Ref.*) it seems impossible to reconcile this verse, and the date of the ensuing chapter, with the other history, except by allowing a trivial error of the transcribers, and reading the *twenty-fifth* instead of the thirty-fifth, in this verse, and the *twenty-sixth* instead of the thirty-sixth, in the first verse of the following chapter. This is the date which Josephus affixes to these events, and it is very probable in itself. Other ways of solving the difficulty have been proposed, but they are liable to insuperable objections.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Prosperity and comfort are intended to animate us to more diligent obedience: and we need the ministry of the word to remind us of our duty when successful, as much at least as when afflicted. The gracious tenour of the Gospel authorizes us to assure sinners of every description, that if they seek the Lord in a proper manner, he will be found of them; at the same time professors should be warned, that if they forsake the Lord, he will cast them off: and we may know that God is with us for every saving purpose, when we are conscious of trusting in his mercy, attending on his ordinances, and walking in obedience to his commandments. But cautious fear and cheering hope must unite to render us vigilant, active, and steadfast in the ways of God. The history of the church in all ages, and the experience of every believer, demonstrate, that vexation and distress are the never failing consequences of negligence and sin, even to those who are not left to final apostacy; and that humiliation before God, and diligent seeking him, uniformly make way for peace and comfort. Hence the benefit of a teaching ministry, of the holy law, and of the blessed Gospel. May the Lord grant that all who are called ministers, may become "apt to teach," mighty in the scriptures, men of God, acquainted with him, his truth, and his will, and able to declare his whole counsel to the people! May he send forth such labourers to his harvest, and extend the blessing of them to the remotest nations of the earth! And may the Jews, who have been so long without the "true God and eternal "life;" (1 *John* v. 20, 21;) without a teaching priesthood, and without him who is the true and only High Priest of God's church, whom "God hath so long vexed "with all adversity," at length in their trouble, seek the Lord, be found of him, and be grafted again into their own olive tree, from which they were broken off through unbelief. The assured expectation of assistance, acceptance, and a gracious recompense, inspires the soul with courage and strength for present duty: and we ought to exhort and encourage one another, that we may be strong in the Lord, and that our hands may not be weak, when called to arduous and perilous attempts, for the honour of God, and the promotion of true religion. The way to win those, who are of the contrary party, is by showing them evidently that "the LORD our God is with us." In order to this, all abominable things must be put away, and conscientious obedience must unite with cheerful confidence in God.—Whatever the Lord gives should be employed according to his will: especially we should devote our bodies and souls unto him, according to his everlasting covenant; by accepting his salvation, and yielding ourselves to his service. Our devotedness to God our saviour should be avowed and professed in the most solemn and public manner. Such obligations indeed bind to no more than was before our duty: but they have a tendency to fortify the heart against temptation, to excite us in the way of remembrance to every service, and to give us a further opportunity of watching over each other, and exhorting one another to every good work. Without we sincerely mean

CHAP. XVI.

Asa makes a league with Benhadad against Baasha, who is hindered from building Ramath; and Asa with the stones of it builds Geba and Mizpah, 1—6. *Hanani the prophet reproves him for trusting in the Syrians, rather than in God, and is imprisoned,* 7—10. *Asa, when sick, seeks to physicians, and not to God,* 11, 12. *His death and burial,* 13, 14.

IN the six and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa, [a] Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah, and built Ramah, [b] to the intent that he might let none go out or come in to Asa king of Judah.

2 Then Asa [c] brought out silver and gold out of the treasures of the house of the LORD and of the king's house, and sent to Benhadad king of Syria, that dwelt at * Damascus, saying,

3 *There is* [d] a league between me and thee, as *there was* between my father and thy father: behold, I have sent thee silver and gold; go, [e] break thy league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may depart from me.

4 And Ben-hadad [f] hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the captains of † his armies against the cities of Israel; and they smote [g] Ijon, and [h] Dan, and Abel-maim, and all the [i] store-cities of Naphtali.

5 And it came to pass, when Baasha heard *it*, that he left off building of Ramah, and let his work cease.

6 Then Asa the king took all Judah, and [k] they carried away the stones of Ramah, and the timber thereof, wherewith Baasha was a building: and he built therewith [l] Geba and Mizpah.

7 ¶ And at that time [m] Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah, and said unto him, [n] Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and not [o] relied on the LORD thy God, therefore is [p] the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thine hand.

8 Were not [q] the Ethiopians and the Lubims ‡ a huge host, with very many chariots and horsemen? yet, [r] because thou didst rely on the LORD, he delivered them into thine hand.

9 For [s] the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to ∮ shew himself strong in the behalf of *them* [t] whose heart *is* perfect toward him. Herein [u] thou hast done foolishly: therefore from [x] henceforth thou shalt have wars.

10 Thus Asa was [y] wroth with the seer, and [z] put him in a prison-house; for *he was* in a rage with him because of this *thing*. And Asa ‖ oppressed *some* of the people [a] the same time.

a 1 Kings xv. 17—22.
b xi. 16. xv. 9. 1 Kings xii. 27.
c 2 Kings xii. 18. xvi. 8. xviii. 15.
* Heb. *Darmesek.*
d xviii. 3. xix. 2. Judg. ii. 2. Is. xxxi. 1—3. 2 Cor. vi. 16.
e Ex. xxxii. 21. Josh ix. 19, 20. 2 Sam. xxi 2. Ps. xv. 4. Rom. i. 31, 32 2 Tim. iii. 3.
f 1 Tim. vi. 10. 2 Pet. ii. 15.
† Heb. *armies which were his.*
g 1 Kings xv. 20.
h Judg. xvii. 28, 29. xx. 1.
i 1 Kings. ix 19
k 1 Kings xv. 22
l Josh. xviii. 24—26 *Gaba* 1 Sam. vii. 8. 16 *Mizpeh.*
m xix. 2. 1 Kings xvi. 1.
n Ps cxlvi 3—6. Is. xxxi 1. xxxii. 2 Jer xvii. 5, 6. Eph. i. 12, 13.
o xiii 18. 2 Kings xiii. 18. 2 Kings xviii. 5. 1 Chr. v 20.
p 3.
q xiv. 9—12
‡ Heb *in abundance.*
r Ps. ix. 9, 10. xxxvii. 39, 40.
s vi. 20. Job xxxiv. 21. Ps. xxxiv. 15. cxliii 6. Prov. v. 21. xv. 3 Jer. xvi. 17. xxxii. 19. Zech. iv. 10. Heb iv. 13.
∮ Or, *strongly to hold with.*
t xv. 17 2 Kings xx. 3. Ps. xxxvii. 37.
u 1 Sam. xiii 13. 2 Sam. xii. 7—12. 1 Chr. xxi. 8. Job xxxiv. 18, 19 Matt. v. 22. Luke xii. 20.
x 1 Kings xv. 32.
y xxvi. 19. Ps cxli. 5.
z xviii. 26. Jer. xx. 2 xxix 26. Matt. xiv. 3, 4. Luke iii. 20. Acts xvi. 23, 24.
‖ Heb. *crushed.* Is li. 23. Lam. iii. 34.
a 2 Sam xi. 4. xii. 31.

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to seek and serve God with our whole heart, and our whole soul, such transactions are mere hypocrisy. But if we enter into these engagements with uprightness, really purposing to be helpful to others also, we may joyfully expect that the Lord will give rest to our souls.—Every public transaction should be conducted with cautious regard to peace, and to civil subordination in all things lawful, lest our good should be evil spoken of. *We* are not indeed called to inflict death or any secular punishment on those who are guilty of impiety, apostacy, or idolatry; yet they who neglect the great salvation of the Gospel, will by no means escape a more dreadful doom.—No relative affections are to be indulged, when they interfere with our evident duty to God: but where the heart is upright, there will be peace and acceptance, though we come short of that perfection which is proposed to us, and to which we should continually be pressing forward.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVI. V. 1—6. (*Notes*, xv. 19. 1 *Kings* xvi. 8—14.) Baasha seems to have meditated war against Judah from the beginning of his reign: and probably he had made some hostile attempts before; but he was not able to make any formidable attack before the year preceding his death. At that time he so fortified Ramah upon the frontiers of the land, that he not only prevented his own subjects from migrating into Judah, but stopped all travellers from passing; and this not only hindered the Israelites from going over to the king of Judah, but was likely, it seems, by these means, to reduce him and his subjects to distress. In this difficulty Asa not only distrusted his own troops, and neglected the proper means of defence, but he gave up his confidence in God, and used every sinful means for deliverance. He tempted a heathen prince, with the consecrated treasures, to break a solemn league, and to turn his arms against his ally: and by making a league with him to this effect, he became accessary to all the treachery, perjury, injustice, and cruelty of Benhadad! But though it answered a present purpose, it exposed him to severe rebukes, and he never prospered afterwards.

V. 7—10. Asa's misconduct entirely originated from unbelief. Had he relied on the Lord, he would have de-

b 1 Kings xv. 23.

11 And, behold,[b] the acts of Asa, first and last, lo, they *are* written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.

c Matt. vii. 2. Luke vi. 37, 38. Rev. iii. 19.
d xxviii. 22. 1 Chr. x. 14. Jer. xvii. 5.
e Gen. l. 2. Job xiii. 4. Jer. viii. 22. Matt. ix. 12. Mark ii. 17. v. 26. Col. iv. 14.
B. C. 914.
f 1 Kings xv. 24.

12 And Asa in the thirty and ninth year of his reign was [c] diseased in his feet, until his disease *was* exceeding *great:* yet [d] in his disease he sought not to the LORD, but to the [e] physicians.

13 And Asa[f] slept with his fathers, and died in the one and fortieth year of his reign.

14 And they buried him in his own sepulchre, which he had * made for himself in the city of David, and laid him in the bed which was filled with [g] sweet odours, and divers kinds *of spices* prepared by the [h] apothecaries' art: and they made [i] a very great burning for him.

* Heb. *digged.*
g Gen. l. 2. Mark xvi. 1. John xix. 39, 40.
h Ex. xxx. 25—37. Ec. x. 1.
i xxi. 19. Jer. xxxiv. 5.

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fended him against the Israelites, and enabled him likewise to prevail against the king of Syria, who was then in league with Baasha; by which he might have enriched his treasures, instead of emptying them to purchase his assistance. This was the more inexcusable in him, seeing he had before experienced the prevalence of faith and prayer, in his victory over the Ethiopians. Indeed Asa could not but be ignorant of God's omnipresent and ever watchful providence, by which he notices all the wants, dangers, and trials of those who uprightly trust and serve him; and is ever ready to give speedy assistance to them, as the matter may require. In this Asa greatly failed, and the prophet plainly told him that he had acted foolishly, and thenceforth should have wars. His subsequent conduct seems to be without parallel in scripture. No one *pious man*, as I recollect, is recorded to have so resented a reproof from a prophet in the name of God, as to have used severity against him for it: yet the expressions concerning Asa's character are so strong, (xiv. 2. xv. 17.) that we must consider him as an exception, and a lamentable proof that there is no kind of sin which a believer is not capable of committing if left to himself; so that we must not form our judgment of men's characters from any detached actions, but the general tenour of their conduct.—In his rage he committed the prophet to prison, or rather he put him into *the stocks*, for that is the meaning of the original word; perhaps excusing himself to others, and to his own conscience, by criminating the prophet as rude, intermeddling, and insolent: and when some of the people censured his conduct, he oppressed them also, as determined to crush all opposition by violent means. It is, however, probable that he speedily released the prophet: and as he lived at least fifteen years after this event, (for so long he lived after Baasha's death;) and as we do not find that he oppressed or persecuted any person, except on this occasion, we may conclude that he repented, and maintained religion to the close of his life. But having openly dishonoured God, the latter part of his reign was obscure, inglorious, and troublesome. We are not informed what wars he was engaged in, but probably they were more teazing to him than fatal to his people.

V. 12. 'Asa had the gout, which increased to such a 'height that he died of it; which was a just punishment 'for putting the prophet's feet in the stocks.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) Under this excruciating correction he relapsed into his former sin, of relying upon man, and not upon the Lord. If he consulted physicians, properly so called, his sin entirely consisted in his *reliance* on them, instead of seeking a blessing from God on the means which they employed. But perhaps they were such persons as attempted, by charms or other superstitious devices, to alleviate his pain: and then the thing itself likewise was exceedingly sinful. As the Lord has been pleased to throw a cloud upon his memory, we will not further attempt to penetrate it; though we trust that he did not die without repenting of this sin also.

V. 14. Some have considered this funeral as an argument of the improper state of Asa, even at death, supposing that he appointed it for himself out of vain glory and in conformity to heathen customs. Indeed it is said that he digged a sepulchre for himself, as Manasseh and others also did: but probably the pomp of his interment, which had nothing idolatrous or unlawful in it, was intended by the people as an expression of respect for his memory; (*Marg. Ref.*) for notwithstanding the blemishes recorded in this chapter, he had been an excellent, valuable, and successful prince: and the state of Judah during his reign was most happy, compared with the distractions and miseries of Israel; (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xvi.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The strongest faith is sometimes lamentably out of exercise: and whenever we waver, as to confidence in God, we grow slack and heartless in waiting on him and serving him, and in using proper means for our own defence or deliverance; and are ready to turn aside into by-paths and employ sinful expedients. When once we have set forward in this down-hill road, we hurry along from one thing to another, till we fall into greater ungodliness; nor can we tell into what impiety, treachery, or injustice we may run, if we are left to ourselves. Well may we then be cautioned, "Whilst we think we stand, to take heed lest we "fall." And well may we pray, "Lord increase our "faith!"—The self-sufficient are impatient of reproof or contradiction: and then the plain language of God's faithful ministers appears ill-nature, ill-manners, impertinence, or insolence. In this case, if power unite with haughty resentment, persecution will follow: so that they are not qualified, at all times, to deliver the messages of God, even to good princes, who are not ready to bear the cross. For in general, "the flatterer, who spreads a net "for a man's feet," and merits execration, may more reasonably expect a reward from men, than he who most affectionately labours for their present and eternal good, but who will speak offensive truth, unreservedly, in plain language. And they who venture to take the part of such as have thus given umbrage, must expect to share in the resentment they have excited; for where rage prevails against the fear of God, justice and humanity will scarcely

CHAP. XVII.

Jehoshaphat succeeds Asa, reigns well, and prospers, 1—6. *He sends priests and Levites, accompanied by princes, to teach the law throughout Judah,* 7—9. *God overawes the minds of Jehoshaphat's neighbours, so that they submit to him,* 10, 11. *His greatness; and his army, with the captains,* 12—19.

AND [a] Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead, and strengthened himself against Israel.

2 And he [b] placed forces in all the fenced cities of Judah, and set garrisons in the land of Judah, and [c] in the cities of Ephraim, which Asa his father had taken.

3 And [d] the LORD was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in [e] the first ways of † his father David, and [f] sought not unto Baalim;

4 But sought to the *LORD* God of his father, and [g] walked in his commandments, and [h] not after the doings of Israel:

5 [i] Therefore the LORD stablished the kingdom in his hand; and all Judah [j] brought to Jehoshaphat presents; and [k] he had riches and honour in abundance:

6 And his heart was ‡ lifted up in the ways of the LORD: moreover [l] he took away the high places and groves out of Judah.

7 ¶ Also in the third year of his reign he sent to his [m] princes, *even* to Ben-hail, and to Obadiah, and to Zechariah, and to Nethaneel, and to Micaiah, [n] to teach in the cities of Judah.

8 And with them *he sent* Levites, *even* Shemaiah, and Nethaniah, and Zebadiah, and Asahel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehonathan, and Adonijah, and Tobijah, and Tob-adonijah, Levites; and with them Elishama and Jehoram, [o] priests.

9 And they taught in Judah, and *had* [p] the book of the law of the LORD with them, and went about [q] throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people.

a 1 Kings xv. 24. 1 Chr. iii. 10. Matt. i. 8. *Josaphat.*
b xi. 11, 12.
c xv. 8.
d xv. 2 9. Gen. xxxix. 2, 3. 21. Ex. iii. 12. iv 12. Matt xxviii 20
e 2 Sam. v. 10 vi. 12—16. viii 15. 1 Kings xv. 4. Ps. cxxxii. 1—5.
† Or, *his father, and of David.* xiv. 2—5. 11. xv. 8—13.
f Judg ii 11. viii. 33. Jer ii. 23
g Luke i 6. 1 Thes. ii. 12 iv. 1.
h 1 Kings xii. 28—33. xiii. 33, 34. xvi. 31—33.
i 2 Sam. vii. 25, 26. 1 Kings ix. 4, 5. Ps. cxxvii. 1 cxxxii. 12. 1 Pet. v. 10.
j Heb. *gave.* 1 Sam. x. 27. 1 Kings iv. 21 x. 25 Ps lxviii. 29. lxxii. 10 lxxvi. 11. Matt ii. 11.
k i. 15 ix. 27. xviii. 1 Matt. vi. 33.
‡ Or, *encouraged.* Job xxii 26.
l xiv 3. xv. 17. xix. 3. xx. 33. 1 Kings xxii. 43. B. C. 912.
m Deut. iv. 5. Ps. xxxiv. 11, 12. 13. Ec. i. 12. xii 9, 10. Is. xlix. 23.
n xv. 3. xxx. 22. xxxv. 3. Neh. viii 7, 8 Matt. iv. 23. Marc iv. 2 Luke iv. 43, 44. Acts i. 1.
o Ezra vii. 1—6. Mal. ii. 7.
p Deut vi. 6—9. Is. viii. 20 Matt. xv 2—9 xxviii. 19, 20. John v. 39. 46 Acts xxviii 23. 1 Pet. iv. 11.
q Matt. x. 23. xi. 1. Acts viii 40.

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be attended to. If, however, any of the Lord's own people thus resent the conduct of his faithful ministers, they may lay their account with most severe chastisement; and when they repeatedly relapse into the same crime, they may expect to go down to the grave in dishonour and uncertainty, and to leave their characters involved in obscurity. But notwithstanding incidental faults, we should honour the memory of those who have been useful in their generation, and that of our benefactors: leaving their eternal state to the heart-searching Judge.—In all our conflicts and sufferings, we have need especially to look to our own hearts, that they be "perfect towards God," in the exercise of faith, patience, and obedience: remembering that "his eyes run to and fro, throughout the earth, to "show himself strong in behalf of them," who thus trust and serve him; being an ever-present and all sufficient Helper and Comforter. And he will especially plead the cause, and abundantly recompense the sufferings, of those who are here persecuted for righteousness' sake, and for being faithful to his truth, and in delivering his message to their fellow sinners.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVII. V. 1, 2. It is probable that Asa had been engaged in war with the kingdom of Israel, after the establishment of Omri on the throne, though no events occurred so considerable as to be recorded.

V. 3. *The first ways,* &c. Jehoshaphat copied the example of David, by proceeding to reform the state of religion immediately on his accession to the throne; and in his zeal for the pure, orderly, and spiritual worship of God: but he carefully avoided those sins into which David afterwards fell. This is the common explication of the expression.—But as David's piety and zeal never shone brighter than at the close of his life; perhaps the words might as properly be read, *In the first ways, even those of David his father:* proposing him as his model, and not the succeeding princes, under whom idolatry had been introduced, tolerated, or but feebly opposed; and not being satisfied even with walking in the steps of his father Asa, but aiming at reducing matters to their ancient purity. Some versions read it, *of his father, and of David;* for the latter days of Asa were not so worthy of imitation, as his former had been.

V. 6. The heart of Jehoshaphat was lifted up, not in pride, but in courage, zeal, and vigour. By strong faith and ardent love, he was lifted up above fears and discouragements; and readily faced and endured dangers and difficulties in the cause of God. And he did not *glory* in his riches and honour, but in serving the Lord, and promoting his cause: (*Note,* 1 *Sam.* ii. 1.)—He took away the high places in Judah; but perhaps he left them in the cities of Ephraim; or he destroyed such as were devoted to idols, but spared those in which God was worshipped. Or he destroyed them at the beginning of his reign; but his subjects restored some of them afterwards. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 7—9. Whilst the priests and Levites neglected their duty as public teachers, the people remained ignorant of the truth and law of God, and were easily seduced into superstition or idolatry: so that the reformations which took place, were rather the result of authority than con-

r xiv. 14. Gen. xxxv 5. Ex. xv. 14–16. Josh ii. 9–11.
* Heb. *was.*
s Ex. xxxiv 24. Prov. xvi 7.

10 ¶ And [r] the fear of the LORD * fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that *were* round about Judah, [s] so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat.

t ix. 14. xxvi. 8. 2 Sam. viii. 2. 2 Kings iii 4

11 Also *some* of the Philistines [t] brought Jehoshaphat presents, and tribute-silver: and the Arabians brought him flocks, seven thousand and seven hundred rams, and seven thousand and seven hundred he-goats.

u xviii. 1. 1 Chr. xxix. 25.
x viii. 2–6. xi. 5–12 xiv. 6, 7.
† Or, *palaces.*

12 And Jehoshaphat [u] waxed great exceedingly; and he [x] built in Judah † castles, and cities of store.

y xxvi. 9 – 15. 1 Chr. xxvii. 25 –31.

13 And he had [y] much business in the cities of Judah: and the men of war, mighty men of valour, *were* in Jerusalem.

z Gen. xii 2. xiii. 16. xv. 5
a Num. i. 2. 18.

14 And these *are* [z] the numbers of them according [a] to the house of their fathers: Of Judah, the captains of thousands; Adnah the chief, and with him mighty men of valour three hundred thousand.

‡ Heb. *at his hand.*

15 And ‡ next to him *was* Jehohanan the captain, and with him two hundred and fourscore thousand.

b Judg v. 2. 9. 1 Chr xxix 9. 14. 17. Ps. cx. 3. 2 Cor. viii. 8. 5. 12.

16 And next him *was* Amaziah the son of Zichri, who [b] willingly offered himself unto the LORD; and with him two hundred thousand mighty men of valour.

c xiv 8. 2 Sam. i. 21, 22.

17 And of Benjamin; Eliada, a mighty man of valour, and with him [c] armed men with bow and shield, two hundred thousand.

18 And next him *was* Jehozabad, and with him an hundred and fourscore thousand ready prepared for the war.

d 2. 12. xi. 12. 23.

19 These waited on the king, beside *those* whom the king [d] put in the fenced cities throughout all Judah.

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viction, and thus only external and transient. Asa and his people had done well, in covenanting together to punish those who would not seek the Lord: for this was according to the genius and intention of that introductory dispensation, under which the capital punishment of apostate Israelites was one divinely appointed method of preserving that people from sinking wholly into idolatry, till the coming of Christ. But Jehoshaphat did better, when he added the public teaching of the people from the law of God: for this not only tended to the same object, but promoted the salvation of souls and the increase of spiritual worshippers, who would hand down religion to their posterity.—The princes were joined in commission with the priests and Levites, both to excite them to their duty, and to induce the attention of the people. Probably they acted as magistrates, and were men of known probity, piety, and acquaintance with the law of God; who, when they administered justice, instructed and exhorted the people, and charged them, both as a matter of conscience, and as they regarded the favour of the king, to receive and observe the instructions of the priests and Levites. The persons appointed to be the itinerant instructers, were doubtless selected, because they were known to be eminent for piety and ability. They took the book of the law with them, and read and expounded it wherever they went, grounding all their instructions upon it. We must also suppose that these teachers were intended to excite, and to strengthen the hands of the priests and Levites who resided in the neighbourhood, and who were to be considered as the stated teachers in their several districts. It hath before been shown, that the prophets in the kingdom of Israel held stated assemblies for religious worship, on the sabbath days, and on some of their solemn feasts; (*Note*, 2 *Kings* iv. 23.) And it is probable that it became gradually the practice of the priests in Judah, as far as they had paid any regard to their duty.

V. 10. Though the army of Jehoshaphat was very formidable, yet it was "the fear of the LORD" that deterred his neighbours from attacking him: they were so dismayed, that they dared not attempt any thing against one who was so evidently favoured of God; and it is probable they had observed that Judah always prospered when the worship of God was kept up in the land.

V. 11. The Philistines had been subdued by David, and no doubt had paid him tribute: but after a time they seem to have again become independent; and it is not certain whether they and the Arabians brought these presents to Jehoshaphat, as submitting to his authority, or only as desiring to conciliate his friendship.

V. 13—19. Jehoshaphat's militia far exceeded in number that of any of his predecessors, though he had not much above a third of the country over which David had reigned. But numbers had flocked into his kingdom from Israel, his people increased by a peculiar blessing, and no wasting wars had occurred for many years. It is probable that these troops served by rotation, and some of them might be employed in the buildings, and other business which he had in the cities of Judah. (*Marg. Ref.*) And one of his chief officers is distinguished for having offered himself willingly to serve God, as well as his country, in that station.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—6.

It is a signal blessing, when the Lord raises up pious and able men, in church or state, to succeed one another. For often useful instruments are removed, or laid aside, at the very crisis when their preparations were completed, and their purposes in a fair way of being effected; and others come in their stead, who have a pride and pleasure in rendering their schemes abortive: and thus "one sinner de-"stroyeth much good." It therefore behooves us all to pray for a succession of useful men, who may every one of them endeavour to complete the designs of their predecessors, and

CHAP. XVIII.

Jehoshaphat joins affinity with Ahab, and agrees to go with him against Ramoth-gilead, 1—3. The false prophets assure them of success, 4, 5. At Jehoshaphat's request Micaiah is sent for, who foretels Ahab's death, and shows that his prophets were instigated by a lying spirit, 6—23. He is abused and sent back to prison, 24—27. Ahab goes in disguise to the battle, where Jehoshaphat, in imminent danger, calls on God, and is preserved, 28—32. Ahab is slain by an arrow shot at a venture, 33, 34.

NOW Jehoshaphat had [a] riches and honour in abundance, and [b] joined affinity with Ahab.

a i. 11—15. xvii. 5. 12. Matt. vi. 33.
b xxi. 6. xxii. 2, 3. 2 Kings viii. 18. 26, 27. xi. 1 2 Cor. vi. 14.

make way for the usefulness of their successors: and did all pious persons, with one accord and without intermission, unite in such prayers, in behalf of the community, the church at large, and in particular congregations, they would witness blessed effects, and brighter prospects would open before us. It is happy when prudence, vigour, and piety unite in distinguished characters; when they carefully imitate the best parts of the conduct of eminent believers, and as carefully avoid their mistakes: and when the purest ages of the church are made the models of personal religion and public reformation. Indeed we should all study and walk in those first ways of christians, when "great grace was upon them all;" and not be satisfied with the current standard of modern profession: and this would tend to the establishment of our hearts in peace and assurance, and to the prosperity of our endeavours to glorify God and to do good. When faith is in vigorous exercise, and when zeal, love, and active hope render the ways of God delightful; the soul rises superior to dangers and difficulties, disregards hardships and labours, and can even rejoice in sufferings for the Lord's sake. Then low earthly affections are subdued; the heart is lifted up above them, and soars heaven-ward; ambitious of, and glorying in, nothing but the service, truth, and favour of God. This exalted piety springs from genuine poverty of spirit: and the consideration of the condescension of the infinite God; in employing and accepting us poor, guilty, polluted, worthless worms, inspires the heart with renewed vigour in his service.

V. 7—19.

The public teaching of the word of God forms in all ages the grand method of promoting the power of godliness: for by it the understanding is informed, the conscience awakened and directed, and the hopes, fears, and affections suitably excited; and as far as the divine blessing is vouchsafed, religious worship is rendered a voluntary, reasonable, and spiritual service. Kings and princes, therefore, render a most essential service to the cause of God, when they use their influence to excite and countenance those, who "labour in the word and doctrine;" and by their example and public declarations make it known, that they best approve of such as diligently attend on their instructions. And though no violence must be done to any man's conscience, nor any constrained to teach in contradiction to his judgment; yet surely they, who are publicly maintained as teachers of the people, may be required either to do their work, or to give place to those that will. Notwithstanding the prejudices of mankind, and the indiscretions of individuals, *an itinerant teacher*, if duly qualified and sent forth, is one of the most honourable and useful characters that can be found upon earth: and there needs no other proof that, when this work is done properly and with perseverance, it forms the grand method of spreading wide and rendering efficacious religious knowledge, than the experience of the church in all ages; for great reformations and revivals of religion have uniformly been thus effected. It is especially sanctioned by the example of Christ and his apostles, and recommended as the divine method of spreading the gospel through the nations of the earth; *itinerant preaching* having almost always preceded, and made way for, the stated ministry of *regular pastors*. But it is a work which requires peculiar talents and dispositions, and a peculiar call in Providence; and is not rashly and hastily to be ventured upon by every novice, who has learned to speak about the gospel, and has more zeal than knowledge, prudence, humility, or experience. An unblemished character, a disinterested spirit, an exemplary deadness to the world, unaffected humility, deep acquaintance with the human heart, and preparation for enduring the cross, not only with boldness, but with meekness, patience, and sweetness of temper, are indispensably necessary in such a service. They who engage in it, should go upon broad scriptural grounds, and dwell chiefly upon those grand essentials of religion, in which pious men of different persuasions are agreed; plainly proving every thing from the word of God, running nothing into extremes, and avoiding all disputes, however urged to it, about the *Shibboleths* of a party. In this way itinerant preaching is a blessing which all that love the souls of men must wish to be vouchsafed to every part of every nation upon earth. And if those who are in authority, were to employ select men of known and approved piety and ability, protected and countenanced by them, to go from city to city, and from village to village, through the kingdom, teaching in every place the plain acknowledged truths and precepts of the Bible; immense good might be done. Those stated teachers, who have been grossly negligent or profligate, must either be disgraced or reformed; others might be stirred up to use greater diligence; and the instructions of stated faithful ministers would receive an additional sanction, which could not fail of producing a happy effect. Thus it was in the days of Jehoshaphat; and thus it will be, wherever or whenever God shall please to stir up the hearts of kings, princes, and ministers, to teach the people in every part of their territories, according to the word of God. This is also the proper way of promoting public peace and prosperity; and it will prove a better protection of nations than an increase of powerful armies or navies: though it may very properly be connected with the ordinary me-

2 And * after *certain* years [c] he went down to Ahab to Samaria: and Ahab killed sheep and oxen for him in abundance, and for the people that *he had* with him, and [d] persuaded him to go up *with him* to [e] Ramoth-gilead.

3 And Ahab king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat king of Judah, Wilt thou go with me to Ramoth-gilead? And he answered him, [f] I *am* as thou *art*, and my people as thy people: and *we will be* with thee in the war.

4 And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, [g] Inquire, I pray thee, at the word of the LORD to-day.

5 Therefore the king of Israel gathered together [h] of prophets four hundred men, and said unto them, [i] Shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up; [k] for God will deliver *it* into the king's hand.

6 But Jehoshaphat said, [l] *Is there* not here a prophet of the LORD † besides, that we might inquire of him?

7 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, *There is* yet [m] one man by whom we may inquire of the LORD: but [n] I hate him: for he never prophesieth [o] good unto [p] me, but always evil: the same *is* Micaiah the son of Imla. And Jehoshaphat said, [q] Let not the king say so.

8 And the king of Israel called for one *of his* ‡ officers, and said, ◊ Fetch quickly Micaiah the son of Imla.

9 And the king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat king of Judah, [r] sat either of them on his throne, [s] clothed in *their* robes, and they sat in ‖ a void place at the entering in of the gate of Samaria; and [t] all the prophets prophesied before them.

10 And Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah had made him [u] horns of iron, and said, [x] Thus saith the LORD, With these thou shalt push Syria, until * they be consumed.

11 And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, [y] Go up to Ramoth-gilead, and prosper; for the LORD shall deliver *it* into the hand of the king.

12 And the messenger that went to call Micaiah spake to him, saying, [z] Behold, the words of the prophets *declare* good to the king with one † assent: let thy word, therefore, I pray thee, be like one of their's, and speak thou good.

13 And Micaiah said, *As* the LORD liveth, [a] even what my God saith, that will I speak.

14 ¶ And when he was come to the king, the king said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And he said, [b] Go ye up, and prosper, and they shall be delivered into your hand.

15 And the king said to him, How many times [c] shall I adjure thee, that thou say nothing but the truth to me, in the name of the LORD?

16 [d] Then he said, I did see all Israel scattered upon the mountains, [e] as sheep that have no shepherd; and the LORD said, These have no [f] master; let them return *therefore* every man to his house in peace.

17 And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, [g] Did I not tell thee *that* he would not prophesy good unto me, but ‡ evil?

18 Again he said, Therefore hear the word of the LORD; [h] I saw the LORD sitting upon his throne, and [i] all the host of heaven standing on his right hand, and *on* his left.

19 And the LORD said, [k] Who shall

* Heb. *at the end of years.*
c xix. 2. 1 Kings xxii. 2. Prov. ix. 6.
d 1 Kings xxii. 4.
e Josh xx. 8. 1 Kings. iv. 13.
f Ps. cxxxix. 21. Eph. v 11. 2 John 11, 12.
g 1 Sam. xxiii 2. 4. 9—12. 2 Sam. ii. 1. v. 19. 23. 1 Kings xxii. 5, 6. Ps. xxvii. 4
h 1 Kings xviii. 19. 2 Tim. iv. 3.
i Jer. xxxviii. 14, &c. xiii. 2, 3. 20.
k 14. 20, 21. Jer. viii. 10, 11. xxiii. 17. Ez. xiii. 3—16. 22 Mic ii. 11. iii. 11. Rev. xix. 20.
l 1 Kings xxii. 7—9. 2 Kings iii. 11—13.
† Heb. *yet*, or, *more.*
m 1 Kings xviii. 4. xix. 10.
n 1 Kings xviii 17. xx. 42, 43. xxi 20. Prov. ix. 8. Jer. xviii. 18. Am. v. 10. John vii. 7. Gal. iv. 16.
o Is. xxx. 10. Jer. xxxviii. 4.
p 13. 2 Kings ix. 22. Ez. iii. 17—19. Acts xx. 26, 27.
q Prov. xxv. 12. Mic ii. 7.
‡ Or *eunuchs.*
◊ Heb. *Hasten.* 25, 26.
r 1 Kings xxii. 10—12. Is. xiv 9. Ez. xxvi. 16. Dan. vii. 9. Matt. xix. 28.
s 29. Matt. vi. 29. xi. 8.
‖ Or, *floor.*
t Jer. xxvii. 14—16.
u Jer. xxvii. 2. xxviii. 10—14. Zech i. 18—21. 2 Tim iii. 8.
x Jer. xxviii. 17. 21. 25 31 xxxiii. 2, 3. xxix. 21. Ez. xxxi. 28.
* Thou *consume them*
y 33, 34. Prov. xxiv. 24, 25. Jude 16. Rev. xvi. 13, 14.
z Job xxii. 13. Ps. x. 11. Hos vii. 3. Am. vii. 13 Mic. ii 6. 14. 1 Cor. ii. 14—16.
† Heb. *mouth*
a Num. xxii 18—20. 35. xxiii 12 26. xxiv. 13. 1 Kings xxii. 14. Jer. xxiii. 28 xlii. 4. 1 Cor xi. 23. 2 Cor i. 17. Gal i. 1. 1 Thes. ii 4.
b 1 Kings xviii. 27 xxii 15. Ez. xi 2. Lam. iv 21. Am. iv. 4. Matt. xxvi. 45
c 1 Sam. xiv. 24. 1 Kings xxii 16 Mark v. 7. Acts xix. 13.
d Matt. xxvi. 63, 64
e 33, 34. 1 Kings xxii. 17, 18. 34—36. Jer xxiii 1, 2 Zech x. 2 xiii. 7. Mark vi. 34.
f 2 Sam. v. 2.
g Prov. xxix. 1. Jer. xliii. 2 3.
‡ Or, *for evil.*
h 1 Kings xxii. 19—23. Is vi. 1. 5 Dan. vii. 9, 10. Acts vii. 55, 56.
i Gen. xxxii. 2. Ps ciii. 20, 21. Zech. i. 10
k Job xii. 16. Is. vi. 9. 10. liv 16. 2 Thes. ii. 11, 12.

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thods of defence. Persons in authority have much business to which they ought to attend: and they should consider that stable peace, and increasing numbers of well maintained and orderly subjects, are more honourable than the most successful wars: and whatever ability any man possesses, he should willingly devote himself to God, and serve him with it.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVIII. V. 1. *Affinity*, &c. Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat married Athaliah the daughter of Ahab. Perhaps pride and ambition had some influence in forming this fatal union: but probably Jehoshaphat was allured to it, by the hopes of cementing a durable peace betwixt Judah and Israel, whom he wished to consider as brethren. Ahab perceived Jehoshaphat to be so strong that he had no hope of prevailing against him, and therefore he courted his friendship. But this affinity was evil in itself, and peculiarly dangerous to Jehoshaphat; who, though firm and courageous in resisting and overcoming opposition and difficulties, was easily persuaded by fair words into improper compliances.

entice Ahab king of Israel, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one spake, saying after this manner, and another saying after that manner.

20 Then [l] there came out a spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said, I will entice him. And the LORD said unto him, Wherewith?

21 And he said, I will go out, and be [m] a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And *the* LORD said, [n] Thou shalt entice *him*, and thou shalt also prevail: go out, and do *even so*.

22 Now therefore, behold, [o] the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of these thy prophets, [p] and the LORD hath spoken evil against thee.

23 Then [q] Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah came near, and [r] smote Micaiah upon the cheek, and said, [s] Which way went the Spirit of the LORD from me to speak unto thee?

24 And Micaiah said, [t] Behold, thou shalt see on that day, when thou shalt go * into an inner chamber to hide thyself.

25 Then the king of Israel said, Take ye Micaiah, [u] and carry him back to Amon the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son;

26 And say, Thus saith the king, [x] Put [y] this *fellow* in the prison, and feed him with [z] bread of affliction and with water of affliction, [a] until I return in peace.

27 And Micaiah said, [b] If thou certainly return in peace, *then* hath not the LORD spoken by me. And he said, [c] Hearken, all ye people.

28 ¶ So [d] the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, went up to Ramoth-gilead.

29 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, [e] I will disguise myself, and will go to the battle; but [f] put thou on thy robes. So [g] the king of Israel disguised himself, and they went to the battle.

30 Now the king of Syria had commanded the captains of the chariots that *were* with him, saying, [h] Fight ye not with [i] small or great, save only with the king of Israel.

31 And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, It *is* the king of Israel; therefore they compassed about him to fight: but [k] Jehoshaphat cried out, and [l] the LORD helped him; and [m] God moved them *to depart* from him.

32 For it came to pass, that, when the captains of the chariots perceived that it was not the king of Israel, they turned back again † from pursuing him.

33 And a *certain* man drew a bow ‡ at a venture, and smote the king of Israel § between the joints of the harness: therefore he said to his chariot-man, Turn thine hand, that thou mayest carry me out of the host: for I am ‖ wounded.

34 And the battle increased that day: howbeit the king of Israel stayed *himself* up in *his* chariot against the Syrians until the even; and about the time of the sun going down [n] he died.

l Job i. 6. ii. 1. 2 Cor. xi. 3. 13—15.
m John viii. 44. 1 John iv. 6. Rev. xii. 9. xiii. 14. xx. 8
n Judg. ix. 23. Job i. 12. ii. 6. Ps. cix. 17.
o Ex. iv. 21. Ez. xiv. 3—5. 9. Matt. xxiv. 24, 25.
p 7. 17. xxvi. 18. Is. iii. 11. Matt. xxvi. 24, 25.
q 10.
r 1 Kings xxii. 24, 25. Is. l. 5, 6. Jer. xx. 2. Lam. iii. 30. Mic. v. 1. Matt. xxvi. 67. John xviii. 22, 23. Acts xxiii. 2, 3.
s Jer. xxix. 26, 27. Matt. xxvi. 67, 68. John ix. 40, 41.
t Is. xxvi. 11. Jer. xxviii. 16, 17. xxix. 21, 22. 32.
* Or, *from chamber to chamber.* Heb. *into a chamber in a chamber.* 1 Kings xx. 30. Is. xxvi. 20.
u 3. Jer. xxxvii. 15—21. xxxviii. 6, 7. Acts xxiv. 25—27.
x 15. xvi. 10. 1 Kings xxii. 26—28. Luke iii. 19, 20.
y 1 Sam. xxv. 21. Matt. xii. 24. Luke xxiii. 2. Acts xxii. 22.
z Ps. lxxx. 5. cii. 9. Is. xxx. 20.
a Prov. xiv. 16. 1 Thes. v. 2, 3.
b Num. xvi. 29. Acts xiii. 10, 11.
c Matt. xiii. 9. xv. 10. Luke xii. 57. xx. 45, 46
d 1 Kings xxii. 29—33.
e 1 Kings xiv. 2—6. Jer. xxiii. 24.
f Ps. xii. 2. Prov. xxvi. 25.
g xxxv. 22.
h 1 Kings xx. 33, 34, 42.
i xv. 13.
k xiii. 14. xiv. 11. Ex. xiv. 10. Ps. cxvi. 1, 2. 2 Cor. i. 9, 10.
l Ps. xlvi. 1. 11.
m Ezra i. 1. vii. 27. Neh. i. 11. Prov. xvi. 7. xxi. 1.
† Heb. *from after him.*
‡ Heb. *in his simplicity.* 2 Sam. xv. 11.
§ Heb. *between the joints and between the breast-plate.* 1 Kings xxii. 34, 35.
‖ Heb. *made sick.* xxxv. 23.
n 16. 19. 27.

V. 29. It has been thought that Ahab wished Jehoshaphat to fall by the Syrians, in expectation that the affairs of Judah would come under his management, as the father-in-law of Jehoram.

V. 31. *God moved*, &c. In the extremity of danger, Jehoshaphat made the Lord his refuge, who remembered his servant, though out of the path of duty, and in answer to his prayer inclined his pursuers to depart from him, by a secret but powerful influence on their minds. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* xxi.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Abundant riches and honour do indeed give large opportunities of doing good; but they are attended with such strong temptations, as very few who possess them are able to withstand. It is therefore a certain proof, that men are not well acquainted with the artifices of Satan and the deceitfulness of their own hearts, and that they have much self-confidence, when they covet riches in order to do good; for they are far more likely to get harm by them. Among other evils, they often betray pious persons into improper marriages for themselves or their children. It appears beneath them to join affinity with inferior families; but "not many mighty or noble are called:" and so they are seduced to prefer titles and estates, to faith and holiness; and the effects are generally lamentable to themselves, to posterity, and to the cause of godliness.—We should follow peace with all men: but we ought to have no intimacies with the workers of iniquity; for their caresses, flatteries, and feasts, are more dangerous than their most embittered rage; and in fact they are frequently

CHAP. XIX.

Jehoshaphat, on his return, is reproved by Jehu the prophet, for joining alliance with Ahab; but commended in other respects, 1—3. *He visits and reforms his kingdom,* 4. *He gives a charge to the judges, priests, and Levites, in the cities of Judah, and at Jerusalem,* 5—11.

AND Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned to his house [a] in peace to Jerusalem.

2 And [b] Jehu the son of Hanani [d] the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, [e] Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that [f] hate the LORD? therefore [g] *is* wrath upon thee from before the LORD.

3 Nevertheless there are [h] good things found in thee, in that thou hast taken away the groves out of the land, and hast [i] prepared thine heart to seek God.

4 And Jehoshaphat dwelt at Jerusalem: and he * went out again through the people from [k] Beer-sheba to [l] mount Ephraim, and [m] brought them back unto the LORD God of their fathers.

5 ¶ And [n] he set Judges in the land throughout all the fenced cities of Judah, city by city;

6 And said to the judges, [o] Take heed what ye do: for [p] ye judge not for man, but for the LORD, who *is* with you in the † judgment.

7 Wherefore now [q] let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take heed and do *it:* for *there is* [r] no iniquity with the LORD our God, nor [s] respect of persons, nor [t] taking of gifts.

8 Moreover in Jerusalem did Jehoshaphat set [u] of the Levites, and *of* the priests, and of the chief of the fathers of Israel, for [x] the judgment of the LORD, and for controversies, when they returned to Jerusalem.

9 And he charged them, saying, Thus shall ye do [y] in the fear of the LORD, faithfully, and with a perfect heart.

10 And what cause soever shall come to you of your brethren that dwell in their cities, [z] between blood and blood, between law and commandments, statutes

a xviii. 31, 32.
b xx. 34. 1 Kings xvi. 1. 7. 12.
c xvi. 7.
d 1 Sam. ix. 9.
e xviii. 3. 28. 1 Kings xxi. 25. Ps. xv. 4. cxxxix. 21, 22. Prov. i. 10—19. Rom. i. 32. 2 John 10, 11.
f xviii. 7. Ex. xx. 5. John xv. 18. 23. Rom viii. 7. Jam iv. 4.
g xxxii. 25. Ps xc. 7, 8. Rom. i 18. 1 Cor. xi 31, 32.
h xvii 3—6. 1 Kings xiv. 13. Rom vii. 18.
i xii 14. xxx. 19. Ezra vii. 10. Ps. lvii. 7.
* Heb *returned and went out.* 1 Sam. vii. 15—17.
k Judg. xx. 1.
l Judg. xix. 1.
m xv. 8—13. xxix. 10, 11. 1 Sam. vii. 3, 4. Mal. iv. 6. Luke i. 17.
n Deut. xvi. 18—20. Rom. xiii 1—5. 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14.
o Josh xxii. 5. 1 Chr., xxviii. 10. Luke xii. 15. xxi 8.
p Deut i. 17. Ps. lxxxii. 1—6. Ec. v. 8.
† Heb. *matter of judgment.*
q Gen xlii. 18. Ex xviii. 21, 22. 25, 26. Neh. v. 15. Is. i. 23—26.
r Gen. xviii. 25. Deut. xxxii. 4. Rom. ix. 14
s Deut x 17, 18. Job xxxix. 17. Matt. xxii. 16. Acts x. 34 Rom. ii 11. Gal ii 6. Eph vi. 9 Col. iii. 25. 1 Pet. i. 17.
t Ex. xxiii. 8. Deut. xvi. 19. Is. i. 23. xxxiii. 15 Mic. vii. 3.
u xvii. 8. Deut xvii. 8—13. 1 Chr. xxiii. 4. xxvi. 29.
x Ex. xviii. 19—26. Deut. xxi. 5. xxv. 1.
y Deut i 16, 17. 2 Sam xxiii. 3 Is. xi 3—5. xxxii. 1.
z Deut. xvii. 8.

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the result of political enmity, and at best they proceed from mercenary self-love. Indeed the most enormous wickedness is often veiled under a show of piety.—A vast majority of professed ministers, *in many ages and places,* have been teachers of lies: who, whilst they acted their parts with the name of God in their mouths, have secretly been prompted by Satan, "deceiving and being deceived." We should therefore be careful not only to inquire of the Lord, but careful likewise *by whom* we inquire of him. And at the last, they who flatter the humours of the rich and great will be most favoured: and they that offend their pride, or disturb their consciences, will be hated, and may lay their account with hard usage: nay, such pious persons as associate with ungodly people, must often witness and appear to approve of, very abominable things. *The event,* however, will show faithful teachers in their proper light; so that even the wicked will be constrained to allow the propriety of their conduct. In the mean time let them go on with confidence in God, simply declaring his whole message, and patiently bearing the cross; for "great will "be their reward in heaven."—Satan is allowed to deceive those who reject the testimony of God's prophets: no policy can avert the stroke of his vengeance when the time arrives; nor can his people ever be destitute of a refuge. He both can and will extricate them even from those difficulties and perils into which they have sinfully run themselves, when they earnestly and humbly call upon him; and as he hath all hearts in his hand, he can easily rescue them in their most urgent distresses.—"O LORD God "of Hosts, blessed is the man that putteth his trust "in thee!"

NOTES.

CHAP. XIX. V. 1. This peaceful return home exceeded Jehoshaphat's expectations, and was contrary to his deserts: and he was thus discriminated from Ahab, to whom he had said, "I am as thou art."

V. 2, 3. Jehu was the son of Hanani, who was cast into prison by Asa for reproving him: yet he was not afraid of bringing a similar message to Jehoshaphat. That prince's alliance with a notorious idolater was a bad example to his subjects, which tended to counteract his endeavours for reformation: and Ahab's expedition was undertaken in defiance of the word of God, and attended with such circumstances as rendered Jehoshaphat inexcusable in helping him. For this misconduct "wrath was upon him from "before the LORD:" not the wrath of an Enemy or avenging Judge, but that of an offended Father; and the fatal effects of this affinity upon his family and kingdom, were as awful evidences of this wrath, as could be experienced by one that did not finally perish.

V. 4. Jehoshaphat went no more to Samaria, but stayed at home, and attended to the affairs of his own kingdom. Being assured that the Lord had graciously accepted of his endeavours for reformation, he made a circuit through his kingdom to perfect that work; and it seems that the people had relapsed into idolatry, regarding his intimacy with Ahab as a *dispensation* to such as chose to avail themselves of it.

and judgments, ye shall even [a] warn them that they trespass not against the LORD, and *so* [b] wrath come upon you, and upon your brethren: this do, and ye shall not trespass.

11 And, behold, [c] Amariah the chief priest *is* over you in [d] all matters of the LORD: and Zebadiah the son of Ishmael, the ruler of the house of Judah, for all the king's matters: also the Levites *shall be* officers before you. * Deal courageously, and the LORD shall be [e] with the good.

a Ez. iii. 18, 19. xxxiii. 6. Acts xx. 31.
b Num. xvi. 46. Josh. xxii. 18, 20.
c 1 Chr. vi. 11.
d 8. 1 Chr. xxvi. 30. Mal. ii. 7.
* Heb. *take courage and do.* Josh. i. 6. 9. 1 Chr. xxii. 11. 16. 19. 1 Cor. xvi. 13. 2 Tim. ii. 1.
e xv. 2. Ps. xviii. 25, 26. Rom. ii. 4—11.

CHAP. XX.

Jehoshaphat, alarmed by an invasion of the Moabites and others, proclaims a fast, 1—4. *His prayer,* 5—13. *Jahaziel, the prophet, assures him of a signal deliverance,* 14—17. *Jehoshaphat and his people receive the promise with adoring thankfulness,* 18, 19. *He exhorts them to believe, and appoints singers to praise the* LORD, 20, 21. *The invaders destroy one another, and the people gather immense spoils,* 22—25. *They bless God at Berachah, return in triumph, and enjoy peace,* 26—30. *Jehoshaphat's good reign and acts,* 31—34. *He joins with Ahaziah in sending ships to Tarshish, which are wrecked, according to the prediction of Eliezer,* 35—37.

IT came to pass [a] after this also, *that* [b] the children of Moab, and the children of Ammon, and with them *other*

a xix. 9, 15. xxx. 1.
b Ps. lxxxiii. 5-8. Is. vii. 1. viii. 9, 10. xvi. 6.

V. 5—11. In process of time irregularities and abuses in the magistracy had interrupted the regular administration of justice: but Jehoshaphat carefully reduced this likewise into order; and took care that judges and courts of justice should be established in every considerable town, for the benefit of the neighbourhood; but with appeal to the superior courts at Jerusalem. It seems that in all these courts the priests and Levites were joined with the principal persons of the other tribes: for the law of God was in an especial manner the statute-law of the realm; according to which both ecclesiastical causes, or the "judgment of the LORD," the pleas of the crown, or "the king's matters," and common pleas, or "controversies," were to be determined. This settlement was completed, when the king and his attendants returned to Jerusalem from the circuit of the land: and both in the country, and at Jerusalem, the king solemnly exhorted, and charged the magistrates to do the duty of their office, in the fear of the Lord; as acting by his authority, in his presence, under his protection, copying his impartial justice and equity, and looking forward to the account which they must shortly render to him. (*Marg. Ref.*)—Some interpret, *blood and blood*, relationship and titles to estates; but it seems rather to mean causes concerning murder, or maiming, or accidentally killing any one. The judges were required to warn the people not to transgress; as for other reasons, so lest others should be involved in the consequences of their crimes. The Targum renders part of the sixth verse in this manner: 'Ye do not judge before the 'sons of men, but before the WORD of the LORD; and his 'glorious presence resides among you in the act of judg'ment.'

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Nothing but perils, wrath, and painful effects, can be expected from *intimacies* with ungodly men; in proportion to the degree of their avowed hatred to the character, worship, and service of God: we ought therefore to shun all needless familiarity with them, and to show them and all the world, our disapprobation of their principles and conduct; whatever may be their rank, abilities, or accomplishments, or however political interest, or relative ties may plead for a coalition. We should bear them good-will, and be ready to relieve their distress, and to help them in their most important interests; but we should be cautious of involving ourselves with their secular undertakings, and still more of concurring with them in any of their sinful projects. The unmerited mercies of God are often united with severe rebukes and corrections; and these again are moderated by tokens of his approbation, where our conduct hath been good in his sight: for he would not have those discouraged, who "prepare their hearts to seek him;" and when there are *real* good things found in us, he will mercifully forgive the evil that we allow not, and accept the good, through the Saviour's advocacy. In these things we should be followers of God: we must not "hate our offending "brother, nor suffer sin upon him; but in any wise re"buke him;" (*Note, Lev.* xix. 17.) But we should take more pleasure in commending what is evidently good; and we should bear much from those in whom good things are found. Whilst ministers must not fear or respect the persons of men, or be intimidated by the sufferings of others in the same cause, but must deliver their whole message plainly: they should also endeavour to do it with forbearance, tenderness, and candour, which will render reproofs less offensive and more effectual: when these are prudently given and properly taken, they are not only salutary, but confer honour on both parties: and when, being united with due commendations, they excite men to renewed vigilance and diligence in their proper work, they become general benefits. The tendency of human nature to evil renders unremitting vigour necessary to all those who would suppress abuses and effect reformation; for on every relaxation, evils will revive and gather strength rapidly, and all will need to be done over again. The ministry and the magistracy, when restricted to their distinct methods, may concur in promoting godliness, as well as preserving public peace: and all legal decisions should be

c xix. 2. Jer. x. 24 Rev. iii. 19.

beside the Ammonites, came against Jehoshaphat to battle.

2 Then there came some that told Jehoshaphat, saying, There cometh a great multitude against thee from beyond [d] the sea on this side Syria; and, behold, they *be* in [e] Hazazon-tamar, which *is* [f] Engedi.

d Gen. xiv. 3. Num. xxxiv.12. Josh iii. 16.
e Gen. xiv. 7.
f Josh. xv. 62.

3 And Jehoshaphat [g] feared, and set * himself to [h] seek the LORD, and [i] proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.

g Gen. xxxii. 7—11. 24—28. Ps. lvi. 3, 4 Is. xxxvii. 3—6.
* Heb. *his face.*
h xi. 16. xix. 3
i Judg. xx. 26. 1 Sam. vii. 6. Ezra viii. 21—23. Esth. iv. 16. Jer. xxxvi. 9. Joel i. 14. ii 12—18. Jon. iii. 5—9.

4 And Judah gathered themselves together, to [k] ask *help* of the LORD: even out of all the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD.

k Ps. xxxiv. 5. 6. 1. 15. lx. 10—12.

5 And [l] Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD, before the new court,

l vi.12,13 xxxiv. 31. 2 Kings xix. 15—19.

6 And said, [m] O LORD God of our fathers, *art* not thou [n] God in heaven? and [o] rulest *not* thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and [p] in thine hand *is there not* power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee?

m Ex iii.6. 15. 16 1 Chr. xxix. 18.
n Deut. iv. 39. Josh. ii. 11 1 Kings viii. 23. Ps. lvii. 15. 16. lxvi. 1. Matt.vi. 9.
o 1 Chr xxix.11. 12 Ps. xlvii 2. 8. Dan. iv. 17 25 32—35
p Ps.lxii.11.Matt. vi. 13.

7 *Art* not thou [q] our God, * *who* didst [r] drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and [s] gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy [t] friend for ever?

q xiv. 11. Gen. xvii. 7. Ex.vi.7. xix. 5—7. xx. 2. 1 Chr xvii. 24—24.
* Heb. *thou.*
r Ps. xliv. 2.
s Gen. xii. 7.xiii. 15. Josh xxiv. 3.13. Neh. ix. 8.
t Is. xli. 8. John xv. 15. Jam. ii. 23.

8 And they dwelt therein, and have [u] built thee a sanctuary therein for thy name, saying,

u ii. 4. vi. 10.

9 [x] If, *when* evil cometh upon us, *as* the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we stand before this house, and in thy presence, (for [y] thy name *is* in this house,) and cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou wilt hear and help.

x vi. 28—30 1 Kings viii. 33 37.
y vi. 20. Ex. xx. 24. xxiii. 21.

10 And now, behold, the children of Ammon, and Moab, and mount Seir, [z] whom thou wouldest not let Israel in-

z Num.xx. 17-21. Deut. ii 4, 5. 9. 19. Judg. xi. 15—18.

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expedited in a regular and easy method, and with little expense; that the poor may be placed, as nearly as possible, at an equal advantage with the rich, in obtaining their dues. Magistrates are the vicegerents of the Governor and Judge of the world, and are therefore to be obeyed in all things lawful for the Lord's sake. But there lies an appeal from their decisions to a superior tribunal: and *they* should be reminded, that they will be exposed to condemnation, if they do not act uprightly in the fear of God, without respect of persons or taking of gifts. And besides executing the laws of man impartially, it is their duty also to warn men not to trespass against the Lord, lest wrath come upon them and their brethren. They should therefore take heed and deal courageously, not fearing the displeasure of man, but confiding in the protection of God, who is with them in the judgment; that he may indeed be with them for their good. May he provide increasing numbers of good ministers and magistrates, to suppress vice, and to promote the cause of truth and holiness!

NOTES.

CHAP. XX. V. 2. This formidable armament came from beyond the *dead sea*.—"The fear of the LORD had "fallen upon the kingdoms round about Judah;" and Jehoshaphat had so long enjoyed peace, that he seems to have neglected his military arrangements, and to have remitted of his vigilance. Perhaps his enemies observed this, and thought to take the advantage of it; and perhaps they had heard "that wrath was upon him from before the "LORD" for uniting with Ahab. Accordingly they had actually invaded his dominions, before he was apprised of their intention; so that he was not able to muster his forces.

V. 3, 4. Probably this invasion took place soon after Jehoshaphat's return from Ramoth; and he was afraid that God was about to chastise his sin, by permitting the devastation of his kingdom. To avert this calamity, "he "set himself to seek the LORD." We may suppose that he made the best military arrangement of which the exigency would admit; but his chief preparation consisted in proclaiming a fast, and gathering his people together to ask help of the Lord. We have read of *private fasting* with prayer; of *afflicting the soul* at the day of atonement; of the people's fasting at *the instance of Samuel the prophet;* and of the people fasting by *common consent;* (*Marg. Ref.*) But the fast here mentioned was observed by *the proclamation of the chief magistrate*, who acted by the authority of his station, and not by the Spirit of prophecy; and the event of this measure both warrants civil governors in times of distress to act in this manner, and encourages them to expect the most important benefits from it. Every one was called upon to humble himself before God for his own sins and the sins of the public, as the aggregate of the whole. Thus they united in expressing their sorrow and self-displacency for their sins: and they publicly honoured God as the righteous author of their calamity, and as their only hope and refuge in distress. All other cares being laid aside, they were at leisure to unite in uninterrupted and fervent prayers for help and forgiveness.—Doubtless serious impressions would be made on many who before had been inattentive; the pious affections of others would be revived, and rendered more fixed and lively; and in every way it would therefore tend to the honour of God and the good of his people.

V. 5. *New court.* It is not known what is here meant by the *new court.* It is probable that Jehoshaphat had rebuilt some of the courts, or had added one to them.

V. 6. After the example of Solomon, Jehoshaphat himself offered the public prayer for this vast congregation, in words which proceeded from the abundance of his heart: but a careful examination of the marginal references will be the best comment on them.

vade, when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned from them, and destroyed them not:

11 Behold, *I say,* [a] *how* they reward us, to come [b] to cast us out of thy possession, which thou hast given us to inherit.

12 O our God, wilt thou not [c] judge them? for [d] we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; [e] neither know we what to do: but [f] our eyes *are* upon thee.

13 And [g] all Judah stood before the LORD, with their little ones, their wives, and their children.

14 ¶ Then [h] upon Jahaziel, the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite, of the sons of Asaph, [i] came the Spirit of the LORD in the midst of the congregation:

15 And he said, Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat, Thus saith the LORD unto you, [k] Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for [l] the battle *is* not your's, but God's.

16 To-morrow go ye down against them: behold, they come up by the † cliff of Ziz; and ye shall find them at the end of the ‡ brook, before the wilderness of Jeruel.

17 [m] Ye shall not *need* to fight in this *battle;* set yourselves, [n] stand ye *still,* and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to-morrow go out against them: [o] for the LORD *will be* with you.

18 And Jehoshaphat [p] bowed his head with *his* face to the ground: and all Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, fell before the LORD, worshipping the LORD.

19 And [q] the Levites of the children of the Kohathites and of the children of the [r] Korhites, stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel, with [s] a loud voice on high.

20 And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and, as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, [u] Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; [x] Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; [y] believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.

a Ps. vii. 4. Jer. xviii. 20.
b Ps. lxxxiii. 3—12.
c Deut. xxxii. 36. Ps. vii. 6. 8. ix. 19. xliii. 1.
d xiv. 11. 1 Sam. xiv. 6. 2 Cor. i. 8, 9.
e 2 Kings vi. 15.
f Ps. xxv. 15. cxxi. 1, 2. cxxiii. 1, 2. cxli. 8. Jon. ii. 4.
g Deut. xxix. 10, 11. Jon. iii. 5. Acts xxi. 5.
h Is. lviii. 9. lxv. 24. Dan. ix. 20, 21. Acts x. 4 31.
i xv. 1. xxiv. 20. Num. xi. 25, 26. xxiv. 2.
k xxxii. 7, 8. Deut. i. 29, 30. xx. 1. 4. xxxi. 6. 8. Ps. xxvii. 1, 2. Is. xli. 10—16.
l 1 Sam. xvii. 47.

† Heb. *ascent.*
‡ Or, *valley.*
m 22, 23. Ex. xiv. 13, 14. 25.
n Ps. xlvi. 10, 11. Is. xxx. 7. 15.
o xv. 2. xxxii. 8. Num. xiv. 9. Is. viii. 9, 10. Matt. i. 23. xxviii. 20. Rom. viii. 31.
p vii. 3. Gen. xxiv. 25. Ex. iv. 31.
q 1 Chr. xv. 16—22. xvi. 5. 42. xxiii. 5. xxv. 1—7.
r Ps. xlv. *title.*
s v. 13 Ezra iii. 12, 13 Neh. xii. 42, 43. Ps. lxxxi. 1. xcv. 1, 2.
t xi. 6. 2 Sam. xiv. 2. 1 Chr. iv. 5. Jer. vi. 1.
u 15.
x Is. vii. 9. xxvi. 3. Rom. viii. 31.
y Ex. xiv. 31. John xiii. 20.

V. 10, 11. The mention of *mount Seir,* the country of Edom, shows what is meant in the first verse by "other "beside the Ammonites."—The Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites, had been expressly named as nations whom Israel must not invade: and the divine admonition had been exactly attended to. Other wars indeed had brought some of them under the dominion of Judah and Israel: but it seems the superiority had been used with gentleness, and no reason had been given for this violent assault; in which, it is probable, the confederates meant to destroy the kingdom of Judah and the house of David; as well as to expel the people of God, from that land which was "his pos-"session:" so that the war was indeed waged against the LORD himself.

V. 12. The language of this verse is peculiarly expressive of humble genuine faith. The appeal, as to the justice of the cause, is simply yet emphatically made to God: and the inability of Jehoshaphat, and the small force he had hastily collected to resist so vast an army; the perplexity to which he was reduced; and his only refuge from despair, by firmly relying on the Almighty, and expecting help from him, as pleading his own cause in pleading their's, are stated in the most natural and affecting manner; (*Marg. Ref.*) 'In this declining state of the church, let 'us say daily with Jehoshaphat, "We know not what to "do; but our eyes are unto thee." "Thine is the king-"dom, the power, and the glory." 'Thou art our King and 'our Shepherd. Thou only art powerful, we are infirm: 'but thy power will be perfected in our weakness.' "Not "unto us, O LORD, but unto thy name give the glory; "for thy mercy and thy truth's sake." 'Such addresses 'will illustrate this prayer, better than the largest commen-'taries.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 13. *With,* &c. Not only the women and children that were grown up, attended on this occasion, but the infants also: for, it is probable the people intended their presence as a silent plea with the Lord to have mercy upon them, for the sake of their helpless offspring. (*Note, Jonah* iv. 11.)

V. 14—17. The Lord did not speak, on this occasion, by the high-priest, but by an ordinary Levite, who it is probable was an eminently pious person. Whether he had previously been known as a prophet, or not, all present were satisfied that he spake by the Spirit of God. He assured them of the Lord's immediate interposition; for as the battle immediately concerned his honour, it would be decided by his power. Without any fear of the multitude of their invaders, they were ordered to march forth the next day, not to fight, but to witness the salvation of the Lord with them, and his answer to their fervent prayers.

V. 18, 19. The king and his people, placing the most entire confidence in the divine promise, at once anticipated its fulfilment, and directly joined in songs of gratitude and praise for this yet unaccomplished deliverance.

21 And when he had [z] consulted with the people, he [a] appointed singers unto the LORD, and that should ♦ praise [b] the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, [c] Praise the LORD; for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

22 And ‖ when they began * to sing and to praise, [d] the LORD set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, which were come against Judah; and they † were smitten.

23 For the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of mount Seir, utterly to slay and destroy *them:* and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, every one helped ‡ to destroy another.

24 And when Judah came toward the watch-tower in the wilderness, they looked unto the multitude, and, behold, they *were* [e] dead bodies fallen to the earth, and ♦ none escaped.

25 And when Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away the spoil of them, [f] they found among them in abundance both riches with the dead bodies, and [g] precious jewels, which they stripped off for themselves, more than they could carry away: and they were three days in gathering of the spoil, it was so much.

26 And on the fourth day they assembled themselves in the valley of ‖ Berachah; for there they [h] blessed the LORD: therefore [i] the name of the same place was called, The valley of Berachah [k] unto this day.

27 Then they returned, every man of Judah and Jerusalem, and Jehoshaphat in the * forefront of them, to go again to Jerusalem with joy; for [l] the LORD had made them to rejoice over their enemies.

28 And they came to Jerusalem with psalteries, and harps, and trumpets, unto the house of the LORD.

29 And [m] the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of *those* countries, when [n] they had heard that the LORD fought against the enemies of Israel.

30 So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet: for [o] his God gave him rest round about.

31 ¶ And [p] Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah: *he was* thirty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Azubah, the daughter of Shilhi.

32 And [y] he walked in [r] the way of Asa

z 1 Chr. xii. 1, 2. Prov. xi 14.
a xxix. 25 — 30. Ezra iii. 10, 11.
♦ Heb. *praisers of.*
b 1 Chr. xvi. 29. Ps. xxix. 2 1. 2. xc. 17. xcvi. 9.
c v. 13 vii. 3. 6. 1 Chr. xvi. 34. 41. Ezra iii 11. Ps. cvi. 1 cvii. 1. cxxxvi. 1, &c. Jer. xxxiii. 11.
‖ Heb *in the time that*, &c
* Heb. in *singing and praise.*
d Judg. vii. 22. 1 Sam. xiv. 16. 20. 2 Kings vi. 17. Ps. xxxv 5, 6. Is xix. 2. Ez. xxxviii. 21.
† Or, *smote one another*
‡ Heb. *for the destruction.*
e Ex. xiv. 30. Ps. cx 6. Is. xxxvii. 36. Jer. xxxiii. 5.
♦ Heb. there was *not an escaping.*
f Ex xii. 35, 36. 1 Sam xxx. 19, 20. 2 Kings vii. 8. 16. Ps lxviii. 12. Rom. viii. 37.
g Prov. iii. 15.
‖ *Blessing.*
h Ex. xv. 1—18. 2 Sam. xxii. 1. Ps. ciii. 1, 2. cvii. 21, 22. Luke i 68. Rev. xix 1—6
i Gen. xxviii. 19. xxxii. 30. Ex. xvii 15. 1 Sam. vii. 12. Is. lxii. 4. Acts i. 19.
k v. 9.
* Heb. *head.*
2 Sam vi. 15. Mic. ii. 13. Heb. vi. 20.
l Neh. xii 43. Ps. xx. 5. xxxi 7. Is. xxxv. 10 li. 11. Rev. xviii. 20.
m xvii. 10. Gen. xxxv. 5. Josh. v. 1. 2 Kings vii. 6.
n Ex. xv. 14—16. Josh. ii. 9—11. ix. 9—11.
o xiv. 6, 7. xv. 15. Josh. xxiii. 1. 2 Sam vii 1. Job xxxiv. 29. Prov. xvi. 7. John xiv. 27.
p 1 Kings xxii. 41—44.
q xvii. 3—6.
r xiv. 2—5. 11—13. 1 Kings xv. 11.

V. 20, 21. Jehoshaphat seems not much to have regarded the arrangement of his army; for he so firmly believed the words of the prophet, that he marched forth as to a triumph, and not to a battle: accordingly he exhorted his troops to a firm faith in God, and an entire reliance on his power, faithfulness, and covenanted mercy to his people; and a confident expectation, that all his words spoken to them by his prophets should be accomplished: thus, and thus only, could they be established, and prosper. He also caused singers to go before the army, "that should praise "the beauty of holiness:" that is, according to some expositors, exactly as *they used to do at his beautiful sanctuary.* But perhaps the expression rather means, that they should celebrate the glorious excellencies of his holy character, which render him the perfection of beauty, and the meet object of the most absolute love, confidence, and delight of all his rational creatures, especially, as "his mercy "which endureth for ever," is displayed in perfect harmony with his more awful attributes.

V. 22—25. Some commentators, both ancient and modern, think that angels were employed on this occasion, who came on the invaders by surprise, and slew some of them: and that the survivors supposed themselves assaulted by their confederates; and so retaliated, till they fell into utter confusion, and entirely destroyed one another. But perhaps the Lord only left the several nations to a natural distrust and jealousy of each other: and thus some of them formed ambushments against the rest, which ensued in their mutual destruction. Or, perhaps, the ambushments placed against the Jews, fell by mistake on their own allies. This however fulfilled God's purpose, as effectually as if he had placed the ambushments, or they had acted in obedience to his commandments. The slaughter was universal, and the spoil immense: so that this invasion served exceedingly to enrich Jehoshaphat and his kingdom.

V. 26. *Berachah* signifies *blessing.* Having previously sought deliverance, by fasting and prayer, and received the assurance of it with grateful joy, Jehoshaphat and his army returned immediate and most fervent thanks and praise to the Lord, who had in so wonderful a manner performed his promise. The whole forms a most remarkable and instructive history: and no undertaking, recorded in Scripture, was entered on, conducted, and concluded in a more unexceptionable manner.

V. 29, 30. When the surrounding nations perceived how wonderfully the Lord had destroyed this powerful armament, they dared not to attack Jehoshaphat any more; and thus God gave him rest round about, which continued during the remainder of his reign.

his father, and [s] departed not from it, doing *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD.

33 Howbeit [t] the high places were not taken away: for as yet the people [u] had not prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers.

34 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, first and last, behold, they *are* written in the * book of [x] Jehu the son of Hanani, who *is* † mentioned in the book of the kings of Israel.

35 ¶ And after this [y] did Jehoshaphat king of Judah join himself with Ahaziah king of Israel, [z] who did very wickedly:

36 And he joined himself with him to make ships to go to [a] Tarshish: and they made the ships in [b] Ezion-gaber.

37 Then Eliezer the son of Dodavah of Mareshah, prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, [c] Because thou hast joined thyself with Ahaziah, [d] the LORD hath broken thy works. And the ships were broken, that they were not able to go to Tarshish.

s xvi. 7–12.
t xiv. 3. xvii. 6.
u xii. 14. xix. 3.
* Heb. *words.*
x xix 2. 1 Kings xvi. 1. 7.
† Heb. *made to ascend.* B. C 896.
y 1 Kings xxii. 48, 49.
z 2 Kings 1.2–16.
a 1 Kings x. 22. *Tharshish.*
b 1 Kings ix. 26. *Ezion-geber.*
c xix. 2.
d xvi 9. Prov. ix 6. xiii. 20 Heb xii. 6.

V. 33. The minds of the people were not suitably prepared for the regular and cordial worship of God at Jerusalem: so that Jehoshaphat either did not dare to attempt, or was not able to effect, an entire and abiding suppression of all those high places where God was irregularly worshipped.

V. 35—37. Jehoshaphat's affinity with Ahab's family drew him in to join in this traffick with wicked Ahaziah; for which he was rebuked and chastened; and afterwards he refused to join with him. Ahaziah died within less than two years after Ahab, and Jehoshaphat survived him for a considerable time. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—13.

Uninterrupted peace must not be expected in this world, even when we are most devotedly serving God. The enemies of true religion are the more exasperated by our zeal to promote it; our own miscarriages require rebukes; trials are needful to repress pride; and difficulties form the proper exercise and discovery of our faith, love, patience, and hope in God. Thus his honour, the edification of others, the good of our own souls, and our situation in the midst of ungodly men, all require that "in the world we "should have tribulation."—In calamities or dangers, public or personal, our first business should be to seek help from God. When two or three agree in doing this, that concurrence adds energy to their supplications: how much more then, when multitudes with one accord pour out their fervent supplications for the same common blessing! Hence the advantage of days appointed for national fasting and prayer. Such seasons remind the remnant of believers to unite in the same requests, as with one heart and voice: and even the cries of natural men for outward mercies form an honourable acknowledgment of God, and of their entire dependence on him; and frequently receive a gracious answer. It is therefore commendable in christian princes to call their people to these solemn services, and indeed a most important part of their duty, and true wisdom: but it can scarcely be supposed that the mere appointment is sufficient: unless their own example proves that they are in earnest in the sacred service, let who will be formal. It is also the duty of every individual, according to his station in the community, to concur in such pious measures, and to stir up himself and those around him to engage cordially in them, that good impressions may be made, fixed, or revived in the minds of men in every place.—What then shall we think of those, who call themselves Christians and patriots; yet, not only neglect, but ridicule or revile, this scriptural method of seeking help in danger, from our almighty Friend, after an example so honoured by God himself! or of those, who give occasion to such reproach and contempt by their absurd and manifest hypocrisy in these observances!—The fear of wrath, when united with a hope of mercy, excites sinners to seek the Lord in good earnest; and is often useful to quicken the believer, when his love subsides, and he grows sluggish in the concerns of his soul. We must, therefore, first approach the holy majesty of our God with humiliation for our sin, justifying him in all we suffer or fear, and confiding only in his mercy for acceptance, and in his power for protection. And in all ages of the church, *fasting* has been deemed an expedient attendant upon such exercises, on particular occasions, personal and public, being expressive of a mind abstracted from and disrelishing earthly things, conscious of having forfeited every enjoyment by sin, and attentive only to obtain the great objects which the soul is then pursuing.—Every believer is a son of Abraham and a *friend of God:* with all such the everlasting covenant is established, and to them every promise belongs. Even in those distresses, which are intended for the correction of their sins, when they cry unto the Lord, he will hear and help them. *Their* enemies are *his;* and when they are rewarded with evil for good, *HE* will appear for them and plead their cause. When they are the most indisposed to avenge themselves, and least able to ward off injuries, their dependence on God will become more unreserved, and their prayers more fervent: and he will no more forsake those who know not what to do, but look up to him alone for help, than a fond mother will desert her helpless infant, that clings to her bosom, and knows and seeks no other refuge.—Indeed this is the very frame of mind to which he designs to form his people. The covenant is made with believers for the good of their children after them; and they should bring them and the rest of their families, as soon as possible, to the ordinances of God, that they may be trained up in his house, and become truly a part of his family.

CHAP. XXI.

Jehoshaphat dies; Jehoram succeeds, slays his brethren, and reigns wickedly, 1—7. *Edom and Libnah revolt,* 8—10. *He establishes idolatry,* 11 *Elijah's written prophecy against him,* 12—15. *The Philistines and Arabians invade and plunder his kingdom, and carry all his family captive except Jehoahaz,* 16, 17. *Elijah's prophecy fulfilled in his incurable disease and death; and his disgraceful funeral,* 18—20.

a 1 Kings xxii. 50. b 20.

NOW [a] Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers, and [b] was buried with his fathers in the city of David. And [c] Jehoram his son reigned in his stead.

c 2 Kings viii. 16, 17.

2 And he had brethren, the sons of Jehoshaphat, Azariah, and Jehiel, and Zechariah, and Azariah, and Michael, and Shephatiah: all these *were* the sons of Jehoshaphat king of Israel.

3 And their father [d] gave them great gifts of silver, and of gold, and of precious things, with fenced cities in Judah: but the kingdom gave he to Jehoram: because he *was* the first born.

d xi. 23. Gen. xxv. 6.

4 Now when Jehoram was risen up to the kingdom of his father, he strengthened himself, and [e] slew all his brethren with the sword, and *divers* also of the princes of Israel.

e 17. xxii. 8. 19. Gen. iv. 8. Judg. xi. 56, 57. 1 John iii. 12.

V. 14—35.

The Lord will surely speak peace to those who seek him in due manner: and when his word banishes our fears and calms our spirits, our prayers are answered in good measure, even previously to those providential deliverances, of which we have received a blessed pledge. —If our sins are pardoned, God is for us; and, "if He "be for us, who can be against us?" We need not be dismayed at the number and power of our enemies, or on account of our own weakness: the battle is the Lord's, and the victory is sure. We have only to observe his word of command, whether he call us to labour, to wrestle, and strive; or whether it become our part to "stand still, "and to see the salvation of the LORD." When vigorous faith receives the promises, their accomplishment is anticipated with humble gratitude. The Christian soldier may sing his songs of triumph, when marching to or conflicting in his spiritual battles, being assured of being more than conqueror, through the Saviour who hath loved him: and thus the joy and praise of the *church militant* emulate and anticipate those of the *church triumphant*. But, alas! our faith is apt to waver, and then our joys decline: believers need frequent exhortations to persevering faith and hope in God; and it becomes the strong thus to animate the weak. But as we cannot know the truth and promises of God, except by his prophets and apostles; how can we believe in him, unless we firmly credit their infallible testimony, as recorded in the sacred Scriptures? In proportion as we expect protection in this way from God, in obedient faith, we shall be established, and prosper; and shall adore the beauty of the divine holiness and the everlasting mercy of God in Christ Jesus, with thankful hearts: and the more generally this is done, the greater stability and success will attend the affairs of the nation. When we proceed in this manner, our enemies will fall before us; our trials will prove our gain; and our very sorrows will enrich our souls with more abundant rejoicing. The advantage will be all our own; but the whole glory will be ascribed to the Lord. We should always render our tribute of praise and gratitude for mercies received, when our hearts are impressed with a lively sense of the loving-kindness of God: as thanksgivings for public or private benefits, grow vapid by delay. But, alas! we find very few that are so prompt at returning thanks for favours vouchsafed, as they were in crying for relief in the hour of distress. (*Luke* xvii. 11—19.) Blessed be God, there are some honourable exceptions, whose example proves very useful to others also. —Mercy thus sought and improved will be durable; and if God give us rest, none will dare to molest us.—But the best of men seldom shine so bright in prosperity as in adversity, and even relapses into sin may be noticed in very valuable characters, which the Lord will mark with rebukes and chastenings. Many things must also remain imperfect in the church on earth; for there are many desirable regulations which the greatest reformers have not ventured to attempt, or have not been able to accomplish: and indeed, except men's hearts are prepared to seek the Lord, magistrates and ministers can do nothing effectual. The zealous however will never labour in vain. Much good will be done, though not all they desire. God will graciously accept their endeavours; and in heaven they will be associated with the spirits of just men made perfect, and be made like them in holiness and felicity.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXI. V. 2. The second Azariah, in the original, is called *Azariahu*.

V. 3. Perhaps Jehoram had acted the hypocrite during his father's life-time: but if he showed his evil disposition, Jehoshaphat, having no command from God, did not think it proper to set him aside; otherwise his brethren were better than he, more wise and more righteous; (13.) The succession of so vile a wretch as Jehoram, to pious Jehoshaphat, was a just judgment upon the men of Judah for "not "having prepared their hearts unto the God of their fa- "thers," during the preceding reigns.

V. 4. On one pretence or other Jehoram cruelly slew all his brethren, out of a jealous ambition, lest they should supplant him in his authority; which was probably increased by their reputation and favour with the people; and the affluence and authority to which Jehoshaphat had raised them. He slew some of the princes also, who perhaps had favoured them. Some think these were the magistrates whom Jehoshaphat had appointed. (xix.)

5 Jehoram *was* thirty and two years old when he began to reign, and [f] he reigned eight years in Jerusalem.

6 And he walked [g] in the way of the kings of Israel, like as did the house of Ahab; for [h] he had the daughter of Ahab to wife: and he wrought *that which was* evil in the eyes of the LORD.

7 Howbeit [i] the LORD would not destroy the house of David, [k] because of the covenant that he had made with David, and [l] as he promised to give a * light to him and to his sons for ever.

8 ¶ In his days [m] the Edomites revolted from under the † dominion of Judah, [n] and made themselves a king.

9 Then Jehoram went forth with his princes, and all his chariots with him: and he rose up by night, and smote the Edomites which compassed him in, and the captains of the chariots.

10 So the Edomites revolted from under the hand of Judah unto this day. The same time *also* did [o] Libnah revolt from under his hand; [p] because he had forsaken the LORD God of his fathers.

11 Moreover [q] he made high places in the mountains of Judah, and [r] caused the inhabitants of Jerusalem to commit [s] fornication, and [t] compelled Judah *thereto*.

12 ¶ And there came [u] a writing to him from [x] Elijah the prophet, saying, Thus saith the LORD God of David thy father, Because thou hast not walked [y] in the ways of Jehoshaphat thy father, nor [z] in the ways of Asa king of Judah,

13 But hast walked [a] in the way of the kings of Israel, and hast made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to go a [b] whoring, like to the whoredoms of the house of Ahab, and also [c] hast slain thy brethren of thy father's house, *which were* better than thyself:

14 Behold, with a great ‡ plague will the LORD smite [d] thy people, and [e] thy children, and thy wives, and all thy goods.

15 And thou *shalt have* great sickness [f] by disease of thy bowels, until [g] thy bowels fall out, by reason of [h] the sickness day by day.

16 ¶ Moreover [i] the LORD stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the [k] Philistines, and of the Arabians, that *were* near the Ethiopians:

17 And they came up into Judah, and brake into it, and § carried away all the substance that was found in the king's house, and [l] his sons also, and his wives; so that there was never a son left him, save [m] Jehoahaz, the youngest of his sons.

18 And after all this the LORD smote him in his bowels with [n] an incurable disease.

19 And it came to pass, that in process of time, after the end of two years, his bowels fell out by reason of his sickness: so he died of sore diseases: and his people

f 2 Kings viii. 16, 17.
g 1 Kings xvi. 25—33.
h xviii. 1. xxii 2. 2 Kings viii. 18. Neh. xiii. 25, 26.
i xxii. 11. Is. vii. 6, 7.
k 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Ps. lxxxix. 28—34. 39. Jer. xxxiii. 20—26.
l 2 Sam. vii. 12—17. 1 Kings xi. 13. 36. 2 Kings viii. 19. Ps. cxxxii. 17, 18. Luke i. 69. 79.
* Heb. *lamp*, or, *candle*.
m Gen. xxvii. 40. 2 Kings viii. 20—22.
† Heb. *hand*.
n 1 Kings xxii. 47. 2 Kings iii. 9.
o Josh. xxi. 13. 2 Kings xix. 8.
p xiii. 10. xv. 2. Deut. xxxii. 21. 1 Kings xi. 31. 33. Jer. ii. 19.
q Deut. xii. 2—4. 1 Kings xi. 7. Ps. lxxviii. 58. Ez. xx. 28.
r 1 Kings xiv. 9. 16. 2 Kings xxi. 11. Hab. ii. 15. Rev. ii. 20.
s 13. Lev. xvii. 7. xx. 5. 2 Kings ix. 22. Ps. cvi. 39. Ez. xvi. 15, &c. Rev. xvii. 1—5.
t xxxiii. 9. Dan. iii. 5, 6. 15. Rev. xiii. 15—17. xvii. 5, 6.
u Jer. xxxvi. 2. 23. 28—32. Ez. ii. 9, 10. Dan. v. 5. 25—29.
x 2 Kings ii. 11.
y xvii. 3, 4. 1 Kings xxii. 43.
z xiv. 2—5. 1 Kings xv. 11.
a 1 Kings xvi. 25. 30—33.
b 11. Ex. xxxiv. 15. Deut. xxxi. 16. 2 Kings ix. 22.
c 4. Gen. iv. 19—12. xlix. 21. 22. Judg. ix. 56, 57. 1 Kings ii. 31—33. Is. xxvi. 21. Hab. ii. 12. 1 John iii. 12.
‡ Heb. *plague*. Lev. xxvi. 21.
d Hos. v. 11. Mic. vi. 16.
e Ex. xx. 5.
f 18, 19. Num. v. 27. Deut. xxviii. 61. Acts xii. 23.
g Ps. cix. 18. Acts i. 18.
h 18. Deut. xxviii. 27. 35. 59. 67.
B. C. 884.
i xxviii. 11. 1 Sam. xxvi. 19. 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. 1 Kings xi. 14. 23. Ezra i. 1. 5. Is. xlv. 5—7. Am. iii. 6.
k xvii. 11.
§ Heb. *carried captive*. Job v. 3—5.
l xxii. 1. xxiv. 7.
m xxii. 1. *Ahaziah*. 6. *Azariah*.
n 15.

V. 5—11. (*Notes*, 2 *Kings* viii. 16—25.) Jehoram, though he obtained some advantages over the Edomites, could not re-establish his dominion. Libnah seems to have revolted, rather than submit to his idolatrous impositions.—The inhabitants of Jerusalem were induced by his persuasions to fall in with his idolatry; but the other parts of Judah were *compelled* to it by persecution.—All kinds of licentious and unnatural practices, to the extreme disgrace of human nature, were encouraged and even held sacred, in the worship of these abominable idols; as may undeniably be proved even from pagan authors!

V. 12. If the account of Elijah's translation be given according to the order of time in which it occurred, it happened before Jehoram reigned alone; (*Marg. Ref.*) But the Spirit of prophecy might direct Elijah to prepare this writing before his translation, in the foresight of Jehoram's crimes; and it might be left to Elisha, or some other prophet, to transmit it to him: and coming to him in that extraordinary manner, it would have a peculiarly awful energy.—But some have conjectured that *Elisha*, and not *Elijah* is here intended.—The opinion, found in Josephus, the Septuagint, and elsewhere, that this letter was sent by Elijah from heaven, only shows that the papists have not the honour of being the first inventors of such legendary tales.

V. 13. *Better*. Jehoram's brethren seem to have been pious persons, and hated for the same cause as Abel was hated by Cain.

V. 14. Many of the people had concurred in Jehoram's idolatry, and some of them must have been instruments in his base unnatural murders. They were therefore joined in his punishment; and he suffered by losing his subjects.

V. 16, 17. The spirit of these invaders was stirred up *against Jehoram*, and they seem not to have done any great mischief to the country or to Jerusalem. Having taken captive all his sons, except Jehoahaz or *Ahaziah*, (names of similar meaning,) they put them to death.—Athaliah the daughter of Ahab was left, to be a still further curse to the family of Jehoram. It is probable that she concealed herself and her youngest son.

o xvi. 14. Jer. xxxiv. 5.

made no burning for him, like the burning of his fathers.

p 5.

20 [p] Thirty and two years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years, and departed without * being desired. Howbeit they buried him in the city of David, but not in the sepulchres of the kings.

* Heb. *without desire.* xxiii. 21. Prov. x. 7. Jer. xxii. 18, 19. 28.

CHAP. XXII.

Ahaziah succeeds Jehoram, reigns wickedly, joins Jehoram king of Israel, and is slain by Jehu, 1—9. *Athaliah murders the seed royal, and usurps the throne,* 10. *Joash is preserved by Jehoshabeath,* 11, 12.

AND [a] the inhabitants of Jerusalem made [b] Ahaziah his youngest son king in his stead: for the band of men that came with the Arabians to the camp had [c] slain all the eldest. So Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah reigned.

2 [d] Forty and two years old *was* Ahaziah when he began to reign, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name also *was* [e] Athaliah the daughter of Omri.

3 He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab: for [f] his mother was his [g] counsellor to do wickedly.

4 Wherefore he did evil in the sight of the LORD, like the house of Ahab: for [h] they were his counsellors, after the death of his father, to his destruction.

a xxiii. 3. xxvi. 1. xxxiii. 25. xxxvi. 1.
b 6 *Azariah.* xxi. 17. *Jehoahaz.* 1 Chr. iii. 11.
c xxi. 16, 17.
d 2 Kings viii. 26.
e xxi. 6. 1 Kings xvi. 28.
f Gen. vi. 4, 5. Deut xiii 6—9. Judg xvii. 4, 5. Neh xiii. 23—27. Mal. ii. 15. Matt. xiv. 8—11.
g Gen. xxvii. 12, 13. Matt x. 37.
h xxiv. 17, 18. Prov. i. 10. xiii. 20 xix 27.

V. 18—20. Jehoram lived to witness the fulfilment of the other most afflictive particulars of Elijah's prophecy; and then he was seized with the predicted malady. He was a young man, yet he could get no relief from the most painful and loathsome disease; and "he departed without "being desired." No one regretted his death, as none had desired his recovery; but the idolaters, and even his dependents, were glad to be relieved from his tyranny: they therefore burnt no sweet spices in honour of him, and refused to bury him among their former kings.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The effects of sin may be very dreadful and durable, even when it doth not prove finally destructive to him that committed it.—No means can ensure divine grace to our children: but connexions with atrocious sinners almost render their ungodliness certain.—We are reminded to bless God for equitable rulers, a mild administration, and a well poised constitution, and to pray for a continuation of these blessings: for notwithstanding the most prudent regulations, we may be suddenly and irreparably bereaved of them, unless God mercifully protect us.—Ambition, envy, and jealousy destroy natural affection, and convert men into savage monsters, when they have got power in possession and are afraid of losing it, and when there is no fear of God before their eyes. In the mystery of Providence such men prosper for a time, and murder much wiser and better men than themselves: but the Lord hath righteous purposes in permitting such events; part of which may now be discerned, and all the rest will be discovered by the light of the eternal world.—The vilest characters are in some way connected in the great chain of causes and effects: and are reserved to be undesignedly instrumental in carrying on the purposes of God, and in fulfilling his promises to his church and servants: or they are spared a while, for the sake of their relation to those whom he delighteth to honour. But his plan will not long require them; their measure of iniquities will speedily be full, and then all their prosperity will end in ruin and despair.—The Lord, by one means or other, reminds offenders of their guilt, and warns them of their danger: and they who despise these admonitions, will experience the truth of them when it is too late; for when neither judgments nor respites bring men to repentance, destruction cannot be far distant.—The dreadful torments and deaths of some murderers, persecutors, and other haughty criminals who defy human justice, proclaim, that "Verily there is a God, that judgeth "the earth," and show what all such enemies of God and man may expect, in the day of wrath and righteous vengeance. None need lament the departure of those who were plagues and tempters whilst they lived: and it may be right, in some cases, to withhold customary respect from them after their death, that other tyrants, whilst surrounded by sycophants who flatter them in their crimes, may understand how they are despised and abhorred in the general sentiments of mankind. May the Lord enable us so to live, that we may have hope and comfort in the approach and agonies of death, and a joyful entrance into glory; and that our survivors may have to bless God for the benefit they have received from us, and to regret their loss of us! Of this we should be ambitious; and such honour have all the saints of God.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXII. V. 1. The Arabians seem to have taken Jehoram's family captive, in prospect of obtaining a ransom: but some band of men in their camp slew them; and thus defeated their purpose, but accomplished that of God.

V. 2. *Forty-two.* As Jehoram was under forty years old when he died, it *must* be granted that this is an error of the transcribers, and that it should be *twenty-two,* as in Kings, and in some ancient versions. Ahaziah was born when his father was eighteen years of age, yet he had several elder brethren: so that Jehoram must have been married to Athaliah when he was very young; and this circumstance rendered Jehoshaphat's conduct in this alliance still more blame-worthy.

5 He [i] walked also after their counsel, and [k] went with Jehoram the son of Ahab king of Israel, to war against Hazael king of Syria at [l] Ramoth-gilead: and the Syrians smote Joram.

6 And he returned to be healed in Jezreel, because of the wounds * which were given him at Ramah, when he fought with Hazael king of Syria. And [m] Azariah the son of Jehoram king of Judah went down [n] to see Jehoram the son of Ahab at Jezreel, because he was sick.

7 And the † destruction of Ahaziah [o] was of God by coming to Joram: for when he was come, [p] he went out with Jehoram against Jehu the son of Nimshi, whom [q] the LORD had anointed to cut off the house of Ahab.

8 And it came to pass, that [r] when Jehu was executing judgment upon the house of Ahab, and found the princes of Judah, and the sons of the brethren of Ahaziah, that ministered to Ahaziah, he slew them.

9 And [s] he sought Ahaziah; and they caught him, (for he was held [t] in Samaria,) and brought him to Jehu: and when they had slain him, they buried him: [u] Because, said they, he *is* [x] the son of Jehoshaphat, who sought the LORD with all his heart. So [y] the house of Ahaziah had no power to keep still the kingdom.

10 But when [z] Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the seed-royal of the house of Judah.

11 But [a] Jehoshabeath the daughter of the king took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him from among the king's sons that were slain, and put him and his nurse in a [b] bed-chamber. So Jehoshabeath the daughter of king Jehoram, the wife of [c] Jehoiada the priest, (for she was the sister of Ahaziah,) hid him from Athaliah, so that [d] she slew him not.

12 And he was with them [e] hid in the house of God six years: and [f] Athaliah reigned over the land.

i Ps. i. 1.
k 2 Kings viii. 28, 29.
l xviii. 3. 31. xix. 2. 1 Kings xxii. 3, 4. Dan. v. 22, 23.
* Heb. *with which they wounded him.*
m i. 7. *Ahaziah.* xxi. 17. *Jehoahaz.*
n 2 Kings viii. 29. x. 13, 14.
† Heb. *treading down.* Mal. iv. 3.
o x. 15. Judg. xiv. 4. 1 Kings xii. 15. xxii. 20. Ps. ix. 16. Is. xlvi. 10.
p 2 Kings ix. 21
q 1 Kings xix. 16. 2 Kings ix. 1—7.
r 2 Kings x. 11—14.
s 2 Kings ix. 27.
t 1 Kings xiii. 32.
u 2 Kings ix. 28. 34.
x xvii. 3, 4. xxi. 20.
y i. 8. xxii. 4. 17.
z 2—4. 2 Kings xi. 1, &c.
a 2 Kings xi. 2 *Jehosheba.*
b Ez. xl. 45, 46.
c xviii. 1.
d xxi. 7. 2 Sam vii. 13. 1 Kings xv. 4. Ps xxxiii 10. lxxvi. 10. Prov. xxi. 30. Is. lxv. 8. Acts iv. 28.
e Ps. xxvii. 5.
f Ps. xii. 8 lxxiii 14. 18. 19. Jer xii. 1. Hab 12.

CHAP. XXIII.

Jehoiada takes proper measures, and makes Joash king, 1—12. *Athaliah is slain,* 12—15. *Jehoiada subverts idolatry; restores the worship of God, and places Joash on the throne, to the great joy of the people,* 16—21.

AND in the [a] seventh year Jehoiada strengthened himself, and took the captains of hundreds, Azariah the son of

B. C. 878.
a 2 Kings xi. 4, &c.

V. 5. 'Ahaziah would not imitate his grandfather in 'that which was good:—yet he followed his bad example 'in joining with Ahab's son, as Jehoshaphat had with 'Ahab.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)—This propensity in human nature, not only to copy bad examples, but even to select the bad part of good characters for imitation, is an awful and conclusive proof of deep depravity.

V. 6. The name given the king of Judah in this verse though in the translation it varies only in a single letter, is more different in the original, and seems to have been a distinct name by which he was known.—It signifies *the help of the* LORD.

V. 7. The Lord was pleased to commission Jehu, at this crisis, in order that Ahaziah might be involved in the righteous judgment which was executed upon the house of Ahab.

V. 8. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 9. Ahaziah lay concealed in some part of the kingdom of Samaria, though not in the city so called. When he had seen Jehoram slain, he fled, and endeavoured to conceal himself in some part of that country: but Jehu ordered him to be pursued, and at length he was taken at Megiddo, and brought to Jehu, who ordered him to be put to death. His servants were however permitted to carry his corpse to Jerusalem, and bury him out of respect to the memory of Jehoshaphat his grandfather: whilst Jehoram was left unburied, in detestation of his father Ahab's enormous wickedness.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

No tongue can express, no imagination can conceive the guilt and condemnation of those parents who *counsel* their own children to do wickedly, and who thus become their murderers in the most awful sense! Yet this fatal calamity to families and to society, is frequently the consequence of contracting marriages with wicked people!—They, who are not previously disposed to ungodliness and vice, will not hearken to such pernicious counsellors: and neither the persuasion, authority, example, nor favour even of a parent, is to be regarded, when the will and honour of God are concerned. But when men hate the truth and service of God, they are judicially left to be seduced and deceived, till their impolicy and impiety concur in bringing destruction upon them.—There is no fleeing or hiding from that evil which pursueth sinners; or from those instruments, that God employs to execute judgment upon his enemies: and the external respect paid to them, for the sake of pious ancestors, will not

Jehoram, and Ishmael the son of Jehohanan, and Azariah the son of Obed, and Maaseiah the son of Adaiah, and Elishaphat the son of Zichri, into [b] covenant with him.

2 And they [c] went about in Judah, and gathered the Levites out of all the cities of Judah, and [d] the chief of the fathers of Israel, and they came to Jerusalem.

3 And all the congregation [e] made a covenant with the king in the house of God. And he said unto them, Behold, the king's son shall reign, [f] as the LORD hath said of the sons of David.

4 This *is* the thing that ye shall do; A third part of you [g] entering on the sabbath, of the priests and of the Levites, *shall be* [h] porters of the * doors;

5 And a third part *shall be* at [i] the king's house; and a third part at [k] the gate of the foundation: and all the people *shall be* in the courts of the house of the LORD.

6 But let none come into the house of the LORD save the priests, and [l] they that minister of the Levites; they shall go in, for they *are* holy: but all the people shall keep the watch of the LORD.

7 And [m] the Levites shall compass the king round about, every man with his weapons in his hand; and [n] whosoever *else* cometh into the house, he shall be put to death: but be you with the king when he cometh in, and when he goeth out.

8 So [o] the Levites and all Judah did according to all things that Jehoiada the priest had commanded, and took every man his men that were to come in on the sabbath, with them that were to go *out* on the sabbath: for Jehoiada the priest dismissed not [p] the courses.

9 Moreover Jehoiada the priest delivered to the captains of hundreds, [q] spears, and bucklers, and shields, that *had been* king David's, which *were* in the house of God.

10 And he set all the people, every man having his weapon in his hand, from the right † side of the temple to the left side of the temple, [r] along by the altar and the temple, by the king round about.

11 Then [s] they brought out the king's son, and [t] put upon him the crown, and *gave him* [u] the testimony, and made him king. And Jehoiada and his sons [x] anointed him, and said, ‡ God save the king.

12 ¶ Now [y] when Athaliah heard the noise of the people running and praising the king, [z] she came to the people into the house of the LORD:

13 And she looked, and, behold, [a] the king stood at his pillar at the entering in, [b] and the princes and the trumpets by the king: and [c] all the people of the land rejoiced, and [d] sounded with trumpets; also [e] the singers with instruments of music; and such as taught to sing praise. Then Athaliah rent her clothes, and said ‖ Treason, Treason.

14 ¶ Then Jehoiada the priest brought out the captains of hundreds that were set over the host, and said unto them, Have her forth of the ranges: and [f] whoso followeth her, let him be slain with the sword. For the priest said, [g] Slay her not in the house of the LORD.

15 So they laid hands on her; and when she was come to the entering [h] of

b xv. 12. 1 Sam. xviii. 3. Neh. ix. 38.
c Ps. cxii. 5. Matt. x. 16. Eph. v. 15.
d xi. 13—17. 1 Chr. xv. 12. xxiv. 6.
e 16. 2 Sam. v. 3. 2 Kings xi. 17. 1 Chr. xi. 3.
f vi. 16. vii. 18. xxi. 7. 2 Sam. vii. 16. 1 Kings ii. 4. ix. 5. Ps. lxxxix. 29. 36.
g 1 Chr. ix. 26. xxiii. 3—6. xxiv. 3—6. Luke i. 8, 9.
h 1 Chr. xxvi. 13—16.
* Heb. *thresholds.*
i 2 Kings. xi. 5, 6. Ez. xliv. 2, 3. xlvi. 2, 3.
k Acts iii 2
l 2 Kings xi. 6, 7. 1 Chr. xxiii. 23—32.
m 2 Kings xi. 8, 9.
n Ex. xix. 12, 13. xxi. 14.
o 2 Kings xi. 9.
p 1 Chr. xxiv. xxv. xxvi.
q 1 Sam. xxi. 9 2 Sam. viii. 7
† Heb. *shoulder of the house.* 2 Kings xi. 11.
r vi. 12. Ex. xl. 6. Matt. xxiii. 35.
s xxii. 11. 1 Kings ii. 12.
t 2 Sam. i. 10. Ps. xxi. 3. lxxxix. 39 cxxxii. 18. Heb. ii. 9. Jam. i. 12 ii 5. Rev. iv. 4 10 v. 10. xix. 12.
u Ex. xxv. 16. xxxi 18. Deut. xvii. 18 Ps. ii. 10—12. lxxviii. 5. Is. viii. 16. 20. xlix. 23.
x 1 Sam. x. 1. 2 Sam. v. 3. 1 Kings i. 39. Ps. lxxxix. 20. Acts iv. 26, 27.
‡ Heb. *Let the king live.* 1 Sam. x. 24. 2 Sam. xvi. 16 1 Kings i. 34 Matt. xxi. 9.
y 2 Kings xi. 13—16.
z 2 Kings ix. 32—37.
a xxxiv. 31. 2 Kings xxiii. 3.
b Num. x. 1—10. 1 Chr xv. 24.
c 1 Kings. i. 39, 40. 1 Chr. xiii. 40. Prov. xi 10. xxix. 2.
d Judg vii. 8. 18—22. 2 Kings ix. 13.
e 1 Chr. xv. 16—22. 27. xxv. 1—8.
‖ Heb. *conspiracy.* 1 Kings xviii. 17, 18. 2 Kings ix. 23. Rom. ii. 1, 2.
f 2 Kings x. 25. xi. 8. 15.
g Ex. ix. 7.
h Neh. iii. 28.

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prevent the ruin of their own souls, or that of their families.—The most desperate and prosperous workers of iniquity, who are hardened against every natural affection, as well as all remains of the fear of God, can do no more than execute his righteous purposes: but he will not suffer his promises to be broken; and if infants, or pious persons, be permitted to be cut off in such unnatural massacres, he will set all right in the eternal world.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIII. V. 3. These "chief fathers of Israel" seem to have been the descendants of those priests and Levites from the ten tribes, who left their cities and joined themselves to Judah, in the days of Jeroboam. (*Marg. Ref.*) The word Israel, however, is sometimes used as a general term for the nation, and so applied to the people of Judah.

V. 6. "The house of the LORD" must here mean *the inner court:* for no mere Levites entered the sanctuary. This serves to show, that on some occasions the people were admitted into the inner courts; else the injunction had been needless.

V. 11. Probably Zechariah, the son of Jehoaida, who was afterwards stoned by Joash's command, assisted in crowning and anointing him.

the horse-gate, by the king's house, [i] they slew her there.

16 And Jehoiada [k] made a covenant between him, and between all the people, and between the king, [l] that they should be the LORD's people.

17 Then all the people went to [m] the house of Baal, and brake it down, and [n] brake his altars and his images in pieces, and [o] slew Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars.

18 Also Jehoiada appointed the officers of the house of the LORD by the hand of the priests the Levites, [p] whom David had distributed in the house of the LORD, to offer the burnt-offerings of the LORD, [q] as *it is* written in the law of Moses, with rejoicing and with singing, *as it was ordained* * by David.

19 And he set the [r] porters at the gates of the house of the LORD, that none *which was* unclean in any thing should enter in.

20 And he took [s] the captains of hundreds and the nobles, and the governors of the people, and all the people of the land, and brought down the king from the house of the LORD: and they came through the high gate into the king's house, and set the king upon the throne of the kingdom.

21 And [t] all the people of the land rejoiced: and the city was quiet, after that they had slain Athaliah with the sword.

i xxii. 10. Judg. i 7. Matt vii 2. Jam. ii. 13. Rev. xvi. 5—7.
k xv. 12.14.xxix. 10.xxxiv.31, 32. Deut. v. 2, 3. xxix. 1. 10—15. 2 Kings xi. 17. Ezra x. 3. Neh. v. 12, 13. ix. 38. x. 29, &c.
l Deut. xxvi 17—19. Josh. xxiv. 21—25. Is. xliv. 5.
m xxxiv. 4. 7. 2 Kings x. 25—28. xi. 18. xviii. 4.
n Deut. xii. 3. Is. ii. 18. Zech. xiii. 2, 3.
o Deut. xiii. 5. 9. 1 Kings xviii.46. 2 Kings xi 18, 19.
p 1 Chr. xxiii. xxiv.
q Num. xxviii. 2, &c.
* Heb *by the hands of David.* xxix 25. 1 Chr. xxv.
r 1 Chr.ix 23, 24 xxvi.
s 2 Kings xi. 9, 10. 19.
t 2 Kings xi. 20. Ps. lviii. 10. Prov xi 10 Rev. xviii. 20. xix. 2—4.

CHAP. XXIV.

Joash reigns well during Jehoiada's life; and zealously repairs the temple, 1—14. *Jehoiada dies, and is honourably buried,* 15, 16. *Joash, seduced by his princes, falls into idolatry; and causes Zechariah, Jehoiada's son, to be stoned, for reproving him in the name of God,* 17—21. *Zechariah's dying prediction,* 22. *Joash is spoiled by the Syrians, left sick, and then slain by his own servants,* 23—26. *Amaziah succeeds him,* 27.

[a] JOASH *was* seven years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also *was* Zibiah of Beer-sheba.

2 And [b] Joash did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD [c] all the days of Jehoiada the priest.

3 And Jehoiada [d] took for him [e] two wives; and he begat sons and daughters.

4 ¶ And it came to pass after this, *that* Joash was minded to * repair the house of the LORD.

5 And he gathered together the priests and the Levites, and said to them, Go out unto the cities of Judah, and [f] gather of all Israel money to repair the house of your God from year to year, and see that ye hasten the matter. [g] Howbeit the Levites hastened *it* not.

6 And the king called for Jehoiada

a 2 Kings xi. 21 xii. 1. *Jehoash.* 1 Chr. iii. 11.
b xxv. 2. xxvi.4, 5 2 Kings xii. 2. Ps. lxxviii. 36, 37 cvi. 12. 13. Mark iv 16, 17.
c 17—22.
d Gen. xxi. 21. xxiv. 4.
e Gen. iv. 19. Matt xix. 4—8. B. C. 865.
* Heb. *renew.* 5—7.
f xxix. 3. xxxiv. 8, 9. 2 Kings xii. 4, 5.
B. C. 856.
g 2 Kings xii.6, 7.

V. 16. Jehoiada, as priest and probably high-priest, represented God in this solemn transaction.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord commonly effects great and important changes, by those persons whom he hath furnished with wisdom, courage, piety, and integrity; and who intend to do his will and promote his glory, and not to advance their own interests. In the greatest emergencies care ought to be taken that sacred things be not profaned; and that every one concur in a manner consistent with his character and calling: and as ministers are by profession *holy persons*, they should be careful to exhibit holy examples. Civil transactions should be managed with a regard to the word and worship of God; and whilst men's hearts overflow with good wishes for their princes, commendations of them, or joy in their advancement; they should remember to terminate all in thanksgivings and praises unto God. This is peculiarly becoming, when persecuting tyrants and usurpers are removed, and equitable rulers come in their places: the work is the Lord's, whatever instruments he is pleased to employ. Such national mercies should be acknowledged by public reformations; and by a concurrence of all ranks, in solemnly yielding themselves up to be the Lord's people, and in establishing his worship and ordinances according to his word. Where this is neglected, the joy and singing, which take place upon great deliverances, or the accession of kings to the throne, will commonly be short-lived, and will terminate in complaints, discords, and calamities.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIV. V. 3. The Jewish expositors are of opinion, that Jehoiada took these two wives for himself, not for Joash: and they consider this as inconsistent with the character of the high-priest. But it is most obvious to understand the words, *for him*, of Joash. It is not indeed expressly said that Jehoiada was high-priest, but the way in which he is distinguished from the other priests, and the authority which he exercised, seem to put it beyond all reasonable doubt, that he was.

the chief, and said unto him, [h] Why hast thou not required of the Levites to bring in out of Judah, and out of Jerusalem, [i] the collection, *according to the commandment* of Moses the servant of the LORD, and of the congregation of Israel, for the [k] tabernacle of witness?

7 For the [l] sons of Athaliah, [m] that wicked woman, had broken up the house of God; and also all the dedicated things of the house of the LORD [n] did they bestow upon Baalim.

8 And [o] at the king's commandment they made a chest, and set it without at the gate of the house of the LORD.

9 And they made a * proclamation through Judah and Jerusalem, to bring in to the LORD the [p] collection, *that* Moses the servant of God *laid* upon Israel in the wilderness.

10 And all the princes and all the people [q] rejoiced, and brought in, and cast into the chest, until they had made an end.

11 Now it came to pass, that [r] at what time the chest was brought into the king's office by the hand of the Levites, and when they saw that *there was* much money, the king's scribe and the high-priest's officer came and emptied the chest, and took it, and carried it to his place again. Thus they did day by day, and gathered money in abundance.

12 And the king and Jehoiada [s] gave it to such as did the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and hired [t] masons and carpenters to repair the house of the LORD, and also such as wrought iron and brass to mend the house of the LORD.

13 So the workmen wrought, and † the work was perfected by them, and they set the house of God [u] in his state, and strengthened it.

14 And when they had finished *it*, they brought the rest of the money before the king and Jehoiada, whereof were made [x] vessels for the house of the LORD, *even* [y] vessels to minister, and ‡ to offer *withal*, and spoons, and vessels of gold and silver. And they [z] offered burnt-offerings in the house of the LORD continually [a] all the days of Jehoiada.

15 ¶ But Jehoiada waxed old, and was [b] full of days when he died: [c] an hundred and thirty years old *was he* when he died.

16 And they buried him [d] in the city of David among the kings, [e] because he had done good in Israel, both towards God, and towards his house.

17 ¶ Now [f] after the death of Jehoiada, came [g] the princes of Judah, and made obeisance to the king. Then the king hearkened unto them.

18 And [h] they left the house of the LORD God of their fathers, and served groves and idols: and [i] wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this their trespass.

h 2 Sam. xxiv. 3.
i Ex. xxx. 12—16.
k Num i. 50. xvii. 7, 8. xviii. 2. Acts vii. 44.
l xxi. 17.
m xxviii. 22—24. Esth vii. 6. Prov. x. 7. 2 Thes. ii. 8. Rev. ii. 20.
n Deut. xxxii. 15—17. Ez. xvi. 17, 19—21. Dan. v. 2—4. 23. Hos. ii. 8, 9.
o 2 Kings xii. 8, 9. Mark xii. 41.
* Heb. *voice.*
p 9. Matt. xvii. 24—27.
q 1 Chr. xxix. 9. Is. lxiv. 5. Acts ii. 45—47. 2 Cor. viii. 2.
r 2 Kings xii. 10—12.
s xxxiv. 9—11.
t 1 Kings v. 15.
† Heb. *the healing went up upon the work by their hand* Neh. iv. 7.
u 1 Chr. xxviii. 5. Hag. ii. 3. Mark xiii. 1, 2.
x 2 Kings xii. 13, 14.
y 1 Kings vii. 50.
‡ Or, *pestils.* Pro. xxvii. 22.
z Ex. xxix. 38—42. Num xxviii. 2, &c.
a 2.
B. C. 845
b Gen. xv. 15. xxv. 8. 1 Chr. xxiii. 1. Job v. 26. Ps. xci. 16.
c Gen. xlvii. 9. Ps. xc. 10.
d 1 Sam. ii. 30. 1 Kings ii. 10. Acts ii. 29.
e xxii. xxxi. 20, 21. Neh. xiii. 14. Heb. vi. 10.
f Deut. xxxi. 27. Acts xx. 29, 30. 2 Pet. i. 15.
g x. 8—10. xxii. 3, 4. Prov. vii. 21—23. xx. 19. xxvi. 28. xxix. 5. Dan. xi. 32.
B. C. 840
h 4. xxi. 13. xxxiii. 3—7. 1 Kings xi. 4, 5. xiv. 9. 23.
i xix. 2. xxviii. 13. xxix. 8. Josh. xxii. 20. Judg. v. 8. 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. Hos. v. 11.

V. 7. (*Note*, 2 *Kings* xii. 6—12. *Marg. Ref.*)

V. 8—14. (*Note*, 2 *Kings* xii. 13—15.)

V. 15, 16. Jehoiada was born in the reign of Solomon, and had lived through six successive reigns, besides Athaliah's usurpation! He was honourably interred among the kings of Judah: but the *reason assigned for this extraordinary respect* was much more honourable; and perhaps it was inscribed on his monument. "He had done good in Is-"rael, both towards God, and towards his house." He had eminently promoted true religion, and forwarded the regular worship of God, and the repairs of the temple; in which the best interests of the people were greatly concerned. He had also been exceedingly useful in preserving the line of David in the person of Joash, and in terminating Athaliah's wicked usurpation. Israel, the general name of the whole nation, is sometimes used when the kingdom of Judah is meant.

V. 17, 18. Jehoiada had acquired his influence over Joash during his childhood; and his near relation to the king, and the vast obligations which he had conferred upon him, concurred with his age, gravity, reputation, piety, and wisdom, in supporting him in authority. So that, whilst he lived, neither Joash nor his courtiers ventured to follow, or even to declare, their inclinations to idolatry, but externally conformed to Jehoiada's regulations. As soon however as he was removed, they threw off the mask; and the nobles paid court to Joash, and perhaps flattered him; as at length freed from priestly domination, tuition, grave lectures, and restraints, and as being now a king indeed: and intimated, that he would have no objection to release the rigour of Jehoiada's administration in matters of religion. Perhaps they only proposed, that he should tolerate their sacrificing upon the high places, as more convenient and agreeable to them, than always coming to Jerusalem: but he, being won by their homage, as well as induced by his own inclinations, joined with them even in more avowed idolatry; in consequence of which, they soon experienced some tokens of the divine displeasure. (*Note*, 2 *Kings* xii. 17, 18.)

19 Yet [k] he sent prophets to them, to bring them again unto the LORD; and they testified against them: but they would not [l] give ear.

20 And [m] the Spirit of God [n] came upon Zechariah [o] the son of Jehoiada the priest, which stood above the people, and said unto them, Thus saith God, [p] Why transgress ye the commandments of the LORD, that ye cannot prosper? [q] because ye have forsaken the LORD, he hath also forsaken you.

21 And they [r] conspired against him, and [s] stoned him with stones at the commandment of the king, in the court of the house of the LORD.

22 Thus Joash the king [t] remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but slew his son. And when he died, he said, [u] The LORD look upon *it*, and require *it*.

23 ¶ And it came to pass * at the end of the year, *that* [x] the host of Syria came up against him: and they came to Judah and Jerusalem, and destroyed [y] all the princes of the people from among the people, and sent all the spoil of them unto the king of † Damascus.

24 For the army of the Syrians [z] came with a small company of men, and the LORD [a] delivered a very great host into their hand, because they had forsaken the LORD God of their fathers. [b] So they executed judgment against Joash.

25 And when they were departed from him, (for they left him in [c] great diseases,) [d] his own servants conspired against him, [e] for the blood of the sons of Jehoiada the priest, and slew him on his bed, and he died: and they buried him in the city of David, but they buried him [f] not in the sepulchres of the kings.

26 And these *are* they that conspired against him, ‡ Zabad the son of Shimeath an Ammonitess, and Jehozabad the son of § Shimrith a Moabitess.

27 Now *concerning* his sons, and the greatness of the [g] burdens *laid* upon him, and the ‖ repairing of the house of God, behold they *are* written in the * story of the book of the kings. And [h] Amaziah his son reigned in his stead.

k xxxvi. 15, 16. 2 Kings xvii 13—15. Neh. ix 26. Jer vii 25, 26. xxv. 4, 5 xliv 4, 5 Luke xi. 47-51 xvi. 31 xx 9—15.
l Is. xxxiii 23. xlii 23 li. 4. lv. 3. Matt. xiii 9. 15, 16
m xv. 1 xx. 14.
n Heb *clothed*. Judg. vi. 34. 1 Chr. xii. 18.
o xxiii. 11.
p Num. xiv 41. 1 Sam. xiii. 13, 14. 2 Sam xii. 9, 10 Zech vii. 11—14.
q xv. 2. Deut. xxix 25, 26. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. Jer. ii 19. iv 18. v. 19 25.
r Jer. xi. 19 xviii. 18. xxxviii 4—6.
s Matt. xxi. 35. xxiii. 34—37. Acts vii. 58, 59
t Ps. cix. 4. Luke xvii. 15—18. John x 32.
u Gen. ix. 5. Jer. xi. 20. xxvi. 14, 15. 2 Tim. iv. 14. Rev. vi. 9—11. xviii. 20. xix. 2, 3
* Heb. *in the revolution* 1 Kings xx 22 26
x Deu. xxxii 35. 2 Kings xii. 17, 18.
y 17, 18 Ps ii 10, 11 lviii. 10, 11. lxxxii. 6, 7.
† Heb. *Darmasek*.
z Lev. xxvi. 8. Deut xxxii. 30. Is. xxx 17. Jer. xxxvii. 10
a xvi. 8, 9. xx 11, 12. Lev. xxvi. 25. Deut. xxvii. 25.
b xxii. 8. Is. x. 5, 6. xiii. 5. Hab. i. 12.
c xxi. 15. 18, 19. xxii. 6.
d 2 Kings xii. 20. xiv. 19, 20.
e 21, 22. Ps. x. 14. Rev. xvi. 6.
f 16. xxi. 20. xxviii. 27.
‡ 2 Kings xii. 21. *Jozachar*.
§ *Shomer*.
g 2 Kings xii 18.
‖ Heb. *founding*. 13.
* Or, *commentary*. ix. 29. xvi. 11. xx. 34
h xxv. 1. 1 Chr. iii. 12.

V. 19—22. Both the king and his courtiers seem to have entirely disregarded the warnings of the prophets, first sent to them; so that they did not honour them with their hatred or persecution. But at length, when they were assembled, on account of some festival; (for the temple was not utterly forsaken;) the Spirit of God directed Zechariah to expostulate with them respecting their idolatry. Being the son of Jehoiada, a near relation to Joash, a chief priest, if not the high priest, he seemed to be the most unexceptionable person that could have been selected for the service: while his piety, and the meekness and reasonableness of his plain address and warning, concurred to procure him a favourable hearing, and evidenced his admonition to be seasonable. But all this was in vain; the enraged apostate, who hated reproof, ordered him to be stoned, and the wretched multitude with one accord executed the unrighteous sentence, even in the court of the temple! (xxiii. 14, 15.) It is scarcely possible that a murder could contain more aggravated injustice and impiety: but the ingratitude of Joash is peculiarly noticed. Many, who had cast off all fear of God, retained some regard to their earthly benefactors: but this base man was lost to every thing, which had the least semblance of good in it. Zechariah's dying words would be best rendered, "The LORD "will look upon it, and require it," as a prophecy, and not a prayer. The event soon verified this prediction, and the judgment of God seems to have singled out the most guilty persons. 'Though Zechariah spake by the Spirit 'of God, he only applied the prediction of Moses to the 'present time; (*Deut.* xxxi. 16, 17;) that they might learn 'to have a greater regard to Moses, and to continually me- 'ditate in his law, unto which if they had attended, they 'would easily have discerned, who were the true prophets, 'and who were false!' (*Bp Patrick.*)

V. 25, 26. Joash seems to have murdered some other sons of Jehoiada, perhaps lest they should avenge the death of Zechariah. Whether the conspirators intended to punish Joash for this murder, or were actuated by private resentment or ambition; God was pleased to use them as executioners of his righteous vengeance. They were both born of foreign women; the idolatrous kings perhaps encouraged such forbidden marriages; but in this case they proved fatal to Joash. (2 *Kings* xii. 20, 21.)

V. 27. *Burdens*, &c. Either the tribute demanded by the victor; or the judgments denounced and inflicted by the Lord.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—16.

The best education, the most scriptural instructions, and the brightest examples, are insufficient of themselves to convert the soul: they are, however, the general means by which the Lord works; and even when not eventually successful to change the sinner's heart, they commonly produce effects salutary to the community. Hypocrites may show extraordinary zeal for externals; but they foolishly neglect the heart! The reluctancy of men to part with their money, for pious and charitable uses, is increased by the avarice of many through whose hands it should

CHAP. XXV.

Amaziah at first reigns well, and justly punishes his father's murderers, 1—4. He gathers a great army, and hires, for an hundred talents, an hundred thousand Israelites against Edom: but, losing the money, he dismisses them at the word of a prophet; and they depart in great anger, 5—10. He smites the Edomites, and exercises great cruelty, 11, 12. The Israelites, on their return, spoil the cities of Judah, 13. Amaziah serves the gods of Edom, and rejects the admonitions of a prophet, 14—16. He challenges Joash, who in vain warns him; he is vanquished, and Jerusalem spoiled, 17—24. The rest of his reign, 25, 26. He is slain by a conspiracy, 27, 28.

AMAZIAH *was* [a] twenty and five years old *when* he began to reign, and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Jehoaddan of Jerusalem.

2 And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, [b] but not with a perfect heart.

3 Now it came to pass, when the kingdom was * established to him, that [c] he slew his servants that had killed the king his father.

[a] 2 Kings xiv. 1—3
[b] 14. xxiv 2. xxvi. 4 1 Sam xvi. 7. Ps. lxxviii. 37. Is. xxix 13. Hos. x. 2 Acts viii. 21.
* Heb *confirmed upon him*
[c] xxiv. 25, 26. Gen. ix. 5, 6. Ex xxi. 14. Num. xxxv 31—33

pass, and who basely intercept it: but exact fidelity and punctuality, in showing that it has been, or will be, expended for the end proposed, go far towards inducing men to contribute liberally in a good cause; and this alone can afford comfort upon reflection, or bring honour upon a man's character. If we live to the glory of God, and endeavour to do good to men, especially in the great concern of salvation; we may be satisfied that we have lived long enough, though we should die young; or we may be willing to linger out many years in infirm old age, if the Lord hath then work for us. But whenever, or however, we pass from time into eternity, may we leave such a testimony in the consciences of our survivors, that if they were required to pen an inscription for our tomb, they might be constrained to write; "He did good to Israel, "both towards God, and towards his house." 'Tis true that many, who are overawed by the personal qualities, the rank, or the reputation of eminent men, secretly hate their piety, and are weary of their authority. But a good conscience, the assurance of usefulness, and the approbation of God, may enable a man to disregard such painful effects of superior excellency.

V. 17—27.

The authority or influence of parents, ministers, or godly friends, joined with transient serious impressions, and other incidental circumstances, may produce, and long maintain, a plausible profession of religion: but the lamp will go out when it is wanted, unless supplied from the oil in the vessel, the grace of God possessing the heart. When a man is under the power of pride and worldly passions, he disrelishes those counsels from which he has received the most important temporal advantage, and which tend to his eternal good: and then flattery, licentious liberty, arbitrary authority, and the most impious proposals, will be more welcome, because congenial to his judgment and affections. But he that has not sense to direct his own conduct, and is too proud to take good advice, will soon be proved a fool, let who will flatter his wisdom. "This is the love of "God to keep his commandments, and his commandments "are not grievous." But the yoke of external obedience is very uneasy to the carnal mind: and in this case men will rejoice, and congratulate one another, upon the death of pious monitors, or even parents! But impiety will bring wrath, especially when consequent to apostacy, on such as cast off the fear of God. No caution, tenderness, or gentleness consistent with faithfulness; no respectability of character, eminent services, or personal obligations, can secure the ministers of God from persecution, if they rouse the dormant conscience, contradict the haughty spirit, or excite disquietude in sin: and except their word be accompanied with the converting grace of God, the sinner will rage in proportion to his power, pride, or impiety.—Some regard to justice, decency, and gratitude may be expected from ignorant and profligate characters, and from infidels and deists: but the rage of an apostate bursts all obligations and restraints; for he has so done violence to his conscience, that it has lost all its energy; and except he be restrained by human laws, every thing desperate may be expected from his resentment. The testimony of faithful ministers will however be accepted by God, when rejected by men; and he will recompense them for all their losses and sufferings for his sake. They who transgress the commandments of the Lord, cannot prosper, whatever they suppose; and when they forsake God, he will forsake them. And, without the Spirit of prophecy, we may confidently foretel, that the Lord will look upon and require all the persecutions, slanders, mockeries, and ill usage, which his servants meet with, except their prayers are answered, and he give the persecutors repentance and better minds. The Lord can soon find such as will, for their own purposes, execute judgment upon murderers, and other atrocious criminals, however exalted; nor can any power avail against those into whose hands he delivers his enemies to be punished. Then superiority in station only ensures precedency in suffering: and how dreadful is it when a painful and miserable death transmits the impenitent rebel to a more miserable eternity! God help us to be in earnest, to take warning, to be upright in heart, and to persevere unto the end: and may he grant that we "may "die the death of the righteous, and that our latter end "may be like his."

4 But he slew not their children, but *did* [d] as *it is* written in the law in the book of Moses, where the LORD commanded, saying, The fathers shall not die for the children, neither shall the children die for the fathers, but every man shall die for his own sin.

d Deut. xxiv. 16. 2 Kings xiv. 45. Jer. xxxi. 29, Ez. xviii. 4 20.

B. C. 827. 5 ¶ Moreover Amaziah gathered Judah together, and made them [e] captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, according to the houses of *their* fathers, throughout all Judah and Benjamin: and he numbered them [f] from twenty years old and above, and found them three hundred thousand choice *men, able* to go forth to war, that could handle spear and shield.

e Ex. xviii. 25. 1 Sam viii 12. 1 Chr. xiii. 1. xxvii. 1.

f Num. i. 3.

6 He hired also an hundred thousand mighty men of valour out of [g] Israel, for an hundred talents of silver.

g xi. 1. xiv. 8. xvii. 14—18.

7 But there came [h] a man of God to him, saying, O king, let not the army of Israel go with thee; [i] for the LORD *is* not with Israel, *to wit, with* all the children of Ephraim.

h 2 Sam. xii. 1. 1 Kings xiii 1. 1 Tim vi. 11. 2 Tim. vii 17.

i xiii 12 xix. 2. 1 Kings xii 28 Is. xxviii 1—3. Hos v. 13—15. ix. 12

8 But if thou wilt go, do *it*, [k] be strong for the battle: God shall make thee fall before the enemy: for [l] God hath power to help, and to cast down.

k xviii. 14. Ec. xi. 9 Is viii 9, 10. Joel iii. 9—14. Matt xxvi. 45.

l xiv 11 Judg. vii 7. 1 Sam. xiv 6. Job v 18. ix. 13 Ps. xx. 7. xxxiii 16—20.

9 And Amaziah said to the man of God, But what shall we do for the hundred talents, which I have given to the * army of Israel? And the man of God answered, [m] The LORD is able to give thee much more than this.

* Heb. *band.*

m i. 12 Deut viii 18. Prov x. 22. Hag ii. 8. Luke xviii. 29, 30.

10 Then [n] Amaziah separated them, *to wit*, the army that was come to him out of Ephraim, to go † home again: wherefore their anger was greatly kindled against Judah, and they returned home in ‡ great anger.

n 1 Kings xii. 24.

† Heb. *to their place.*

‡ Heb. *heat of anger.* 2 Sam. xix. 43 Prov. xxix. 22.

11 ¶ And Amaziah strengthened himself, and led forth his people, and went to the [o] valley of salt, and smote of the children of Seir ten thousand.

o 2 Sam. viii. 13. 2 Kings xiv. 7. Ps. lx. *title.*

12 And *other* ten thousand *left* alive did the children of Judah carry away captive, and brought them unto the top of the rock, and [p] cast them down from the top of the rock, that they all were [q] broken in pieces.

p 2 Sam. xii. 31. 1 Chr. xx. 3.

q xx. 10. xxi. 8—10.

13 But the § soldiers of the army which Amaziah sent back, that they should not go with him to battle, fell upon the cities of Judah, from [r] Samaria even unto [s] Beth-horon, and smote three thousand of them, and took much spoil.

§ Heb. *sons of the band.*

r 1 Kings xvi. 24—29.

s viii. 6. 1 Kings ix 17.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXV. V. 3, 4. Even if the conspirators against Joash intended to avenge upon him the murder of Zechariah, they acted without a commission from that God to whom vengeance belongeth; and were justly put to death for treason and murder. (*Note*, 2 *Kings* xiv. 5, 6.)

V. 5. Nearly four times as many soldiers had been numbered in the days of Jehoshaphat; (*Marg. Ref.*) The inhabitants of the land must have vastly decreased during the late reigns, in consequence of their wickedness, and as a punishment of it: but perhaps numbers were unwilling to enlist under Amaziah; and either he did not attempt to force them, or they found means to evade his inquiries. His army however seems to have been sufficiently numerous to reduce the revolted Edomites.

V. 6—10. If Amaziah had previously consulted God, the disagreeable consequences of this measure would have been prevented. As the hundred talents would not divide above eight shillings a piece amongst one hundred thousand men; we may suppose that it was only an earnest of their pay, or else that they expected to be enriched with the plunder of the Edomites. The kingdom of Israel was openly idolatrous, and the Lord would not have Judah join alliance with them. Perhaps the army that Amaziah had hired, was chiefly of the tribe of Ephraim: or that tribe, being the most considerable in the kingdom of Israel, is put for the whole. As the Lord was not with the men of Ephraim, he declared by his prophet that he would not prosper Amaziah, if he employed them: and if, after this prohibition, he would persist in taking them with him, he was warned, that God would make him fall before the enemy: for God could help him without the aid of idolaters, and he could cast him down though he thus made himself strong for the battle. And as for the hundred talents, which he had given to the Israelites, and could not recover, and which he was unwilling to lose; the Lord was able to give him much more than that. Amaziah, though destitute of true faith, paid so much regard to the message of God, that he discharged the hired army: and they were exceedingly offended at the affront put upon them, in being sent away as the enemies of God; and likewise perhaps by the disappointment of their avaricious or ambitious expectations.

V. 11, 12. (*Note*, 2 *Kings* xiv. 7.)

V. 13. The Israelites seem to have returned *home*, when discharged by Amaziah, as his powerful army deterred them from attempting revenge at that time: but when he was engaged with the Edomites, they took the opportunity, marched from Samaria, and plundered all the cities till they came to Beth-horon, and slew three thousand of the inhabitants. Amaziah had indeed dismissed these auxiliaries in obedience to God; but his savage cruelty to the prisoners of Edom, and his subsequent idolatry, proved that he acted by constraint or terror when he was obedient: and he there-

14 ¶ Now it came to pass, after that Amaziah was come from the slaughter of the Edomites, that [t] he brought the gods of the children of Seir, and set them up *to be* [u] his gods, and bowed down himself before them, and burned incense unto them.

15 Wherefore the anger of the LORD was kindled against Amaziah, and he sent unto him [x] a prophet, which said unto him, [y] Why hast thou sought after [z] the gods of the people, [a] which could not deliver their own people out of thine hand?

16 And it came to pass, as he talked with him, that *the king* said unto him, [b] Art thou made of the king's counsel? [c] forbear; why shouldest thou be smitten? Then the prophet forbare, and said, I know that God [d] hath * determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not hearkened unto my counsel.

17 ¶ Then [e] Amaziah king of Judah took advice, and sent to Joash, the son of Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, Come, [f] let us see one another in the face.

18 And Joash king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, The † thistle that *was* in Lebanon sent to the cedar that *was* in Lebanon, saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife: and there passed by ‡ a wild beast that *was* in Lebanon, and trode down the thistle.

19 Thou sayest, Lo, thou hast smitten the Edomites; and [g] thine heart lifteth thee up [h] to boast: abide now at home; [i] why shouldest thou meddle to *thine* hurt, that thou shouldest fall, *even* thou, and Judah with thee?

20 But Amaziah would not hear: for [k] it *came* of God, that he might deliver them into the hand *of their enemies*, because they sought after the gods of Edom.

21 So Joash the king of Israel went up, and they [l] saw one another in the face, *both* he and Amaziah king of Judah, at [m] Beth-shemesh, which *belongeth* to Judah.

22 And Judah was § put to the worse before Israel, and they [n] fled every man to his tent.

23 And Joash the king of Israel [o] took Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Joash, the son of [p] Jehoahaz, at Beth-shemesh, and brought him to Jerusalem, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, from the [q] gate of Ephraim to the ‖ corner-gate, four hundred cubits.

24 And *he took* [r] all the gold and the silver, and all the vessels *that were* found in the house of God with Obed-edom, and the treasures of the king's house, the hostages also, and returned to Samaria.

25 ¶ And Amaziah, the son of Joash king of Judah, lived after the death of [s] Joash, son of Jehoahaz king of Israel, fifteen years.

26 Now the [t] rest of the acts of Amaziah, first and last, behold, *are* they not written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel?

27 Now after the time that Amaziah did turn away * from following the LORD, they † made a conspiracy against him in

t xxviii. 23.
u Ex. xx. 3—5. Deut. vii 5. 25. 2 Sam. v. 21.
x 7. xvi. 7—9. xix. 2. xx. 37. 2 Sam. xii. 1—6.
y xxiv. 20. Judg ii. 2. Jer. ii. 5.
z Ps. xcvi 5.
a 11. Ps. cxv. 4—8. Is. xliv. 9, 10. xlvi. 1, 2. Jer. x. 7. 1 Cor. viii. 4. x. 20.
b xvi. 10. xviii. 25, 26 xxiv. 21. Am. vii. 10—13. Matt. xxi. 23.
c Prov ix. 7, 8. Is xxx. 10, 11. Jer. xxix. 26. 2 Tim iv. 3. Rev. xi. 10.
d Ex. ix. 16. Deut. ii. 30. 1 Sam ii. 25. Acts iv. 28 Rom. ix. 22.
* Heb. *counselled* xviii 20, 21. Is. xlvi. 10. Eph i. 11.
e 13. 2 Kings xiv. 8—14.
f 2 Sam. ii. 14. Prov. xx. 3.
† Or *furze-bush*, or *thorn*. Judg. ix. 8—15. 1 Kings iv. 33.
‡ Heb. *a beast of the field*. Ps. lxxx. 13.
g xxvi. 16 xxxii. 25. Deut. viii. 14. Prov. xiii. 10. xvi. 18. xxviii. 25. Dan. v. 20—23. Hab. ii. 4. Jam. iv. 6. 1 Pet. v. 5.
h Jer. ix 23, 24. 1 Cor. i. 29.
i xxxv. 21. Prov. xviii. 6 xx. 3. xxvi. 17. Luke xiv 31.
k 16. xxii 7. 1 Kings xii. 15. Ps lxxxi. 11, 12. Acts xxviii. 25—27. 2 Thes. ii. 9—11. 1 Pet. ii. 8.
l 17.
m Josh. xxi 16. 1 Sam. vi. 9 19, 20.
§ Heb. *smitten*. xxviii. 5, 6.
n 1 Sam. iv. 10. 1 Kings xxii. 36.
o xxxiii. 11. xxxvi 6. 10. Prov. xvi. 18. xxix. 23. Dan. iv. 37. Obad. 3. Luke xiv. 11.
p xxi. 17 xxii. 1. *Ahaziah*. xxii. 6. *Azariah*.
q Neh viii. 16. xii. 39.
‖ Heb *the gate of it that looketh* Jer. xxxi. 38
r xii 9. 2 Kings xiv. 14.
s 2 Kings xiv. 17. *Jehoash*.
B. C. 810
t xx 34. 2 Kings xiv. 15.
* Heb *from after*.
† Heb. *conspired a conspiracy*. xxiv. 25. 2 King. xiv. 19.

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fore received for his complicated misconduct just rebuke. Had he broken the idols to pieces, and treated the prisoners with clemency, he might have expected comfort in his success, and not experienced such painful effects from dismissing the Israelites. Perhaps the cities which were destroyed on this occasion, being in the vicinity of Israel, were infected with idolatry.

V. 14—16. Ahaz, who worshipped the idols of Syria by whom he was vanquished, was not so senseless as Amaziah, who sought unto the gods of the people, which could not deliver them from his cruelty. But Amaziah, who had borne with the prophet that spake to him concerning dismissing the Israelites, by which he lost one hundred talents, was so mad upon his idols that he would not endure that subject to be insisted on. He seems to have menaced the prophet with Zechariah's doom; and thus he made himself a sharer in the guilt of that atrocious murder. The prophet was a *counsellor* whom the Lord had appointed him; and none of those whom he had chosen for himself, gave him such honest, wise, and salutary counsel. But as he would not hearken to it, the prophet desisted, having warned him that the Lord had *counselled* to destroy him.

V. 17. *Took advice*, &c. Amaziah, having rejected the counsel of God, advised with his flatterers; and they counselled him to make that foolish challenge which paved the way for his ruin, to which he had been doomed for his obstinate idolatry; (*Notes*, 2 *Kings* xiv. 8—20. *Marg. Ref.*)

V. 24. Obed-edom, perhaps a descendant of him who received the ark in the days of David, had the charge of these treasures in the house of God.

Jerusalem; and he fled to [u] Lachish: but they sent to Lachish after him, and slew him there.

[u] Josh. x. 31.

28 And they brought him upon horses, and buried him with his fathers in [x] the city of Judah.

[x] 2 Kings xiv. 20. *City of David.*

V. 25—27. We find no evidences of Amaziah's repentance, during the whole space of the Lord's long suffering. Probably he added tyranny and oppression to his idolatry: and this, with his imprudent administration, rendered him so odious, that he was slain, as it seems, by the general consent of his subjects, and nobody was called to account for his death.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

Many favour and support religion, who either *do not appear*, or *only appear*, to be religious: yet the Lord has no pleasure in dissemblers. Traitors and murderers are sometimes so powerful, as for a time to set justice at defiance; but they will at length find those that are able to execute righteous vengeance upon them. But in every case the law of God should be adhered to as our perfect rule of duty. As unrepented sin will inevitably and finally ruin those who continue in it; so it will infallibly enfeeble, and diminish the prosperity and consequence of those nations where it prevails. Princes and statesmen professing Christianity, when forming alliances, or stipulating succours from foreign courts, seldom inquire, Whether the Lord be with them or not? Indeed the very question would excite general ridicule and disgust: and yet this will be found of far greater efficacy in the success of wars and the prosperity of kingdoms, than men are disposed to believe. It is however, certain, that no enterprize, public or private, should be engaged in, without seeking to know the will of God concerning it, if men would avoid those distressing consequences which often follow from politic measures. But none are such dangerous confederates, as apostates. Success cannot reasonably be expected by those who act in defiance of the divine commands: they may be strong for the battle, or for the business; but if God is pleased to make them fall, their strength will avail them nothing; for he has power to help, and to cast down: and if men prosper in presumptuous wickedness, their success is the prelude of their ruin.—Convinced sinners, who have not true faith or a spiritual mind, always object to self-denying obedience; and seem to say, "But what shall we do for the hundred talents?" "What shall we do, if by hallowing the sabbath, we lose "so many good customers? What shall we do, if we quit "this illegal traffic and exorbitant profit, to compensate so "important a loss? What shall we do, if we affront our "friends, balk our preferment, or lose the friendship of "the world? How shall we maintain our families? "What "shall we eat? or what shall we drink? And wherewithal "shall we be clothed?" Penury and distress face us in the "way which you point out to us: we are almost persuad-"ed it is the road to heaven: but what shall we do about "the expenses of the journey?" Here many stumble and turn aside, or endeavour to quiet their conscience in a vain pretence, that such and such practices are necessary *in their case;* that the precept must be dispensed with; that by them, circumstanced as they are, both God and mammon may be served; and that they may be Christ's disciples without denying themselves, taking up the cross, and forsaking all for him. But the answer to such objections is obvious: "The Lord is able to give thee much more than "this;" and he hath promised "to add all other things "to those who seek first the kingdom of God and his "righteousness:" yea, to make up a hundred fold, even in this present world, all that hath been conscientiously renounced for his sake and the Gospel: and we are compassed about with an innumerable cloud of witnesses of his faithfulness to this promise. Unbelief, however, will trust the Lord no further than it can understand in what way he is to work: but faith approves the security, and gives him full credit for his truth, power, and love; and makes every sacrifice, and ventures every consequence, in dependence on his word, and in obedience to his command. He that in this way is reduced to poverty, is enriched for ever; and he may set down his largest losses as his most certain gains, and rest assured, that "no good thing will the "Lord withhold from those who thus walk uprightly."—Yet a single instance of self-denying obedience, performed on a sudden, under some vehement impression, does not always prove that a man has true faith. A person in a heat, might cut off his hand, in any cause, and upon reflection repent of it ever after; but the deliberate daily renouncing of the world, and opposing our strongest sinful inclinations, (though as painful to part with as a right hand or eye,) for the sake of the Gospel, and in obedience to the Saviour, forms the constant evidence of an interest in him, and all his precious promises; (*Phil.* iii. 7—10:) and to some measure of this temper and conduct every true believer hath attained. But the behaviour of the mere professor will frequently detect the hypocrisy of his obedience in some instances, and justify God in punishing his other crimes, by the very consequences of that obedience.

V. 11—28.

They who are evidently and consciously *irreligious*, are yet often much offended with being treated *as such:* and affronted pride, united with disappointed rapacity, kindles a resentment, from which the most fatal effects may be expected. Abused mercies occasion man's most aggravated wickedness, and accelerate his ruin; so that when we are prospered by Providence, we should be peculiarly careful what return we make for God's goodness, and what use we make of his bounty. The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel: and none are so imperious and inhuman towards those who oppose their will, as they who dare to bid defiance to the authority of the Almighty. The absurdities of superstition and idolatry, to which the human race has in all ages shown so strange a propensity, are as disgraceful to the understanding as to the heart of man: and if we did but consider how unavailing those worldly objects, which we are apt to idolize, have always proved to the peace, safety, and happiness of their possessors; the reflec-

CHAP. XXVI.

Uzziah succeeds Amaziah, reigns well for a time, and is greatly prospered, 1—8. *His buildings, husbandry, army, and engines of war,* 9—15. *Growing proud, he attempts to burn incense in the temple, is opposed by the priests, and smitten with leprosy by God,* 16—21. *He dies, and is succeeded by Jotham,* 22, 23.

a xxii. 1. xxxiii. 25.
b 2 Kings xiv 21. xv. 1. 1 Chr. iii. 12. *Azariah.* Matt. i. 8, 9. *Ozias.*
c viii. 17. 2 Kings xiv. 22. xvi. 6. *Elath.*
d xxv. 13. 28.

THEN [a] all the people of Judah took [b] Uzziah, who *was* sixteen years old, and made him king in the room of his father Amaziah.

2 He built [c] Eloth, and [d] restored it to Judah, after that the king slept with his fathers.

e Is. i. 1. vi. 1. Hos. i. 1. Am. i. 1. Zech. xiv. 5.

3 Sixteen years old *was* [e] Uzziah when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also *was* [f] Jecoliah of Jerusalem.

f 2 Kings x *Jecholiah.*

4 And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, [g] according to all that his father Amaziah did.

g xxv. 2.

5 And [h] he sought God in the days of Zechariah, who [i] had understanding in the * visions of God: and, [k] as long as he sought the LORD, God made him to prosper.

h xxiv. 2. Judg ii 7. Hos. vi. 4. Mark iv. 16, 17. Acts xx. 30.
i Gen. xli. 15. Dan. i. 17. ii. 19 v. 16. x. 1.
* Heb. *seeing of God*
k xv. 2. xxv. 8. 1 Chr. xxii 11. 13. Ps. i. 3.

6 And he went forth and [l] warred against the Philistines, and brake down [m] the wall of Gath, and the wall of Jabneh, and the wall of Ashdod, and built cities † about Ashdod, and among the Philistines.

l xxi. 16. Is. xiv. 29.
m 2 Sam. viii. 1. 1 Chr. xviii. 1
† Or, *in the country of Ashdod.* 1 Sam. v. 1. 6.

7 And [n] God helped him against the Philistines, and against [o] the Arabians that dwelt in Gur-baal, and the Mehunims.

n xiv. 11. 1 Chr. v. 20. xii 18. Ps. xviii. 29. 34, 35. Acts xxvi 22.
o xvii 11. xxi. 16.

8 And [p] the Ammonites gave gifts to Uzziah: and [q] his name ‡ spread abroad

p xx 1 Gen xix. 38 Deut. ii. 19. Judg. xi. 15—18. 1 Sam. xi 1.
q Gen. xii 2. 2 Sam viii. 13. 1 Kings iv. 31. Matt iv 24.
‡ Heb *went.*

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tion must check our eager pursuit of wealth, honour, or sensual pleasure; or at least show it to be as irrational as the worship of useless helpless idols. They who are mad upon their lusts, will not bear control or counsel: and he who would expostulate with them for their good, may expect to be treated as impertinent, intermeddling, or insolent: especially if an inferior venture to admonish, in the name of the Lord, sinners of superior rank and station. These indeed seem generally to claim it as their prerogative to walk unmolested in the broad way that leadeth to destruction: and ridicule or menaces will be his recompense, who dares to warn them that it is a dangerous road. But after all the contempt and obloquy, to which such counsellors are exposed; the event demonstrates that princes generally hearken to those that are much worse: and though assuming churchmen have often disgraced their profession: yet no man, from the throne to the almshouse, will have cause to repent attending to the warnings, instructions, and counsel, of those few, who honestly declare the truth and will of God, without courting the favour, fearing the frown, or respecting the person, of any man. If, however, mild, serious, rational and scriptural reproof is proudly rejected and resented, we are not required to force our admonitions, but must desist, after plainly giving men to understand the consequence. When the remonstrances of conscience are silenced, and the ministers of God are rejected and menaced, it is to be feared that God hath determined upon the sinner's destruction: and if he too says, "Let him alone," "My Spirit shall not alway strive "with him;" he will be given up to strong delusion, to increasing vain-confidence, infatuated projects, rash intermeddling, and obstinate perseverance in a course of folly, till the measure of his wickedness be filled up, and destruction from the Almighty come upon him. Thus a man's pride shall bring him low; his ruin may be dated from his turning away from the Lord, and the longer he is spared, the more will he "treasure up wrath against the "day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment "of God, who shall render to every man according to his "works." May the Lord preserve us from this dreadful doom, and prepare our hearts to receive his truth, to welcome his counsels and reproofs, and obediently to submit to his authority, and do his will.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXVI. V. 1—3. (*Notes,* 2 *Kings* xiv. 21, 22. xv. 1—7.)

V. 4. Uzziah, or Azariah, began his reign much better than he ended it, as Amaziah had done. But he seems to have supported the worship of God all his days; and he is never charged with idolatry or any kind of immorality. His reign must therefore have been very happy for his people, and favourable to the interests of religion; though the close of it proved disgraceful to him.

V. 5. It is not known of what tribe or family this Zechariah was; though some conjecture that he was the son of that Zechariah whom Joash murdered. It is, however, a singular instance in Scripture, of a son called by his father's name. He was perhaps endued with a peculiar gift in distinguishing between those who were actually favoured with prophetic visions, and those who only pretended to be so; (1 *Cor.* xii. 10.) At least he was well acquainted with divine things, an intelligent, prudent, pious, and heavenly-minded man: and an instructor, or counsellor, to Uzziah, who prospered by hearkening to his admonitions: whilst Amaziah, who scorned to be counselled by a prophet, followed advice which brought him to destruction. Had Zechariah been spared, he might perhaps have dissuaded Uzziah from that fatal attempt, which he afterwards made.

even to the entering in of Egypt; for he strengthened *himself* exceedingly.

9 Moreover Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at [r] the corner-gate, and at [s] the valley-gate, and at [t] the turning *of the wall*, and * fortified them.

10 Also he built towers in the desert, and † digged many wells: for [u] he had much cattle, both in the low country and in the plains: husbandmen *also*, and vine-dressers in the mountains, and in ‡ Carmel: for he loved § husbandry.

11 ¶ Moreover Uzziah had an host of fighting men, that [x] went out to war by bands, according to the number of their account, by the hand of Jeiel the scribe, and Maaseiah the ruler, under the hand of Hananiah, *one* of the king's captains.

12 The whole number of the chief of the fathers of the mighty men of valour *were* two thousand and six hundred.

13 And under their hand *was* ‖ an army, [y] three hundred thousand and seven thousand and five hundred, that made war with mighty power, to help the king against the enemy.

14 And Uzziah prepared for them, throughout all the host, shields, and spears, and helmets, and habergeons, and bows, and * slings *to cast* stones.

15 And he made in Jerusalem engines, invented by [z] cunning men, to be on the towers, and upon the bulwarks, to shoot arrows and great stones withal: and his name † spread far abroad; for he was marvellously helped till he was strong.

16 ¶ But [a] when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to *his* destruction; for he transgressed against the LORD his God, and [b] went into the temple of the LORD [c] to burn incense upon the altar of incense.

17 And [d] Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him four-score priests of the LORD, *that were* [e] valiant men;

18 And they [f] withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, *It appertaineth* [g] not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the LORD, but [h] to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed; [i] neither *shall it be* for thine honour from the LORD God.

19 Then Uzziah was wroth, and *had* a censer in his hand to burn incense; and while [k] he was wroth with the priests, [l] the leprosy even rose up in his forehead, before the priests in the house of the LORD, from beside the incense-altar.

20 And Azariah the chief priest, and all the priests, looked upon him, and, behold, he *was* leprous in his forehead, and they thrust him out from thence; yea, himself [m] hasted also to go out, because [n] the LORD had smitten him.

21 And [o] Uzziah the king was a leper unto the day of his death, and [p] dwelt in a ‡ several house, *being* a leper; for he was cut off from the house of the LORD: and Jotham his son *was* over the king's house, judging the people of the land.

22 ¶ Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, [q] first and last, did [r] Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amos, write.

23 So Uzziah [s] slept with his fathers, and [t] they buried him with his fathers in the field of the burial which *belonged* to the kings; for they said, He *is* a leper: and Jotham his son reigned in his stead.

r xxv. 23. 2 Kings xiv. 13. Jer xxxi. 38. Zech. xiv 10.
s Neh. iii. 13 iii. 13.
t Neh. iii. 20. 24
* Or, *repaired*
† Or, *cut out many cisterns.* Gen xxvi. 18—21
u 2 Kings iii 4. 1 Chr xxvii 26—31.
‡ Or, *fruitful fields.* 2 Kings xviii. 32. Is. xxix 17.
§ Heb. *ground.*
x 2 Kings v. 2.
‖ Heb. *the power of an army.*
y xi. 1. xiii 3 xiv. 8. xvii. 14. 19.
* Heb. *stones of slings.* Judg. xx 16 1 Sam. xvii. 49.
z ii. 7. 14. Ex. xxxi. 4.
† Heb. *went forth.* Matt. iv. 24.
a xxv. 19. xxxii. 25. Deut. viii. 14. 17. xxxii. 13—15 Prov xvi. 18. Hab. ii. 4. Col. ii. 18.
b 2 Kings xvi. 12, 13.
c Num xvi 7.17, 18. 35. 1 Kings xii 33. xiii. 1—4.
d 1 Chr. vi. 10.
e 1 Chr xii 28. xxvi 6
f xvi 7—9. xix. 2. Jer xlii. 18. Matt x 18. 28 xiv
2 Cor v 16 Gal. ii 11.
g Num xvi. 40. 46 17 xviii 7.
h Ex xxx. 7, 8. Heb v. 4.
i 1 Sam. xv 30. Dan iv. 37. John v. 44 Jam. iii. 1.
k xxvi. 10. xxv. 16.
l Num. xii 10. 2 Kings v. 27.
m Esth vi 12.
n Lev. xiv 34. Deu xxviii 22. 35
o 2 Kings xv. 5.
p Lev. xiii 46. Num v 2, 3. xii. 15. 2 Kings vii 3.
‡ Heb. *free.*
q ix. 29. xii. 15.
r Is. i. 1. vi. 1.
s 2 Kings xv. 6, 7.
t 18. xxi. 20. xxviii. 27. xxxiii. 26.

V. 6—9. These verses contain some particulars, in which Uzziah, by the special help and blessing of God, was prospered, while he adhered strictly to the ordinances of God.—In the days of his father, the wall of Jerusalem had been broken down at the *corner-gate:* (xxv. 23:) and Uzziah not only repaired it, but he added towers and fortifications to secure it.

V. 10. *Towers.* These towers seem to have been built in the desert for the protection of Uzziah's shepherds and flocks from the depredations of the Arabian free-booters and others, upon whom he seems to have retaliated; (11.) —A prince can hardly have a more rational, inoffensive, and indeed useful, recreation from public business, than these rural occupations.

V. 16—23. Uzziah had been remarkably prospered in every thing; but pride, instead of gratitude, was fostered by it: so that deeming himself as much favoured as the priests were, he thought it a reproach to him to be excluded from any part of the temple, or the worship, of God.—Burning incense was the most honourable part of the sacerdotal office, and of that he became ambitious. The law had forbidden any, but the priests of the family of Aaron, to enter the sanctuary, or to burn incense; and the fate of Korah, and his company, was an awful example upon record, of the consequences to be expected from violating that statute. But perhaps Uzziah was tempted to disbelieve these ancient records; imagining that they had been falsified by the priests to keep up their own consequence;

CHAP. XXVII.

Jotham reigns well and prospers, 1, 2. *His buildings,* 3, 4. *He subdues the Ammonites,* 5, 6. *He dies, and is succeeded by Ahaz,* 7—9.

JOTHAM *was* [a] twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and he

a 2 Kings xv. 32, 33. 1 Chr. iii. 12. Is. i. 1. Hos. i. 1. Mic. i. 1. Matt. i. 9. *Joatham*

or that the law was now become obsolete: and he might be confirmed in this, by considering that nothing of this kind had taken place for many centuries. Thus "his heart "was lifted up to his destruction," his disgrace or *death,* for the sin he committed exposed him to that punishment; and though he was respited, yet his remaining days were spent, as it were, in a lingering ignominious execution.—None of the former kings of Judah had attempted to burn incense in the temple; perhaps none to invade the sacerdotal office in any way: though many of them offended by forsaking the worship of God. Had Uzziah contented himself with imitating David, Solomon, Jehoshaphat, &c. in instructing, and praying with and for, his people, he would have done commendably.—The idolatrous kings indeed burned incense to their idols, and it seems he took them for his pattern in this instance, though he would not forsake the God of Israel.—Azariah and the other priests behaved nobly on this occasion: they opposed the king's design, not with violence or reproachful language, but with plain scriptural remonstrances, precepts, and counsels; and by warning him that his attempt would expose him to disgrace from the Lord God. But he was insensible to their arguments, and enraged by their faithful opposition: and Josephus writes us that he threatened them with death, when an extraordinary earthquake preceded his being smitten with leprosy. (*Amos* i. 1. *Zech.* xiv. 5.) But when he found that this divine judgment was inflicted upon him and was conspicuous in his forehead, he became sensible of his sin and danger, and hastily yielded to the priests, who hurried him out of the sanctuary. It pleased God to continue this stigma upon him during the remainder of his life; though we know not how long he lived afterwards: and in consequence he was excluded from the precincts of the temple; from society, except that of the priests into whose office he had intruded; and from the exercise of his regal authority. Thus by aspiring after that honour which did not belong to him, he lost all his dignity and reputation, and was in some sense degraded beneath the meanest of his subjects: and even after his death, notwithstanding his good and prosperous reign, he was, as a leper, excluded from the sepulchres of the kings. But the long-suffering of God gave him space for repentance; and his patient and quiet submission to this severe rebuke, and to all its most painful consequences, (as they must have been to so honourable and prosperous a monarch,) forms no inconsiderable proof of his repentance; and gives a confidence that his retirement was well improved, and his death happy.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—15.

Wise and pious instructors are an invaluable treasure to young people; especially to those who are advanced to exalted stations, and who are generally poisoned with the flattery of interested sychophants and dependents. Yet, unless they seek and serve God from an inward principle of piety; they will at length lose, or shake off, their preceptors and their religion together. Many have experienced, and some have confessed, that when they paid regard to the service of God they prospered; but that every thing went wrong, from the time that they grew negligent in religion. Indeed external prosperity does not now so uniformly attend godliness, as it did in the case of Israel: yet every undertaking will succeed with the true Christian, as far as it is good for him: and God will help and prosper him in his spiritual warfare, in proportion to the simplicity of his dependence and obedience. No lawful business will be the worse managed, or prove less pleasant to any man, on account of his diligence in the service of God, if he have learned to arrange his temporal and spiritual concerns in due order. It would be happy for mankind, if able and powerful monarchs took more delight, and spent more leisure hours, in rural occupations, which are both manly, useful, and truly honourable: but hitherto man's chief ambition, exertion, and ingenuity have been directed to the destruction of his own species! If, however, it must be a part of the occupation of mankind to invent and forge instruments of destruction, and of shortening the already contracted duration of human life; surely these should be used only in self-defence, or in awing the turbulent spirits of those public depredators, who cannot otherwise be prevented from disturbing the world.

V. 16—23.

It is written as with a sun-beam, that prosperity is most dangerous to fallen man. Some are by it lifted up to their destruction, others to their deep disgrace and lasting distress: and we have all more cause to pray to be preserved from its fascinating influence, than from the depth of poverty, or from the anguish of disappointment. The narrow way is *one* and straight: but the paths of transgression are numerous and various; and new ones are continually struck out by the perverse ingenuity and presumption of rebellious man. Extremes are on every side. To avoid enthusiasm and credulity, men become profane and infidel; and in shunning infidelity they rush into superstition. They who are not chargeable with immorality or gross profaneness, may yet provoke the Lord by their hypocrisy or self-righteous pride. We are not indeed at present kept at that awful distance from sacred things which the people of God of old were: yet let us not suppose that we are in no danger of offending in this way. The sacred ministry may be intruded into with a presumption and impiety, bordering upon sacrilege and blasphemy: whilst mercenary and ungodly men make those professions, engagements, and protestations, in the presence of God, for filthy lucre's sake, which they deride as enthusiastic or superstitious! The Lord's table may be approached in hypocrisy, pride, unbelief, and impenitency, or even as a

reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also *was* Jerushah, the daughter of Zadok.

b xxvi. 4. 2 Kings xv. 34. 2 And [b] he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Uzziah did: howbeit [c] he entered not into the temple of the LORD. And [d] the people did yet corruptly.

c xxvi. 16—21. Ps cxix. 120. Acts v. 13

d 2 Kings xv. 35.

3 He built the [e] high gate of the house of the LORD, and on the wall of * Ophel he built much.

e xxiii. 15. 20. Jer. xx 2.

* Or, *the tower.* xxxiii. 14. Neh. iii. 26.

4 Moreover [f] he built cities in [g] the mountains of Judah, and in the forests he built castles and towers.

f xi. 5—10. xiv. 7. xxvi. 9. 10

g Josh. xiv. 12, 13. Luke i. 39.

5 He fought also with [h] the king of the Ammonites, and prevailed against them. And the children of Ammon gave him the same year an hundred talents of silver, and ten thousand measures of wheat, and ten thousand of barley. † So much did the children of Ammon pay unto him, both the second year, and the third.

h xx. 1. Judg. xi. 4 &c. 2 Sam x. 1, &c. Jer. xlix. 1—6.

† Heb. *This.*

6 So Jotham became mighty, because he ‡ prepared his ways before the LORD his God.

‡ Or, *established.* xix 3.

7 ¶ Now [i] the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all his wars, and his ways, lo, they *are* written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah.

i xx. 34. xxvi. 22, 23. xxxii 32, 33.

8 He was five and twenty years old when he began to reign; and reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem.

9 And [k] Jotham slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David: and Ahaz his son reigned in his stead.

k 2 Kings xv. 38

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step to preferment, by infidels and debauchees who are the slaves to every lust! and in many ways man may be guilty of most awful profanations. Against these abuses the ministers of God must caution all men, however wealthy, honourable, or powerful, with plain declarations of the truths and precepts of Scripture, and solemn warnings respecting the consequences of transgression. Yet, alas! few are found, who are *valiant men*, that dare, in meekness and faithfulness, oppose the powerful who attempt such scandalous profanations; and venture all the consequences of their displeasure in refusing to concur in them. But the Lord will assuredly stand by those few, and mark their opposers with evident tokens of his anger. No wonder that ungodly men are so enraged at opposition from the Lord's ministers; for even believers at some times cannot endure it. But his rebuke brings them to themselves, and they then make haste to renounce their wayward purposes, they submit patiently to his severest corrections, and are humbled for the pride of their hearts. And, whatever humiliating or disgraceful events take place, however we may be excluded from the earthly courts of the Lord, the communion of his saints, and the comforts of society; if we are brought to true repentance, and at length obtain eternal life, we shall bless God for the whole. But the Lord always resists the proud; and contempt, either on earth or in hell, is the never-failing consequence of self-confidence and arrogance. When, however, the Lord sees good to throw prosperous and useful men aside, as a broken vessel; if he raises up their children, or other able persons, to fill their places, that the community be not losers, they may rejoice in renouncing all worldly concerns, and in employing their remaining days in preparation for death and heaven.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXVII. V. 2. *Entered.* Jotham imitated his father in the best part of his conduct; but did not attempt to enter the temple, or to burn incense, as Uzziah had done.

V. 3. *Ophel.* This seems to have been a cliff, or high rock, where a tower and wall were built to fortify the city. These Jotham greatly strengthened and improved.

V. 5. (*Marg. Ref.*) It is probable, that at the end of three years, the Ammonites recovered strength, and refused to pay the tribute.

V. 6. It has been observed, that most, if not all the pious kings of Judah, have some evil thing laid to their charge: but Jotham has not: except as the people did corruptly, and the high places were not demolished.

V. 7. It is supposed, that Jotham's deeds so attracted attention, that they were recorded in the chronicles of Israel, as well as in those of Judah: though but little hath been transmitted to us concerning him.

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PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The severest judgments of God have mercy connected with them, either to the persons themselves, or to others, who thence learn caution and circumspection. It ought to be the constant aim of every one of us to imitate the faith, piety, equity, kindness, self-denial, patience, and meekness, of those servants of God with whom we have acquaintance; and carefully to avoid their failings, and the sins into which they have been betrayed: but the reverse of this is natural, and general among mankind.—If we would attain to eminency in godliness, or usefulness, we must diligently "prepare our ways before the LORD "our God;" acting habitually, as under his inspection, and depending on his assistance and merciful acceptance, from love to his name, and zeal for his glory. Many pious men have not fortitude or vigour to combat the difficulties which they who attempt reformation, in opposition to inveterate prejudices, errors, superstitions, and immoralities, must expect; yet all in public stations should remember, that this is incumbent upon them, and forms that improvement of their talents which God requires. They should therefore "arise, and be doing," according to the duties of their situations, "and the LORD will be "with them for good." But even when the most unexceptionable example is united to the most strenuous and

CHAP. XXVIII.

Ahaz reigns very wickedly, and is defeated with vast slaughter by the kings of Israel and Syria, 1—7. The Israelites lead to Samaria an immense number of captives; but are induced by the remonstrance of a prophet and the interference of the princes, to treat them kindly and send them home, 8—15. Ahaz, attacked by the Edomites and Philistines, sends to the king of Assyria, but receives no benefit from his assistance, 16—21. In his distress he adds to his idolatries, 22—25. He dies, and is succeeded by Hezekiah, 26, 27.

a 2 Kings xvi. 1, 2. 1 Chr. iii 13 Is. i. 1. vii. 1—12. Hos. i. 1. Mic. i. 1. Matt. i. 9. *Achaz.*
b xvii. 3.
c xxi. 6 xxii. 3, 4. 1 Kings xvi 31—33. 2 Kings x. 26—28
d Ex xxxiv. 17. Lev. xix. 4
e Judg. ii. 11. 13.
* Or, *offered sacrifice.*
f 2 Kings xxiii. 10 Jer vii 31, 32. xix. 2—6. 13.
g xxxiii 6. Lev. xviii 21 2 Kings xvi 3 Ps cvi. 37. 38 Jer ii 34. Ez. xvi. 20, 21 Mic vi 7
h xxxiii 2 Deu xii. 31

A HAZ *was* twenty years old when he began to reign; and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: but he did not *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, [b] like David his father.

2 For [c] he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and made also [d] molten images for [e] Baalim.

3 Moreover he * burnt incense in [f] the valley of the son of Hinnom, and [g] burnt his children in the fire, [h] after the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.

4 He [i] sacrificed also, and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree.

i Lev. xxvi. 30. Deut. xii. 2, 3. 2 Kings xvi. 4.

5 Wherefore the LORD [k] his God [l] delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria; and they smote him, and carried away a great multitude of them captives, and brought *them* to † Damascus; and he also was delivered into the hand of the king of Israel, who smote him with a great slaughter.

k xxxvi. 6. Ex. xx. 2, 3.
l xxiv. 24. xxviii. 11. xxxvi. 17. Judg ii 14. 2 Kings xvi. 5. Is. vii. 1. 6.
† Heb. *Darmasek.*

6 For [m] Pekah the son of Remaliah slew in Judah [n] an hundred and twenty thousand in one day, *which were* all ‡ valiant men: [o] because they had forsaken the LORD God of their fathers.

m 2 Kings xv. 27. 37 Is vii. 4, 5 9 ix. 21
n xiii 17.
‡ Heb *sons of valour.*
o xv. 2. Deu. vi. 14, 15. xxviii. 15. 25. xxix 24—26. xxxi 16, 17. xxxii 30. Josh. xxiii. 16. Is xxiv. 5, 6. Jer. ii. 19.

7 And Zichri, a mighty man of Ephraim, slew Maaseiah the king's son, and Azikram the governor of the house, and Elkanah *that was* § next to the king.

§ Heb. *the second to.*

8 ¶ And the children of Israel [p] carried away captive of their [q] brethren, two hundred thousand, women, sons, and daughters, and took also away much spoil from them, and brought the spoil to Samaria.

p Deut. xxviii. 25. 41.
q xi 4. Acts vii. 26. xiii. 26.

9 But a prophet of the LORD was there, whose name *was* Oded; and [r] he

r xix. 1, 2. xxv. 15, 16. 1 Kings xx. 13. 22. 42. 2 Kings xx. 14, 15.

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persevering endeavours, the success of pious reformers will not answer their desires and expectations. Many of the people will still do corruptly: and in righteous displeasure against those who hate to be reformed, the Lord often prematurely removes wise, prosperous, and pious rulers in church or state; and sends others, whose follies and vices severely punish a people, who valued not their mercies till they were withdrawn from them.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXVIII. V. 1—4. (*Notes*, 2 *Kings* xvi. 1—4.)

V. 5. The Lord was the God of Ahaz, as his Creator, Upholder, and Governor; as he was born among God's professing and covenant people, dedicated to him by circumcision, and educated in a religious manner; as he was king over Judah, where alone the worship of God was instituted; and as he was bound by every obligation to serve and obey him. But he was not the God of Ahaz, as he is the God of true believers, according to the covenant of grace; he was not Ahaz's Portion and Salvation, nor was Ahaz the Lord's servant and worshipper, for he was a vile apostate and idolater. In short, he had not the privilege of having the Lord for his God, his Shield, and exceeding great reward: but he had the guilt of violating the strongest obligations to his service: and of continuing impenitent, and ungodly, in the midst of every advantage and means of grace. Had he been born and educated a heathen, he might perhaps have escaped remarkable judgments: but as he was an apostate, "the LORD his God" delivered him to be punished, into the hands of the Syrians and Israelites. His people also were involved in the same guilt, and in the same punishment. They did corruptly under pious Jotham: for their correction Jotham was removed, and wicked Ahaz succeeded; and his idolatry and enormous crimes were punished by dreadful havock made among his subjects. Thus, the sins and sufferings of kings and people resemble the case of the human body; in which the head must share the sufferings of the members, and the members those of the head, by reason of that unity which subsists betwixt them.

V. 6—8. This is the greatest slaughter of the men of Judah that we read of. And as they were all valiant men, and Israel was not in a very prosperous state, it must be ascribed to some *supernatural* terror or confusion. Ahaz escaped the massacre: but one of his sons, and two of his chief officers were slain, one of whom was next under him in authority; and an immense spoil, and a vast number of prisoners were collected from the defenceless country by the rapacious victors: but it does not appear that Jerusalem was taken by them.

went out before the host that came to Samaria, and said unto them, Behold, s because the LORD God of your fathers was wroth with Judah, he hath delivered them into your hand, and ye have slain them in a rage *that* t reacheth up unto heaven.

s 5. Judg. iii. 8. Ps. lxix. 26. Is. x. 5. xlvii. 6. Ez. xxv. 12 15. xxvi. 22. Obad. 10 — 16. Zech. i. 15.
Gen. xi. 4. Ezra ix 6. Rev. xviii. 5.

10 And now ye purpose to u keep under the children of Judah and Jerusalem for bond-men and bond-women unto you; *but are there* x not with you, even with you, sins against y the LORD your God?

u Lev. xxv. 39—46.

x Jer. xxv. 29. Rom xi. 20, 21. 1 Pet. iv. 17, 18.
y 5.

11 Now hear me therefore, and z deliver the captives again, which ye have taken captive of your brethren: for a the fierce wrath of the LORD *is* upon you.

z Is. lviii. 6 Jer xxxiv. 14, 15. Heb. xiii. 1—3.
a Ezra x. 14. Matt v. 7 vii. 2 Jam. ii. 14.

V. 9—11. The Lord, provoked with Judah's idolatries, had delivered them into the hands of their still more idolatrous brethren, who had shown the most exorbitant rage and cruelty in destroying them; and as if this had been a small thing, they proceeded to gratify their inhuman avarice by seizing all the women and children, to sell them, or to keep them for slaves. But if the Lord had so severely punished their offending brethren of Judah, could the men of Israel expect to escape his fierce indignation? Were there no sins among them to provoke his displeasure? Or were they not sufficient, without augmenting them by this iniquitous and cruel treatment of the women and children, who had never injured them? Or could they hope for the mercy of God, if they neither showed mercy nor justice to their brethren? This was the Lord's message to the conquerors by his prophet: and it naturally leads us to consider some questions concerning slavery. Let it then be remembered, that there do not at present subsist any such distinctions betwixt nations, as God for wise reasons was pleased for a time to establish betwixt Israel and the Gentiles; but every man is now our *neighbour*, and in one sense our *brother;* our *fellow-man*, if not our *fellow-christian*. Perhaps they attempt too much who argue that slavery *in all cases* is contrary to scriptural principles; and this has given its advocates some advantages in the controversy. But no man, well acquainted with the word of God, needs fear to maintain, that the modern slave-trade stands in diametrical opposition to both the law and the Gospel; as well as to the true interests of mankind. Who can possibly hold his *unoffending* brother in bondage, for his own gain, without violating the rule of doing to others, as he would that they should do unto him? and as he might fairly expect that they should do to him? Suppose that an African should kidnap the son of an English merchant, and carry him to Africa, and pretending property in him, should sell him for a slave; and so he should be sold from one to another for life, and his children after him. Suppose that Africans gave such prices for Englishmen, as encouraged them to steal and sell one another, till it became a regular trade: would not free-born Britons execrate buyers, sellers, stealers, and all concerned in such a traffic? They, who have forfeited their lives by crimes against the state, have also forfeited their natural right to liberty; and might justly be sold for slaves, *by public authority*, declaring the crimes for which they were thus punished. Some other criminals, and some kinds of fraudulent debtors, might be sold for a *limited* time, consistently with equity. Perhaps some prisoners taken in battle, in those wars which are evidently undertaken and conducted in avarice and cruelty, might thus be punished, without transgressing the law of God: (for the *policy* of it forms quite a distinct question.) But to seize, enslave, and sell a fellow-creature, who has by *no criminality* known to us, or cognizable by us, merited so severe a treatment, must in all cases be contrary to the law of "loving our neighbour as ourselves." The poor Africans cannot be proved to be either criminals, debtors, or prisoners taken in rapacious or revengeful wars; but they appear generally to be persons, that have been kidnapped from their relatives, or bought of them; or taken prisoners in wars excited on purpose to supply that infamous market. If any of them are criminals, the European merchants know it not: they have no authority from either God or man to be their executioners; and their descendants certainly are not criminals. Were it indeed true, that if not bought by the Europeans, they would be slain by the conquerors: we need only answer, that "You "must not do evil, that good may come." 'If you have 'no other way of rescuing them, you had better leave 'them to fight their own battles, and treat their captives 'as they please, without interfering: and you certainly 'would do so, if *avarice* were no more concerned in the 'business than *humanity* is.' It is true, that the scripture throughout speaks of slavery as actually existing. But the *judicial* law was very distinct from the *moral* law, as hath before been shown: (*Note*, *Exod.* xxi. 1—6.) Like other municipal laws, it aimed to prevent those evils which originated from abuses and human passions, and which could not be terminated except by constant miracle; as in the case of divorces. The apostles and evangelists were *preachers*, and not *legislators;* they were not empowered to subvert the foundations of civil government throughout the world; and they found slavery universally and inseparably interwoven with them. Every one must therefore perceive what confusion, what reproach, and what additional enmity to Christianity, must have been occasioned by such an attempt. They indeed laid down the principles which, when reduced to practice, will infallibly annihilate slavery: and, taking things as they then stood in civil society, they taught all Christians how to accommodate themselves to their stations, consistently with their profession, even if they were slaves, and slaves in a heathen family. The question is therefore not to be decided by *facts;* but by *The moral Law of God* and the tendency of the GOSPEL. The practice could not *then* be regularly opposed, without creating convulsions in society: nor can it ever be successfully rectified by *preachers;* it is the work of enlightened, humane, and pious *legislators*. Individual believers under both dispensations possessed slaves: they took matters as they were; and treated their slaves with such equity and humanity, as rendered it a kindness to them, to take them

12 Then certain of [b] the heads of the children of Ephraim, Azariah the son of Johanan, Berechiah the son of Meshillemoth, and Jehizkiah the son of Shallum, and Amasa the son of Hadlai, [c] stood up against them that came from the war,

13 And said unto them, Ye shall not bring in the captives hither: for whereas we have offended against the LORD *already*, ye intend to [d] add *more* to our sins and to our trespass: for our trespass is great, and *there is* fierce wrath against Israel.

14 So the armed men left the captives and the spoil before the princes and all the congregation.

15 And the men which were [e] expressed by name rose up, and took the captives, and with the spoil [f] clothed all that were naked among them, and arrayed them, and shod them, and [g] gave them to eat and to drink, and anointed them and carried all the feeble of them upon asses, and brought them to Jericho, [h] the city of palm-trees, to their brethren: then they returned to Samaria.

16 ¶ At that time [i] did king Ahaz send unto the kings of Assyria to help him.

17 For again [k] the Edomites had come and smitten Judah, and carried away * captives.

18 The [l] Philistines also had invaded the cities of the low country, and of the south of Judah, and had taken [m] Beth-shemesh, and [n] Ajalon, and [o] Gederoth, and [p] Shocho with the villages thereof, and [q] Timnah with the villages thereof, Gimzo also and the villages thereof: and they dwelt there.

19 For [r] the LORD brought Judah low, [s] because of Ahaz king of [t] Israel; for he [u] made Judah naked, and transgressed sore against the LORD.

20 And [x] Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria came unto him, and [y] distressed him, but strengthened him not.

21 For Ahaz [z] took away a portion *out* of the house of the LORD, and *out* of the house of the king, and of the princes, and gave *it* unto the king of Assyria: but he helped him not.

22 And [a] in the time of his distress did

b 1 Chr. xxviii. 1.
Ecr. xxvi 16.
d Num. xxxii 14. Josh xxii. 17, 18. Matt. xxiii 32 35. Rom. ii. 5.
e 12.
f Job xxxi. 15—23. Is. lviii. 7. Matt. xxv 35—45. Acts ix. 39. 1 Tim. v. 10. Jam. ii 15, 16. 1 John iii 17, 18.
g 2 Kings vi. 22 Prov. xxv. 21, 22. Luke vi. 27. Rom. xii. 20, 21.
h Deut. xxxiv. 3. Judg. i. 16.
i 2 Kings xvi. 5—7 Is. vii. 1—9. 17.
k xxv. 11. 12. Lev. xxvi. 13.
* Heb. *a captivity.*
l Ez. xvi. 27. 57.
m Josh xv 10. 1 Sam vi. 9. 13.
n xi. 10. *Aijalon.*
o Josh. xv. 41.
p Josh xv. 48. *Socoh*
q Judg. xiv. 1 *Timnath.*
r Deut. xxviii. 43. 1 Sam ii 7. Job xl 12. Ps. cvi. 41—43. Prov. xxix 23.
s Hos v. 11. Mic. vi 16
t xxi 2
u Gen. iii. 7. 11. Ex. xxxii. 25. Rev. iii 17, 18. xvi. 15.
x 2 Kings xv. 29. xvi 7—10. *Tilgath-pileser.* 1 Chr. v. 26. Hos. v. 13.
y 2 Kings xvi. 5. Is vii 20 xxx. 3. 16 Jer. ii. 37.
z xii. 9 2 Kings xviii. 15, 16. Prov. xx. 25.
a xxxiii. 12 Ps. l. 15. Is i. 5. Ez. xxi. 13. Hos. v. 15. Rev. xvi. 9—11.

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out of ungodly families. And a pious West-Indian, who laments the enormities which he cannot but witness, arising from this unnatural trade, and who sincerely wishes and prays for its entire abolition; may in the mean time deem it better, quietly to set his neighbours an example of treating slaves with brotherly lenity and kindness, conducive to their real happiness, than indiscriminately to liberate them; when perhaps it might occasion fatal effects upon the minds of the other planters and their slaves; if this were done by an individual, in opposition to all his neighbours, and without the interference of legal authority. When strangers are brought so far from home, and are not able to return, a truly pious and humane man may render the yoke very tolerable to them. But who had a right by compulsion to bring their unoffending brethren so far from home? And what proportion do pious and humane persons, in most communities, bear to those of an opposite character? A succession of wise and good kings, if that could be ensured, might render even absolute government a blessing. But whilst mankind are what they are, men of reflection, and lovers of their brethren, will never be friends to despotism in kingdoms or in families: and absolute monarchs and slave-holders will ever be justly exposed to the determined opposition of mankind, even when they merit not their detestation by any abuse of power.

V. 12—15. It is remarkable that Pekah is not mentioned in this transaction, but probably he was at the head of the army when the prophet addressed them. The courage of these princes who ventured to oppose the whole army, insolent with victory and enriched with booty, was admirable and commendable, and their arguments were cogent, and coincided with the messages of the prophet. The apostacy, idolatry, and recent cruelty of Israel rendered their trespass very great; and if they reduced the captives to slavery, it would add more to their sins, and hasten the execution of the fierce wrath of God upon them.—The compliance of the army, in leaving both the captives and the spoil to the disposal of the princes, was very wonderful; and the humane treatment, and the *carrying back of the captives to their brethren*, deserves all possible applause.—The prophet's remonstrance had for the time its full effect: but, alas! both princes and people still cleaved to their idols, and went on in their other sins.

V. 16. 'Before the time of Paul, (2 *Kings* xv. 19.) 'we read nothing of the Assyrian monarchy, which 'grew by degrees to its greatness from small begin-'nings. If their large empire had been of long stand-'ing, we should in all probability have heard of them 'before this time, as we do often afterwards.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 19. *Naked.* The Lord himself was the glory and defence of Judah: but Ahaz, by seducing his subjects from his worship and service, had degraded them, stripped them of all their ornament, deprived them of all their protection, and left them defenceless and contemptible in the hands of their feeblest enemies.

V. 20, 21. (*Note*, 2 *Kings* xvi. 7—9.)

he trespass yet more against the LORD:
b Esth. vii. 6. Ps. lii. 7. b this *is that* king Ahaz.
c xxv. 14 2 Kings xvi 12, 13. 23 For c he sacrificed unto the gods of
† Heb. *Darmesek.* † Damascus, which smote him; and he
d Hab. i. 11. said, d Because the gods of the kings of
e Jer. xliv. 15–18. Syria help them, *therefore* will I e sacrifice to them, that they may help me.
f Jer. xliv. 20–28. But f they were the ruin of him, and of all Israel.

24 And Ahaz gathered together the
g 2 Kings xvi. 17, 18. xxv. 13, &c. vessels of the house of God, and g cut in pieces the vessels of the house of God,
h xxix. 3. 7. and h shut up the doors of the house of
i xxxiii 3–5. Jer ii. 23 Hos. xii. 11 Acts xvii. 16, 23. the LORD; and i he made him altars in every corner of Jerusalem.

25 And in every several city of Judah he made high places to ‡ burn incense ‡ Or, offer. unto other gods, and provoked to anger the LORD God of his fathers.

26 ¶ Now k the rest of his acts, and of k xx. 34. xxvii. 7–9 2 Kings xvi. 19, 20. all his ways, first and last, behold, they *are* written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.

27 And Ahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, *even* in Jerusalem: but l they brought him not B. C. 726. l xxi. 20 xxv. 28. xxxiii. 20 1 Sam. ii. 20. Prov. xi. 7. into the sepulchres of the kings of Israel: and Hezekiah his son reigned in his stead.

V. 22, 23. *This*, &c. 'This is that notorious offender, 'who grew more outrageous in his idolatry and impiety, 'amidst his distresses! That abandoned prince, who disgraced the house of David, and accelerated the ruin of 'Judah! Who foolishly sacrificed to the gods of his 'enemies, supposing that they had smitten him; instead 'of humbling himself before the Lord, who had used the 'Syrians as his instruments for his correction! That Ahaz, 'who acted in a manner which tended to ruin himself, his 'family, and his kingdom; and persevered therein so obstinately, that he provoked the Lord to cut him off by a 'premature death, in the full career of his wickedness!' (*Notes*, 2 *Kings* xvi. 12—20.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

They who succeed eminently wise and pious men in the same important station, seldom enter into their views or imitate their conduct, in "doing that which is right in the "sight of the LORD:" Nay, frequently they seem ambitious of being as opposite to them as possible; especially when they run into wickedness after having received a pious education! When sinners "like not to retain God in "their knowledge," he "gives them over to vile affec-"tions," to perpetrate every thing horrible and unnatural: and if such monsters of iniquity are advanced to thrones, the Lord intends by them to punish a guilty land, by involving their subjects in the consequences of their crimes and follies. They therefore who are groaning under the oppression of cruel tyrants, or smarting through the effects of *their* infatuated counsels, are called on to humble themselves before God for *their own* sins, to submit to *his* justice, and to seek deliverance from his mercy. On the other hand, if we are governed with equity and clemency, and live in peace and prosperity, through the prudent and successful administration of our rulers; we should bless God for his mercies, and show forth our gratitude in our daily conduct: and it is the constant duty of us all to pray for those who are, or shall be, placed over us, that they may be the instruments of God's goodness to us, and not of his wrath. Tempters and examples of iniquity, are often employed to be scourges; and the sentence, which God *righteously* denounces, man may *unrighteously* execute.—It is a lamentable reflection that so many thousands of lives are sacrificed to the mad passions of potent individuals, who themselves escape: but they that thus are cut off, are sinners, and are punished for having forsaken or offended God.

V. 8—27.

The combined effects of several depraved passions is very dreadful: when revenge is satiated, avarice or ambition may take the reins; and if power be not wanting, the widow, the orphan, the stranger, and the helpless, will be oppressed, crushed, and enslaved without redress; and men will rejoice in growing rich by these detestable measures. But the Lord beholds and disapproves: and in one way or other he will plead or revenge the cause of the oppressed. It is happy when the authority of his word, or the expostulations of his ministers, deter men from persisting in mercenary cruelties; or excite legislators and princes to put a stop to such iniquity. If the oppressed have provoked God to deliver them up into the hand of their oppressors, should not these remember, that "there "are with them also sins against the LORD?" Even rigorous justice towards an offending brother, is a grievous offence, in one that only lives and hopes through the mercy of God. (*Matt.* xviii. 23—35.) But for such persons to injure and cruelly entreat their unoffending brethren, must "add exceedingly to the fierce wrath of the Lord that is "upon them." If "he shall have judgment without "mercy, who hath showed no mercy," what will be his doom, who hath been guilty of the most flagrant injustice to the inoffensive stranger, merely because he had it in his power to oppress him? Surely, in such a case, whilst the ministers of the Gospel warn, exhort, and beseech the oppressors to deliverer the captives up whom they have taken of their brethren: the legislators and rulers of every state should peremptorily refuse admission into their dominions, to those bond-slaves whom they have so unjustly reduced under their subjection. For we have offended against the Lord already, and this connivance will add still more to our sin and to our trespass, till fierce wrath come upon the

CHAP. XXIX.

Hezekiah reigns well, opens the doors of the temple, and exhorts the priests and Levites to prepare every thing for the worship of God, 1—11. *They sanctify themselves, and cleanse the temple,* 12—19. *Hezekiah offers solemn sacrifices; and the Levites show more zeal than the priests,* 20—36.

a 2 Kings xviii. 1—3. 1 Chr iii. 13. Is. i. 1. Hos i. 1. Mic. i. 1. Matt. i. 9, 10. *Ezekias.*

HEZEKIAH began to reign *when he was* five and twenty years old, and he reigned nine and twenty years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Abijah, the daughter of [b] Zechariah.

b xxvi. 5. Is. viii. 2.

c xxviii. 1. xxxiv. 2. 1 Kings xv. 5.

2 And he [c] did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David his father had done.

3 He, [d] in the first year of his reign, in the first month, [e] opened the doors of the house of the LORD, and repaired them.

d xxxiv. 3. Ec. ix. 10. Matt. vi. 33.

e xxviii. 24. 2 Kings xvi. 14—18.

4 And he brought in the priests and the Levites, and gathered them together into the [f] east-street.

f xxxii. 6 Neh. iii. 29. Jer. xix. 2.

5 And said unto them, [g] Hear me, ye Levites; Sanctify now yourselves, and [h] sanctify the house of the LORD God of your fathers, and carry forth the filthiness out of the holy *place.*

g xxxv. 6. Ex. xix. 10. 15. 1 Chr xv. 12

h 16. xxxiv. 3. 8. Ez. xxxvi. 25. Matt. xxi. 12, 13. 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17. 2 Cor. vi. 16. vii. 1. Eph. v. 26, 27.

6 For [i] our fathers have trespassed, and done *that which was* evil in the eyes of the LORD our God, and [k] have forsaken him, and have [l] turned away their faces from the habitation of the LORD, and * turned *their* backs.

i xxviii. 2—4. 23—25. xxxiv. 21. Ezra v. 12 ix. 7. Neh. ix. 16. 32. Jer. xvi. 19. xliv. 21, 22. Lam. xv. 7. Dan. ix. 8. 15. Matt. x. 37. xxiii. 39—32.

k Jer. ii 27.

l Ez. viii. 16.

* Heb. *given the neck.*

7 Also [m] they have shut up the doors of the porch, and put out the lamps, and

m xxviii. 24. Lev. xxiv. 2—8. 2 Kings xvi. 17, 18.

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nation. Nay, if the poor captives who have violently been torn from their native country, and who have no power to return to their beloved relatives, could, when dismissed and kindly treated, be carried back again to them, it would be a conduct becoming the disciples of Christ; it might tend to render the name of Christian respectable in those distant regions, where the cruelty, treachery, and avarice of those who bear it, have rendered it odious; and thus at length prepare the way for the propagation of the Gospel among these poor benighted heathens. And instead of injuring the interests of the community, or of any individuals, (except the most atrocious of the oppressors, who have no right to be considered, let it suffice them to escape deserved punishment;) we may venture, upon general scriptural principles, to foretel, that above all other measures, it would tend the most effectually to the lengthening of our tranquillity and prosperity. (*Dan.* iv. 27.) But if they who commiserate their oppressed fellow-creatures, long to see their grievous servitude terminated, they must unite their prayers for the divine blessing upon the exertions of those who honourably stand forth in this benevolent cause. For without the Lord touch the hearts of those who are to decide upon it, every exertion will be in vain. When sinners are left to their own hearts' lusts, they grow more and more callous, and desperate in wickedness; and trespass yet more and more in their distresses, as if in defiance of God; and seek redress in their miseries, from those sins whence all their sufferings spring, and which will terminate in their ruin, and that of all who adhere unto them. For when God casts down, none can raise up: and all helpers will increase distress, instead of affording deliverance. The progress of wickedness and misery is often rapid; and it is awful to reflect upon a sinner's being driven away in his wickedness into the eternal world. Yet this apparent severity of God against the ringleaders in iniquity proves mercy to thousands, when righteous and useful persons are raised up in their stead.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIX. V. 1, 2. (*Notes,* &c. 2 *Kings* xviii. 1—3.)

V. 3. It seems that the public worship at the temple was entirely suppressed and prohibited, during the latter years of king Ahaz: (7.) The only reason advanced for a contrary opinion, is this: It is not said that the sacred fire on the altar of burnt-offering was extinguished, or that it was rekindled by fire from heaven, as at the dedication of the temple. If, however, the service was not totally put a stop to, the people in general were shut out from attending.—Hezekiah must have witnessed this impiety of his father with deep regret and indignation: but immediately upon his succession to the throne, he threw open the doors of the temple, and proceeded to re-establish the worship there, as in the days of David. Yet the priests and Levites delayed to do their duty, till excited to it by the king. Perhaps Urijah was still the high-priest; the chief priests were infected with idolatry, and disaffected to the service of God; and their inferiors, who were better disposed, might be held back by the authority of the leading men, till authorized by Hezekiah.

V. 5. Personal repentance, and purification from legal and moral defilements, were requisite in the priests and Levites, before they could orderly proceed to purify the temple. Much rubbish, dirt, and rust, would be contracted, through disuse and neglect, in the temple, the courts, and the sacred vessels: but the idolatry, with which they had been polluted, and the altar made after the model of one which Ahaz saw at Damascus, formed by far the worst filthiness, from which they needed to be cleansed. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 6. *Our fathers,* &c. When the honour of God was concerned, Hezekiah hesitated not to criminate those who had gone before. He did not directly mention Ahaz his father, because that was not needful; and the neglect, and base compliances of the priests and Levites, had greatly contributed to the wickedness of the king and his nobles.

have not burned incense, nor offered burnt-offerings in the holy *place* unto the God of Israel.

8 [n] Wherefore the wrath of the LORD was upon Judah and Jerusalem, and he hath delivered them to * trouble, [o] to astonishment, and to hissing, as ye see with your eyes.

9 For, lo, [p] our fathers have fallen by the sword, and our sons, and our daughters, and our wives *are* in captivity for this.

10 Now [q] *it is* in mine heart [r] to make a covenant with the LORD God of Israel, [s] that his fierce wrath may turn away from us.

11 My sons, be not now † negligent: for [t] the LORD hath chosen you to stand before him, to serve him, and that ye should minister unto him, and ‡ burn incense.

12 Then the Levites arose, Mahath the son of Amasai, and Joel the son of Azariah, of the sons of the [u] Kohathites: and [x] of the sons of Merari; Kish the son of Abdi, and Azariah the son of Jehalelel: and [y] of the Gershonites; Joah the son of Zimmah, and Eden the son of Joah:

13 And of the sons of [z] Elizaphan; Shimri, and Jeiel: and of the sons of [a] Asaph; Zechariah, and Mattaniah:

14 And of the sons of [b] Heman; Jehiel, and Shimei: and of the sons of [c] Jeduthun; Shemaiah, and Uzziel.

15 And they gathered their brethren, and [d] sanctified themselves, and came, according to the commandment of the king, ‡ by the words of the LORD, [e] to cleanse the house of the LORD.

16 And the priests went into [f] the inner part of the house of the LORD, to cleanse *it*, and brought out [g] all the uncleanness that they found in the temple of the LORD, into the court of the house of the LORD. And the Levites took *it*, to carry *it* out abroad into the brook [h] Kidron.

17 Now they began on the first *day* of the first month to sanctify, and on the eighth day of the month came they to [i] the porch of the LORD: so they sanctified the house of the LORD in eight days: and in [k] the sixteenth day of the first month they made an end.

18 Then they went in to Hezekiah the king, and said, We have cleansed all the house of the LORD, and [l] the altar of burnt-offering, with all the vessels thereof, and [m] the shew-bread table, with all the vessels thereof.

19 Moreover [n] all the vessels, which king Ahaz in his reign did cast away in his transgression, have we prepared and sanctified; and, behold, they *are* before the altar of the LORD.

20 ¶ Then Hezekiah the king [o] rose early, and gathered the rulers of the city, and went up to the house of the LORD.

21 And they brought [p] seven bullocks, and seven rams, and seven lambs, and seven he-goats, for [q] a sin-offering for the kingdom, and for the sanctuary, and for Judah. And he commanded the priests the sons of Aaron to offer *them* on the altar of the LORD.

a xxiv. 18. xxxiv. 24, 25. xxxvi. 14—16. Deut. xxviii 15—20.
* Heb. *commotion.*
o Lev. xxvi. 32. Deu. xxviii. 59. 1 Kings ix 8. Jer. xviii. 16. xix. 8. xxv. 9. 18 xxix. 18.
p xxviii. 5—8 17. Lev. xxvi. 17.
q vi. 7, 8.
r xv. 12, 13 xxiii. 16. xxxiv. 30—32. Ezra x. 3. Neh. ix 38. x. 1, &c. Jer. xxxiv. 15. 18. 1. 5. 2 Cor. viii. 5.
s 2 Kings xxiii 3. 26.
† Or, *deceived.* Gal. vi. 7, 8.
t Num. iii. 6—9. viii. 6—14. xviii. 2—6. Deu. x. 8.
‡ Or, offer sacrifice. Num xvi. 35—40. xviii. 7.
u Ex. vi. 16—25. Num. iv. 2, &c. 1 Chr. vi. 16—18. xv. 5. xxiii. 12—20
x 1 Chr. vi. 19. 44 xv 6. xxiii. 21—23.
y 1 Chr. vi. 17, 18. xv. 7. xxiii. 7—11.
z Lev. x. 4 *Elzaphan.* 1 Chro. xv. 8.
a 1 Chr. vi. 39. xv. 17 xxv. 6.
b 1 Chr. vi. 33. xv. 19.
c 1 Chr. xxv. 1. 3 6.
d 5.
‡ Or, *in the business.* xxx. 12.
e 1 Chr. xxiii. 28.
f iii 8. v. 7. Ex. xxvi. 33, 34. 1 Kings vi. 19, 20 Heb. ix. 2—8. 23, 24.
g Ez. xxxvi. 29. Mat. xxiii. 27.
h xv. 16. 2 Kings xxiii. 4—6. John xviii. 1. *Cedron.*
i 7. iii. 4 1 Kings vi. 3. 1 Chr. xxviii. 11.
k Ex. xii. 2—8.
l iv. 1—8.
m iv. 8. xiii. 11.
n xxviii. 24.
o Gen. xxii. 3. Ex. xxiv 4. Josh. vi. 12. Jer. xxv. 4.
p Num. xxiii. 1. 14. 29. 1 Chr. xv. 26. Ezra viii 35. Job xlii. 8. Ez. xlv. 23
q Lev. iv. 3—14. Num. xv. 22—24. 2 Cor. v. 21.

V. 8, 9. The defeat and dreadful slaughter recorded in the foregoing chapter seems here referred to, as the effect of some extraordinary terror from God on the minds of the Jews: and the Edomites and Philistines had been successful, because God had employed them as the weapons of his indignation.

V. 11. Hezekiah attempted to prevail with the priests and Levites to attend to their duty, by argument and affectionate exhortation, and not by compulsion. This condescending address assured them of his readiness to support and protect them, as a father would do his obedient children. He warned them not to *be deceived*, (so some render the word,) for God would certainly call them to a strict account, if they neglected the work to which he had chosen them: or he exhorted them not to be *remiss*, when extraordinary exertions were become absolutely necessary.

V. 12—16. All these leaders in the work were Levites; not the chief in rank, but the most eminent for zeal and diligence. The high-priest is not mentioned. Some of the other priests concurred, and cleansed the inside of the sanctuary, whither the Levites might not come. When the ark was to be removed, and on other necessary occasions, the priests might enter the holy of holies; though not at other times. Ahaz died about the close of the year; and Hezekiah had given timely orders to the priests and Levites, for them to begin this good work with the new year.

V. 20. Perhaps Hezekiah arose earlier on that day than common, that he might set the people an example of earnestness in the service of God. He would not lose a day nor an hour, after the temple was ready, before he opened the solemn worship of God, by sin-offerings and other sacrifices.

22 So they killed the bullocks, and the priests received the blood, and [r] sprinkled *it* on the altar: likewise, when they had killed the rams, they sprinkled the blood upon the altar: they killed also the lambs, and they sprinkled the blood upon the altar.

23 And they brought * forth the he-goats *for* the sin-offering before the king and the congregation; and [s] they laid their hands upon them:

24 And the priests killed them, and they made [t] reconciliation with their blood upon the altar, to make an atonement for all Israel; for the king commanded *that* the burnt-offering and [u] the sin-offering *should be made* for all Israel.

25 And [x] he set the Levites in the house of the LORD with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, [y] according to the commandment of David, and of [z] Gad the king's seer, and [a] Nathan the prophet: [b] for *so was* the commandment † of the LORD by his prophets.

26 And the Levites stood with [c] the instruments of David, and [d] the priests with the trumpets.

27 And Hezekiah commanded to offer the burnt-offering upon the altar. And ‡ when the burnt-offering began, [e] the song of the LORD began *also* with the trumpets, and with § the instruments *ordained* by David king of Israel.

28 And [f] all the congregation worshipped, and ‖ the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded: *and* all *this* *continued* until the burnt-offering was finished.

29 And when they had made an end of offering, the king and all *that were* * present with him, [g] bowed themselves, and worshipped.

30 Moreover Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the LORD, [h] with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer. And [i] they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshipped.

31 Then Hezekiah answered, and said, Now ye have † consecrated yourselves unto the LORD, come near, and bring [k] sacrifices and [l] thank-offerings into the house of the LORD. And the congregation brought in sacrifices, and thank-offerings; and [m] as many as were of a free heart, burnt-offerings.

32 And [n] the number of the burnt-offerings, which the congregation brought, was threescore and ten bullocks, an hundred rams, *and* two hundred lambs: all these *were* for a burnt-offering to the LORD.

33 And the [o] consecrated things *were* six hundred oxen, and three thousand sheep.

34 But [p] the priests were too few, so that they could not slay all the burnt-offerings: wherefore [q] their brethren the Levites ‡ did help them, till the work was ended, and until the *other* priests had sanctified themselves: [r] for the Levites

r Lev. i. 5. iv. 7. 18. 31. viii. 15. 19. 24. Heb. ix. 21.
* Heb. *near.*
s Lev. i 4. iv. 15. 24.
t Lev. vi. 30. viii. 15. Ez. xlv. 15 17 Dan. ix. 21 Rom v. 10, 11. 2 Cor. v. 18—20. Col. i. 20, 21 Heb. ii 17.
u Lev. iv. 13. &c.
x 1 Chr. ix 33. xv 16—22 xvi 4, 5. 42 xxv. 1—7
y viii. 14. xxxv. 15 1 Chr. xxiii. 5. xxviii 12. 19.
z 2 Sam xxiv 11 1 Chr xxi 9. xxix 29.
a 2 Sam vii. 2—4 xii 1—7.
b xxx 12
† Heb *by the hand of the LORD, by the hand* of his prophets
c 1 Chr. xxiii. 5 Am. vi 5.
d v. 12, 13 Num. x. 10 Josh vi 4—9. 1 Chr xv. 24. xvi 6 Ps. lxxxi. 3. xcv. 1, 4, 6. cl 3.
‡ Heb *in the time.*
e vii 3. xx. 21. xxiii. 18. Ps. cxxxvi. 1.
§ Heb *hands of instruments.*
f Ps. lxviii. 24—26. Rev v. 8—14.
‖ Heb. *song.* Ps. lxxxix. 15.
* Heb *found*
g xx 18. 1 Chr xxix 20 Ps lxxii. 11. Rom. xiv. 11. Phil. ii. 10, 11.
h 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2. 1 Chr. xvi. 7—36.
i Ps. xxxii. 11. xxxiii 1. xcv. 1, 2. c. 1, 2. cxlix 2. Phil. iv. 4.
† Or, *filled your hand.* xiii. 9.
k Lev. i. iii.
l Lev. vii. 12.
m Lev. i. 3. xxiii. 38. Ezra i. 4.
n 1 Kings iii. 4, viii. 63. 1 Chr. xxix. 21. Ezra vi. 17.
o 31.
p 5. xxx. 16, 17.
q xxxv. 11 Num. viii. 15, 19. xviii. 3 6, 7.
‡ Heb *strengthened them.*
r xxx. 3.

V. 21—24. (*Notes*, &c. *Lev.* iv. (*Marg. Ref.*) One bullock was appointed for a sin-offering for the whole congregation: but on this extraordinary occasion, when so many and great enormities had been committed, multiplied atoning sacrifices were offered. The ceremony of the king and the congregation laying their hands upon the head of the goats, expressed their confession of guilt, and the substitution of the guiltless animals to suffer in their stead; which prefigured Him "who bare our sins in his own "body on the tree." The word rendered *he-goats* is not used in scripture till after the captivity; and learned men think that this is one proof that Ezra compiled these books. —The sin offerings especially were presented not only in behalf of the kingdom of Judah, but for all Israel, even the ten tribes, which were at this time governed by Hoshea. Hezekiah seems in this to have had respect to the plan which he afterwards proposed, and which is recorded in the ensuing chapter; namely, of uniting the whole nation of Israel in celebrating the passover, and in the worship of God.

V. 25. The temple-psalmody was regulated with the concurrence of these other prophets, as well as by the appointment of David.

V. 26—28. (*Note, Num.* x. 1—10. *Marg. Ref.*)

V. 31, 32. As burnt-sacrifices were wholly consumed on the altar, the offering of them evinced greater zeal and liberality, than the oblation of peace-offerings, a great part of which was eaten by the offerer and his friends. Comparing the sacrifices offered on this occasion with those of Solomon when the temple was dedicated; (though here it is said the burnt-offerings were in abundance;) we may form some idea how greatly the riches and prosperity of the kingdom of Judah were diminished; or how greatly the general spirit of piety had declined!

V. 33. It is probable that *the consecrated things* denote the peace-offerings, and thank-offerings.

s 1 Chr. xxix. 17. Ps. vii. 10.
t 32.
u Ex. xxix. 13. Lev. iii. 15, 16.
x Gen. xxxv. 14. Lev. xxiii. 13. Num. xv. 5, 7. 10.
y 1 Chr. xvi. 37—42. Ezra vi. 18. 1 Cor. xiv. 40.

were more s upright in heart to sanctify themselves than the priests.

35 And also t the burnt-offerings *were* in abundance, with u the fat of the peace-offerings, and x the drink-offerings for *every* burnt-offering. y So the service of the house of the Lord was set in order.

36 And z Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people, that a God had prepared the people: for b the thing was *done* suddenly.

z 1 Chr. xxix. 9. 17. Ezra vi. 22. 1 Thes. iii. 8, 9.
a xxx. 12. 1 Chr. xxix. 13. Ps. x. 17. Prov. xvi. 1.
b Acts ii. 41.

V. 34. *The priests*, &c. We do not find that any *idolatrous priests* were punished: but perhaps some were disgraced and excluded from attendance; whilst more neglected to sanctify themselves, being averse to the sacred service. It was therefore deemed more proper that upright and duly sanctified Levites should slay the sacrifices, than unclean or profane priests. This is considered by many as irregular, but it is no where expressly prohibited. Indeed before the Levites were explicitly given to the sons of Aaron, the slaying the sacrifices was exclusively the work of the priests: but afterwards it seems to have been a part of the ministry assigned to the Levites, at the will of the priests: yet the Levites might not in any case sprinkle the blood, or burn the fat and flesh, or approach the altar.

V. 36. The great and sudden change produced in the conduct of the people; and the alacrity with which they concurred in measures to which much opposition had been expected, evidenced that God had prepared the people: and Hezekiah and all the people rejoiced in it, as a token that he would prosper them in endeavouring a more complete reformation.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—19.

The removal of a single individual of very bad character, from any public situation, and the succession of a wise and pious person in his stead, may be productive of most important and extensive good consequences: for, authority, influence, and example, give such efficacy to the attempts of princes and nobles, that the consequences of their conduct are beyond calculation. And what an honour is it to be employed in diffusing piety and felicity through whole kingdoms! But how dreadful will be the condemnation of those who spread guilt and misery in so extensive a manner!—Whether a godly man inherit a kingdom or an estate; whether he change his station in society, or his place of abode, or be removed to a new situation in the church, his *first actions* will be of considerable importance, and often leave an abiding impression: and regulations may frequently be then made without difficulty, before different habits and expectations have been formed, which would afterwards become almost impracticable.—Even where God had appointed that apostates and idolaters should be punished with death, we find that the most effectual revivals of true religion were produced by example, exhortation, and encouragement: and if it were in the hearts of kings and rulers, thus to join themselves in covenant with the Lord, and zealously to stir up all orders of men to do their duty, by earnest persuasions and affectionate expostulations, without using violence, or imposing upon men's consciences; many would be excited willingly to concur in their pious designs, and to "come according "to the commandment of the king, *by the words of the* "Lord." Happy and honourable will they be, who shall thus become nursing fathers to the church, not by bribes and preferments, but by countenancing those who zealously labour to promote acknowledged truth and practical godliness, though not all exactly in the same way.

V. 20—36.

The nominal ministers of religion have in all ages been lamentably backward in labouring and venturing to promote the cause of God: and the higher their dignities, and the greater their emoluments, the more evident frequently has been their aversion to *the work* of the ministry. Too generally indeed the infidelity and impiety of all orders in the community are justly chargeable upon the vices, the supineness, or the insufficiency, of the stated ministers. Instead of exhorting all others to do their duty, no exhortations have been found effectual, on some occasions, to induce them to attend to their own: nay, they have often been found disposed to overawe and browbeat their inferior brethren, who were willing to "labour in the word and "doctrine," and to supply their lack of service, that immortal souls might not perish for want of instruction. But if the honour of a parent is not to be regarded where the glory of God is concerned, such clergymen must not expect to be treated with respect, when the very existence of true religion is at stake: and the reputation of the clerical function must be supported by the holy lives, superior knowledge in divine things, and unwearied labours of the clergy: or else it must sink into neglect and contempt. The true minister of Christ, however, should take heed first to himself, and then to his ministry. His own conscience, heart, and life must first be purified by repentance and faith in the divine Saviour: and then he may hope to prosper in endeavouring to convert others also, and to promote the pure and spiritual worship of God. In all reformation, personal or public, we must first be convinced, in what particulars we have done wrong, and then consider how we may do better. Neglect of God, and omission of duty, lead to more direct impiety and iniquity; and our own transgressions prepare us to become tempters and seducers of others. Thus religion is run down, and the wrath of the Lord comes on apostate professors and apostate nations. In returning to him, therefore, we must renounce our sins and begin to practise neglected duties, to use the means of grace, and to watch against the wickedness of the heart. We indeed have no occasion for multiplied sacrifices, as the one atonement of Christ is sufficient for all who rely on it: but we need repeated confessions of guilt, constant humiliation before God, and application to the Saviour's blood, for forgiveness and acceptance; we need to maintain daily communion with, and to receive continual communications from, our reconciled Father, through him; and we should present our

CHAP. XXX.

Hezekiah proclaims a solemn passover to be kept in the second month, and calls both Judah and Israel to unite in celebrating it, 1—5. *His message to them, and the reception it met with,* 6—12. *A great multitude, having destroyed the altars for Idolatry in Jerusalem, prepare to keep the feast,* 13—16. *Hezekiah prays for those who were not ceremonially clean, and prevails,* 17—20. *They keep the feast fourteen days with great joy,* 21—26. *The priests bless the people,* 27.

a xi. 13. 15.
b 10, 11. xxv. 7. xxxv. 6. Hos. v. 4. vii. 8, 9. xi. 8.
c Deut. xvi. 2—6.
d Ex. xii. 3—20. 1 Cor. v. 7, 8.
e 1 Chr xiii. 1—3 Prov. xi. 14. xv. 22. Ec. iv. 13.
f Num. ix. 10, 11.

AND Hezekiah sent [a] to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters [b] also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come [c] to the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, [d] to keep the passover unto the LORD God of Israel.

2 For [e] the king had taken counsel, and his princes, and all the congregation in Jerusalem, to keep the passover [f] in the second month.

g Ex. xii. 6. 18.
h xxix. 34.

3 For they could not keep it [g] at that time, [h] because the priests had not sanctified themselves sufficiently, neither had the people gathered themselves together to Jerusalem.

* Heb. *was right in the eyes of.* 1 Chr. xiii. 4.

4 And the thing * pleased the king, and all the congregation.

i Ezra vi. 8—12. Esth iii 12—15. viii. 8—10. ix. 20, 21. Dan. vi. 8.
k xxiv. 9. xxxvi. 22. Lev. xxiii. 2 4. Dan iv. 1, &c.
l Judg. xx. 1.
m xxxv. 13.

5 So they [i] established a decree [k] to make proclamation throughout all Israel; [l] from Beersheba even to Dan, that they should come to keep the passover unto the LORD God of Israel at Jerusalem: [m] for they had not done *it* of a long *time in such sort* as it was written.

n Job ix. 25. Est. viii. 14 Jer. li. 31.
† Heb. *the hand of.*

6 So [n] the posts went with the letters from the † king and his princes throughout all Israel and Judah, and according to the commandment of the king, saying, Ye children of Israel, [o] turn again unto the LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and he will return to the remnant of you, that are [p] escaped out of the hand of the kings of Assyria.

o Is. lv. 6, 7. Jer. iv. 1. Ez. xxxiii. 11. Hos xiv. 1. Joel ii. 12, 13. Jam. iv. 8.
p xxviii. 20. 1 Kings xv. 19. 29. 1 Chr. v. 26. Is. i. 9.
q Ez. xx. 18. Zech. i. 3, 4.

7 And be not ye [q] like your fathers and like your brethren, which trespassed against the LORD God of their fathers,

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spiritual sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, and devote our time, talents, and substance, yea, our bodies and souls, with a free heart, as sacrifices acceptable to the Father, through the Redeemer's name. To these things we are encouraged by the joyful sound of his gospel: when we abound in these sacred exercises, according to the commandment of the holy prophets and apostles of Christ, we shall be enabled, though in ourselves most miserable sinners, to rejoice in the Lord and to glory in his salvation.—Those ministers who are most diligent in preparing for their work and performing it, will be most employed and honoured, even though inferior in external distinctions; and slothful disqualification will never excuse any man's negligence before God. But He alone can prepare the heart of man for vital godliness: when much real good is effected in a little time, the glory must be ascribed to him; and all who love him, or the souls of men, will rejoice. And if we would have such blessings, we must make it our constant prayer to the Lord, thus to prepare our hearts and those of others: for when he works, great things may suddenly be effected. May he grant that none called ministers may be negligent: but that they may all act as chosen by him to stand before him, and to serve him; and that they may zealously do his will, that the wrath of God may be turned from them and from others on every side, by his blessing upon their labours.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXX. V. 1. The other tribes of Israel were as much bound to obey the law of Moses, as Judah and Benjamin were: but Hezekiah had no authority over them. Yet the circumstances in which they were placed, encouraged him to address them by letters, with an amicable and pious invitation; which implied that they might attend at the temple with perfect safety, though not his subjects.—Ephraim and Manasseh, as principal tribes, seem put for the whole kingdom of Israel.

V. 2—4. Hezekiah and his counsellors justly concluded, that the regulation of the fourteenth day of the second month, which had been made for individuals who were hindered from eating the passover at the appointed season, might, in their present circumstances, be extended to the whole congregation. A sufficient number of the priests had not been duly sanctified, to prepare the temple for that ordinance at the sacred time, or to officiate in it; the people, long disused from attendance, were not generally assembled; they who were present, seemed well disposed to celebrate that solemn and significant ordinance, and it might have an abiding good effect, if the favourable opportunity were seized. For these reasons it was determined to summon the people to attend, and to keep the passover in the second month.

V. 5. *As it was written.* It seems probable, that the passover, and the other solemn feasts, were sometimes totally omitted for years together; and at other times very carelessly attended, and by very few persons, compared with what the law required: and the ten tribes had never been accustomed to repair to Jerusalem, since the division of the kingdom.

who therefore gave them up to desolation, as ye see.

8 Now * be ye not stiff-necked as your fathers *were, but* † yield yourselves unto the LORD, and [r] enter into his sanctuary, [s] which he hath sanctified for ever: and [t] serve the LORD your God, that [u] the fierceness of his wrath may turn away from you.

9 For [x] if ye turn again unto the LORD, your brethren and your children *shall find* compassion before them that lead them captive, [y] so that they shall come again into this land: for [z] the LORD your God *is* gracious and merciful, and [a] will not [b] turn away *his* face from you, if ye return unto him.

10 So [c] the posts passed from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, even unto Zebulun: but [d] they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them.

11 Nevertheless, [e] divers of Asher, and Manasseh, and of Zebulun, [f] humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem.

12 Also in Judah [g] the hand of God was to give them one heart to do [h] the commandment of the king and of the princes, [i] by the word of the LORD.

13 ¶ And there assembled at Jerusalem much people to keep the feast of unleavened bread in [k] the second month, a very great congregation.

14 And they arose, and took away the [l] altars that *were* in Jerusalem, and all the altars for incense took they away, and cast *them* into [m] the brook Kidron.

* Heb. *harden not your necks.* xxxvi 13. Ex. xxxii. 9. Deut. x. 16. Is. xlviii. 4.
† Heb. *give the hand.* 1 Chr xxix. 24 Ezra x. 19 Ps lxviii. 31. Rom. vi. 13. 16. 19.
r Ps. lxiii. 2. lxviii. 24 lxxiii. 17.
s Ps. cxxxii. 13, 14.
t Deut vi. 13. 17. Josh. xxiv. 15. Matt. iv 10. John xii. 26. Rom. vi. 22. Col. iii 22-24. Rev vii. 15
u xxviii 11 13. xxix. 10 2 Kings xxiii. 26. Ps. lxxviii. 49
x vii. 14. Lev. xxvi. 40-42. Deut. xxx. 2-4. 1 Kings viii. 50 Ps cvi. 46.
y Jer xxix. 12-14. xxxi 27. 28.
z Ex. xxxiv 6, 7. Ps. lxxxvi. 5. 15. cxiv 7, 8. Mic. vii. 18
a xv. 2. Is. lv. 7. Ez xviii. 30-32.——b Jer. xviii 17.——c 6.
d xxxvi 16 Gen. xix. 14 Neh ii. 19. Job xii 4. Luke viii 53. xvi 14 xxii 63, 64. xxiii. 35. Acts xvii 32. Heb xi. 36
e 18 xi. 16. Acts xvii. 34
f xxxiii. 12. 19. 23. Ex. x 3. Lev. xxvi. 41. 1 Pet v 6.
g xxix. 36. 1 Chr. xxix 18, 19. Ezra vii. 27. Ps. cx. 3 Jer. xxxii. 39. Phil. ii. 13. 2 Thes. ii. 13, 14.
h Deut iv. 2. 5, 6. 1 Thes. iv. 2
i xxix. 25.
k 2.
l xxviii. 24. Is. ii. 18-20.
m xv. 16. xxix. 16.

V. 6—9. Hoshea was king of Israel at this time, and it does not appear that he attempted to hinder his subjects from resorting to Jerusalem to worship, if they chose it; (*Note*, 2 *Kings* xvii. 2.)—In the preceding reign Israel had made a dreadful slaughter of the men of Judah: yet Hezekiah considered the Israelites as brethren, and greatly desired to bring them back, by kind treatment, to the religion of their fathers: and therefore he sent his proclamation or letters, into the parts of the land belonging to the ten tribes, as well as throughout his own dominions. The word rendered *posts* signifies *runners*: for men were then, and still are, in many places, trained and kept on purpose to convey dispatches speedily by running. Even then the Israelites were but a remnant, that had escaped from the ravages of Pul and Tiglath-pilezer: and far heavier judgments awaited them for their apostacy and idolatry; which could not be averted, except by turning again to the God of their fathers. Hezekiah, however, most affectionately and plainly cautioned them not to copy the crimes of their fathers and brethren, whose miseries they had witnessed: he warned them not to be *stiff-necked*, or *obstinate in rebellion:* and he exhorted them "to yield themselves unto the Lord;" that is, to yield the victory to him, to submit to his authority, to lay down their rebellious arms, to crave mercy, and to become his servants. He entreated them also "to enter "into his sanctuary, which he had sanctified for ever:" that is, to renounce their idolatries and self-invented worship, and to resort with their sacrifices to the temple at Jerusalem, and there to keep the solemn feasts. The temple was not only the centre of God's worship, and the pledge of his gracious presence with his people, but likewise the type of those spiritual blessings which are from everlasting to everlasting upon all true believers. Hezekiah also encouraged those whom he addressed to hope, from the mercy and grace of God to the penitent, that if thus they turned to him, the fierceness of his wrath would be turned away from them; and they might expect the restoration of their brethren and children, who were already in captivity: for having all hearts in his hand, he can and will make the enemies of those that please him to be at peace with them, and to show them compassion. In this he evidently referred to the promises contained in the books of Moses. (*Marg. Ref.*) It is observable that these letters carefully avoided all mention of the claim of David's family to dominion over all Israel; and of former injuries and quarrels, or whatever could give any shadow of offence, either to the prince or his subjects, except in the immediate concerns of religion.

V. 10, 11. The nation of Israel was almost ripe for destruction; and no wonder that most of them insulted and mocked the messengers who conveyed these invitations: we may rather wonder, that they met with no worse treatment. Some however of several tribes were prevailed on, and humbling themselves for former sins, resorted to Jerusalem: so that Hezekiah's pious design was not ineffectual, though not so successful as he wished it to be.

V. 12. The language of this verse is entitled to special attention. "The commandment of the king and his "princes, by the word of the LORD," met with ready and general obedience from the men of Judah; because "the hand of God was to give them one heart to do it." If the rulers had commanded any thing contrary to the word of the LORD, or beyond it, in affairs of religion; it would have been a misapplication of their authority: but, as they required nothing but what God had expressly enjoined; they duly improved their talent, and the people, by the grace of God, knew and performed their duty. It does not appear that Christianity has altered the duty either of rulers or subjects in this respect.

V. 13. The emphatical language here used fully proves, that the concourse of people to celebrate this passover, was exceedingly great, compared with all other instances with which the writer was acquainted.

V. 14. As the people assembled at Jerusalem some days before the passover, they employed the intermediate time in clearing the city of altars for idolatry, and from other abominations. This was an excellent preparation for the solemn ordinance which they were about to celebrate.

15 Then they killed the passover on the fourteenth *day* of the second month: and the priests and the Levites [n] were ashamed, and sanctified themselves, and brought in the burnt-offerings into the house of the LORD.

16 And they stood in their * place after their manner, according to the law of Moses the man of God: [o] the priests sprinkled the blood, *which they received* of the hand of the Levites.

17 For *there were* many in the congregation that were not sanctified: therefore [p] the Levites had the charge of the killing of the passovers, [q] for every one *that was* not clean, to sanctify *them* unto the LORD.

18 For a multitude of the people, *even* [r] many of Ephraim and Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, [s] had not cleansed themselves, yet did they eat [t] the passover otherwise than it was written. But Hezekiah [u] prayed for them, saying, [x] The good LORD pardon every one,

19 *That* [y] prepareth his heart to seek God, the LORD God of his fathers, [z] though *he be* not *cleansed* according to the purification of the sanctuary.

20 And the LORD hearkened to Hezekiah, and [a] healed the people.

21 And the children of Israel that were † present at Jerusalem kept [b] the feast of unleavened bread seven days, with [c] great gladness: and the Levites and [d] the priests praised the LORD day by day, *singing* with ‡ loud instruments unto the LORD.

22 And Hezekiah spake § comfortably unto all the Levites [e] that taught [f] the good knowledge of the LORD: and they did eat throughout the feast seven days, offering peace-offerings, and [g] making confession to the LORD God of their fathers.

23 And the whole assembly [h] took counsel [i] to keep other seven days: and they kept *other* seven days with gladness.

24 For Hezekiah king of Judah ‖ did [k] give to the congregation a thousand bullocks, and seven thousand sheep: and the princes gave to the congregation a thousand bullocks, and ten thousand sheep: and [l] a great number of priests sanctified themselves.

25 And all the congregation of Judah, with the priests and the Levites, and all the congregation that came out of Israel, and [m] the strangers that came out of the land of Israel, and that dwelt in Judah, [n] rejoiced.

26 So there was great joy in Jerusalem: for [o] since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel, *there was* not the like in Jerusalem.

n xxix. 34. Ez. xvi. 61—63. xliii. 10, 11.
* Heb. *standing.*
o xxxv. 10, 11. Lev. i. 5. Heb. xii. 24.
p xxxv. 3.
q xxx. 18.
r 11.
s Num. xix. 20. 1 Cor. xi. 28.
t Ex. xii. 43, &c.
u Gen. xx. 7, 17. Job xlii. 8, 9. Jam. v. 15. 1 John v. 16.
x vi. 21. Ex. xxxiv. 6, 9. Num. xiv. 18—20. Ps. xxxvi. 5. Dan. ix. 19.
y xix. 3. xx. 33. 1 Sam. vii. 3. Ezra vii. 10. Job xi. 13. Prov. xxiii. 26.
z Lev. xii. 4. xv. 31—33. xxi. 17—23. xxii. 3—6. Num. ix. 6. xix. 13—20.
a Ex. xv. 26. Ps. ciii. 3. Jam. v. 16.

† Heb. *found.*
b Ez. xii. 15. xliii. 6. Lev. xxiii. 6. Luke xxii. 1, 7. 1 Cor. v. 7, 8.
c 26. vii. 10. Deut. xii. 12. Acts ii. 46.
d xx. 21. xxix. 25—27.
‡ Heb. *instruments of strength.* Ps. cl. 3—5.
§ Heb. *to the hearts of all.* xxxii. 6. Is. xl. 1. Hos. ii. 14.
e xv. 3. xvii. 9. xxxv. 3. Deut. xxxiii. 10. Ezra vii. 10, 25. Neh. viii. 7, 8. 18. ix. 3. 2 Tim. iv. 2.
f Prov. ii. 6, 7. viii. 6. Phil. iii. 8.
g Deut. xxvi. 3—11. Ezra x. 11. Neh. ix. 3, &c.
h 2.
i vii. 9. 1 Kings viii. 65.
‖ Heb. *lifted up,* or, *offered.*
k xxxv. 7, 8. 1 Chr. xxix. 3—9. Ez. xlv. 17. Eph. iv. 8.
l xxix. 34.
m 18. Ex. xii. 43—49.
n 1 Chr. xvi. 10, 11. Ps. xcii. 4. civ. 34.
o vii. 9, 10.

V. 15. The zeal and earnestness of the king, the princes, and the people in general, made the priests and Levites ashamed of their own supineness, and stirred them up to prepare themselves, and attend on their work. The hand of God was in this also, or they would have been the more irritated. (*Matt.* xxi. 15.)

V. 16, 17. (*Marg. Ref.*) Either the Levites or the offerers might *receive* the blood of the victims: but the priests alone might *sprinkle* it. It is evident, that in ordinary cases, the persons who brought the paschal lambs slew them; or this exception would not have been stated: and it is at least probable, that the case was the same with other sacrifices. (*Note, Lev.* i. 5. 9.)

V. 18—20. Many of the ten tribes having come at a short warning, and being destitute of instruction, were ceremonially unclean, and therefore not regularly prepared to eat the passover. But it would have greatly discouraged them, had they been excluded from that ordinance to which they had been invited; they appeared very sincere and earnest in returning to the Lord; and there was a prospect of important usefulness. They were therefore allowed to eat the passover, when the Levites had killed it for them, notwithstanding their ceremonial disqualification: and Hezekiah, sensible that there was danger in this deviation, earnestly prayed to the good and merciful LORD, "to pardon every one that prepared his heart to seek—"the LORD,—though not cleansed, according to the purification of the sanctuary." (*Marg. Ref.*) To this prayer the Lord granted a favourable answer, "and healed the "people." Perhaps he had visited them with some sickness for their irregularity, which he then graciously healed. (1 *Cor.* xi. 30.) Or he gave peace to their consciences, and healed their souls.

V. 22. The sacrifices, psalmody, and supplications of the people, were accompanied by the reading and expounding of the law: some of the Levites were thus employed in instructing the people, in the good, the profitable, and pleasant knowledge of the Lord; (*Note, 1 Chron.* xxviii. 9:) and the king peculiarly noticed and encouraged them in this useful work, which was very much wanted. This would excite others to apply themselves to the study of the law, that they too might be qualified for this service. By "making confession," may be meant, either confessing their sins, or acknowledging the unmerited goodness of the Lord.

V. 23. This passover must have been nearly about the time of harvest: but the hearts of the people were so enlarged with holy affections, that they were neither weary of the sacred service, nor in haste to return to their secular business. (*Marg. Ref.*)

p Num vi. 23–26. Deut. x. 8.
q 1 Kings viii. 30. Acts x. 4.

27 Then [p] the priests the Levites arose, and blessed the people: and their voice was heard, and [q] their prayer came *up* to * his holy dwelling place, *even* unto heaven.

* Heb *the habitation of his holiness.* Ps. lxviii. 5 Is lvii. 15. lxiii. 15. lxvi. 1.

V. 27. *Arose*, &c. This seems to have been at the close of the solemnity. The observance of this passover, and the solemnities that attended it, were crowned with a peculiar blessing, and brought many of the priests and people to a serious sense of religion, and introduced an important revival among them; even superior to any that had taken place since the days of Solomon. As this occurred in the first year of Hezekiah's reign, and he reigned twenty-nine years, we may be sure that he witnessed the effects of so good a beginning to the end of his life. It was done *suddenly*, but by the grace of God it was done *effectually*. Doubtless the passovers and other solemn feasts were kept up and attended to during this reign, but not in so remarkable a manner as this first passover.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

Favourable opportunities of fixing good impressions ought by no means to be let slip: and it is better that circumstantial irregularities should be admitted, than that divine ordinances should be neglected, or substantial usefulness prevented. When duties have been long omitted, the time ought to be more carefully redeemed, that no further delays may be occasioned: former negligence, though it cannot be *excused*, may be *forgiven;* but persevering ungodliness will infallibly end in destruction. We ought to embrace every proper opportunity of addressing men upon their eternal concerns, and of engaging as many as possible in the service of God: and we may employ *arguments* and *persuasions* with those over whom we pretend to no authority. No injuries or enmities should render us indifferent about the salvation of any man: no expense or labour ought to be grudged in such endeavours: nor should we be discouraged by the prospect of the neglect, or contempt, or even rage, of the very persons whose happiness we are seeking. Numbers may and will *laugh us to scorn:* but several will be humbled and benefited; and perhaps, where success was least expected, where impiety and profligacy were most notorious, and among those that appeared ripe for destruction! Such attempts should be made in plainness, meekness, and affection; all reproaches and upbraidings, and every thing assuming or needlessly offensive, should be avoided; important and undeniable truths and duties should chiefly be insisted upon; and the conscience and passions, especially hope and fear, should be vigorously addressed. The consequences of continuing in sin, and of returning to God, should be contrasted; and the whole should be enforced by arguments deduced from fact and experience. Addresses to this effect are peculiarly seasonable, while men are suffering for their crimes, and still deeper miseries present themselves to their view, from which they have no prospect of deliverance, but by the merciful interposition of God. And when the prosperity of eminently pious persons, among their acquaintance or relatives, can be compared with the misery of others notoriously profligate; the argument thence deduced, for repentance and returning to God, will have peculiar energy: for even the irreligious must see the absurdity of copying the wicked examples of fathers or brethren, who have been evidently ruined by their vices. But the rich mercy of God forms the grand argument, by which to enforce repentance on the sinner's conscience. There is forgiveness with him, and plenteous redemption in the Saviour's blood; and we are under a dispensation of mercy. Nothing but stiff-necked, obstinate, impenitent wickedness can ruin us. The vilest of sinners, "who yield themselves to the LORD," shall certainly be saved. Let then sinners trust in his mercy, and attend upon his ordinances, and join themselves to his people, that they may serve him: and then the fierceness of his wrath will turn away from them; but not otherwise. To this "we should exhort one another daily, lest any of us should be hardened, through the deceitfulness of sin:" to this we may invite and persuade the chief of sinners; for "him that cometh" to the Saviour, "he will in no wise cast out:" but he "will grant" unto all who believe in him, "that, being delivered from the hand of their enemies, they may serve him without fear, in righteousness and true holiness, before him, all the days of their life:" and the covenant made with them will prove for the good of their children and brethren also. Oh, that messengers were sent forth to carry these invitations to every city and village, through every land! Indeed the Lord alone can render them effectual: but he works by the word of his ministers, and also by the commandment of kings and princes. Faith comes by hearing: and true religion hath uniformly flourished in proportion to the measure in which faithful scriptural preaching hath abounded. In general, persons of wealth or authority might be instrumental in promoting this faithful preaching of the word of God, if they had the inclination, and were willing to bear the expense of it: and superior rank does not enjoy a higher privilege. All who are employed in such a work, should do it with their might; and neither be discouraged nor exasperated by opposition or reproach; and they will find that their labour has not been in vain in the Lord.

V. 13—27.

When we are humbled for our transgressions, and declare war against all our idols, expecting and seeking forgiveness and salvation through the atonement of Christ, we become welcome guests at the Lord's table. The unhumbled and impenitent indeed; the man who lives in allowed known sin, and he who comes 'trusting in his own righteousness, 'instead of God's manifold and great mercies,' may pretend to commemorate the death of Christ; but he is an intruder who comes to the marriage-feast without the wedding-garment. Yet when the sinner has indeed begun to prepare his heart to seek the Lord; though his views are feeble, obscure, and in many things erroneous, and his approach be not exactly regular; he must not be discouraged, despised, or treated with harshness: our blessed Advocate, who breaketh not the bruised reed, will intercede for him; we

CHAP. XXXI.

The people destroy the idols and their temples and altars, throughout Judah and Israel, 1. *Hezekiah orders the courses of the priests and Levites, and provides for their maintenance as well as for the stated sacrifices,* 2—4. *The people readily bring their first-fruits and tithes,* 5—10. *Hezekiah appoints officers to dispose of these oblations,* 11—19. *A high commendation of his zeal and integrity,* 20, 21.

a xxx. 1, &c. 1 Kings xviii. 38—40. 2 Kings xxiii. 2—20.
* Heb. *found.*

NOW [a] when all this was finished, all Israel *that were* * present went out to the cities of Judah, and [b] brake the † images in pieces, and cut down the groves, and threw down the high places and the altars out of all Judah and Benjamin, [c] in Ephraim also and Manasseh, ‡ until they had utterly destroyed them all. Then all the children of Israel returned, every man to his possession, into their own cities.

b xiv. 3. xxxiv. 3—7. Deut. vii. 5. 2 Kings xviii. 4.
† Heb. *statues.*

c xxx. 18. 2 Kings xvii. 2. xviii. 1.
‡ Heb. *until to make an end.*

2 And Hezekiah appointed [d] the courses of the priests, and the Levites after their courses, every man according to his service, the priests and Levites for burnt-offerings, and for peace-offerings, to minister, and * to give thanks, and to praise in the gates of the tents of the LORD.

d 1 Chr. xvi. 37 40. xxiii. xxiv. xxv. xxvi. Ezra vi. 18. Luke i. 5.

e xxix. 24. 26. 1 Chr. xvi. 4—6. 41, 42. xxv. 3. Neh. xi. 17. Ps. cxxxiv. 1—3. cxxxv. 1—3. 19, 20. Jer. xxxiii. 11.

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too ought to pray for and encourage him, and our good Lord will pardon every one who bears this character. No trembling believer, therefore, who desires to trust in the Redeemer, and to show his gratitude by obeying his plain command, need to be alarmed lest he should fail in that exactness which he supposes is required in this ordinance: for the good LORD lays no snares in the way of humble upright inquirers. Previous preparation is indeed profitable; but the true believer is habitually ready, and ought not to retire for want of actual preparation. Yet every defect is sin, and needs forgiveness; and should be matter of humiliation, but not of discouragement. Man's authority cannot disannul or alter divinely instituted externals in the worship of God: yet they may be idolized; and the Lord will on some occasions approve the conduct of those who prefer the *spirit* to the *letter* of an insituted observance, where both *cannot possibly* be attained; and who seize an opportunity of glorifying him, in seeking the conversion and salvation of souls, by postponing, or relaxing in, the exact observance of an external regulation. Much allowance should be made for those who are newly brought forth out of very ignorant places: yet they must not be left in their mistakes. The ministers of God must diligently teach them the good knowledge of the Lord, of his perfections, mysteries, ordinances, and precepts; that they may proceed with increasing understanding and alacrity. They who labour in this important work should be encouraged and counselled by all that are able; for it is very arduous, and brings a man into many perplexities.—When the chief of sinners humble themselves before God, they may in due time expect great gladness in his ordinances. Their confessions of sin will be made pleasant by the hope of forgiveness, and by that peace and joy which are the sweet fruits of the sanctifying Spirit. They who taste this happiness in the worship of God, will not speedily grow weary of it, but will be glad to prolong the delightful employment, and must be, as it were, torn away to return to their secular occupations. When the ignorant, the mean, and the profligate, as well as those of superior stations, become earnest in God's service, Pharisees will either be exasperated or ashamed: and it is happy for themselves, and for others, when they are at length brought to true repentance, and fall in with and help forward the work of God in their several places. And if numbers of ministers, that have been ungodly and mercenary, become obedient to the faith, we may be sure, that God is powerfully at work, and has much more to do. (*Acts* vi. 7.) True godliness will be attended with proportionable joy; and numbers met together, to whom God hath given one heart to delight in his ordinances, will share and augment each other's rejoicing. But such seasons on earth are transient: trials and conflicts await us after our choicest consolations; yet these are beneficial to us. The benedictions and prayers of the Lord's ministers, by which the people are dismissed from solemn ordinances, are not to be slighted; though spoken on earth, they are heard in heaven, the holy dwelling place of our reconciled God. But the intercession of our great High-Priest is chiefly to be valued: he never fails to plead for every believer, and he never pleads in vain. A few more interruptions of our joy by conflicts and temptations, (whilst in him we still have peace!) and we shall soon be with him to behold his glory: and there our worship, our love, and rejoicing, will be uninterrupted, unalloyed, and eternal.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXI. V. 1. This destruction of idolatry and its appendages, was either confined to those cities and villages which had come under the dominion of the kings of Judah, or to those places whence the Israelites came, who resorted to Jerusalem to keep the passover: or else, Hoshea not objecting to it, the people, in their zeal for the honour of the God of Israel, went through the whole land, for this purpose; whilst the idolaters were intimidated from making any opposition. When this was done, they returned home: and it is probable that some of the Israelites, who had been at the feast, retired into the land of Judah during the ravages of Shalmaneser, and so escaped the general ruin.

V. 2. *The tents,* &c. The buildings which surrounded the temple in which the priests and Levites were stationed, resembled the tents in which soldiers are regularly encamped. (*Marg. Ref.*)

3 *He appointed* also [f] the king's portion of his substance for the burnt offerings, *to wit*, [g] for the morning and evening burnt-offerings, and [h] the burnt-offerings for the sabbaths, and [i] for the new moons, and for [k] the set feasts, as *it is* written in the law of the LORD.

4 Moreover he commanded the people that dwelt in Jerusalem, to give [l] the portion of the priests and the Levites, [m] that they might be encouraged in [n] the law of the LORD.

5 ¶ And [o] as soon as the commandment * came abroad, the children of Israel brought in abundance [p] the first-fruits of corn, wine, and oil, and † honey, and of all the increase of the field; and the tithe of all *things* brought they in abundantly.

6 And *concerning* the children of Israel and Judah, that dwelt in the cities of Judah, they also brought in [q] the tithe of oxen and sheep, and the tithe of holy things which were consecrated unto the LORD their God, and laid *them* by ‡ heaps.

7 In [r] the third month they began to lay the foundation of the heaps, and finished *them* in the seventh month.

8 And when Hezekiah and the princes came and saw the heaps, they [s] blessed the LORD, [t] and his people Israel.

9 Then Hezekiah questioned with the priests and the Levites concerning the heaps.

10 And [u] Azariah the chief priest of the house of Zadok answered him, and said, [x] Since *the people* began to bring the offerings into the house of the LORD, [y] we have had enough to eat, and have left plenty: for [z] the LORD hath blessed his people; and that which is left *is* this great store.

11 Then Hezekiah commanded to prepare § chambers in the house of the LORD; and they prepared *them*,

12 And brought in the offerings and the tithes and the dedicated *things* faithfully: [a] over which Cononiah the Levite *was* ruler, and Shimei his brother *was* the next.

13 And Jehiel, and Azaziah, and Nahath, and Ashael and Jerimoth, and Jozabad, and Eliel, and Ismachiah, and Mahath, and Benaiah, *were* overseers * under the hand of Cononiah and Shimei his brother, at the commandment of Hezekiah the king, and [b] Azariah the ruler of the house of God.

14 And Kore the son of Imnah the Levite, [c] the porter toward the east, *was* over [d] the free-will-offerings of God, to distribute the oblations of the LORD, and [e] the most holy things.

15 And † next him *were* Eden, and Miniamin, and Jeshua, and Shemaiah, Amariah, and Shecaniah, in [f] the cities of the priests, in *their* ‡ set office, to give to their brethren by courses, [g] as well to the great as to the small:

16 Beside their genealogy of males, from [h] three years old and upward, *even* unto every one that entereth into the house of the LORD, his daily portion for

f xxx. 24. 1 Chr. xxvi 26. Ex. xlv. 17. xlvi. 4—7. 12—18
g Ex. xxix. 38—42. Num. xxviii. 3—8.
h Num. xxviii. 9, 10.
i Num. xxviii. 11—15.
k Lev. xxiii. 2, &c. Num. xxviii. 16—31. xxix. 1, &c. Deut xvi. 1, &c. Ps. lxxxi 1—4. Col. ii. 16, 17.
l Lev. xxvii. 30. Num. xviii. 9. 21. Mal. iii. 8—10.
m Neh xiii 10—13. 1 Cor. ix. 10—14.
n Mal. ii. 7.
o xxiv. 10, 11. Ex. xxxv. 5. 20—29. xxxvi 5, 6. 2 Cor. viii. 2—5.
* Heb. *brake forth.*
p Ex. xxii. 29. xxiii. 19. xxxiv. 22. 26. Num. xviii. 12. Neh. x. 35—39. xii 44. xiii. 31. Prov. iii. 9. 1 Cor xv. 20. Jam. i. 18. Rev. xiv. 4.
† Or, *dates*
q Lev. xxvii. 30. Deut xiv. 28.
‡ Heb. *heaps, heaps.*
r Lev. xxiii. 16—24.
s Gen. xiv. 20. 1 Kings viii. 14. 15. 1 Chr xxix. 10. 20. Ezra vii. 27. Eph. i. 3. 1 Pet. i. 3.
t Gen xiv. 19. 2 Sam. vi. 18. 1 Kings viii. 55, 56.
u xxvi. 17. 1 Chr. vi. 8 10—14.
x Prov. iii. 9, 10. Hag. ii. 18, 19. Mal. iii 10, 11. 1 Tim. iv 3.
y 2 Kings iv. 43, 44 Matt xv. 37. Phil. iv. 18.
z Gen. xxvi. 12. xxx. 27—30. xxxix. 5. 23. Lev. xxv. 21. xxvi. 4, 5. Deut. xxviii. 8. Prov. x. 22. 2. Cor. ix. 8—11.
§ Or, *store-houses.* Neh. x. 38, 39. xiii. 5. 12, 13.
a 1 Chr. xxvi. 20—26.
* Heb. *at the hand.*
b 10.
c 1 Chr. xxvi 12. 14. 17.
d Lev. xxii 18. xxiii. 38. Num. xxix. 39. Deut. xii. 6. 17. xvi. 10. Ezra i. 4. iii. 5 vii. 16 Ps. cxix. 108.
e Lev. ii. 10. vi. 16, 17. vii. 1—6. x. 12, 13. xxvii. 28.
† Heb. *at his hand.*
f Josh. xxi. 9—18.
‡ Or, *trust.* 1 Chr. ix. 22.
g 1 Chr. xxv. 8.
h Lev. xxi. 22—25.

V. 3, 4. The public sacrifices were generally purchased by contributions from the people: but Hezekiah chose to be at that expense out of his stated revenue; that the people might be the more ready to obey his commandment in bringing their tithes and first-fruits, according to the law of God, for the maintenance of the priests and Levites. This was intended to encourage the priests and Levites to apply themselves entirely to studying, teaching, and fulfilling the law of the Lord; being assured that their families would not be left destitute.

V. 6. The several productions here mentioned were laid in different heaps, in some convenient place, but not properly guarded or taken care of. It is probable that some of the first-fruits, tithes, and offerings, were sold, and the money reposited in one common stock.

V. 8. Hezekiah and his princes commended the liberality of the people; they also prayed for them, and gave thanks to the Lord, who had given them the power and inclination to bring such abundance.

V. 9, 10. The king and the princes supposed, from the abundance which they beheld, that the priests who had the superintendence of the business, had preserved the whole; and they inquired wherefore they had not distributed the oblations of the people? But it was answered, that the Lord had blessed the people with such an abundant increase, that all this was left, after the priests and Levites had been sufficiently provided for! This disinterestedness of the priests was very commendable; for they might easily have enriched themselves without being suspected: and the whole transaction enlarges our idea of the blessing which had attended the preceding solemnity. For before this, the priests seem to have been generally very careless and ungodly.—It is probable that Azariah *was the chief-priest under the high-priest*, and nearly related to him

their service in their charges, according to their courses;

17 Both to the genealogy of the priests by the house of their fathers, and the Levites from [i] twenty years old and upward, in their charges, [k] by their courses;

18 And to the genealogy of all their little ones, their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, through all the congregation: for their * set office [l] they sanctified themselves in holiness:

19 Also of the sons of Aaron, the priests, *which were* in [m] the fields of the suburbs of their cities, in every several city, [n] the men that were expressed by name, to give portions to all the males among the priests, and to all that were reckoned by genealogies among the Levites.

20 And thus did Hezekiah throughout all Judah, and [o] wrought *that which was* good, and right, and truth, before the LORD his God.

21 And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did *it* [p] with all his heart, and [q] prospered.

i Num. iv. 3 viii. 24. 1 Chr. xxiii. 24. 27.
k 1 Chr. xxiv. 20—31. xxv. xxvi.
* Or. *trust.* 15. 1 Chr. ix. 22.
l Is. v. 16. Rom. xv. 16.
m Lev. xxv. 34. Num. xxxv. 2—5. 1 Chr. vi. 54, &c.
n 12—15. xxviii. 15.
o 1 Kings xv. 5. 2 Kings xx. 3. xxii. 2 John i. 47. Acts xxiv. 16. 1 Thes. ii 10.
p Deut. vi. 5. x. 12. 1 Kings ii. 4. 1 Chr. xxii. 19. Ec. ix. 10. Jer. xxix. 13.
q xiv. 7. xx. 20. xxvi. 5. Josh i. 7. 1 Chr xxii. 13. Ps. i. 3. Matt. vi. 33.

V. 15—19. The priests and Levites, as they attended in course, had a certain portion allotted to them, according to their office and charge. The sons of the priests who attended with them, as it seems, from three years of age, to learn the work of the sanctuary previously to the time of their officiating, had a provision made for them. A list was taken of the wives, and of the other children of the priests and Levites, and a proportionable allowance was assigned them: as also to those who were excluded or excused from attendance; and for all of them, when absent from the temple, and acting as magistrates and teachers in their several districts. Thus none appropriated an exorbitant proportion, and none wanted a suitable provision: "for in their set office they sanctified themselves in holi-"ness;" they separated themselves from other employments, and devoted themselves to serve God in their proper office, in a holy and believing expectation that he would provide for them; (for so the words seem to mean;) nor were they disappointed. And this regular provision kept them from the temptation of entangling themselves in worldly cares, to the neglect of their ministry.

V. 20, 21. The conduct of Hezekiah was good in itself; he acted with equity and impartiality towards all his subjects in these regulations; his heart was upright in the sight of God; and in all that he attempted to establish the worship of the Lord, and to obey and enforce the observance of his law, seeking his favour and glory, he was earnest and hearty, and single in his aim and dependence: and he was prospered accordingly. What a commendation was this from God himself! What a happy instrument was this pious king of good to his people! And what an encouraging and worthy example is this for princes, ministers, and Christians to imitate!

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

The finishing of one duty should form an introduction to another; and he that "delights greatly in God's com-"mandments," will not complain of this as a weariness.—Public ordinances and divine consolations should stir us up to cleanse our hearts, and houses, or shops, and every thing in which we are concerned, from the filthiness of sin and the idolatry of covetousness: and to exhort and excite others to do the same, by every method consistent with relative duties and the peace of society. The subsequent improvement of solemn ordinances is of the greatest importance to personal, family, and public religion. It is then our business to meditate on, and reduce to practice, what we have learned; to give vent to our pious affections in every kind of good work; and to take care that the vigour of them do not subside through unwatchfulness, neglect of prayer, or worldly indulgences. Inattention to these duties renders the private conversation and behaviour of most professors so inconsistent with their public profession and apparently religious affections; their growth in grace is thus prevented, and religion does not appear so venerable as it otherwise would do. Examples should concur with exhortations or injunctions, whether men act as magistrates or ministers: and this will give them greater effect, in many cases, than menaces, coercive measures, or severe rebukes. They who would have others expend their wealth in useful works, ought to take the lead: nay, the easiest method of enforcing the laws, and prevailing with others to pay their dues, hath often been found to be by receding from personal claims, and joining liberality with justice, in the magistrate's own conduct. The proper use of superior riches is, to do superior good with them: and if this were generally understood and believed, the most blessed effects would be produced. Every exercise of human authority in the church of God, must be regulated and bounded by his law, and must enforce obedience to it, and not make additions to it, or alterations in it. Whilst ministers ought to attend upon their proper work, in their several places; they should be encouraged in it, and not constrained or tempted to neglect it, by the want of a suitable maintenance for their families; or made uneasy and distressed in attending on it: nor should any excuse be afforded to those who, by choice, leave the word of God for secular engagements. A man is never impoverished by prudent liberality in works of piety and charity: indeed, this is the way to ensure the blessing of God on his substance and his labours. (*Marg. Ref.*) And when the portion that *is due* to the ministers of religion and to the poor, is conscientiously rendered to them, it shall be recompensed as if it were a *free-will-offering*.

CHAP. XXXII.

Sennacherib invades Judah; and Hezekiah fortifies Jerusalem, and encourages the people, 1—8. *Sennacherib's blasphemous messages and letters,* 9—19. *Hezekiah and Isaiah pray for deliverance: an angel destroys the Assyrian army, and their king returning home is slain by his sons,* 20—22. *Hezekiah prospers and is renowned,* 23. *In his sickness he prays, and is miraculously recovered: his heart is lifted up; but he afterwards humbleth himself,* 24—26. *His riches and works,* 27—30. *His misconduct in respect of the ambassadors from the king of Babylon,* 31. *He dies: his memory is honoured: and Manasseh succeeds him,* 32, 33.

a xx. 1, 2. 2 Kings xviii. 13. Is. xxxvi. 1, &c.

AFTER [a] *these* things, and the establishment *thereof*, Sennacherib

b Is. vii. 17, 18. viii. 6—8. x. 5, 6.

king of Assyria came, and entered into [b] Judah, and encamped against the fenced cities, and thought to * win them for himself.

* Heb. *break them up* Is. x. 7—11. xxxvii. 24, 25.

2 And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib was come, and that † he was purposed to fight against Jerusalem,

† Heb. *his face was to war.* 2 Kings xii. 17. Luke ix. 51 53.

3 He [c] took counsel with his princes and his mighty men, [d] to stop the waters of the fountains which *were* without the city: and they did help him.

c xxx. 2. 2 Kings xviii 20.
d 2 Kings xx. 20. Is. xxii. 8—11.

4 So there was gathered much people together, who stopped all the fountains, and [e] the brook that ‡ ran through the midst of the land, saying, Why should the [f] kings of Assyria come, and [g] find much water?

e 30. xxx. 14. 1 Kings i 33.
‡ Heb. *overflowed.*
f 2 Kings xviii 9. 13 xix. 17. Is. x. 8.
g 2 Kings iii. 9. 16, 17 xix 24

5 Also [h] he strengthened himself, and built up all the wall [i] *that was* broken, and raised *it* up to the towers, and [k] another wall without, and repaired [l] Millo *in* the city of David, and made ♦ darts and shields in abundance.

h xiv 5—7 xvii. 1, 2. Is. xxii. 9, 10.
i xxv. 23.
k 2 Kings xxv. 4. Jer. xxxix. 4.
l Judg. ix 6. 2 Sam. v 9. 1 Kings ix. 24. xi. 27. 2 Kings xii. 20
♦ Or, *swords.* or, *weapons.* xxvi. 14, 15

6 And [m] he set captains of war over the

m xvii. 14—19. 1 Chr xxvii. 3, 4, &c.

V. 11—21.

A proper use of authority, joined with a good example and convincing arguments, will induce many to do their duty in those things, in which they before were entirely negligent: but whatever means are used, when men abound in good works, we should bless the Lord for it; though due commendation should not be withheld from them.—Disinterestedness, impartiality, and frugality, are requisite in those who have the management of public charities, or other public funds: for when proper care is taken of the sums already contributed, and they are evidently expended for the sole purpose intended, encouragement is given to further contributions. It would tend greatly to the welfare of the church, if ministers were provided for with some degree of equality proportioned to their diligence, their families, and their necessary expenses: and it is a shameful abuse, that funds anciently appropriated for the maintenance of the clergy, are in great measure applied to aggrandize those that do very little for them; whilst the real labourers in the vineyard are scarcely kept from starving, and leave no provision for their families when taken from them. Legislators should rectify such abuses; but the faithful servant of God needs not be discouraged: let him study to live and to preach according to the word of truth, and give himself wholly to his work; and let him do it in faith, and the Lord will not suffer him to want, yea, he will provide for his children after him. But all pious men are not able to go on comfortably in this manner; and it is a grievous thing, that their spirits should be depressed, and their hands weakened in their work, on this account: and it is still worse, when they are tempted to leave their proper employment, to earn a morsel of bread for their wives and children. May the Lord raise up in every nation zealous men, who in such matters and in all other, "will work that which is good, and right, and truth, "before the LORD:" and who will do their utmost, "with "all their hearts in the service of the house of God, and "in the law and in the commandments," to seek the honour of the Lord! Whether we have few or many talents, may we thus improve them, and encourage others to do the same: we shall then assuredly be prospered in some measure; and shall obtain that honour that cometh from God, being graciously accosted by him with, "Well "done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy "of thy Lord."

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXII. V. 1. Most of the transactions, recorded in the preceding chapters, took place in the first year of Hezekiah's reign: and from that time he proceeded to *establish* and complete his reformation, without any very memorable occurrences, till his fourteenth year, in which Sennacherib's first invasion occurred. (*Notes*, 2 *Kings* xviii. xix. *Marg. Ref.*)

V. 4. The brook here mentioned is supposed to have been Kidron, or Cedron, called also the upper water-course of Gihon. (30.) Through subterraneous or concealed channels, Hezekiah brought the waters of this rivulet into the city, to supply certain pools there formed for the use of the inhabitants. Or by some means he turned or concealed the course of it, in order that the Assyrians might be distressed for water, if they undertook the siege of Jerusalem.—*The kings of Assyria* had, during several successions, been formidable enemies to Israel and Judah: and this measure was intended, not only for a present defence against Sennacherib, but also as a security against future sieges of him or his successors.

people, and gathered them together to him [n] in the street of the gate of the city, and spake * comfortably to them, saying,

7 [o] Be strong and courageous, [p] be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that *is* with him: [q] for *there be* more with us than with him:

8 With him *is* [r] an arm of flesh; but [s] with us *is* the LORD our God, to help us, and [t] to fight our battles. And the people † rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.

9 ¶ After this did [u] Sennacherib king of Assyria send his servants to Jerusalem, (but he *himself laid siege* against [x] Lachish, and all his † power with him,) unto Hezekiah king of Judah, and unto all Judah that *were* at Jerusalem, saying,

10 [y] Thus saith Sennacherib king of Assyria, Whereon do ye trust, that ye abide in the ‡ siege in Jerusalem?

11 Doth not Hezekiah persuade you [z] to give over yourselves to die by famine and by thirst, saying, [a] The LORD our God shall deliver us out of the hand of the king of Assyria?

12 [b] Hath not the same Hezekiah taken away his high places and his altars, and commanded Judah and Jerusalem, saying, [c] Ye shall worship before [d] one altar, and burn incense upon it?

13 Know ye not what [e] I and my fathers have done unto all the people of *other* lands? [f] were the gods of the nations of those lands any ways able to deliver their lands out of mine hand?

14 Who *was there* [g] among all the gods of those nations that my fathers utterly destroyed, that could deliver his people out of mine hand, that [h] your God should be able to deliver you out of mine hand?

15 Now therefore let not Hezekiah [i] deceive you, nor [k] persuade you on this manner, neither yet believe him: for no god of any nation or kingdom was able to deliver his people out of mine hand, and out of the hand of my fathers: how [l] much less shall your God deliver you out of mine hand?

16 And his servants spake [m] yet *more* against the LORD God, and [n] against his servant Hezekiah.

17 He [o] wrote also letters [p] to rail on the LORD God of Israel, and to speak against him, saying, [q] As the gods of the nations of *other* lands have not delivered their people out of mine hand, so shall not the God of Hezekiah deliver his people out of mine hand.

18 Then [r] they cried with a loud voice in the Jews' speech unto the people of Jerusalem that *were* on the wall, [s] to affright them, and to trouble them; that they might take the city.

19 And they [t] spake against [u] the God of Jerusalem, as against the gods of the people of the earth, *which were* [x] the work of the hands of man.

20 And for this *cause* [y] Hezekiah the king, and [z] the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz, [a] prayed and cried to heaven.

21 And [b] the LORD sent [c] an angel, which [d] cut off all the mighty men of valour, and [e] the leaders and captains, in the camp of the king of Assyria: so he returned [f] with shame of face to his own land. And when [g] he was come into the house of his god, they that came forth of his own bowels, * slew him there with the sword.

22 Thus [h] the LORD saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the

n Neh. viii. 1–3.
* Heb. *to their hearts.* xxx. 22. Is xl 2.
o Deu. xxxi. 6, 7. 23. Josh. i 6, 9. 1 Chr. xxviii 20. Eph vi. 10. 2 Tim. ii. 1.
p xx. 15. 2 Kings xviii. 30. xix. 6, 7.
q 2 Kings vi. 16. Rom viii. 31. 1 John iv. 4.
r Job xl. 9. Jer xvii 5.
s xiii 12. xiv. 11. Ps. xlvi. 11. Is. xli. 10. Acts xviii. 10.
t xx 15. Deu. xx. 1, 4. Josh. x 42.
† Heb *leaned.* 15. xx 20. Is xxxvi. 18.
B. C. 710
u 2 Kings xviii. 17. Is. xxxvi. 2.
x Josh. x. 31. Is. xxxvii. 8.
‡ Heb. *dominion.*
y 2 Kings xviii. 19. Is. xxxvi. 4.
|| Heb. *strong hold.*
z 2 Kings xviii. 27. Is. xxxvi 12. 18
a 15. 2 Kings xix 10. Ps. iii 2 xlii. 10. lxxi 11. Mat. xxvii. 43.
b xxxi 1. 1 Kings xviii. 4. 22. Is. xxxvi. 7.
c Deu xii. 13, 14. 26, 27.
d iv 1 Ex xxvii. 1–8. xxx. 1–6. xl. 26–29. 1 Kings viii. 48.
e 2 Kings xv. 29. xvii. 5, 6. xix. 11–13. 17, 18 Is. x. 9, 10. xxxvii. 12, 13. 18–20 Dan. iv. 39. 37.
f 19 2 Kings xviii. 33–35. xix 18, 19. Ps cxv 3–8. Is. xliv. 8–10. Jer x. 11, 12. 16. Acts xix 26. 1 Cor. viii. 4.
g Is. x. 11, 12.
h 19. Ex. xiv. 3. xv 9–11. Is. xlii. 8.

i 2 Kings xviii. 29 xix 10
k 1 Kings xxii. 22.
l Ex. v. 2 Dan. iii. 15. John xix. 10, 11.
m Job xv. 25, 26. Ps. lxxiii 9.
n John xv. 21.
o 2 Kings xix. 14. Neh. vi. 5. Is. xxxvii 14
p 2 Kings xix 22. 28. Is. x 15. xxxvii. 23, 24. 28, 29. Rev. xiii. 6.
q 2 Kings xix 12.
r 2 Kings xviii. 26 -- 28 Is. xxxvi 13
s 1 Sam xvii. 16. 26 Neh. vi 9.
t 13 - 17.
u vi 6 Ps. lxxvi 1, 2. lxxviii. 68. lxxxvii. 1–3. cxxxii 13, 14. Is. xix 32 Heb. xii. 22.
x 2 Kings xix. 18. Ps. cxxxv. 15–18. Is. xliv. 18–20. Hos. viii. 5, 6.
y 2 Kings xix. 14–19. Is xxxvii. 14–20.
z 2 Kings xix. 2–4. Is. xxxvii. 2–4.
a xiv. 11. xx. 6–12. Ps. l. 15. xci 15.
b 2 Kings xix 20. 35. Is. xxxvii. 21. 36, 37.
c 2 Sam xxiv. 16 Matt xiii. 49, 50. Acts xii. 23
d Job. ix. 4. Ps. lxxvi 5–7 12.
e Is x. 16–19. 33, 34. xvii. 12–14. xxix. 5–8. xxx. 30 — 33. xxxiii 10–12. xxxvi. 9. Rev. vi. 15, 16. xix. 17, 18.
f Ps. cxxxii. 18. Prov. xi. 2. xvi. 18.
g 2 Kings. xix. 36, 37. Is. xxxvii 37 38.
* Heb *made him to fall.*
h Ps xviii. 46–50. cxliv 10 Is. x. 24, 25. xxxi. 4, 5. xxxiii 22.

V. 8. *Rested*, &c. These measures seem to have been adopted at the approach of Sennacherib's first invasion: and the people in general had a strong confidence that the Lord would deliver them according to the word of Hezekiah; though others confided rather in their fortifications. Yet Hezekiah himself was afterwards induced to submit to Sennacherib, and pay him tribute. On this he departed; but not long after he renewed his attempts.

V. 15. *How much less*, &c.? This haughty conqueror supposed that JEHOVAH was even inferior to the gods of the nations! Probably he grounded this notion on the inferiority of Judah, in extent and population, to many of the kingdoms that he had subdued: especially as he was almost master of the whole land already.

V. 19. Sennacherib called JEHOVAH "the God of "Jerusalem," either because that city alone remained in the hands of his worshippers; or because Hezekiah, by abolishing the high places, seemed to have confined to Jerusalem alone, the worship of his God, which before had been spread over the land.

hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria, and from the hand of all *other*, and [i] guided them on every side:

23 And many brought [k] gifts unto the LORD to Jerusalem, [l] and * presents to Hezekiah king of Judah: so that [m] he was magnified in the sight of all nations from thenceforth.

24 ¶ In those days [n] Hezekiah was sick to the death, and prayed unto the LORD: and he spake unto him, and he † gave him a sign.

25 But Hezekiah [o] rendered not again, according to the benefit *done* unto him; for [p] his heart was lifted up: [q] therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem.

26 Notwithstanding [r] Hezekiah humbled himself for the ‡ pride of his heart, *both* he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the LORD came not upon them [s] in the days of Hezekiah.

27 ¶ And Hezekiah had [t] exceeding much riches and honour: and he made himself [u] treasuries for silver, and for gold, and for precious stones, and for spices, and for shields, and for all manner of § pleasant jewels;

28 [x] Storehouses also for the increase of corn, and wine, and oil; and stalls for all manner of beasts, and [y] cotes for flocks.

29 Moreover he provided him cities, and possessions of flocks and herds in abundance: for [z] God had given him substance very much.

30 This same Hezekiah also [a] stopped the upper water-course of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David. And [b] Hezekiah prospered in all his works.

31 Howbeit in [c] *the business of* the ‖ ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to inquire of [d] the wonder that was *done* in the land, God [e] left him [f] to try him, [g] that he might know all *that was* in his heart.

32 Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and his * goodness, behold, they *are* written [h] in the vision of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, *and* [i] in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.

33 And Hezekiah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the † chiefest of the sepulchres of the sons of David: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem [k] did him honour at his death. And Manasseh his son reigned in his stead.

i Ps. xlviii. 14. lxxiii. 24.
k 2 Sam. viii. 10, 11. Ps lxviii 29. lxxii. 10.
l xvii. 11. 1 Kings iv 21.
* Heb. *precious things.* ix. 9, 10. 24.
m i. 1. 1 Chr. xxix. 25.
B. C 713.
n 2 Kings xx. 1—3 Is. xxxviii. 1—3.
† Or, *wrought a miracle for him.* 2 Kings xx. 4—11. Is. xxxviii. 4—8. 21. 22.
o Deut. xxxii. 6. Ps. cxvi. 12, 13. Luke xvii. 17, 18.
p 37. xv 19. xxvi. 16. Deut. viii. 12—14. 17 2 Kings xx. 13 Dan. v. 20. 23. Hab ii 4. 2 Cor. xii 7. 1 Pet v. 5, 6.
q xxiv. 18. 2 Sam xxiv 1 10—17.
r Lev xxvi 40, 41. 2 Kings xx. 19. Jer. xxvi. 18, 19.
‡ Heb. *lifting up.*
s xxxiv. 27, 28. 1 Kings xxi. 29. Is. xxxix. 6—8.
B. C. 700
t i. 12. ix. 27. xvii. 5.
u 1 Chr. xxvii. 25, &c.
§ Heb. *instruments of desire.*
x xxvi. 10.
y 2 Sam. vii. 2
z xxv. 9. Deut viii. 18. 1 Sam. ii. 7. 1 Chr. xxix. 12. Prov. x. 22.
B. C. 712.
a 4 Is xxii 9—11.
b Ps. i. 1—3.
c 2 Kings xx. 12, 13. Is. xxxix. 1, 2.
‖ Heb. *interpreters.*
d 2 Kings xx 8, 11 Is xxxviii 3.
e Judg. xvi. 20. Ps. xxvii. 9. li. 11, 12. cxix 116, 117. John xv. 5.
f Gen. xxii. 1. Deut. viii 16. Job i. 11, 12. ii. 3—6. Ps. cxxxix. 1, 2. 23, 24. Prov. xvii. 3. Zech. xiii. 9. Mal. iii. 2, 3. 1 Pet. i. 7.
g Deut. viii. 2. xiii. 3.
* Heb *kindnesses.* xxxi. 20, 21.
h Is. xxxvi—xxxix.
i 2 Kings xviii—xx.
B. C. 698.
† Or, *highest.*
k xvi. 14. Gen. l. 10, 11. Num. xx. 29. Deut. xxxiv. 8. 1 Sam. ii. 30. xxv. 1. Prov. x. 7.

V. 25, 26. (*Notes*, 2 *Kings* xx. *Is.* xxxviii. xxxix.) These events are supposed, by many learned men, to have been previous to Sennacherib's first invasion, as evidently occurring in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah's reign. The princes and the people of Judah, as well as the king, had been very faulty; and when "he was humbled for the "pride of his heart," and had received Isaiah's alarming message, it is probable he made open confession of his offence, and called upon the people to join with him in solemn humiliation and prayer on that account. The Lord would not let Sennacherib prevail against his servant: but perhaps it was at this crisis that Hezekiah's confidence so failed him, that he hired Sennacherib's departure, with those treasures which he had ostentatiously displayed.—This chapter is in great measure an abridgment of those chapters in the Second of Kings, and in the prophecy of Isaiah, which are referred to.

V. 31. "The princes of Babylon sent to inquire of "the wonder that had been done in the land:" but it is not *certain* that the Chaldeans observed any change in the motion of the heavenly bodies. The report of the miracles which attended Hezekiah's recovery, might suffice for that purpose. Yet, in Isaiah, it is said, "The sun returned, &c." —The Lord on this occasion withdrew from Hezekiah the immediate efficacy of his grace, and left him to follow the dictates of his own natural propensity, "to try him, that "he might know all that was in his heart." The omniscient God before knew the whole: but having by the trial made the case evident, he pointed it out to Hezekiah and to all succeeding ages, for their humiliation, warning, and instruction. For it hence appears undeniable, that the best of men, if left to themselves, are prone to pride and ostentation, to idolize themselves and their fellow creatures, to withdraw their dependence from God, to rob him of his glory, and to be ungrateful for his mercies. 'God 'made proof of Hezekiah, as he had done of many other 'good men, whether he would entirely obey him or not.—'God no doubt knew and saw the pride and vanity 'that lurked in Hezekiah's heart; which was hid from 'every one but God himself, who now suffered him to dis'cover it for his humiliation.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—23.

Satan and his emissaries are most eager to give us disturbance, when we are most usefully employed: but God restrains them, till he sees it needful to correct our misconduct or to try our faith and constancy, and then they

CHAP. XXXIII.

Manasseh reigns long, is very wicked, multiplies idolatries, corrupts the people, and rejects the admonitions of God, 1—10. *He is carried captive to Babylon; he humbles himself greatly before God, and is restored to his kingdom,* 11—13. *He fortifies his dominions, and restores the worship of God,* 14—17. *His acts and prayers,* 18, 19. *He dies, and Amon succeeds, who reigns wickedly, and is murdered,* 20—24. *The people slay the murderers, and make Josiah king,* 25.

a 2 Kings xxi 1,2 1 Chr. iii. 13. Mat. i. 10. *Manasses.*
b xxxiv 1,2 Ec. x 16. Is iii. 4. 12.
c xxviii. 3 Lev. xviii. 25—30. Deut. xii. 31 xviii. 9—14 Ps. cvi. 35—40.

a MANASSEH *was* b twelve years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem:

2 But did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, c like unto the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.

3 For d he * built again the high places e which Hezekiah his father had broken down, and f he reared up altars for Baalim, and g made groves, and worshipped all h the host of heaven, and served them.

d Ec. ii.19 ix.18.
* Heb. *returned and built.*
e xxx. 14 xxxi.1. xxxii.12.2 Kings xviii 4. xxi. 3.
f xxviii. 2—4. Judg. ii 11—13.
g Deut. xvi 21.
h Deut. iv. 19. xvii 3. 2 Kings xxiii. 5, 6. 11. Jer. viii. 2.

4 Also i he built altars in the house of the LORD, whereof the LORD had said, k In Jerusalem shall my name be for ever.

i xxxiv 3, 4. 2 Kings xxi. 4, 5.
k vi. 6. vii. 16. xxxii. 19 Deut. xii 11. 1 Kings viii. 29. ix. 3.

5 And he built altars for all the host of heaven l in the two courts of the house of the LORD.

l iv. 9. xxviii 24, 25 Jer. xxxii. 34, 35. Ez. viii 7—18.

6 And he m caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom: also n he observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and o dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.

m xxviii. 3. Lev. xviii. 21 xx. 2. Deut. xii. 31. xviii.10. 2 Kings xxi. 6 xxiii 10. Jer. vii. 31. 32. Ez. xxiii. 37 39.
n Lev. xix. 26. xx. 6. Deut. xviii. 10—14.
o 2 Kings xxi. 6. xxiii 24. 1 Chr. x.13. Is. viii. 19. xix. 3.

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are permitted, under certain restrictions, to assault us.—It is very lawful and proper to employ prudent precautions and means of defence; and to be united and vigorous in every advisable measure, when there is a prospect of danger or difficulty; but it is seldom, that men *attend* to these things, without *confiding* in them. We should therefore encourage ourselves and each other to trust wholly in the Lord: and, if he be for us, there will be more with us than with our foes; should all the men on earth, and all the legions of fallen angels, combine and actually approach to assault us. What need then have we to fear the strongest arm of flesh, when we have the "LORD our God to help "us, and to fight our battles?" These are words, that may safely be rested upon, by all who "repent and turn "to God, and do works meet for repentance." Yet such a confidence will excite the contempt and reviling of proud infidels; they, who venture to do their duty, in defiance of the persecuting rage of some powerful king, professing to rely on the LORD of hosts, will be deemed obstinate and infatuated: and in various difficulties, it will be inquired, Whether "they will be persuaded to give them-"selves over to die by famine and thirst?" The more undaunted any one is in trusting the Lord in the path of duty, the more will some impious wretches rail, blaspheme, menace, boast, and triumph; especially when grown insolent by success, and intoxicated with absolute authority. But let the oppressed and insulted believer pray earnestly to the Lord, that he may not be driven from his confidence. In due time it will appear, that "none ever hardened him-"self against God and prospered;" and that none were ever confounded who put their trust in him. For, as the power and justice of God are displayed in the destruction of his enemies; so, his rich and free mercy are glorified in the salvation of his people.

V. 24—33.

Alas, how seldom do we in any tolerable degree render to the Lord according to his benefits! none, who know themselves and watch their own hearts, will venture to cast a stone at Hezekiah; but they will all, one by one, depart convicted in their consciences of similar guilt, and crying out, "God be merciful to me a sinner." If we are not left to expose our foolish and wicked pride before the world, the Lord sees and abhors the risings of it in our hearts, and might justly pour out his wrath upon us: yet, if we are humbled for this pride of our heart, he will forgive us and continue to bless us. But we ought to watch and pray always, that we may not enter into temptation, and that God would not leave us to ourselves: we ought to repress every vain-glorious thought, and to welcome even affliction and severe rebukes, when they keep us from being exalted above measure. Blessed be God, death will soon end the believer's conflict; then every sin will be abolished, and he may safely be trusted with the most glorious exaltation and uninterrupted felicity; and will no more to all eternity be tempted to intercept the least mite of that revenue of praise, which belongs to the God of his salvation. Whilst we are here, we ought to honour those to whom honour is due, though they be far from perfect: and we may well respect the memories, and should imitate the examples, of those who have been pious and useful in their generation: for a short time may perhaps awfully convince survivors, that the loss of them was greater, than it was at first supposed to be.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXIII. V. 6. Manasseh 'seems to have 'studied to find out what God had forbidden in his

7 And he set a carved image, the idol which he had made, [p] in the house of God, of which [q] God had said to David, and to Solomon his son, In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen before all the tribes of Israel, will I put my name for ever:

8 [r] Neither will I any more remove the foot of Israel from out of the land, which I have appointed for your fathers; [s] so that they will take heed to do all that I have commanded them, according to the whole law and the statutes and the ordinances by the hand of Moses.

9 So Manasseh [t] made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, *and* [u] to do worse than [x] the heathen, whom the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel.

p 2 Kings xxi. 7, 8. xxiii. 6.
q 4. 1 Kings viii. 29. Ps. cxxxii. 13, 14.
r 2 Sam. vii. 10.
s vii. 17-22. Deu. xxviii. 1, &c. xxx 15—20. Is. i. 19, 20. Ez. xxxiii. 25, 26.
t 1 Kings xiv. 16. xv. 26. 2 Kings xxi. 16. xxiii. 26. xxiv. 3, 4. Prov xxix. 12. Mic vi 16.
u 2. 2 Kings xxi. 9—11. Ex xvi. 45—47.
x Ezra ix. 11.

10 And [y] the LORD spake to Manasseh, and to his people: but they would not hearken.

11 Wherefore [z] the LORD brought upon them [a] the captains of the host* of [b] the king of Assyria, which took Manasseh [c] among the thorns, and [d] bound him with † fetters, and carried him to Babylon.

12 And [e] when he was in affliction, [f] he besought [g] the LORD his God, and [h] humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers,

13 And prayed unto him; and [i] he was entreated of him, and heard his supplication, and [k] brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh [l] knew that the LORD he *was* God.

y xxxvi. 15, 16. Neh. ix. 29, 30. Jer. xxv. 4—7 xliv. 4, 5 Zech i. 4. Acts vii 51, 52
B. C. 660.
z Deut xxviii. 36.
a Is. x. 8. xxxvi 9.
* Heb. *which were the king's*
b Neh. ix. 32 37. Is. v. 26 — 30. vii. 18—20.
c 1 Sam. xiii. 6
d 2 Kings xxiii. 33. xxv 6. Job xxxvi. 8-11. Ps. cvii. 10—12.
† Or, *chains.*
e xxviii. 22. Lev xxvi. 39 — 42 Deut. iv. 30, 31. Jer. xxxi 18—20. Hos v. 15. Mic. vi. 9 Luke xv. 16—18.
f 18, 19. Ps. l. 15. Acts ix. 11.
g xxviii. 5.
h 19. 23. xxxii. 26. Ex x. 3. Luke xviii. 14 15. Jam. iv. 10. 1 Pet. v. 5, 6
i Ezra viii. 22 Job xxii 23. 27. xxxiii. 16—30. Ps. xxxii 3—5. lxxxvi. 5. Is lv. 6—9. Jer xxix. 12, 13. Matt. vii. 7, 8. Luke xxiii. 42, 43. John iv. 10 ——— k Ezra vii 27. Prov. xvi. 7. xxi. 1. Matt. vi. 33 ——— l Deut. xxix. 6. Ps. xlvi. 10. Jer. xxiv. 7. Dan. iv. 34, 35. John xvii. 3. Heb. viii. 11.

'law, that he might practise it.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) (*Notes, 2 Kings* xxiii.)

V. 9. 'A most prodigious change from the height of 'piety in his father's reign, into the sink of iniquity in 'this.—Victorinus Strigelius, professor of theology at 'Heidelberg, left this remark in his lectures on this place, 'near a hundred and forty years ago,' (or soon after the establishment of the reformation in Germany:)—'Now we have the word of God abundantly in all wisdom, and 'pious princes patronize both those who preach and those 'who learn the Gospel. But this plenty of the word we 'now enjoy, (I tremble to speak it, but I must speak it, 'because it will come to pass,) shall be taken away: and 'that sad mourning time will come, when the public 'assemblies of the church shall be scattered, and a few 'pious souls shall meet with fear in a corner, to communicate among themselves the fragments of the heavenly 'doctrine, and to give God thanks for these remainders.' (*Vic. Strig.*) 'Which we have seen fulfilled in that country, and in France, and in other places.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) This apparent prophecy seems to have been merely a presage grounded on the vicissitudes of things, especially in respect of religion; and the tendency of prosperity to induce carnal security.

V. 11. We have not the least intimation, in the Second of Kings, either of Manasseh's captivity or of his repentance: but we might have concluded, from the narrative there given, that he persevered in his career of impiety and iniquity with impunity till his death. But here we find a most instructive view of his latter end; and this very man became as eminent an instance of the power, riches, and freeness of divine mercy and grace, as any recorded in the scripture. When he and his people had long disregarded the admonitions of the prophets, and added persecutions and multiplied murders to their other crimes, "the "LORD was pleased to bring upon them the captains of "the host of the king of Assyria." We are not informed what devastations they made in Judah or Jerusalem: but Manasseh, being either vanquished or intimidated, attempted to conceal himself in a thicket, where, being discovered, he was taken prisoner, loaded with fetters, and sent to Babylon. God, in his providence, gave the Assyrians the power and opportunity of making this invasion, and he left them to follow their own ambition, or other carnal motives; and he also gave them success, in order to chastise Manasseh's wickedness. Many suppose, that Esar-haddon, having got possession of Babylon, and entirely changed the inhabitants of the kingdom of Israel, about the same time sent to invade Judah, and carried Manasseh captive to Babylon, in the twenty-second year of his reign. But the scripture does not mention the date of this event, nor the name of the Assyrian king: and from the character of Manasseh's reign, as exceedingly wicked, it seems highly improbable that he lived above thirty years after his repentance and reformation, as upon this supposition he must have done.

V. 12, 13. When Manasseh was deprived of his authority and liberty, and secluded from his evil counsellors and companions, and from all his pleasures; in chains, and in a prison; without any other prospect than that of ending his days in that wretched situation, he had leisure to reflect on what had passed. He would then no doubt recollect the honour, and prosperity, and deliverances, with which his father had been favoured; his own good education, and the instructions and warnings of the prophets; and his atrocious, multiplied, and daring crimes: and he would remember that his miseries had been foretold by his faithful monitors.—Thus, by the special grace of God, his solitude and affliction brought him to view his own conduct and character in another light than before; and he began to cry for mercy and deliverance, "humbling himself greatly before the "God of his fathers." He confessed his sins, condemned himself, and was covered with shame before God, abhorring his crimes, and loathing himself for them, as a monster of ingratitude, impiety, and iniquity; yet still hoping to be pardoned, through the abundant mercy of the Lord,

14 ¶ Now after this [m] he built a wall without the city of David, on the west side of [n] Gihon, in the valley, even to the entering in at [o] the fish-gate, and compassed about * Ophel, and raised it up a very great height, and [p] put captains of war in all the fenced cities of Judah.

15 And [q] he took away the strange gods, and the idol out of the house of the LORD, and all the altars that he had built in the mount of the house of the LORD, and in Jerusalem, and cast *them* out of the city.

16 And he [r] repaired the altar of the LORD, and sacrificed thereon [s] peace-offerings, and [t] thank-offerings, and [u] commanded Judah to serve the LORD God of Israel.

17 [x] Nevertheless the people did sacrifice still in the high places, *yet* unto the LORD their God only.

18 ¶ Now [y] the rest of the acts of Manasseh, and [z] his prayer unto his God, and the words of [a] the seers that spake to him in the name of the LORD God of Israel, behold, they *are* *written* in the book of the kings of Israel:

19 [b] His prayer also, and *how God* was entreated of him, and [c] all his sin, and his trespass, and the places wherein he built high places, and set up groves and graven images, [d] before he was humbled: behold, they *are* written among the sayings of the * seers.

20 So [e] Manasseh slept with his fathers, and they buried him in his own house: and [f] Amon his son reigned in his stead.

21 ¶ Amon *was* two and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned [g] two years in Jerusalem.

22 But he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, [h] as did Manasseh his father: for Amon sacrificed unto all the carved images which Manasseh his father had made, and served them;

23 And [i] humbled not himself before the LORD, as Manasseh his father had humbled himself; but Amon † trespassed more and more.

24 And [k] his servants conspired against him, and slew him in his own house.

m xxxii. 5.
n xxxii. 30. 1 Kings i. 33. 45.
o Neh. iii. 3. xii. 39. Zeph. i. 10.
p Or, *the tower.* xxvii. 3. Neh. iii. 26, 27.
q xi. 11, 12.
q 3—7. Is. ii. 17—21. Ez. xviii. 20—22. Hos. xiv. 1—3. Mat. iii. 8.
r xxix. 18. 1 Kings xviii. 30.
s Lev. iii. 1, &c.
t Lev. vii. 12—18.
u xiv. 4. xxx. 12. Gen. viii. 19. Luke xxii. 32.
x xxxii. 12. 1 Kings xxii. 43. 2 Kings xv. 4.
y xxxii. 32.
z 12, 13.
a 10. 1 Sam. ix. 9.
b Prov. xv. 8. Acts ix. 11.
c 1—10.
d 12. 23. xxx. 11. xxxvi. 12. Jer. xliv. x. Dan. v. 22.
* Or, *Hosai.* B. C. 643.
e 2 Kings xxi. 18.
f 2 Kings xxi. 19—25. 1 Chr. iii. 14. Matt. i. 10.
g 1. Luke xii. 19, 20. Jam. iv. 13—15.
h 2 Kings xxi. 1—11. 20. Ez. xx. 18.
i 12. 19. Jer. viii. 12.
† Heb. *multiplied trespass* xxviii. 22. 2 Tim. iii. 13.
k xxiv. 25, 26. xxv. 27, 28. 2 Sam. iv. 5—12. 2 Kings xxi. 23—26. Ps. lv. 23. Rom. xi. 22.

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who had always, in the days of his ancestors, shown himself ready to forgive repenting rebels. These humble supplications the Lord graciously accepted: and he inclined the king of Assyria to liberate his prisoner, and to reinstate him in his authority. Then Manasseh knew, that the LORD he was God; alone able to punish, or to deliver: he likewise became acquainted with him as a God of salvation, and learned to fear, trust, love, and obey him.

V. 14. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 15—17. Manasseh, upon his return from Babylon, entirely renounced all idolatry; and set himself to suppress it in his kingdom, to revive the worship of God at the temple, and by his example and authority to prevail with the people to attend on it. These were fruits meet for repentance. It has, however, been asserted that his public reformation was very imperfect, and that he did not show the zeal and vigour which a true penitent ought to have done: but it does not appear, from this short account, that he was remarkably deficient. He would have done better, if he had demolished the idols, instead of casting them out of the city. But he totally suppressed all open idolatry: and it might arise from other causes than Manasseh's want of zeal, that the high places were not removed. The inveterate habits of the people; the powerful opposition of that party which had concurred in his former idolatries; and the weakness of his authority, through ill success, and the power of the Assyrian monarch, would occasion obstacles which he might not be able to overcome. But there is not the most remote intimation that God did not accept his endeavours. Yet the opposition, or hypocrisy of the people, who had readily concurred in his iniquities, but did not imitate his repentance, prevented it from being a national blessing; as his crimes had formed and occasioned, a load of national sin, which the Lord would not pardon.

V. 18, 19. The repeated mention of Manasseh's *prayer*, and of his being *humbled*, are well worthy our notice.—This humble supplicating frame of mind forms, as it were, a crisis in the sinner's case; and from the moment that he is brought into it, he enters upon a new state, and commences a new life, however vile he before hath been. (*Marg. Ref.*) It is uncertain whether the prayer contained in the Apocrypha were, in whole or in part, composed by Manasseh: but we may be sure, that he prayed continually and fervently for all the blessings and mercies which such a sinner needed; and with particular confessions of his sins, and with all that unstudied copiousness, which a burdened conscience, a broken heart, trembling fears, wavering hopes, and fervent desires will invariably dictate. Instead of *the seers*, the marginal reading is *Hosai*, whom some suppose to have been a prophet in those days.

V. 21—24. As soon as Manasseh was dead, Amon re-established all his father's idolatries; either bringing back those images that had been thrown aside, or forming others of the same kind. Perhaps he flattered himself, that he too should live many years; and should repent in his old age, if that were necessary, and so at last be saved as his father was supposed to have been. But whatever warnings or convictions he had, he never humbled himself in true repentance; but trespassed more and

[l] Gen. ix 5, 6. Num. xxxv. 31—33.

25 But the people of the land [l] slew all them that had conspired against king Amon; and [m] the people of the land made Josiah his son king in his stead.

[m] xxvi. 1. xxxi. 1.

more. He was therefore soon cut off in his sins, and made an example of just severity; and placed as a beacon, to warn all men not to abuse the example of the Lord's patience and mercy to Manasseh, into an encouragement to continue in sin. (*Luke* xxiii. 39—43.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

It would be extremely distressing to pious parents, magistrates, or ministers, if they could foresee the consequences of their removal, in the conduct of their children or people, and in the subversion of their most important regulations. Yet good instructions and examples may remain, like seed under the ground, for a long time unperceived, and at length spring up and bring forth much fruit. Without disquieting ourselves about futurity, we may therefore cheerfully commit our families and our endeavours to do good, as well as our souls and bodies, into the hand of God, assured that our labours will not prove wholly ineffectual. The tendency of human nature to evil is so strong, that nothing but divine grace can give it a contrary bias: and when that power is suspended we return to evil, as a stone falls downwards; and run with rapid and accelerated motion, further and further, into transgression continually. But the Lord notices both the number, the variety, and the aggravations of our offences: mercies and opportunities ungratefully abused, the truth held in unrighteousness, the seduction or compulsion of others to sin, warnings slighted or despised, and mischief extensively committed, add exceedingly to the heinousness of men's offences. Yet, where sin hath abounded, grace hath often much more abounded: and some of every description of sinners shall be brought to repentance and salvation, to prove that "with God nothing is impossible."

V. 11—25.

When the objects of the Lord's special love disregard the rebukes of his word, he will let them feel his chastening rod; and they may truly say, "Before I was afflicted, I "went astray; but now have I kept thy word." Adversity, solitude, and sequestration from gay companions, scenes of pleasure and dissipation, connected with present sufferings and the prospect of death and eternity, cause many to reflect, who in prosperity were careless and presumptuous. The seeds of a pious education, or of solid religious instruction, often vegetate in affliction; the troubles themselves verify the warnings of pious relatives or teachers; and worse things arise before the mind, as the consequence of continuing in sin. Yet all this would not have an abiding effect, if afflictions were not a means of grace, which God himself uses and blesses, as evidently, as he doth those which he commands us to employ for ourselves and for each other. When men are left to themselves, "in their distress they trespass yet more against "the LORD." But when he gives the blessing, the hardest, stoutest, and proudest heart softens, and becomes broken and contrite. His hand should therefore be noticed in all our afflictions; and our prayers presented that they may be sanctified, and converted into blessings to our souls. They who have been most daring in rebellion against God, are sometimes the most cowardly when assaulted by their fellow-creatures. "In the fear of the LORD, there is "strong confidence:" but guilt appals the sinner: and his courage fails him in the hour of danger. There is however no way of fleeing, or hiding ourselves from God: our only hope consists in humbling ourselves before him; and if our distresses and perils induce us to this, they will prove the most effectual means of promoting our felicity. "The "Lord is rich in mercy, with him there is plenteous "redemption;" and he so delights in pardoning and saving sinners, that he permits the vilest to come to his throne of grace. Wherever there is a sinner of whom it can truly be said, "Behold he prayeth," there will the Lord be found a God that heareth prayer. There is indeed immense difficulty in bringing the sinner thus to seek the Lord; but none in prevailing with Him, to hear and forgive the sinner that calls upon him in truth. He often answers the mere cry of distress with temporal deliverances, whilst relapses into former crimes; and perseverance in them, prove that the supplicants were never truly humbled or penitent. But when a sinner in his affliction beseeches the Lord, and humbles himself greatly before him; when he condemns himself, ingenuously confesses his sins, and is covered with shame, and melted into godly sorrow; when he renounces all hope but in free mercy, and every plea but in the Redeemer's name, and seeks forgiveness and salvation before all other things: he will assuredly find access and acceptance; and his future life will evince, that his repentance, faith, and love, have united in bringing him to hate and renounce all his sins, and to walk henceforth in newness of life. If it were possible, he would undo his former wicked works, and lead into the ways of truth and peace all those whom he had before seduced into the paths of sin and ruin: if his former life hath been profane or immoral, his future conduct will appear a perfect contrast to it; and he will make a contrary use of his wealth, abilities, or influence, after *he is humbled* and hath begun to pray, to what he did before. Sincere piety, and love to the truths, ordinances, and commandments of God, will be manifest in his consequent conduct; and he will desire and aim at more than he can accomplish, both in serving God himself, and in attempting to prevail with others to do the same. The blood of Christ cleanseth such penitents from all sin: their afflictions will either be sanctified and counterbalanced with comfort, or removed; in due time the Lord will extricate them from all the difficulties in which their former sins had involved them; and he will be greatly glorified in their repentance, future conduct, and eternal salvation. Let sinners then be willing to know the worst of their case; for it is by no means desperate: let them consider all their pains and sorrows as so many calls to humble themselves before God, to call upon him, and to "acquaint themselves with him, that they may be at peace." Let not the hearts of those, who are thus seeking him, yield to discouragement; but let them humble themselves yet more, and pray always and not faint. Let pardoned sinners exert

CHAP. XXXIV.

Josiah reigns well, and destroys idolatry both in Judah and Israel, 1—7. *He provides for the repair of the temple,* 8—13. *Hilkiah finds the book of the law, and reads it before the king; who is alarmed, and inquires of God by the prophetess Huldah,* 14—22. *Huldah predicts the destruction of Jerusalem, but not till after Josiah's death,* 23—28. *He causes the law to be read in a solemn assembly, and renews the covenant between God and the people,* 29—33.

a 1 Kings xiii. 2. 2 Kings xxii. 1, 2. 1 Chr. iii. 14, 15. Jer. i. 2 Zeph. i. 1 Mat i. 10, 11. *Josias.*
b xxiv. 1. xxvi. 1. xxxiii. 1. 1 Sam. ii. 18 26. 1 Kings iii. 7—9. Ec iv. 13.
c xvii. 3. xxix. 2. 1 Kings xv. 5.
d Deu. v 32. Josh. i. 7. xxiii. 6. Prov. iv. 27. B. C. 634.
e Ps. cxix. 9. Ec. xii. 1. 2 Tim. iii. 15.
f xv. 2. 1 Chr. xxviii 9. Prov. viii 17.
B. C. 630.
g xxxiii. 17. 22. 2 Kings xxiii. 4. 14.
h xxx. 14. 2 Kings xviii. 4.
i Ex. xxiii. 24. Lev. xxvi. 30. Deu. vii. 5. 25.
* Or, *sun-images.* xiv. 5. 2 Kings xxiii 4, 5. 11.

a JOSIAH *was* b eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem one and thirty years.

2 And he did *that which was* c right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the ways of David his father, and d declined *neither* to the right hand nor to the left.

3 For in the eighth year of his reign, e while he was yet young, he began f to seek after the God of David his father: and in the twelfth year g he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem from h the high places, and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images.

4 And they i brake down the altars of Baalim in his presence; and the * images that *were* on high above them he cut down; and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images he brake in pieces, and k made dust *of them*, and strewed *it* upon † the graves of them that had sacrificed unto them.

k Ex. xxxii 29. Ps xviii. 42. Is. xxvii. 9.
† Heb. *faces of the graves* 2 Kings x. 26, 27. xxiii. 4, 6.

5 And l he burnt the bones of the priests upon their altars, and m cleansed Judah and Jerusalem.

l 1 Kings xiii. 2. 2 Kings xxiii. 16 Jer. viii. 1, 2.
m Jer. iii. 10. iv. 14.

6 And *so did he* n in the cities of Manasseh, and Ephraim, and Simeon, even unto Naphtali, with their ‡ mattocks round about.

n xxx. 1. 10, 11. xxxi. 1. 2 Kings xxiii. 15—20.
‡ Or, *maule.*

7 And when he had broken down the altars and the groves, and had o beaten the graven images § into powder, and cut down all the idols throughout all the land of Israel, he returned to Jerusalem.

o Deut. ix. 21.
§ Heb. *to make powder.*

8 ¶ Now in p the eighteenth year of his reign, when he had purged the land, and the house, he q sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, and Maaseiah the governor of the city, and Joah the son of Joahaz the recorder, r to repair the house of the LORD his God.

B. C. 624.
p Jer. i. 2, 3.
q 2 Kings xxii. 3. 12 14.
r xxiv. 4—13. 2 Kings xii. 12. xxii. 5.

9 And when they came to Hilkiah the high-priest, s they delivered the money *that was* brought into the house of God, which the Levites that kept the doors had gathered of the hand of t Manasseh and Ephraim, and of all the remnant of Israel, and of all Judah and Benjamin; and u they returned to Jerusalem.

s 2 Kings xxii. 4. Phil. iv. 8.
t xxx. 10. 18. xxxi. 1.
u 7.

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themselves to evidence their gratitude, and to glorify the God of their salvation; and let them walk humbly before him, and hope, pray, and endeavour after the conversion of their fellow sinners, not excepting the very vilest: "for "the things that are impossible with man are possible "with God." Let presumptuous abusers of gospel grace read in Manasseh's deep humiliation, earnest prayers, and consequent newness of life, their own fatal and horrible delusion, who *practically say*, "Let us sin on that grace "may abound." Let those who trifle and procrastinate, because a merciful God hath long borne with, and at length given repentance and forgiveness of sins, to a few most notorious rebels, meditate upon the example of Amon; and tremble, lest he should make them monuments of his righteous vengeance. But we have all sinned: let us all then inquire seriously, whether we have been and are deeply humbled, or not? and whether we are pouring out our prayers before the mercy-seat of a forgiving God, day by day, in this self-abased frame of mind? Whether we have experienced a change in our judgment, disposition, aim, and general conduct? Or whether we still continue unhumbled, impenitent, trespassing still more and more, and imitating the wickedness, and only the wickedness, of those that are gone before us? The two characters are easily distinguished; and they comprise all mankind, and distinguish betwixt those who are *now* in the broad road to destruction, and those who are in the narrow way of eternal life. May God help us to be honest to ourselves, and to form a just conclusion concerning our own characters, before death (which perhaps may come sooner than we expect) fixes us for ever in an unchangeable state!

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXIV. V. 3—7. This passage seems a compendious account of Josiah's reformation, perhaps without much respect to the order of time. He began seriously to attend to religious subjects in the eighth year of his reign. Something was attempted in the twelfth year (which was before Jeremiah began to prophecy, (*Marg. Ref.*) but probably not much was effected till the eighteenth. Yet the land was purged from its grosser abominations, before the repairing of the temple: but it is uncertain whether this extended to the land of Israel, or whether that be spoken of by anticipation. (*Notes*, 2 *Kings* xxii. xxiii.)

10 And they put *it* [x] in the hand of the workmen that had the oversight of the house of the LORD, and they gave it to the workmen that wrought in the house of the LORD, to repair and mend the house:

11 Even to the artificers and builders gave they *it*, to buy hewn stone, and timber for couplings, and to * floor the houses which [y] the kings of Judah had destroyed.

12 And the men did the work [z] faithfully: and the overseers of them *were* Jahath and Obadiah, the Levites, of the sons of Merari; and Zechariah and Meshullam, of the sons of the Kohathites, to set *it* forward; and *other of* the Levites, [a] all that could skill of instruments of music.

13 Also *they were* over [b] the bearers of burdens, and *were* overseers of all that wrought the work in any manner of service: and of the Levites *there were* [c] scribes, and [d] officers, and [e] porters.

14 ¶ And when they brought out the money, that was brought into the house of the LORD, [f] Hilkiah the priest found a book of the law of the LORD *given* by † Moses.

15 And Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD. And Hilkiah delivered the book to Shaphan.

16 And [g] Shaphan carried the book to the king, and brought the king word back again, saying, All that was committed to ‡ thy servants, they do *it*.

17 And they have ◊ gathered together the money that was found in the house of the LORD, and have delivered it into the hand of the overseers, and to the hand of the workmen.

18 Then Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest hath given me a book. And Shaphan read ‖ it [h] before the king.

19 And it came to pass, when the king had heard [i] the words of the law, [k] that he rent his clothes.

20 And the king commanded Hilkiah, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and [l] Abdon the son of Micah, and Shaphan the scribe, and [m] Asaiah a servant of the king's, saying,

21 Go, inquire of the LORD for me, and for them [n] that are left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book that is found: [o] for great *is* the wrath of the LORD that is poured out upon us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the LORD, to do after all that is written in this book.

22 And Hilkiah, and *they* that the king *had appointed*, went to Huldah [p] the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvath, the son of [q] Hasrah, keeper of the * wardrobe; (now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the † college:) and they spake to her to that *effect*.

23 And she answered them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, [r] Tell ye the man that sent you to me,

24 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, [s] I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, *even* [t] all the curses that are written in the book which they have read before the king of Judah:

25 Because [u] they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore [x] my wrath shall be poured out upon this place, and [y] shall not be quenched.

26 And as for the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, so shall ye say unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, *concerning* the words which thou hast heard;

27 Because [z] thine heart was tender, and thou didst [a] humble thyself before God, when thou heardest his words against this place, and against the inha-

x 2 Kings xii. 11. 12, 13. xxii. 5, 6.
* Or, *rafter*.
y xxxiii. 4—7. 22.
z 2 Kings xii. 15. xxii 7. Neh. vii. 2. Prov. xxviii. 20. 1 Cor. iv. 2.
a 1 Chr. vi. 31, &c. xv. 16—22. xvi. 4, 5. 41, 42. xxiii. 5. xxv. 1, &c.
b ii. 18. viii. 10. Neh. iv. 10.
c Ezra vii. 6. Jer. viii. 8. Matt. xxvi 3.
d xix. 11. 1 Chr. xxiii. 4. xxvi. 29, 30.
e 1 Chr xxvi. 1, &c
f 2 Kings xxii. 8. Deut xxxi. 24—26.
† Heb. *hand of Moses*.
g 2 Kings xxii. 9, 10.
‡ Heb. *the hand of thy*.
◊ Heb. *poured out* or *melted*.
‖ Heb. *in it*.
h Deut. xvii. 19. Josh. i. 8. Ps. cxix 46 97—99. Jer. xxxvi. 20—26.
i Rom. iii 20 vii. 7—11. Gal ii. 19. iii. 10—13.
k 2 Kings xix. 1. xxii. 11 19. Joel ii 13.
l 2 Kings xxii. 12. *Achbor*. Jer. xxvi 22—24.
m 2 Kings xxii 12. *Asahiah*.
n xxviii. 9. xxxiii. 11 2 Kings xvii. 6, 7. xxii. 13.
o Lev xxvi 14, &c. Deu xxviii. 15, &c. xxix. 18—28 xxx. 17—19. xxxi. 16—18. xxxii. 15—25. Rom. iv. 15.
p Ex xv. 20. Judg. iv. 4 Luke i. 41—45. ii 36. Acts xxi. 9.
q 2 Kings xxii. 14 *Harhas*.
* Heb *garments*.
† Or, *school*, or *second part*.
r 2 Kings xxii. 15—20. Jer xxi. 5—7. xxxvii. 7—10.
s xxxvi. 14—20. 2 Kings xxiii 26, 27. Is. v. 4—6.
t Deut. xxvii 15—26 xxviii. 16, &c. xxix. 20, 21, 27, 28.
u xii 2. xv. 2. xxxiii. 3—9. 2 Kings xxiv. 3, 4. Is. ii. 8, 9. Jer. xv. 1—4.
x Is. xlii 25. Jer. vii. 20. Lam ii. 4 iv. 11 Nah. i. 6. Rev. xiv 10. 19.
y Jer. iv 4. Ez. xx. 47. Mark ix. 43—48.
z Ps. xxxiv. 18. li. 17. Is lvii. 15. lxvi. 2 Ez. ix. 4. xxxvi 26.
a xxxii. 26. xxxiii 12, 19. Jam. iv. 6—10.

V. 9. *They returned*. &c. These Levites seem to have gone through the land, soliciting contributions for repairing the temple, even from the remnant of Israel; and they returned to Jerusalem when they had completed that business. The temple began to go to decay during the idolatries of Manasseh: and the wicked reign of Amon, and the long minority of Josiah, rendered it much in need of a thorough repair.

V. 12. *All*, &c. It seems, that the Levites, who attended by courses, in the intervals of their proper work, assisted by turns in overlooking the workmen; nor were they excepted who were employed in psalmody: thus they became doubly useful, and saved the expense of other overseers. (*Notes*, 2 *Kings* xxii. xxiii.)

bitants thereof, and humbled thyself before me, and [b] didst rend thy clothes, and weep before me; I have even heard *thee* also, saith the LORD.

28 Behold, [c] I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave [d] in peace, neither shall thine eye see all the evil that I will bring upon this place, and upon the inhabitants of the same. So they brought the king word again.

29 ¶ Then [e] the king sent, and [f] gathered together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem.

30 And the king went up into the house of the LORD, and all the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the priests, and the Levites, and all the people, * great and small: and [g] he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant that was found in the house of the LORD,

31 And the king stood [h] in his place, and [i] made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, [k] with all his heart, and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant *which are* written in this book.

32 And [l] he caused all *that were* † present in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand *to it*. And the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers.

33 And Josiah [m] took away all [n] the abominations out of all the countries that *pertained* to the children of Israel, and made all *that were* present in Israel to serve, *even* to serve the LORD their God. *And* [o] all his days they departed not ‡ from following the LORD, the God of their fathers.

b 19. Jer. xxvi. 22, 24.
c xxxv. 24. 2 Kings xvii. 20. Is. lvii. 1, 2. Jer. xv. 1. Ez. xiv. 14—21.
d Ps. xxxvii. 37. Is. lvii. 1, 2.
e 1 Sam. xii. 11, 12. 23. 1 Chr. xxviii. 3. 10, &c. xxix. 2, &c. Mark xiv. 8.
f xxx. 2. 2 Kings xxiii. 1—3.
* Heb. *from great even to small.* xv. 12, 13. xviii. 30. Deut. i. 17. Job iii. 19.
g vi. 1, &c. xvii. 7—9. Deut. xvii. 18—20. Neh. viii. 2—5. Ec. i. 12. xii. 9, 10.
h vi. 13. 2 Kings xi. 14. xxiii. 3. Ez. xlvi. 2.
i xxiii. 16. xxix. 10. Ex. xxiv. 6—8. Deut. xxix. 1. 10—15. Josh. xxiv. 25. Neh. ix. 38. x. 29. Jer. l. 5. Heb viii. 6—13.
k xv. 12. 15. Deut. vi. 5. Luke x. 27—29
l xiv. 4. xxx 12. xxxiii. 16. Gen. xviii. 19. Ec. viii. 2.
† Heb. *found.*
m 2 Kings xxiii. 4—20.
n 1 Kings xi. 5—7.
o Josh. xxiv. 31. Jer. iii. 10.
‡ Heb. *from after.*

CHAP. XXXV.

Josiah causes a solemn passover to be celebrated, 1—19. *He is slain in battle against Pharaoh-necho,* 20—24. *The lamentations made for him,* 25. *His acts and goodness,* 26, 27.

MOREOVER [a] Josiah kept a passover unto the LORD in Jerusalem: and they killed the passover on [b] the fourteenth *day* of the first month.

2 And he set the priests in their [c] charges, and [d] encouraged them to the service of the house of the LORD,

3 And said unto [e] the Levites that taught all Israel, which were holy unto the LORD, [f] Put the holy ark [g] in the

a xxx. 2 Kings xxiii 21—23.
b Ex. xii. 6. Num. ix. 3. Deut xvi 1—8. Ezra vi. 19. Ez. xlv. 21.
c xxiii. 8. xxxi. 2. Num xviii. 5—7. 1 Chr. xxiv Ezra vi. 19.
d xxix. 5—11. xxxi. 2. 1 Chr. xxii. 19.
e xvii. 8, 9. xxx. 22 Deut xxxiii. 10. Neh. viii. 7, 8. Mal. ii. 7.
f xxxiv. 14.
g v. 7.

V. 29—32. (*Notes*, 2 *Kings* xxiii. 2, 3.)

V. 33. Whilst Josiah lived, the people were restrained from open idolatry: yet we learn from the prophets, that, at this very time especially, they were ripening for destruction, by their hypocrisy and iniquity.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Several years of our lives must pass before we become capable of performing useful services: our earliest youth should therefore be dedicated to God, that we may not waste any of our remaining span. Happy and wise are they who seek the Lord at a period of life when others are pursuing sinful pleasures, contracting bad habits, forming ruinous connexions, and making work for repentance; either gracious repentance in this world, or that which is attended with despair in the regions of misery. None can express the anguish that is prevented by early piety, and its happy consequences. If we would be useful, we must first take heed to ourselves; and when we are established in faith and grace, we shall be fitted for instruments of good to others. In this important work we must expect many opposers, and but few cordial helpers: and the more we look into the world, the church, or our own hearts, by the light of God's word, the more evidently shall we see how very much reformation and renovation are needed. The suppression of gross abominations makes way for the pure administration of God's ordinances; and when the filthiness and idols are cleansed out of our hearts, the Lord will prepare his temple there, and graciously come and dwell in it. Liberality, integrity, and diligence, are commendable in every work, but especially in the work of true religion, and all undertakings immediately connected with it. When God enables us to act conscientiously, according to our present knowledge, he will in due time give us still further and clearer views of his truth. The more we become acquainted with the Scripture, the more evidently shall we perceive our own guilt and danger: but if this discovery produces godly sorrow, contrition, humiliation, and further inquiries after the will of God, an answer of peace may be expected: whilst all the curses which he has denounced, will fall upon the impenitent workers of iniquity. Though we cannot prevent the ruin of sinners in general, or of collective bodies, we should endeavour by our examples, prayers, instructions, and the regular use of authority, in domestic or in public life, to engage all we can to return to God, and walk before him, by trusting his promises and obeying his commandments.

house, which Solomon the son of David king of Israel did build; *it shall* [h] not *be* a burden upon *your* shoulders: [i] serve now the LORD your God, and his people Israel.

4 And prepare *yourselves* by [k] the houses of your fathers, [l] after your courses, according to the writing of David king of Israel, and [m] according to the writing of Solomon his son.

5 And [n] stand in the holy *place* according to the divisions of the *families of the fathers of your brethren the †people, and *after* the division of the families of the Levites.

6 So [o] kill the passover, and [p] sanctify yourselves, and prepare your brethren, that *they* may do according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

7 And [q] Josiah ‡ gave to the people, of the flock, lambs and kids, all for the passover-offerings, for all that were present, to the number of thirty thousand, and three thousand bullocks; these *were* of [r] the king's substance.

8 And [s] his princes § gave [t] willingly unto the people, to the priests, and to the Levites: [u] Hilkiah, and Zechariah, and Jehiel, [x] rulers of the house of God, gave unto the priests for the passover-offerings two thousand and six hundred *small cattle*, and three hundred oxen.

9 Conaniah also, and Shemaiah, and Nethaneel his brethren, and Hashabiah, and Jeiel, and Jozabad, chief of the Levites, ‖ gave unto the Levites for passover-offerings five thousand *small cattle*, and five hundred oxen.

10 So the service was prepared, and [y] the priests stood in their place, and the Levites in their courses, according to the king's commandment.

11 And they killed the passover, and [z] the priests sprinkled *the blood* from their hands, and the Levites [a] flayed *them*.

12 And they removed the burnt-offerings, that they might give according to the divisions of the families of the people, to offer unto the LORD, [b] as *it is* written in the book of Moses. And so *did they* with the oxen.

13 And they [c] roasted the passover with fire, according to the ordinance: but the *other* holy *offerings* [d] sod they in pots, and in caldrons, and in pans, and * divided *them* speedily among all the people.

14 And afterward they made ready for themselves, and for the priests: [e] because the priests the sons of Aaron *were busied* in offering of burnt-offerings and the fat until night; therefore the Levites prepared for themselves, and for the priests the sons of Aaron.

h 1 Chr. xxiii. 26.
i Num. viii. 19.
k 1 Chr. ix. 10—34. Neh. xi. 10—20.
l 1 Chr. xxiii—xxvi.
m viii. 14.
n Ps. cxxxiv. 1.
* Heb. *house of the fathers.*
† Heb. *sons of the people.*
o xxx. 15—17. Ex. xii. 6. 21, 22. Ezra vi. 20, 21
p xxix. 5. 15. 34. xxx. 3. 15—19. Gen. xxxv. 2. Num. xix. 11—20. Job i. 5. Ps. li. 7. Joel ii. 16. Heb. ix. 13, 14.
q xxx. 24. Ez. xlv. 17.
‡ Heb. *offered.*
r 1 Kings viii. 63. 1 Chr. xxix. 3.
s xxix. 31—33. 1 Chr. xxix. 6—9. 17. Ezra i. 6. ii. 68, 69. vii. 16. viii. 25—35. Neh. vii. 70—72. Ps. xlv. 12.
§ Heb. *offered.*
t 2 Cor. viii. 12. ix. 7.
u xxxiv. 14. 20.
x 1 Chr. xi. 20. xxiv. 4, 5. Jer. xxix. 25, 26.
‖ Heb. *offered.* Is. i. 10—15. Jer. iii. 10. vii. 21—23. Mic. vi. 6—8.
y 4, 5. xxx. 16. Ezra vi. 18.
z xxix. 22. xxx. 16. Lev. i. 5, 6. Num. xviii. 3. 7. Heb. ix. 21, 22.
a xix. 34.
b Lev. iii. 3, 5. 9—11. 14—16.
c Ex. xii. 8, 9. Deu. xvi. 7. Ps. xxii. 14. Lam. i. 12, 13.
d Lev. vi. 28. 1 Sam. ii. 13—15. Ez. xlvi. 20—24.
* Heb. *made them run.* Rom. xii. 11.
e Acts vi. 2—4.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXV. V. 3. It may be very probably concluded, that the most holy place had gone to decay, through neglect; and that whilst it was cleansed and repaired, the high-priest, having removed the ark, had committed it to the custody of some Levites of the family of Kohath: but when it was carried again into its place, they would be at liberty for other services, to the glory of God, and the benefit of his people Israel.

V. 4. The regulations, formed by David and Solomon, concerning the courses of the priests and Levites, were committed to writing, and preserved for them to refer to continually.

V. 5. The meaning of this verse seems to be, that the Levites should be as exact, in ascertaining to what family, or subdivision of a family, every man belonged; as those of the other tribes were: that they might know and do their proper work, without confusion or dispute, and with as much certainty and accuracy, as the others knew what lands belonged to them by inheritance. But some suppose, that the arrangement of the Levites at this time only is intended; and that they were directed to stand in regular order, according to their families, to receive the paschal lambs, which their brethren of the other tribes would bring according to their families, one for each household.

V. 7—9. The people were not at this time either very rich or very zealous, and the ordinances were expensive. That this therefore might not prevent their attendance on this solemn service, the king provided, at his own expense, an immense quantity of cattle suited to the solemnity; and after his example, the nobles and the chief of the priests and Levites, liberally assisted their poorer brethren. According to the calculation, that not fewer than ten nor more than twenty persons were to join for one lamb or kid, the numbers, given on this occasion, would suffice for above four hundred thousand persons, young and old: besides those given for peace-offerings and other sacrifices.

V. 12. The Levites separated, as speedily as they could, the parts of the peace-offerings which were to be burnt, from the rest, and added them to the other burnt-offerings; that the remainder, together with the paschal lambs, might be prepared and distributed as the occasion required.

15 And the singers the sons of Asaph *were* in their * place, [f] according to the commandment of David, and Asaph, and Heman, and Jeduthun the king's seer; and [g] the porters *waited* at every gate; they might not depart from their service, for their brethren the Levites prepared for them.

16 So all the service of the LORD was prepared the same day, to keep the passover, and to offer burnt-offerings upon the altar of the LORD, according to the commandment of king Josiah.

17 And the children of Israel *that were* † present kept the passover at that time, and [h] the feast of unleavened bread, seven days.

18 And [i] there was no passover like to that kept in Israel, from the days of Samuel the prophet; [k] neither did all the kings of Israel keep such a passover as Josiah kept, and the priests, and the Levites, and all Judah and Israel that were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

19 In the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah was this passover kept.

20 ¶ After all this, when Josiah had prepared the ‡ temple, [l] Necho king of Egypt came up to fight against [m] Carchemish by Euphrates: and Josiah went out against him.

21 But he sent ambassadors to him, saying, [n] What have I to do with thee, thou king of Judah? *I come* not against thee this day, but against the § house wherewith I have war: for [o] God commanded me to make haste: [p] forbear thee from *meddling with* God, who *is* with me, that he destroy thee not

22 Nevertheless Josiah would not turn his face from him, [q] but disguised himself, that he might fight with him, and hearkened not unto the words of Necho from [r] the mouth of God, and came to fight in the valley of [s] Megiddo.

23 And [t] the archers shot at king Josiah: and the king said to his servants, Have me away; for I am sore ‖ wounded.

24 His servants therefore took him out of that chariot, and put him in [u] the second chariot that he had; and [x] they brought him to Jerusalem, and [y] he died, and was buried * in *one of* the sepulchres of his fathers. And [z] all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah.

* Heb. *station.*
f 1 Chr. xxiii. 5. xxv. 1, &c.
g 1 Chr. ix. 17—19. xxvi. 14—19.
† Heb. *found.*
h xxx. 21—23. Ex xii 15—20 xiii. 6, 7 xxiii. 15 xxxiv. 18. Lev. xxiii 5—8 Num. xxviii. 16—25. Deu xvi 3. 4—6. 1 Cor. v 7, 8.
i xxx. 5. 2 Kings xxiii. 21, 22.
k xxx. 26, 27.
B. C. 616.
‡ Heb. *house.*
l 2 Kings xxiii. 29. *Pharaoh-necheh.* Jer. xlvi. 2.
m Is. x. 9.
n 2 Sam. xvi. 10. Matt. viii. 29. John ii. 4.
§ Heb. *house of my war.*
o 2 Kings xviii. 25 Is. xxxvi. 10.
p xxv. 19.
q xviii. 29. 1 Kings xiv. 2. xxii. 30.
r 21 xviii. 4—6. Josh ix 14.
s Judg v. 19. 2 Kings ix. 27. xxiii. 30 Zech. xii. 11 *Megiddon.* Rev. xvi. 16 *Armageddon: the mountain of Megiddo.*
t xviii. 33. Gen. xlix 23 Lam. iii. 12, 13.
‖ Heb. *made sick.* 1 Kings xxii. 34. 2 Kings viii. 29.
u Gen. xli. 43.
x 2 Kings xxiii. 30
y xxxiv 28. Ps. xxxvi. 6. Ec. viii. 14. ix. 1, 2.
* Or, *among the sepulchres.*
z Zech xii. 11.

V. 13—17. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 18. Hezekiah's remarkable passover seems to have been celebrated with greater fervency of devotion: but this of Josiah was far more regular, and in more exact conformity to the law; it was attended by vast multitudes, and the liberality of the king in furnishing the paschal lambs was without example. Nothing is recorded on this subject from the time that Israel obtained possession of the promised land: but even this passover, under Josiah, which exceeded all for several centuries, seems to have been very deficient as to genuine devotion.

V. 20—24. Josiah lived thirteen years after this remarkable passover, and zealously supported the worship of God to the end of his life. But the nation was all the while ripening for destruction; and was adjudged unworthy of so pious and excellent a prince. Josiah's conduct at the close of his life has been treated with great severity by most commentators; and he hath been charged with engaging in an *unjust war*, and *disregarding the express command of God*, which may in great measure be ascribed to the censure passed on him by the apocryphal Esdras, 'Not 'regarding the words of the prophet Jeremy, spoken by the 'mouth of the LORD:' (1 *Esdras* i. 28:) but the Scripture does not any where thus condemn him. Pharaoh, in marching his army through Josiah's territories against his will, certainly committed an act of hostility. It is evident that Josiah was in possession of the whole land, and not of Judah only: and probably he held the northern parts of Canaan of the king of Babylon, and was not only in alliance with him, but bound by the grant to guard his frontiers against hostile invaders. And doubtless the kings of Judah had been in some measure dependent on the kings of Assyria and Babylon, from the time of Manasseh's captivity and release. Pharaoh declared indeed by his ambassadors, that he meant not to attack Josiah, but the king of Babylon. But he was in the heart of Josiah's kingdom before he sent this embassy, and he avowed his intention of attacking his ally: and therefore Josiah may fairly, on both accounts, be justified from the charge of *unjustly* meddling with a war that did not belong to him; for no king upon earth would think it *unjust* to declare war against another prince, that should march an army into his dominions, in order to attack another that was in alliance with him. It is true that Pharaoh's ambassadors assured Josiah, that "God had commanded him to make haste;" and warned him not to "meddle with God, who was with him, that "he destroyed him not:" and he is therefore said, "Not to have hearkened to the words of Necho, from "the mouth of God." But Necho produced no proof, that he was a *prophet of the* LORD, and Sennacherib had used similar language to Hezekiah, who had paid no regard to it: (*Marg. Ref.*) The word used by Necho, (*Elohim*,) may signify *his gods* or *idols*: and critics have noted, that the expression "from the mouth of God," is no where used in the Hebrew bible, for a revelation from the true God; but that it is always "from the mouth of the

a Jer. xxii. 10.
b Job iii. 8. Ec. xii. 5. Jer. ix. 17—21. Matt. ix. 23.

25 And [a] Jeremiah lamented for Josiah: and [b] all the singing men and the singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations to this day, and made them an ordinance in Israel: and, behold, they *are* written in the lamentations.

26 Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and his * goodness, according to *that which was* written in the law of the LORD,

* Heb. kindness. xxx. 20. xxxi. 32.

27 And his deeds, first and last, behold, they *are* written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah.

"LORD." It is not indeed at all probable, that God had commanded Pharaoh by Jeremiah, or by any other prophet, to undertake this expedition: for in that case Josiah would doubtless have been informed, and have submitted. And if Pharaoh had received any monition in a dream or vision, which he concluded to be from the God of Israel, (and so meant something more than his own auguries and superstitions;) Josiah might not give any credit to his testimony, in matters connected with his own interest. Josiah, however, seems to have been guilty of precipitation, in not inquiring of the Lord when thus warned, before he proceeded to attack so formidable an enemy: his premature and violent death might therefore be a rebuke for his rashness, but it was chiefly a judgment upon a hypocritical and wicked generation. Whatever sin Josiah committed, he doubtless repented of it: and the final state of one who habitually lives a life of repentance, faith, and obedience, cannot be affected, by the manner in which he is suddenly taken away. *The second chariot* seems to have been one that waited for him in case of necessity: into which he was removed from that which was perhaps covered with blood.

V. 25—27. Though the people would not imitate Josiah's eminent piety, and though they disliked his reformation; yet they respected his character, and were sensible, that they had sustained a very great loss. The book of the Lamentations of Jeremiah was written on another occasion: and what he composed upon the death of Josiah hath not come down to us. But both the prophet and the people, took several methods of doing honour to the memory of their prince; and of perpetuating the lamentations made on the account of his death.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—19.

Much good may be done by persons in authority, who spare no labour and no expense, in promoting the honour of God; and who unite their own example and influence with their most zealous endeavours, to excite and encourage other members of the community to do their duty. Even they that teach others, and are holy to the Lord, not only by office, but in their hearts and lives, need to be repeatedly exhorted and charged to serve God and his church, with increasing zeal and persevering diligence; and when one service is finished, to proceed with alacrity to another.—God alone can *efficaciously* sanctify and prepare our hearts for his holy service; but there is a duty belonging to us respecting ourselves and our brethren, in the performance of which we obtain this blessing, and become *instrumental* to each other's benefit: and ministers should always begin to sanctify themselves, before they attempt to prepare the people for the ordinances of God. In due attendance on these, revivals of religion are both manifested and forwarded; they at once honour the Lord, and become *means of grace* to the souls of men. The maintenance of them, in an orderly and public manner, must always be attended with expense; and the multitude of the poor will often be unable to defray it. On this account religion will, in some places and at some times, be neglected, to the discouragement of many, and the ruin of far more: it then becomes a noble generosity for kings, princes, and wealthy persons, to step forward and to communicate liberally to the assistance of the poor, that they may not want the Bread of life for their souls: and God will honour those who thus honour him. None are more bound to liberality in such cases, than the *superior clergy*, who enjoy large revenues appropriated to the maintenance of religion: for surely they ought willingly to assist their poorer brethren, who commonly do a large proportion of the work, without even a decent provision for themselves and their families! Thus the service of God might be prepared, and his ordinances conducted in harmony and to edification; whilst mutual love would be cemented, discouragements and temptations to envy, discontent, and revilings, would be obviated; and the affluent might expect to enjoy their abundance in reputation, beloved by their inferiors, with the blessing of God, and to his glory: whilst the whole would cause numbers to pray for each other, and to abound in many thanksgivings to God: (2 *Cor.* ix. 6—15.)—They that are continually so taken up in the work of God and his church, that they cannot attend to their secular interests, ought particularly to be cared for by their brethren who have more leisure: in all things we need reciprocal assistance; and they who are much employed in public exercises of religion, should be cautioned not to neglect their own souls. Alas! how are God's ordinances disregarded, or formally attended on! The church *in its best days* hath fallen short hitherto of what it ought to be *at all times:* our most religious hours, in public or private, need forgiveness; and the mercy of God, through the Saviour's atonement, must continue our only plea, unto the close of our days. Vast exertions are requisite to produce an outward attendance on religion: but the efficacious grace of God alone can convert the heart. Except our dependence be fixed on it, the most excellent means and instruments will be ineffectual, and serve only to demonstrate the strength of man's depravity, and the justice of God in the sinner's condemnation: and abused mercies will after a time be withdrawn.

V. 20—27.

Though no man suffers who has not merited his suffering; yet public persons are often laid aside or removed,

CHAP. XXXVI.

Jehoahaz succeeds Josiah, and is deposed by Necho, and carried into Egypt; and Jehoiakim is made king, 1—4. *He reigns wickedly, and is put in chains by Nebuchadnezzar, who carries some of the sacred vessels to Babylon,* 5—8. *Jehoiachin is made king, who after a year is carried captive to Babylon, with other of the sacred vessels; and Zedekiah succeeds,* 9, 10. *He reigns very wickedly, despises the warnings of Jeremiah, and rebels against Nebuchadnezzar,* 11—13. *The sins of the priests and people cause the utter destruction of Jerusalem, and the desolation of the land, for seventy years,* 14—21. *Cyrus's proclamation for rebuilding the temple,* 22, 23.

a xxvi. 1. xxxiii. 25
b 2 Kings xxiii. 31-34 1 Chr. iii. 15. Jer. xxii. 11. *Shallum.*

THEN [a] the people of the land took [b] Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and made him king in his father's stead in Jerusalem.

2 Jehoahaz *was* twenty and three years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem.

* Heb. *removed him.* 2 Kings xxiii. 33
† Heb. *mulcted.*

3 And the king of Egypt * put him down at Jerusalem, and † condemned the land in an hundred talents of silver, and a talent of gold.

c 2 Kings xxiii 34, 35. 1 Chr. iii. 15.
d Jer. xxii. 10—12. Ez. xix 3, 4.

4 And the king of Egypt [c] made Eliakim his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem, and turned his name to Jehoiakim. And [d] Necho took Jehoahaz his brother, and carried him to Egypt.

e 2 Kings xxiii. 36 37 Jer. xxii. 13—19. xxvi. 21—23 xxxvi. 1. 27—32.

5 [e] Jehoiakim *was* twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem: and he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD his God.

B. C. 607.
f 2 Kings xxiv. 1. 2. 5, 6. Ez. xix. 5—9. Dan. i. 1, 2. Hab. i 5—10.
‡ Or, *chains.*

6 Against him [f] came up Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and bound him in ‡ fetters, to carry him to Babylon.

g Ezra i. 7—11. Jer. xxvii. 16—18. xxviii. 3. Dan. v. 2—4.

7 Nebuchadnezzar also carried of [g] the vessels of the house of the LORD to Babylon, and put them in his temple of Babylon.

8 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and his abominations which he did, and that which was found in him, behold, [h] they *are* written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah: and [i] Jehoiachin his son reigned in his stead.

h 2 Kings xxiv. 5, 6.
i 1 Chr iii 16,17. *Jeconiah.* Jer. xxii. 24. 28. *Coniah.* Matt. i. 11. 12. *Jeconias.*
k 2 Kings xxiv. 8, 9.

9 ¶ Jehoiachin *was* [k] eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem: and he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD.

§ Heb. *at the return of the year.* B. C. 599.
l 2 Kings xxiv. 10—16. xxv. 27—30. Jer. xxix. 2. Ez. i 2.
|| Heb. *vessels of desire.* 7. Jer. xxvii. 18—22. Dan. v. 2 23.
m 2 Kings xxiv. 17. *Mattaniah.* 1 Chr iii. 15, 16. Jer. xxxvii 1.
n 2 Kings xxiv. 18—20. Jer lii. 1—3.
o xxxii 26. xxxiii. 12 19. 23 Dan. v. 22, 23.
p Jer xxi 1, &c. xxvii 12, &c. xxviii. 1, &c. xxxiv 2, &c. xxxvii. 1, &c. xxxviii 14, &c.
q xxxv. 22.

10 And § when the year was expired, [l] king Nebuchadnezzar sent and brought him to Babylon, with the || goodly vessels of the house of the LORD, and made [m] Zedekiah his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem.

11 ¶ Zedekiah *was* [n] one and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned eleven years in Jerusalem.

12 And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD his God, *and* [o] humbled not himself [p] before Jeremiah the prophet, *speaking* from [q] the mouth of the LORD.

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to punish the wickedness of the community: and even their own indiscretions, contrary to their general character, and of fatal consequence, may be permitted as a national judgment. We are not bound to believe all those who profess to speak by the authority of God: but it is always right to act with caution, to search the Scriptures, to seek the Lord's direction in prayer, and to consult wise, experienced, and pious friends; that we may discover as far as possible what is the truth and will of God concerning us, and that we may not be found to fight against him. Men seldom prosper in those measures which are unadvisedly adopted: and they who are honoured with great usefulness, should be doubly circumspect in their conduct, and careful of their lives, because so many are interested in them. However, believers, even when taken away by a sudden or premature death, are removed to a better world: and their survivors should honour them, notwithstanding their imperfections; and will frequently perceive they have great cause to mourn for them. Yet, many join in lamenting the death and commemorating the goodness of useful men, who neither regard their admonitions, nor imitate their examples. And many mourn over their own calamities, who do not repent, and forsake those sins which have provoked God to inflict them: yet this alone can avert still more tremendous judgments.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXVI. V. 1—7. (*Notes,* 2 *Kings* xxiii. 29—37. xxiv. 1—7.)

V. 9. *Eight.* Either this is an error of the transcribers, or Jehoiachin reigned ten years with his father; at whose death he seems to have been eighteen years old.

V. 10. Jehoiakim probably died towards the close of the year: and soon after the entrance of the new year, Nebuchadnezzar captivated Jehoiachin, with many of the vessels of the temple.

V. 12. (*Notes, Jer.* xxvii. xxviii. xxxiv. xxxvii. xxxviii.)

13 And he also [x] rebelled against king Nebuchadnezzar, [s] who had made him swear by God: but [t] he stiffened his neck, [u] and hardened his heart from turning unto the LORD God of Israel.

14 Moreover [x] all the chief of the priests and the people transgressed very much, [y] after all the abominations of the heathen; and [z] polluted the house of the LORD, which he had hallowed in Jerusalem.

15 And [a] the LORD God of their fathers sent to them by * his messengers, rising up † betimes, and sending; [b] because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place:

16 But they [c] mocked the messengers of God, and [d] despised his words, and [e] misused his prophets, until [f] the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, [g] till *there was* no ‡ remedy.

17 Therefore [h] he brought upon them [i] the king of the Chaldees, [k] who slew their young men with the sword, [l] in the house of their sanctuary, and had [m] no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man or him that stooped for age: he gave *them* all into his hand.

x 2 Kings xxiv. 20. Jer. iii. 3. Ez. xvii. 11—20. s Josh. ix. 15. 18, 20. 2 Sam. xxi. 2. t 2 Kings xvii. 14. Neh. ix. 16, 17. Is. xlviii. 4. u Ex. viii. 15. 32. ix. 17. Neh. ix. 29. Rom. ii. 4, 5. Heb. iii. 8, 13. x 2 Kings xvi. 10—16. Ezra ix. 7. Jer. v. 5. xxxvii. 13—15. xxxviii. 4. Ez. xxii. 6. 26—28. Dan. ix. 6. 8. Mic. iii. 1—4. 9—11. vii. 3. Zeph. iii. 3, 4. y xxxviii. 3. xxxiii. 9. z xxxiii. 4—7. Ez. viii. 5—16. a xxiv. 19—21. xxxiii. 10. 2 Kings xvii. 13. Jer. xxv. 3, 4. xxvi. 5. xxxv. 15. xliv. 4, 5. * Heb. *hand of his.* † That is, *continually and carefully.* b Judg. x. 16. 2 Kings xiii. 23. Hos. xi. 8. Luke xix. 41—44. c. xxx. 10. Ps. xxxv. 16. Is. xxviii. 22. Jer. v. 12, 13. xx. 7. Luke xviii. 32. xxii. 63, 64. xxiii. 11. 36. Acts ii. 13. xvii. 32. Heb. xi. 36. d Prov. i. 25—30. Luke xvi. 14. Acts xiii. 41. 1 Thes. iv. 8. e Jer. xxxii. 3. xxxviii. 6. Matt. v. 12. xxi. 33—41. xxiii. 34—37. Acts vii. 52. f Ps. lxxiv. 1. lxxix. 1—5. g Prov. vi. 15. xxix. 1. ‡ Heb. *healing.* B. C. 590. h xxxiii. 11. Deut. xxviii. 49. 2 Kings xxiv. 2, 3. Jer. xv. 8. xxxii. 42. xl. 3. Dan. ix. 14. i 2 Kings xxv. 1, &c. Jer. xxxix. 1, &c. lii. 1, &c. k Lev. xxvi. 14, &c. Deut. xxviii. 15, &c. xxix. 18—28. xxx. 18. xxxi. 16—18. xxxii. 15—28. Ps. lxxix. 2, 3. Jer. xv. 9. xviii. 21. Lam. ii. 21, 22. l xxiv. 21. Lam. ii. 20. Ez. ix. 5—7. Luke xiii. 2. m Deut. xxviii. 50. Ps. lxxiv. 20.

18 And [n] all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and [o] the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes; all *these* he brought to Babylon.

19 And [p] they burnt the house of God, and [q] brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof.

20 And ‖ them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where [r] they were servants to him and his sons, [s] until the reign of the kingdom of Persia:

21 To [t] fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had [u] enjoyed her sabbaths: *for* as long as she lay desolate, she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years.

22 ¶ Now [x] in the first year of [y] Cyrus king of Persia, [z] that the word of the LORD *spoken* by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, [a] the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made [b] a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and *put it* also in writing, saying,

23 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, [c] All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and

n 7. 10. 2 Kings xxv. 13—17. Jer. xxvii. 18—22. lii. 17—23. Dan. v. 3. o Is. xxxix. 6. p 2 Kings xxv. 9. Ps. lxxiv. 4—8. lxxix. 1. 7. Is. lxiv. 10, 11. Jer. vii. 4. 14. lii. 13. Lam. iv. 1. Mic. iii. 12. Luke xxi. 6. q 2 Kings xxv. 10, 11. Jer. lii. 14, 15. ‖ Heb. *the remainder from the sword.* r Deut. xxviii. 47, 48. Jer. xxvii. 7. s 22. Ezra i. 1, &c. t Jer. xxv. 9—11. xxvi. 6, 7. xxvii. 12, 13. Dan. ix. 2. Zech. i. 4—6. u Lev. xx. 4—6. xxvi. 34, 35. Zech. i. 12. x Ezra i. 1—3. y Dan. x. 1. z 21. Jer. xxv. 12. 14. xxix. 10. xxxii. 42—44. xxxiii. 10—14. Heb. x. 23. a xxi. 16. 1 Sam. xxvi. 19. 1 Kings xi. 14. 23. 1 Chr. v. 26. Ezra i. 5. Is. xiii. 2—5. 17. 18. xlv. 1—5. Hag. i. 14. b xxiv. 9. xxx. 5. c Ps. lxxv. 5—7. Dan. ii. 21. 37. iv. 35. v. 18. 26.

V. 13. *Swear*, &c. Nebuchadnezzar had placed Zedekiah on the throne, who had sworn allegiance to him by the God of Israel. Having received his authority in this manner, and holding it by such a tenure, he could not revolt from the king of Babylon without perjury, treachery, and injustice: and in his case the impolicy of his conduct was equal to his impiety, and made way for the punishment of it. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 15. The Lord acted towards Judah, as a man would do who had the welfare of his son much at heart, who would lose no time, but meet him with warnings as soon as he began to turn aside, missing no opportunity and sparing no pains; for he had compassion on the people, and proceeded reluctantly to execute vengeance, and to give up Jerusalem and the temple to the rage of heathen conquerors.

V. 16. *No remedy*, &c. It no longer consisted with the honour of God to protect so wicked a people, who professed to be his worshippers, and who encouraged themselves in sin, by a presumptuous confidence in him. It was become necessary to display the glory of the divine holiness and justice, in bringing signal miseries upon them: and this he did, by giving them up to their own infatuated counsels, and the embittered resentment of their cruel invaders. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 17. It is probable that many fled into the courts of the temple, as to a *sanctuary* or sacred refuge; but they were slain there by the haughty victors.

V. 21. The law concerning the sabbatical year seems to have been almost entirely neglected, from the first entrance of Israel into Canaan; and when the land had many sabbatical years together during the captivity, it bore a near proportion to those in which the law had been violated. Yet this intimated, that it was not to be given to another people, because the Israelites were to be reinstated in it.—The seventy years here mentioned may either be computed from the first captivity in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, to the first year of Cyrus the Persian; or from the later and more complete desolations of the land, to the finishing of the temple, in the sixth year of king Darius, as the land was gradually desolated, and gradually repeopled.

V. 22, 23. (*Note, Ezra* i. 1—4.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—16.

When the wickedness of nations provokes God to remove wise and pious princes, and to send others of a contrary character; avowed impiety and desolating judgments may

d Is. xlv. 26—28. e 1 Chr. xxii. 16. xxix. 5. Ezra vii. 13. Zech. ii. 6, 7. Rom. viii. 31.

d he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah e Who *is there* among you of all his people? the LORD his God *be* with him, and let him go up.

be expected to come in like a flood, and to bear down all before them. Indeed Providence often raises up such worthless rulers, one after another, to scourge a guilty land; and then every change proves a step towards more complete destruction. Infatuated counsels and treacherous measures concur in bringing ruin upon those, who, in proud contempt of God, reject the warnings of his ministers, from his word; and who thus "stiffen their neck, and harden "their heart from turning unto the LORD." Yet he would not punish whole kingdoms for the impiety of their rulers, did not the people also transgress very much: but when nations, favoured with his word and ordinances, become so corrupt, that nobles, priests, and people imitate, and even exceed, the abominations of the heathen; and add the shameless profanation of things most sacred, and the most obstinate contempt of his holy word, to all their other crimes, what can be expected but miseries as remarkable as their wickedness? And when the mockery and persecution of his ministers is added to all the rest, the "wrath of the LORD will arise against such a people, till "there be no remedy." He indeed delighteth in mercy, and is honoured by the repentance and salvation of sinners. The whole plan of redemption; the warnings, invitations, and entreaties of his word, and his long-suffering towards us, prove his rich compassion and love: but these endearing attributes are exercised in exact consistency with his justice, holiness, and truth, and according to the counsel of his infallible wisdom; and when no means, mercies, or warnings are effectual to bring sinners to repentance, there is no remedy, but he must vindicate the honour of his despised authority, patience, and mercy, in their condign punishment. Nothing, except obstinate impenitent unbelief and iniquity, can ruin our souls; but nothing can save those who persist in rejecting the salvation of the Gospel: for the honour of the truths and ordinances of God demands the destruction of men who disgrace, whilst they pretend to glory in them. Yet ministers must not yield to despondency or resentment, however disappointed, mocked, or misused: they must copy the patience and forbearance of the Lord; and spare no pains, and leave no proper method untried, to bring sinners to repentance.

V. 17—23.

The instruments of divine vengeance against devoted nations are of themselves disposed for their bloody work; and the Lord arms them with power, and gives up the objects of his righteous indignation into their hands. Then, no age or sex, no sacredness of place or character, will move compassion; but all will be involved in one common calamity: and the abused privileges, in which hypocritical professors confide, will both add to their guilt, and enhance the poignancy of their sufferings. Yet, all the miseries of this life are temporal; but the punishment of the wicked in another world is eternal. Even the circumstances of severe calamities often forebode and make way for their removal. When the executioners of vengeance have cut off the more desperate transgressors, and the rest are humbled by their sufferings, and for their sins; the Lord stirs up the spirit of some instrument of his mercy, who will patronize the afflicted, and become their deliverer: and the gates of hell shall never prevail against his church.

THE BOOK OF

EZRA.

IT is generally agreed that Ezra wrote this book, and also the preceding books of Chronicles. It is likewise recorded by the Jewish writers, that he revised all the preceding parts of Scripture, and published a correct copy of the whole: and indeed this account appears highly probable. He is not called a prophet in the sacred Scripture: yet there can be no doubt but he performed these services under the guidance of the holy Spirit; as no distinction is made in the New Testament between one part and another of that volume, which was then called "The Oracles of God," and as such sanctioned by our Lord and his apostles. The prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah confirm the history contained in the former part of this book: and as Ezra alone records the re-building of the temple, whatever in the New Testament relates to the temple, as then standing, is in some sense a sanction to the authenticity of the narrative: though I do not recollect any express references to it except in the genealogies. Neither does the book appear to contain any direct prophecies; but it is written in so pious a strain, and so much in the manner of the other Scriptures, that it has strong internal evidences of divine inspiration. As express mention is made in it of Jeremiah's prophecies, and plain intimations are given of Isaiah's extraordinary predictions concerning Cyrus, (i. 1—3.) *it is evident the writings of these prophets were then extant: and the constant reference to the law of Moses and the preceding histories in this book, and that of Nehemiah, proves the same respecting them.—Ezra was peculiarly had in honour by the ancient Jews, and is so by the modern: and to this we must ascribe the forgery of several other books under his name, (especially the two apocryphal books of Esdras or Ezra:) for forgeries they undoubtedly are. This history opens with the proclamation of Cyrus, the return of a company of Jews, and their attempts to rebuild the city and temple, and to re-inhabit the land; it proceeds to record the opposition they met with, the delays this occasioned, and how, after a time, they in part succeeded. At length, about seventy-eight or nine years afterwards, (concerning a large part of which nothing is recorded,) Ezra himself arrived with a commission, and large powers and grants from Artaxerxes, and with many attendants: and the narrative closes with an account of the sin of the Jews in marrying heathen wives; Ezra's grief, humble confession, and prayers on that account; and his pious endeavours to separate his people from idolaters.—In this and the subsequent history, the Jews no longer appear as an independent prosperous nation, governed by kings of their own race; but a small remnant returned from captivity, by the favour of the Persian kings, and under their protection and dominion; and struggling, often feebly, with many difficulties and enemies; yet, in this condition, they were enabled to re-establish the worship of God at the temple in Jerusalem; to which they outwardly adhered till the coming of Christ; being effectually cured of idolatry, though in other respects exceedingly prone to disobedience.—During the captivity, nothing is recorded of their history, except what may be collected from the prophecies of Ezekiel and Daniel: and exceedingly little is contained in the Scripture of their condition during 536 years, till the birth of Christ, compared with the regular history given of the nation from the days of Moses to the captivity. The old dispensation was about to expire and make way for Christianity; the Spirit of prophecy was about to be withdrawn for a season; and the people had so often and so flagrantly violated their national covenant, that they were not honoured and noticed as they had been in former ages.*

B. C. 536.

CHAPTER I.

Cyrus issues a proclamation, allowing the Jews to go up to Jerusalem and build the temple; and exciting those who staid behind to assist them, 1—4. *Many prepare to return, and others contribute to the expense,* 5, 6. *Cyrus restores the vessels of the temple to Sheshbazzar,* 7—11. B. C. 536.

NOW [a] in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD [b] by the mouth of Jeremiah might be

[a] 2 Chr. xxxvi. 22, 23.
[b] Jer. xxv. 12—14. xxix. 10. xxxiii. 7—13.

fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, [c] that he *made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and *put it* also in writing, saying,

2 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD [d] God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and [e] he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah.

3 [f] Who *is there* among you of all his people? [g] his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel ([h] he *is* the God,) which *is* in Jerusalem.

c v. 13—15 vi. 22. vii. 27. Ps. cvi. 46. Pro. xxi. 1.
* Heb *caused a voice to pass.* Matt iii 1—3. John i. 23.
d 1 Kings viii. 27. 2 Chr. ii. 12 Is. lxvi 1. Jer. x 11. Dan. ii 28. 37. 44 v. 23.
e Is xliv. 26—28. xlv. 1. 12, 13.
f 2 Chr. xxxvi. 23.
g Josh. i. 9 1 Chr xxviii. 20. Mat. xxviii. 20.
h Deu xxxii. 31. Dan. ii. 47, vi. 26. Acts x. 36.

4 And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, [h] let the men of his place † help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, besides [i] the free-will-offering for the house of God, that *is* in Jerusalem.

5 Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all *them* [k] whose spirit God had raised to go up to build the house of the LORD, which *is* in Jerusalem.

6 And all they that *were* about them ‡ strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with

h 3 John 6, 7.
† Heb. *lift him up.* Ec. iv. 9, 10. Gal. vi. 2.
i 1 Chr. xxix. 2. 9. 17.
k 1 2 Chr. xxxvi. 22. Neh. ii 12. Prov. xvi. 1. Phil. ii. 13.
‡ Or, *helped them.* vii. 15, 16. viii. 25—28. 33.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1—4. Nebuchadnezzar reigned, after the first captivity of the Jews in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, forty-five years. His son Evil-merodach was slain by Neriglissar, his brother-in-law, after he had reigned two years; and probably Jehoiachin died before him. After four years Neriglissar was slain in battle by Cyrus: in a few months Belshazzar, the son of Evil-merodach, mounted the throne: and at the end of seventeen years he was slain in Babylon by Cyrus; (*Dan.* v.) Then Cyaxares, or Darius the Mede, the uncle and father-in-law of Cyrus, succeeded to the throne of all these kingdoms; and after two years he died, and left the whole of them to Cyrus, who, in the first year after his predecessor's death, proclaimed liberty to the captive Jews. This is the first computation of the seventy years of the Babylonish captivity. As Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius the Mede and of Cyrus the Persian, there can be little doubt, but that he was instrumental in procuring the Jews this extraordinary proclamation: and probably he showed that prince the prophecy of Isaiah, which was known to have been long extant, and in which he was predicted by name, and his successors were described, and by which he was appointed to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple; and also those of Jeremiah, which foretold the exact duration of the captivity. (*Marg. Ref.*) These predictions, set before him by a person of Daniel's reputation for wisdom and eminent station, seem to have produced in the mind of this prudent and humane conqueror, a conviction that the God of Israel was the true God, and that the captive Jews were his chosen people and Jerusalem the place where he was especially pleased to be worshipped. Thus "*the* LORD *stirred up his spirit*" to issue a proclamation, which was publicly made known in every place by heralds appointed for that service, and also committed to writing, that the Jews were at liberty, and should be protected, in returning to Jerusalem and rebuilding the temple. In this proclamation Cyrus called the God of Israel, "JEHOVAH, the God of Heaven," and avowed, "that he was THE GOD," in contradistinction to all others that were so called. He acknowledged, that he had received his dominions from him, whether acquired by inheritance or conquest. These, being far superior to any other empire then in the world; (as comprising the dominions of the Medes and Persians increased by those of the Assyrians, Babylonians, and others,) were called in the customary style, "All the kingdoms of the earth." And he declared that "the LORD had charged him to build him "an house at Jerusalem." Some think that this was done in a vision vouchsafed to him; but probably it was his inference from Isaiah's prophecies. He also wished the Jews success in the name of the Lord, and in some sense prayed for his powerful and favourable presence with them. And he exhorted others, in every place, to help those who went upon this undertaking, with such things as were needful for their expenses, and for accomplishing their pious intentions. Some interpret this as an order to the rulers of the provinces, to supply them from the public revenues: others suppose that Cyrus allowed the Jews to collect voluntary contributions from his subjects at large; and some confine it to the Jews that did not go up to Jerusalem, who were exhorted to assist their brethren that did. Without such assistance, many, that "remained in any place," waiting an opportunity of going up to Jerusalem, would have been eventually hindered. Besides affording assistance to the Jews for their journey; the people in general were allowed, and even reminded, to send oblations for the temple, which was about to be built at Jerusalem. By this decree the Jews, who had been enslaved, were virtually released, provided they chose to engage in this enterprise. Any attempt of this kind would previously have been punished as rebellion; but now, the government being favourable, their opposers would be restrained, and many would readily help them on that account alone. As the kings of Persia still retained the sovereignty of the land, it could be no real impolicy to encourage the people to re-inhabit and cultivate a fertile territory, which had long lain desolate. But this measure was so contrary to their ancient prejudices and superstitions, that it was probably dictated by conscience, and a sense of duty to the God of heaven: though we find nothing in the subsequent history of this prince, to favour a conclusion that he finally renounced idolatry, and became a true worshipper of JEHOVAH. The proclamation, however, was honourable to God; and would encourage the Jews to adhere to their religion, and be more zealous for it; and perhaps induce many of the Gentiles to respect, and even to embrace it.

beasts, and with precious things, besides all *that* was [l] willingly offered.

7 ¶ Also [m] Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the LORD, which [n] Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put them in the house of his gods;

8 Even those did Cyrus king of Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and numbered them unto [o] Sheshbazzar the prince of Judah.

9 And this *is* the number of them: thirty [p] chargers of gold, a thousand chargers of silver, [q] nine and twenty knives,

10 Thirty basons of gold, silver basons of a second *sort* four hundred and ten, *and* other vessels a thousand.

11 [r] All the vessels of gold and of silver *were* five thousand and four hundred. All *these* did Sheshbazzar bring up with *them of* the * captivity, that were brought up from Babylon unto Jerusalem.

l Ps. cx. 3. 2 Cor. ix. 7.
m v. 14. vi. 5.
n 2 Kings xxiv. 13. xxv. 13—16. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 7. 10. 18. Jer. xxvii. 21, 22. xxviii. 3—6. Dan. i. 2. v. 3. 23.
o v. 14. 16 Hag. i. 1. 14. ii. 2—4. Zech. iv. 6—10.
p Num. vii. 13. 19 1 Kings vii. 50. 2 Chr. iv. 8. 19—32. xxiv. 14. Matt. xiv. 3.
q Matt. x. 29—31.
r Rom. ix. 23. 2 Tim. ii. 19—21.
* Heb. *transportation.* Matt. i 11, 12.

V. 5, 6. Some persons may perhaps wonder that, on this proclamation, the Jews did not assemble in one body, and directly go and take possession of their ancient inheritance: but a little reflection shows the matter in another light. The city and temple lay a heap of ruins, and it would cost immense labour and expense to rebuild them. The land was either wholly desolate, or occupied by encroaching neighbours; and in either case, it would require some time and trouble to procure for themselves habitations and provisions. The journey was arduous and perilous, for those who were attended with their families and substance; and many enemies would endeavour to plunder them by the way, as far as they could and dared. None of them had seen Jerusalem or the temple, except such as were above fifty years of age; at which period of life the spirit of enterprise commonly begins to decline. Few were attached to the temple by true piety: and most of them wanted even that attachment which men naturally feel for the land of their nativity; having been born in the places where they were now settled. Some persons of true and eminent piety were so situated, that they did not think it their duty to remove; as Daniel in the court of Cyrus: others would be hindered by the infirmities of old age, and the peculiar circumstances of their families and connexions. In short, the difficulties, hardship, and peril were manifest; the success of the attempt would be doubtful to all but those that were strong in faith: its temporal advantages were remote and precarious, and not worth the venture, especially to such as had obtained comfortable settlements or occupations, in the land of their captivity: even the spiritual advantages would appear to the godly mind, more intended for posterity than for that generation; and to engage in it, in this view, would require vigorous faith, lively hope, and an active zeal for the honour of God, and the benefit of his church, and establishment of his worship in ages to come. We may conclude, that in consequence of the captivities, many Israelites, and some of the Jews, were finally incorporated with the heathen, among whom they dwelt; yet these calamities seem to have had a very good effect on considerable numbers. The chief fathers of Judah and Benjamin, who had the greatest influence in their tribes, first moved in this undertaking; and they were joined by the leading men among the priests and Levites, which doubtless rendered the design more reputable: and thus a considerable number were encouraged to attend them: whilst others assisted, and sent oblations for the intended temple. Many more returned than we read of being carried away captive: but as the land had been utterly desolated, all the surviving inhabitants must have been driven into other countries, and most of them into those lands which had been subject to the kings of Babylon, and were now fallen under the dominion of the kings of Persia: and doubtless many of the ten tribes accompanied the Jews at this time. It is, however, evident that a great majority, even of the latter, chose to continue in the settlements that they had there gained: some of them afterwards returned, but more never did; and immense numbers of Jews were from that time dispersed, in every city and country over all that part of the world. So that the new settlement, in Judea and at Jerusalem, formed but a small part of that people, as they continued to be distinguished from other nations; for they still increased and multiplied very rapidly, according to the promise of God to their fathers. It is worthy of observation, that no Jews, who chose to go, were excluded by Cyrus's proclamation: yet the language of the sacred historian implies, that none would actually have gone, if He who "stirred up "the spirit of Cyrus," had not also "stirred up the "spirit of the people," to avail themselves of this permission: (the original words are the same in both clauses.) This transaction, (as Archbishop Usher has particularly observed,) furnishes a most striking *illustration*, or, as I would rather say, *representation*, of the way in which the Gospel is proposed to sinners, and embraced by believers. It is in general set before the ruined descendants of Adam: with the Saviour's most solemn assurance, that "Him "who cometh—he will in no wise cast out." Yet "no "man can come unto him, except the Father draw him." On one pretence or other, all who are left to themselves, "neglect so great salvation," and are *justly* condemned. But God, by his preventing grace, "moves the spirits" of some, who thus thankfully embrace the proffered blessing, and are *mercifully* saved.

V. 7—11. Some of the vessels of the temple had been cut in pieces by the victors; (*Marg. Ref.*) but the most valuable had been providentially preserved through all the succeeding revolutions, and were now ordered by Cyrus to be restored to Sheshbazzar; and so were at last brought back to Jerusalem, and again employed in the service of the sanctuary. It is generally agreed, that the ark was lost or destroyed when the temple was burnt: and, it is likely, that by the absence of it, and his visible glory, 'God would

CHAP. II.

The principal persons who returned from Babylon, 1, 2. *The number of the several families which accompanied them,* 3—35. *The priests,* 36—39. *The Levites,* 40—42. *The Nethinims,* 43—54. *The children of Solomon's servants,* 55—60. *The priests who could not show their pedigree,* 62, 63. *The sum total, with their retinue,* 64—67. *Their oblations towards the temple and its service,* 68—70.

NOW these *are* [a] the children of the province that went up out of the captivity, of those which had been carried away, [b] whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away unto Babylon, and came again unto Jerusalem and Judah, every one unto his city;

[a] v. 8. vi. 2. Neh. vii. 6. Esth. i. 1. iii. 8. 11. viii. 9. Acts xxiii. 34.

[b] 2 Kings xxiv. 14—16. xxv 12. 2 Chr. xxxvi. Jer. xxxix lii. 1. 8.

'signify he was withdrawing his presence from that house 'of stone, to dwell in the temple of Christ's body, who 'offered himself to God, and thereby put an end to these 'figurative sacrifices.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)—The knives were used for slaying and preparing the sacrifices, and the vessels for receiving the blood, for the meat-offerings, and other similar purposes. The sum total of the vessels here stated far exceeds the particular account given of them: but it is supposed, that many spoons, tongs, &c. not before numbered, were included. Sheshbazzar may signify *joy in tribulation:* and it is supposed that this name was given, by the kings of Babylon, to the same person whom the Jews called Zerubbabel, which signifies *a stranger at Babylon.* He was the grandson of Jehoiachin by Salathiel, and the heir of the house of David: as such he was regarded by the conquerors; he possessed authority over the captive Jews; and he was authorized, and willingly undertook, to lead those back who now returned to rebuild the city and temple. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

As the architect progressively executes every part of the plan which he had delineated, till the whole design is completed; so God in his providence performs in due order all the prophecies of his word: much of his great scheme hath already been accomplished, and revolving ages will hasten the performance of all the rest in the appointed periods. Difficulties, that to us appear impossibilities, form no obstruction to Omnipotence. The Lord our God turneth the hearts of kings, as he doth the rivers of waters, which way he pleases: he subverts the deep laid foundations of mighty empires, and establishes others in their room: he throws away the executioners of his vengeance, when their work is done, to make way for the instruments of his mercy: he gives, as he pleases, abilities, success, and authority; and then secretly disposes men's minds to fulfil his word and do his will, and over-rules every thing for the good of his church, and of those who trust in him. When he has work to do, they whom he hath chosen to perform it find their minds enlarged to entertain noble designs; and, forgetful of their former habits, maxims, and superstitions, they serve his cause with all the authority which he hath conferred on them. Even they who live and die strangers to the power of true religion, have often received deep convictions of his eternal power and Godhead, and of their obligations and accountableness to the God of heaven: and under these convictions, they have made public and honourable confessions to him, have shown for a time a regard for his authority, and have done many and great things for his cause and people; speaking the language of piety, and being very useful to his worshippers: and yet at last they have relapsed into their former idolatry or ungodliness!—If such things have heretofore been done in fulfilling former prophecies; the Lord is equally able and faithful to provide for the ruin of Anti-christ, the conversion of the Jews, and the calling of all the Gentiles into his church. In every useful undertaking, all should endeavour to be helpful; and it bodes well, when princes and ministers take the lead and give the example, in arduous and self-denying services. Some may be useful by their labours, some with their substance, and all by their prayers, to the common cause of truth and righteousness: and whatever is done *willingly,* and from love to God and his people, will be graciously accepted. No time should be lost in setting about those duties which belong to us in our several stations: and in stirring up others to abound in love and good works, we should give them an example. That which is devoted to the service, is intrusted to the protection, of the Lord: and he will especially keep account of and preserve those whom he hath "purified unto himself to be a peculiar "people, zealous of good works." Even the very hairs of their head are all numbered; and whatever tribulations they may pass through, no true believer shall perish, but they shall all be forth-coming, at that day "when the LORD "shall make up his jewels."—Salvation is fully prepared in Jesus Christ; "all power in heaven and earth is given "unto him:" the proclamation of the Gospel is general to every creature. But pride, worldly lusts, and unbelief, render us averse to the gracious proposal: and it would be made in vain, did not the Lord raise up the spirits of a remnant, "according to the election of grace," to renounce all for the sake of Christ and his salvation. They who prefer carnal things, to the eternal blessings which he confers, will find, that their pride and love of sin will aggravate, and not excuse, the guilt of their unbelief. They that feel a willingness to accept of what they have heretofore neglected, may come with encouragement, for Jesus will in no wise cast them out. And if we by grace have been enabled to receive this salvation, and to bring forth the fruits of it: whilst we take the comfort of it, we shall give him the glory, and offer our fervent prayers, that others also may be made willing in the day of his power.

2 Which came with [c] Zerubbabel: [d] Jeshua, Nehemiah, [e] Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum, Baanah. The number of the men of the people of Israel:

3 The children of [f] Parosh, two thousand an hundred seventy and two.

4 The children of [g] Shephatiah, three hundred seventy and two.

5 The children of [h] Arah, seven hundred seventy and five.

6 The children of [i] Pahath-moab, of the children of Jeshua *and* [k] Joab, two thousand eight hundred and twelve.

7 The children of [l] Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty and four.

8 The children of [m] Zattu, nine hundred forty and five.

9 The children of [n] Zaccai, seven hundred and threescore.

10 The children of [o] Bani, six hundred forty and two.

11 The children of [p] Bebai, six hundred twenty and three.

12 The children of [q] Azgad, a thousand two hundred twenty and two.

13 The children of [r] Adonikam, six hundred sixty and six.

14 The children of [s] Bigvai, two thousand fifty and six.

15 The children of [t] Adin, four hundred fifty and four.

16 The children of [u] Ater, of Hezekiah, ninety and eight.

17 The children of [x] Bezai, three hundred twenty and three.

c i. 11. Neh. vii. *Sheshbazzar.* Hag i.1. xii. 14. ii. 2. 4. 21. Zech. iv. 2–10. Matt. i. 12, 13. *Zo obabel.*
d iii. 8, 9. iv. 3. v. 2. Hag. i. 12. 14. ii. 4 Zech iii. 1. 3. 8, 9. *Joshua*
e Neh vii 7. *Azariah. Raamiah Mispereth. Nehum.*
f viii. 3. *Pharosh.* x. 25 Neh. vii. 8
g viii. 8 Neh. vii. 9.
h Neh. vi. 18. vii. 10. 652.
i viii. 4. x. 30. Neh. vii. 11. 2818. x 14.
k viii 9.
l viii. 7. x. 26. Neh. vii. 12.
m x 27. Neh. vii. 13. 845.
n Neh. vii. 14.
o x. 24. Neh. vii. 15. *Binnui.* 648.
p viii. 11. x. 28. Neh. vii. 16 628.
q viii. 12 Neh. vii. 17. 2322
r viii 13. Neh. vii. 18. 667.
s viii. 14. Neh. vii. 19. 2067.
t viii. 14. Neh. vii. 20. 655.
u Neh. vii. 21.
x Neh. vii. 23. 324.

18 The children of [y] Jorah, an hundred and twelve.

19 The children of [z] Hashum, two hundred twenty and three.

20 The children of [a] Gibbar, ninety and five.

21 The children of [b] Bethlehem, an hundred twenty and three.

22 The men of [c] Netophah, fifty and six.

23 The men of [d] Anathoth, an hundred twenty and eight.

24 The children of [e] Azmaveth, forty and two.

25 The children of [f] Kirjath-arim, Chephirah and Beeroth, seven hundred and forty and three.

26 The children of [g] Ramah and Gaba, six hundred twenty and one.

27 The men of [h] Michmas, an hundred twenty and two.

28 The men of Beth-el and [i] Ai, two hundred twenty and three.

29 The children of [k] Nebo, fifty and two.

30 The children of Magbish, an hundred fifty and six.

31 The children of the other [l] Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty and four.

32 The children of [m] Harim, three hundred and twenty.

33 The children of [n] Lod, * Hadid, and Ono, seven hundred twenty and five.

34 The children of [o] Jericho, three hundred forty and five.

y Neh. vii. 24. *Hariph.*
z x 33. Neh vii. 22. 328.
a Neh. vii. 25. *Gibeon.*
b 1 Chr ii. 50–52.
c 2 Sam. xxiii. 28. 1 Chr ii. 54 Neh. vii. 26. Jer. xl. 8.
d Josh. xxi. 18. Neh. vii. 27. 188. Is. x. 30. Jer. i. 1. xi 21.
e Neh. vii 28. *Beth-azmaveth.*
f Josh ix. 17. Neh. vii. 29.
g Josh. xviii. 24. 25. Neh. vii. 30.
h 1 Sam. xiii 5. 23 Is. x. 28. *Michmash.*
i Gen. xii. 8 *Hai.* Josh. vii 2. viii. 9. 17. Neh. vii. 32. 123.
k Num xxxii. 3. Deu. xxxii. 49. Neh. vii. 33. Is. xv. 2 xlvi. 1. Jer. xlviii 1. 22
l 7. Neh. vii 34.
m x. 31. Neh. vii. 35.
n Neh. vi 2. vii. 37 xi 34, 35.
* Or, *Harid.*
o 1 Kings xvi. 34. Neh. vii. 36.

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1. *Province*, &c. This term seems to denote Judea, as now become a province of the Persian empire.

V. 2. *Nehemiah*, &c. These were the chief fathers, who were next in authority, and assistant, to Zerubbabel in this expedition. Jeshua, or Joshua, was the high-priest, the grandson of Seraiah, who was slain by Nebuchadnezzar. (2 *Kings* xxv. 18.) Nehemiah and Mordecai were not the same persons that we afterwards read of, who bare these names; for they flourished many years later. (*Neh.* i. 1. *Esth.* iii. 2.) As these persons renounced many advantages, and encountered many hardships and dangers, in attempting to rebuild the temple and city, and resume possession of the promised land; it was proper that their names should be recorded, as a mark of honourable distinction to them and their descendants.

V. 3—29. The Register, in the book of Nehemiah, answers to this here given in so many particulars, that there can be no doubt but the same is meant in both places. In general, the names and the numbers of each family, are nearly the same; and the sum total is computed in both exactly alike. Yet there are several considerable variations, in names and numbers, which cannot be readily and satisfactorily accounted for. The most material of these are marked in the margin. It is probable, that Ezra, when he wrote his history, many years after the return of the Jews to Babylon, copied this register from the public records without alteration. Some think, that several who had their names inserted in the register, altered their minds, or died before the company arrived at Jerusalem; and that others came forward, so as to complete the same number in all. (*Notes, Neh.* vii.) The word *children* is sometimes used for the descendants from the several heads of families; at others for those, whose ancestors belonged to the cities mentioned in connexion with them.

V. 30. The children of Magbish are not named in Nehemiah.

p Neh. vii. 38. 3930.

35 The children of [p] Senaah, three thousand and six hundred and thirty.

q 1 Chr. ix. 10. xxiv. 7. r iii. 9.

36 ¶ The priests: the children of [q] Jedaiah, of the house of [r] Jeshua, nine hundred seventy and three.

s x. 20. 1 Chr. xxiv. 14. Neh. vii. 40

37 The children of [s] Immer, a thousand fifty and two.

t x. 22. 1 Chr. ix. 12. Neh. vii. 41.

38 The children of [t] Pashur, a thousand two hundred forty and seven.

u x. 21. 1 Chr. xxiv. 8. Neh. vii. 42.

39 The children of [u] Harim, a thousand and seventeen.

40 ¶ The Levites: the children of Jeshua and Kadmiel, of the children of [x] Hodaviah, seventy and four.

x iii. 9. *Judah* Neh. vii. 43. *Hodevah.*

41 The singers: the children of [y] Asaph, an hundred twenty and eight.

y 1 Chr. vi. 39. xv. 17. xxv. 1, 2. Neh. vii. 44. 148. z 1 Chr. xxvi. 1, &c. Neh. vii. 45. 138.

42 The children of [z] the porters: the children of Shallum, the children of Ater, the children of Talmon, the children of Akkub, the children of Hatita, the children of Shobai, *in* all an hundred thirty and nine.

a 1 Chr. ix. 2. Neh. x. 28. b Neh. vii. 46. *Hashupha.*

43 ¶ The [a] Nethinims: the children of Ziha, the children of [b] Hashupha, the children of Tabbaoth,

c Neh. vii. 47 *Sia.*

44 The children of Keros, the children of [c] Siaha, the children of Padon,

d Neh. vii. 48. *Lebana Hagaba.*

45 The children of [d] Lebanah, the children of Hagabah, the children of Akkub,

46 The children of Hagab, the children of * Shalmai, the children of Hanan,

* Or, *Shamlai.*

47 The children of Giddel, the children of Gahar, the children of Reaiah,

48 The children of Rezin, the children of Nekoda, the children of Gazzam,

49 The children of Uzza, the children of [e] Paseah, the children of Besai,

e Neh. vii. 51 *Phaseah*

50 The children of Asnah, the children of [f] Mehunim, the children of Nephusim,

f Neh. vii. 52. *Meunim. Nephishesim.*

51 The children of Bakbuk, the children of Hakupha, the children of Harhur,

52 The children of [g] Bazluth, the children of Mehida, the children of Harsha,

g Neh. vii. 54 *Bazlith.*

53 The children of Barkos, the children of Sisera, the children of [h] Thamah,

h Neh. vii. 55 *Tamah.*

54 The children of Neziah, the children of Hatipha.

55 ¶ The children of [i] Solomon's servants: the children of Sotai, the children of Sophereth, the children of [k] Peruda,

i 1 Kings ix. 21 k Neh. vii. 57. *Perida.*

56 The children of [l] Jaalah, the children of Darkon, the children of Giddel,

l Neh. vii. 58. *Jaala.*

57 The children of Shephatiah, the children of Hattil, the children of [m] Pocherith of Zebaim, the children of [n] Ami.

m Neh. vii. 59 *Pochereth* n Neh. vii 59 *Amon.*

58 All the [o] Nethinims, and the children of Solomon's servants, *were* three hundred ninety and two.

o vii. 7 Josh. ix. 23 27. 1 Chr. ix 2. Neh. vii. 60.

59 And these *were* they which went up from Tel-melah, [p] Tel-harsa, Cherub, Addan, *and* Immer; but they could not shew their father's house, and their † seed, whether they *were* of Israel:

p Neh. vii. 61. *Tel-haresha Addon.* † Or, *pedigree.*

60 The children [q] of Delaiah, the children of Tobiah, the children of Nekoda, six hundred fifty and two.

q Neh. vii 62. 642

61 ¶ And of [r] the children of the priests: the children of Habaiah, the children of Koz, the children of Bar-

r Neh. vii. 63, 64.

V. 36—39. A very large number of priests went up to Jerusalem on this occasion: yet only four, out of the twenty-four courses instituted by David, seem to have returned: at least only four of the persons, after whom the courses were first named, are here mentioned; namely, Jedaiah, Immer, Harim, and Pashur, who was the son of Malchijah, (1 *Chr.* ix. 12. xxiv. 7—9. 14:) and his name appears to have stood in the public records, as head of his course, instead of his father's. The priests, however, were afterwards divided into twenty-four courses, under the ancient names, in order to preserve regularity in their ministrations.

V. 40—42. The small number of Levites, when compared with the multitude of priests, who returned from Babylon, is very remarkable. Perhaps during a course of years, having no employment in their appropriate services, they generally entered on other occupations; and felt little inducement or inclination to leave them, in order to be the assistants of the priests, in the present desolated condition of Judah and Jerusalem. Whereas it may be supposed, that the priests, having a more sacred and honourable office, were reluctant to be deprived of it, and more ready to resume the exercise of their ministry.

V. 43. (*Note*, 1 *Chr.* ix. 2.)

V. 55. These were persons descended from the remains of the devoted Canaanites who had been brought into bondage by Solomon; and so their posterity were employed in menial services, perhaps about the sanctuary, along with the Nethinims: and though both the Nethinims and "the children of Solomon's servants" were of Gentile extraction, and not admitted to the privileges of Israelites; yet they seem to have been more ready to return to Jerusalem, than the Levites were.

zillai: which took a wife of the daughters of [s] Barzillai the Gileadite, and was called after their name:

62 These sought their register *among* those that were reckoned by genealogy, but they were not found: [t] therefore * were they, as polluted, put from the priesthood.

63 And the † Tirshatha said unto them, that they [u] should not eat of the most holy things, till there stood up a priest with [x] Urim and with Thummim.

64 The whole congregation together *was* [y] forty and two thousand three hundred *and* threescore,

65 Besides their [z] servants and their maids, of whom *there were* seven thousand three hundred thirty and seven: and *there were* among them [a] two hundred singing men and singing women.

66 Their horses *were* seven hundred thirty and six; their mules, two hundred forty and five;

67 Their camels, four hundred thirty and five; *their* asses, six thousand seven hundred and twenty.

68 ¶ And *some* of the chief of the fathers, when they came to the house of the LORD which *is* at Jerusalem, [b] offered freely for the house of God to set it up [c] in his place.

69 They gave after their ability, unto [d] the treasure of the work, threescore and one thousand drams of gold, and five thousand pounds of silver, and one hundred priests' garments.

70 So [e] the priests, and the Levites, and *some* of the people, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinims, dwelt in their cities, and all Israel in their cities.

s 2 Sam. xvii. 27. xix. 31—39. 1 Kings ii. 7.

t Lev. xxi. 21—23 Num. iii. 10. xvi. 40. xviii. 7.

* Heb. *they were polluted from the priesthood.*

† Or, *governor.* Neh. vii. 65. viii. 9. x. 1.

u Lev. ii. 3. 10. vi. 16. 28. vii. 6. x. 17, 18. xxii. 2. 10, 15, 16. Num. xviii. 9—11. 19. 32.

x Ex. xxviii. 30. Lev. viii. 8. Num. xxvii. 21. Deut. xxxiii. 8. 1 Sam. xxviii. 6.

y ix. 8. Neh. vii. 66—69. Is. x. 20—22. Jer. xxiii. 3.

z Is. xiv. 1, 2.

a Ex. xv. 20, 21. 2 Sam. xix. 35. Neh. vii. 67. 2 Ch. 15. Ps. lxviii. 25. cxlviii. 12, 13. Ec. ii. 8. Jer. ix. 17, 18. Matt. ix. 23.

b Ex. xxxv. 5, &c. 29. xxxvi. 3. Num. vii. 3, &c. 1 Chr. xxix. 5—17. Neh. vii. 70. Ps. cx. 3. Luke xxi. 1—4. 2 Cor. viii. 3. 12. ix. 7.

c iii. 3. 1 Chr. xxi. 18. xxii. 1. 2 Chr. iii. 1.

d viii. 25—34. 1 Kings vii. 51. 1 Chr. xxii. 14. xxvi. 20—28. Neh. vii. 71, 72.

e vi. 16, 17. 1 Chr. ix. 2. Neh. vii. 73. xi. 3, &c.

V. 61—63. Either Habaiah, or Koz, being of the sacerdotal family, married one of Barzillai's daughters; and his posterity perhaps thought their descent from him more honourable than their priestly character, and so neglected to preserve their genealogy. Yet on their return from captivity, they desired to be admitted to the service of the sanctuary: but not being able to trace their genealogy, they were excluded by the Tirshatha, (that is, the governor, or Zerub-babel;) until a high-priest should arise with Urim and Thummim, who might, by immediate revelation from God, decide upon their case. (*Marg. Ref.*) But such a high-priest was not vouchsafed under the second temple, until the coming of Christ.

V. 64. The number of the several families amount only to twenty-nine thousand eight hundred and eighteen; and those in Nehemiah to thirty-one thousand and eighty-nine: yet the sum total is in both said to be forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty, besides their servants. The surplus are supposed to have been Levites who could not produce their genealogy, and Israelites from the other tribes, who accompanied their brethren of Judah and Benjamin. 'It is remarkable that the two accounts' (of Ezra and Nehemiah) 'agree in the total amount; and the sum of the 'numbers, as separately detailed, will correspond; if to the '29,818, specified by Ezra, we add the 1765 persons 'reckoned by Nehemiah, which Ezra has omitted: and 'on the other hand, to the 31,089 enumerated by Nehe-'miah, add the 494, which is an overplus in Ezra, not 'noticed by Nehemiah: both writers including in the sum 'total 10,777 of the mixed multitude, not particularized 'in the individual detail.'—'Prideaux attributes the dif-'ference to alterations made by Nehemiah, in compliance 'with changes, that had happened since the departure from 'Babylon.' 'The accounts unquestionably agreed, when 'they were received into the canon, except where there 'might be some cause for variation; and probably the 'differences that now exist have originated in the careless-'ness of the copyists.' (*Gray's Key.*)

V. 65. Among the servants were two hundred singing men and women, (or two hundred and forty-five, according to Nehemiah) who probably were employed in families, to assist their mournings, or their thanksgivings. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 66, 67. How reduced and impoverished does Israel appear in this narrative, compared with the condition of the nation in the days of David and Solomon!

V. 68—70. Under the divine protection this company arrived safe at Jerusalem, without any memorable occurrence. They found the city and all around in ruins, and it seems the neighbouring cities totally unoccupied. These they rebuilt as well as they could, and dwelt in them for the present. But the house of God was uppermost in their thoughts; and it seems that their oblations to it were made, before they separated to seek habitations or subsistence. The whole amounted to nearly eighty thousand pounds sterling, besides the priest's garments; which was a considerable sum for them to contribute in their present poverty: but probably their brethren that staid behind, offered part of it: as the sacrifices and the burning of incense at the temple, were for the benefit of those who worshipped *at*, or *towards*, that typical residence of the God of Israel.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord will honour those who renounce their own ease or interest for the sake of his service and glory: and all who avail themselves of the proclamation of liberty and salvation sent in the Gospel, have their names recorded in the book of life; whilst others shall be written in the dust of oblivion or disgrace. Those orders of men that have on one occasion been most zealous in the cause of God, may at another time become most negligent; and

CHAP. III.

The Jews re-assemble at Jerusalem, build an altar, sacrifice, keep the feast of tabernacles, and prepare to rebuild the temple, 1—7. *Under the direction of Zerubbabel and Jeshua, the foundation is laid, amidst the rejoicing of some, and the weeping of others,* 8—13.

AND when [a] the seventh month was come, and the children of Israel *were* in the cities, the people gathered themselves together [b] as one man to Jerusalem,

2 Then stood up [c] Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brethren the priests, and [d] Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and his brethren, and builded the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt-offerings thereon, [e] as *it is* written in the law of Moses the man of God.

3 And they set [f] the altar upon his bases; [g] for fear *was* upon them because of the people of those countries: and they offered burnt-offerings thereon unto the LORD, *even* [h] burnt-offerings morning and evening.

4 They kept also [i] the feast of tabernacles, as *it is* written, and *offered* [k] the daily burnt-offerings by number, according to the custom, * as the duty of every day required;

5 And afterward *offered* [l] the continual burnt-offering, both of the new moons, and of all the set feasts of the LORD *that were* consecrated, and of every one that [m] willingly offered a free-will-offering unto the LORD.

6 From the first day of the seventh month began they to offer burnt-offerings unto the LORD. But † the foundation of the temple of the LORD was not *yet* laid.

7 They [n] gave money also unto the masons, and to the ‡ carpenters: and [o] meat, and drink, and oil, unto them of

a Ex. xxiii 14—17 Lev. xvi. 29. xxiii. 24, &c. Num xxix. 1, &c.
b Judg xx 1 Neh. viii. 1. Zeph. iii 9. Acts ii. 46. iv. 32. 1 Cor. i. 10.
c Hag. i. 1. 12.14. ii. 2—4. Zech. iii. 1. 8. vi. 11 *Joshua the son of Josedech.*
d ii 2 1 Chr. iii. 17. 19. Hag ii. 21. 23. Zech iv. 6—10. Matt. i. 12, 13 *Zorobabel* son of *Salathiel.*
e Ex xx. 25 Deut xii 5—7. 2 Chr. vi. 6. Ps. lxxviii 68
f 2 Chr. iv. 1.
g vii. 21, 23. Ps. xxvii. 1, 2. lvi. 2—5.
h Ex. xxix. 38—42 Num. xxviii. 2—8.
i Ex xxiii 16. Lev xxiii 34—36. Neh viii 14—17. Zech xiv. 16—19. John vii. 2. 31. Heb. x 9—13.
k Num. xxix. 129, &c.
* Heb. *the matter of the day in his day.*
l Ex xxix. 38—42 Num xxviii. 3—10. 11. 19. 27. xxix 2. 8 13.
m Lev i. 3 Deut. xii 6. 17. 2 Chr. xxix. 31, 32.
† Heb. *the temple of the LORD was not yet founded*
n 2 Kings xii. 11, 12 xxii. 5, 6. 2 Chr xxiv 12, 13.
‡ Or, *workmen*
o 1 Kings v 6. 9—11. 2 Chr. ii. 10. 15. Ez. xxvii. 17. Acts xii. 20.

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the reverse is often exemplified; "for the first shall be "last, and the last first:" (36—42. 2 *Chron.* xxix. 34.) —They that are ashamed of religion, or undervalue their external relation to God, in times of reproach, persecution, or distress, will have no benefit from it when it becomes honourable or profitable; and they who have no evidence that they are, by regeneration, spiritual priests unto God through Jesus Christ, have no right to the peculiar comforts and privileges of Christians. But there are many cases of which we cannot judge, but must leave them to be determined at the second coming of our High-Priest, whose illuminations and perfections are unchangeable and eternal. —They that seek *first* the kingdom of God, his favour, and his glory, will have all things else added to them: they will readily offer according to their ability for the house and service of God: and "where there is a willing mind it is "accepted, according to what a man hath, and not accord-"ing to what he hath not."—Sin always impoverishes and degrades both individuals and societies; but sometimes that poverty and degradation are sanctified, and finally promote their true interest and honour. Our gracious Lord will carry us through those undertakings, which are entered on according to his will, with an aim to his glory, and in dependence on his assistance: and then we shall be made superior to all difficulties, hardships, and dangers. Thus they who, at the call of the Gospel, renounce sin, and return unto the Lord, shall be guarded and guided through all the perils of the way; and arrive safe at those mansions which are prepared for them in the holy city of our God.

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1. We may suppose that the Jews began their journey in the beginning of the spring; and probably they did not reach Jerusalem till three or four months after. (vii. 9.) They took a short time to provide habitations and necessaries for their families; and then all met together in the seventh month. This was the season of the first solemnities which occurred after their arrival. On the first day the feast of trumpets was kept; the great day of atonement followed on the tenth; and the feast of tabernacles began on the fifteenth. All these they seem to have observed with great devotion. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 3. The Jews built the altar upon the same foundation, and therefore of the same size, with that of Solomon. Probably it was formed of rough stones, with a large hearth of brass on the top. (*Exod.* xx. 25.) So large an altar, built all of brass, would have cost a sum far beyond their present circumstances. The fear of the tribes or nations around them, whom they knew to be their enemies, did not cause the people to take arms, or to erect fortifications, but to prepare an altar and to offer sacrifices; by which they put themselves under the protection of the Lord.

V. 4. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 6. *From,* &c. Many of the people had come to Jerusalem, and had got the altar ready before the first day of the seventh month. And the rest being assembled as one man, they then began their solemn worship with the daily sacrifices, those appointed for the new moons, and those for the feast of trumpets. The sacrifices for all these solemnities, till the conclusion of the feast of tabernacles, must have been a heavy expense for so poor a company: yet beside those which were expressly appointed, many "willingly offered free-will-offerings unto the Lord."—Until the temple was completed, it is likely they had a tabernacle near the altar, where the sacred vessels and treasures were deposited and attended. (1 *Chron.* ix. 19.)

Zidon, and to them of Tyre, to bring cedar-trees from Lebanon to the sea of Joppa, [q] according to the grant that they had of Cyrus king of Persia.

p 2 Chr. ii. 16. Jon i. 3. Acts x. 5, 6.
q vi. 3—5.

8 ¶ Now in the second year of their coming unto the house of God at Jerusalem, in the second month, began [r] Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and the remnant of their brethren the priests and the Levites, and all they that were come out of the captivity unto Jerusalem; and appointed the Levites, from [s] twenty years old and upward, to set forward the work of the house of the LORD.

r 2.
s 1 Chr. xxiii. 24—27.

9 Then stood Jeshua *with* his sons and his brethren, Kadmiel and his sons, the sons of [t] Judah, * together, to set forward the workmen in the house of God: the sons of Henadad, *with* their sons and their brethren the Levites.

t ii. 4. *Hodaviah.*
* Heb. *as one.*

10 And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, they [u] set the priests in their apparel with [x] trumpets, and the Levites [y] the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise the LORD, [z] after the ordinance of David king of Israel.

u Ex. xxviii. 40—42. 1 Sam. xxii 18. 1 Chr. xv. 27.
x Num. x. 1—10. 1 Chr. xv. 24. xvi. 5, 6.
y 1 Chr. vi. 39. xvi 37 xxv. 1—7
z 1 Chr. vi. 31. xvi. 4 7. xxiii. 5 2 Chr xxix. 25, 26.

11 And [a] they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the LORD; [b] Because *he is* good, for his mercy *endureth* for ever towards Israel. And all the people [c] shouted with a great shout when they praised the LORD, [d] because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid.

a Ex. xv. 21. Neh xii. 24. 40. Ps xxiv. 7—10.
b 1 Chr. xvi 34. 41 2 Chr. vii. 3. Ps ciii 17 cvi. 1. cvii 1. cxxxv. 3. cxxxvi 1, &c. Jer xxxiii. 11. Luke i 50.
c Josh. vi 5 10. 16 Ps. xlvii. 1. 5 Is. xii. 6. xliv. 23. Zech ix. 9.
d Ps. cii 13, 14.

12 But [e] many of the priests and Levites, and chief of the fathers, *who were* ancient men, that had seen the first house, [f] when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice: and many shouted aloud for joy:

e Hag. ii. 3.
f Job viii. 7. Is. xli 14 lx 22. Dan ii. 34, 35. Zech iv 10. Matt. xiii. 31, 32.

13 So that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people: for the people [g] shouted with a loud shout, and [h] the noise was heard afar off.

g Neh. xii. 43. Ps. v. 11 Jer. xxxiii. 11 Zech. iv. 7. Luke xix. 37—41
h Ex. xxxii. 18. 1 Kings i 40. 45. Ps. c. 1, 2.

V. 7. The Jews were authorized by Cyrus to cut as much timber in Lebanon, as they wanted; but the Zidonians and Tyrians would expect to be paid for their labour; and they would prefer corn, wine, and oil, to money. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 8—11. The people did all that they could, during the winter, in making preparations for building the temple; though immense labour must have been requisite to clear the ground for the foundation, as well as in providing materials. So that in the second month of the second year, or in a little more than a year after they left Babylon, Zerubbabel and Jeshua, having appointed the priests and Levites to attend in their courses, laid the foundation of the temple, with songs of praise and thanksgiving to the Lord. Thus after their long afflictions, they were encouraged again to sing, "The LORD is good, for his mercy "endureth for ever towards Israel;" as the prophet Jeremiah had foretold. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 12, 13. The Jews who had heard of the temple and its solemn worship, and the blessing and comfort which it had been to their fathers, but had not seen it, were elated with joy that they were once more to have a temple, as the symbol of the Lord's presence, and his favour to them. On the other hand, the old men, who remembered the splendour of the former temple, (which had now been destroyed about fifty-three years,) were led by the recollection of past prosperity, to vent their regret in copious tears and loud lamentations. By this they undervalued their present mercies: and it was the more reprehensible, as the priests and Levites, and chief persons, led the way in this unseasonable sorrow, so as to discourage their brethren, and interrupt their fervent praises. The temple itself is supposed to have been rebuilt of the same dimensions as before; but probably it was formed chiefly with the old stones, and with inferior workmanship; and it was not overlaid with gold, as Solomon's temple had been: neither was it, for a long time at least, surrounded with such magnificent out-buildings. Moreover, the ark of the covenant, the tables of the law, and the mercy-seat, were irrecoverably lost; and it is uncertain whether any thing was substituted in their stead: no visible glory, it is said, now appeared in the most holy place; there were no answers by Urim and Thummim; and no fire from Heaven to consume the sacrifices, but common fire was used for that purpose. These and other circumstances *seemed to indicate*, that the Lord was not with them as in times past: but they *really showed*, that the types were waxing old and ready to vanish away, by the coming of the great Antitype.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is true wisdom to prefer the service of God to our most urgent temporal concerns. The greater difficulties, and the more formidable enemies, we are exposed to, the more we need the friendship and assistance of God; and we should be proportionably earnest and constant in seeking and serving him according to his word through the great atonement of our heavenly Advocate. They that rule over others should go before them in every good work: and we should serve the Lord, as well as our circumstances will permit, though we cannot attain to all that is desirable. That which is expended in obedience to his commandment, will never impoverish us or our families: we should therefore rather save in any thing, than grudge the expense of works of piety and charity, which is like sowing the seed

CHAP. IV.

The adversaries of the Jews offer to join in building the temple; and being rejected, they endeavour to hinder the work, 1—6. *They write to Artaxerxes,* 7—10. *A copy of their letter,* 11—16. *The answer of Artaxerxes, who decrees that the work shall be stopped,* 17—22. *The Jews are compelled to cease from building,* 23.

a 7—9. 1 Kings v. 4, 5. 1 Chr. xxii. 9, 10. Neh. iv. 1—11. 1 Cor. xvi 9.
* Heb *sons of the transportation.*
b i. 5. ii 2. iii. 2. 12.

NOW when [a] the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the children of the captivity* builded the temple unto the LORD God of Israel;

2 Then they came to [b] Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, [c] Let us build with you: for we seek your God as ye *do;* and [d] we do sacrifice unto him, since the days of [e] Esar-haddon king of [f] Assur, which brought us up hither.

c Prov. xxvi. 23—26. 2 Cor. xi. 13—15. Gal. iv. 4. 2 Tim. iii 8. 2 Pet. ii. 1, 2.
d 2 Kings xvii. 24. 27—33. 41.
e 10. *Asnapper.* 2 Kings xix. 37.
f Gen. x. 11. Ps. lxxxiii. 8. Is. xxxvii. 37. *Assyria.* Hos. xiv. 3. *Asshur.*

3 But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Israel, said unto them, [g] Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the LORD God of Israel, as [h] king Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us.

g Neh ii. 20. John iv. 22, 23. Acts viii. 21. Rom. ix. 4, 5.
h i. 1—3. vi 3—5. Matt. x. 16.

4 Then the people of the land [i] weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and [k] troubled them in building,

i iii. 3. Neh. vi. 9. Is. xxxv. 3, 4. Jer. xxxviii. 4. B. C. 534.
k Neh. iv. 7, 8. 11.

5 And [l] hired counsellors against them, to frustrate their purpose, all the days of

l Ps ii. 1, 2. Nah. i. 11. Acts xxiv. 1.

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of a future harvest.—Every day brings its peculiar duties: these will not be grievous, but pleasant to the true servant of the Lord; and when zeal and love prevail, he will be looking out for opportunities of usefulness, and cheerfully bringing his free-will-offerings.—Unanimity, activity, and promptitude, in contriving and executing good designs, will surmount many difficulties, and perform great things in a little time; especially if all orders in society concur in their proper places.—The trumpet of the Gospel not only warns the sinner to flee from the wrath to come, but animates the believer to his work.—Every recent token of the loving-kindness of the Lord should remind us to celebrate his former goodness and mercy, and to anticipate future blessings; for, notwithstanding our chastisements and distrustful murmurs, "the LORD is good and "his mercy endureth for ever towards Israel." The conviction of this truth, and the consideration of our own unworthiness, should enlarge our hearts with hope and gratitude at every renewed token of his favour; and render us joyful at our work, and even amidst our trials. But we are too prone to bemoan lost comforts, disappointments, and scanty possessions; to foster discontent, impatience, and distrust, and thus to mar our own enjoyment of present mercies, to interrupt the joy of others, and to refuse our God that praise which is due unto his name. Against this propensity we should continually watch and pray. Even when we compare the present low state of true piety and the small success of the Gospel, with those primitive times when "great grace was upon all" the company of believers, and "the Lord daily added to the church such "as should be saved;" or when we lament declensions in congregations, churches, or nations; we should be careful not to undervalue the present goodness of our God, to despise the day of small things; or to weaken our own hands, and discourage the hearts of others, in seeking a more signal and effectual blessing.—In this world joys and sorrows will be blended, for it is a mixed state: hereafter there will be a complete separation; in one place there will be fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore, in the other there will be eternal weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth. May "Jesus deliver us from the wrath to "come," and prepare us for his glorious and eternal feli-"city; that where he is there we may be also."

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1. The Cutheans, or Samaritans, who had been planted in the land of Israel by Esar-haddon, had perhaps encroached upon the countries belonging to the Jews; and doubtless they were envious of the favour shown them by the King of Persia: and thus they took occasion to become their determined enemies. But they were chiefly influenced by the enmity which the seed of the serpent bears to the true church of God; arising from contrariety of character, and hatred to the holiness of God, as displayed in his holy law, ordinances, truths, and people. But they might also fear, lest the establishment of the true worship of Jehovah would expose their mongrel religion to disgrace.

V. 2. *We seek,* &c. The Samaritans professed to worship the God of Israel: yet they were not guided by his word, but by their own fancies or traditions, in the service which they professed to render to him; and they worshipped with him their tutelar deities: so that their religion was a jumble of idolatry, superstition, and ignorance; far worse than it was when our Lord himself declared, "that "they knew not what they worshipped."

V. 3. These Samaritans were neither Israelites by birth, nor yet true proselytes: so that the law of God forbade all coalition with them, neither were they included in the decree of Cyrus. Doubtless the rulers of the Jews perceived, that the Samaritans only meant to insinuate themselves, that they might obtain pre-eminence, foment dissentions, introduce their corruptions, prejudice the minds of the people against their rulers, and in short to seize the temple, when built, for their own use; or to retard, spoil, and put a stop to the work.—It was, however, plain, that they did not mean to unite cordially with them in the worship of the true God *alone according to his written word;* and therefore nothing but mischief could have resulted from so unnatural an alliance among those that did.

Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of [m] Darius king of Persia.

6 And in the reign of * Ahasuerus, in the beginning of his reign, [n] wrote they *unto him* an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem.

7 ¶ And in the days of Artaxerxes wrote † Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, and the rest of their ‡ companions, unto Artaxerxes king of Persia; and the writing of the letter *was* written in [o] the Syrian tongue, and interpreted in the Syrian tongue.

8 Rehum the chancellor, and Shimshai the scribe, wrote a letter against Jerusalem to Artaxerxes the king, in this sort:

9 Then *wrote* Rehum the chancellor, and Shimshai the ◊ scribe, and the rest of their ‖ companions; the Dinaites, the [p] Apharsathchites, the Tarpelites, the Apharites, the Archevites, the Babylonians, [q] the Susanchites, the Dehavites, *and* the [r] Elamites,

10 And [s] the rest of the nations whom the great and noble Asnapper brought over, and set in the cities of Samaria, and the rest *that are* on this side the river, [t] and * at such a time.

11 ¶ This *is* the copy of the letter that they sent unto him, *even* unto Artaxerxes the king; Thy servants, the men on this side the river, and at such a time.

12 Be it known unto the king, that the Jews which came up from thee to us, are come unto Jerusalem, building [u] the rebellious and the [x] bad city, and have † set up the walls *thereof*, and ‡ joined the foundations.

13 Be it known now unto the king, that [y] if this city be builded, and the walls set up *again*, *then* will they not ◊ pay [z] toll, tribute, and custom, and *so* thou shalt endamage the ‖ revenue of the kings.

14 Now because we * have maintenance from *the king's* palace, [a] and it was not meet for us to see the king's dishonour, therefore have we sent and certified the king;

15 That search may be made in the book of the records of thy fathers: so shalt thou find in the book of the records, and know, that [b] this city *is* a rebellious city, and hurtful unto kings and provinces, and that they have † moved sedition ‡ within the same of old time: [c] for which cause was this city destroyed.

16 We certify the king, that if this city be builded *again*, and the walls thereof set up, by this means [d] thou shalt have no portion on this side the river.

B. C. 529.
m 23. v. 5, &c. vi. 1, &c.
B. C. 529.
* Heb. *Ahashverosh.*
n Mat. xxvii. 37. Acts xxiv. 5—9. 13. xxv. 7. Rev. xii. 12.
† Or, *in peace.*
‡ Heb. *societies.* 9. 17. v. 6.
o 2 Kings xviii. 26.
◊ Or, *secretary.* 2 Sam. viii. 17. xx. 25.
‖ Heb. *societies.* 2 Kings xvii 24. 31, 22.
p v. 6 vi. 6. *Apharsachites.*
q Esth. i 2. ii. 3. Dan. viii. 2.
r Gen x. 22. Is. xxi.2 Jer. xxv. 25. xlix 34. Ez. xxxii. 24. Acts ii. 9.
s 1. 2 Kings xvii. 24, &c.
t 11. 17. vii. 12.
* Chal. *Cheeneth.*
u 15 19. 2 Kings xviii 20 xxiv. 1. 2 Chr. xxxvi 13. Jer. lii. 3. Ez. xvii. 13 — 19. Luke xxiii. 2—5. 1 Thess. v. 22. 1 Pet. ii. 13—15.
x Ps xlviii. 1, 2. Is. i 21 — 23. Luke xiii 34.
† Or, *finished.* Neh. i. 3. Dan ix. 25
‡ Chal. *sewed together.*
y Neh. v 4. Ps. lii 2 cxix. 69.
◊ Chal. *give.*
z vii. 24. Matt. ix 9 xvii 25. Rom. xiii. 6, 7.
‖ Or, *strength*
* Chal *are salted with the salt of the palace.* 1 Tim. vi 10.
a Ez xxxiii. 31. John xii 5, 6. xix. 12—15.
b 12. Neh. ii. 13. vi. 6 Esth. iii. 5—8. Dan. vi. 4. 13 Acts xvii. 6, 7.
† Chal. *made.*
‡ Chal. *in the midst thereof.*
c Jer. lii. 3, &c.
d 20. 2 Sam. viii. 3. 1 Kings iv. 24.

V. 4—6. This opposition of the Samaritans is supposed to have begun soon after the foundation of the temple was laid. During the remainder of the reign of Cyrus for almost five years, however, they did not attempt any thing openly against a work which that prince had commanded: but they discouraged the people, and impeded their progress; and by bribing counsellors to oppose their application to the ministers of Cyrus, for supplies or protection, they greatly obstructed the design. This would be more easily done, as Daniel, the powerful friend of the Jews, seems to have died about this time. Cambyses, the son of Cyrus, called here (as it is probably supposed) Ahasuerus, reigned above seven years; and was a very weak and vicious prince: but regard to his father's memory, it is probable, prevented his noticing the clamours of the Samaritans against the Jews. Yet for want of assistance and protection, they made little progress during his reign.

V. 7—9. Upon the death of Cambyses, Smerdis the Magian usurped the throne, and as he *alone* reigned in Persia, after Cambyses and before Darius Hystaspis, under whom the temple was finished, he must be the Artaxerxes here mentioned. The rulers of the Samaritans wrote a letter to him, which Ezra seems to have copied from the records of Persia. It was written at first in Syriac or Chaldee; but perhaps it was entered into the records in Persian; so that Ezra, when he extracted it, again translated it into Syriac; and therefore it stands in the original scriptures in that language, as does all that follows to the end of the sixth chapter. Bishlam, Mithredath, and Tabeel, seem to have been the principal persons who counselled their people to send this letter; and Rehum and Shimshai, it is probable, drew it up.

V. 10. *Asnapper*, &c. Probably Asnapper was the name by which Esar-haddon was known, in the eastern parts of the Assyrian empire.

At such a time. The date of the letter seems to have followed in the records; but it was omitted by the transcriber, as it were, with an *et cœtera.*

V. 12. *The rebellious*, &c. After God in his righteousness had reduced Judah to subjection under the kings of Babylon, the Jews certainly showed a very obstinate and treacherous spirit of rebellion; they created their new masters a great deal of trouble, and they provoked them to their own destruction. But in so doing they transgressed the commandments of their law, by violating their own solemn oaths and engagements. Nothing effectually seems at this time to have been done towards rebuilding *the walls* of Jerusalem; and the Samaritans were not in reality so much displeased at any thing, as the Jews building of the temple, though they artfully avoided the mention of it.

17 ¶ *Then* sent the king an answer unto Rehum the chancellor, and *to* Shimshai the scribe, and *to* the rest of their * companions that dwell in Samaria, and *unto* the rest beyond the river, [e] Peace, and [f] at such a time.

18 The letter which ye sent unto us hath been plainly read before me.

19 And † I commanded, and [g] search hath been made, and it is found that this city of old time hath ‡ made insurrection against kings, and *that* rebellion and sedition have been made therein.

20 [h] There have been mighty kings also over Jerusalem, which have ruled over all *countries* [i] beyond the river; [k] and toll, tribute, and custom, was paid unto them.

21 § Give ye now commandment to cause these men to cease, and that this city be not builded, until *another* commandment shall be given from me.

22 Take heed now that ye fail not to do this: [l] why should damage grow to the hurt of the kings?

23 ¶ Now when the copy of king Artaxerxes' letter *was* read before [m] Rehum, and Shimshai the scribe, and their companions, [n] they went up in haste to Jerusalem unto the Jews, and made them to cease by ‖ force and power.

24 Then ceased the work of the house of God, which *is* at Jerusalem. [o] So it ceased unto the second year of the reign of [p] Darius king of Persia.

* Chal. *societies.* 7. 9.
e v. 7. vii. 12. Luke x. 5. Acts xxiii. 26. Rom. i. 7.
f 10, 11.
† Chal. *by me a decree is set.*
g 15. v 17. vi. 1, 2. Deu xiii. 14. Prov. xxv. 2
‡ Chal. *lifted up itself.* 2 Kings xviii.7 xxiv.20 Ez. xvii.13—19.
h 1 Kings iv 21. 1 Chr. xviii. 3. Ps lxxii. 8.
i 16 Gen. xv. 18. Josh. i 4.
k 1 Chr. xviii. 6. 13. xix. 19. 2 Chr. ix. 14. 23, 24. xvii. 11. xxvi. 7, 8.
§ Chal. *Make a decree.* 19.
l 13 Esth. iii. 8. 9 vii. 3, 4.
m 8, 9.
n Prov. iv. 16. Mic. ii. 1. Rom. iii. 15.
‖ Chal. *arm and power.*
o Neh. vi. 3. 9. Job xx. 5. 1 Thes. ii. 16.
p v. 5. vi. 1. Hag. i. 15. B. C. 520.

V. 13—16. David and Solomon had reigned over all the countries from the river Euphrates to the river of Egypt: but this was long before the commencement of the Babylonish or Persian monarchies. And after the death of Solomon, their successors had been confined within much narrower limits. The Samaritans, however, aimed to insinuate a jealousy into the mind of the king of Persia, that the Jews intended to claim and seize upon all those dominions; than which nothing could be more groundless and absurd. All their offence seems to have been, that they had prepared to defend themselves against their enemies, whilst acting under the authority of the king of Persia. The Samaritans cloaked their slander and enmity, under the fair pretence of fidelity and gratitude: the ruling persons among them were maintained by revenues from the court of Persia; it was not meet for them to see the king's dishonour; and the loss which would accrue to him, if the Jews were not prevented from going on with their work.

V. 17—24. The king of Persia found by the records that Jerusalem had been the seat of government for powerful princes many ages before; and that afterwards rebellion and sedition had been made in it: and, as thus much was true in the letter of the Samaritans, full credit was given them for all that they advanced, concerning the progress and intentions of the Jews, and the consequences of their proceeding; though nothing could be more improbable, false, and malicious! A commission therefore was sent back, in which the temple was not mentioned; (for though that created jealousy in the minds of the Samaritans, it was little regarded by the king of Persia:) but they were ordered "to cause them to cease;" this was sufficient for their purpose; and without delay they forcibly put a stop to the work. The usurpation of Smerdis did not continue a whole year; so that their commission was soon vacated: but the Jews, being greatly intimidated, and not so zealous as they had been, the work ceased till the second year of Darius, who, having assisted in killing the usurper, was advanced to the throne in his stead.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—6.

Every vigorous and successful attempt to revive true religion will excite the opposition of Satan, and of the children of disobedience in whom he worketh. Indeed all ungodly men despise or hate holiness: yet they who do not pretend to religion, commonly treat pious persons with mere neglect or ridicule; but hypocrites and heretics have always been the most unwearied and cruel enemies of the true church of God. The labours and lives of his servants undermine their reputation, affront their pride, and expose their hypocrisy: and their enmity is thus embittered by envy and resentment. Sometimes indeed they seem desirous of being admitted to the fellowship of believers, and profess to be of the same sentiments, and to be minding the same things. But they only want to insinuate themselves, that they may gain pre-eminence, and manage every thing for their own purposes. Such "false brethren, unawares crept in privily, bring in damnable heresies" form parties, and excite contentions, introduce their own coalition betwixt the world and religion, mislead and prejudice some, and pervert others, lessen the influence of pious persons, and render the minds of the people disaffected towards them: and, whilst their lives disgrace the cause, their insinuations eat as doth a canker, till an internal decay corrode the very vitals of piety, in every church where they obtain admission and preserve their authority. Let then all the friends of truth and holiness beware of such characters, and let them withdraw from them: "by their fruits ye shall know them;" and let no plausible pretences, or hopes of support from their superior rank or wealth, bribe Christians to admit them "to build with them," unless they mean to build a Babel, instead of a temple. It is true, if you will not have their friendship, you must expect their embittered resentment, which is more dreaded, but is far less dangerous. By insinuations, objections, and discouragements, they weaken the hands of the Lord's people, and induce them to suspect or dislike their faithful

CHAP. V.

Zerubbabel and Jeshua, excited by Haggai and Zechariah, begin again to build the temple, 1, 2. *Tatnai and Shethar-boznai are not able to hinder them,* 3—5. *A copy of their letter to Darius,* 6—17.

THEN the prophets, [a] Haggai the prophet, and [b] Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that *were* in Judah and Jerusalem, [c] in the name of the God of Israel, *even* unto them.

2 Then [d] rose up Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and [e] Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and began to build the house of God which *is* at Jerusalem: and with them *were* [f] the prophets of God, helping them.

a Hag. i. 1, &c. ii. &c.
b Zech. i. 1, &c.
c Mic. v. 4. Hag. i. 2—7. Zech. i. 3, 4. iv. 6—10.
d Hag. i. 12—15.
e Zech. vi. 11. *Joshua Josedech.*
f vi. 14. Hag. ii. 4—9. 19. 23. Zech. iii. iv. 2 Cor. i. 24.

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ministers, or their lawful rulers; and by slanders and reproaches, they attempt to prejudice others against them. But it is no wonder that we cannot enumerate all their practices, when they have the old Serpent for their prompter, and spare neither trouble, expense, nor crimes, to accomplish their designs. For the same part is acting over and over again, from age to age, with circumstantial variations; and the less we are aware, the more we are in danger of being injured by it.

V. 7—24.

The gates of hell, in directly assaulting the church of Christ, often labour to excite rulers to suppress his truths and ordinances, by statutes and penal sanctions. To this end ungodly men bestow great pains to obtain the ear of princes. If they find them disposed to countenance pious Christians, they use underhand methods to poison their minds with prejudices and suspicions. But when weak and wicked kings succeed to the thrones that have been filled by wiser men; these slanderers venture to speak more plainly; and, professing vast loyalty and attachment, and even pleading the ties of gratitude and conscience, they pour in their false accusations, and petition for leave to persecute. It is an old slander, that "Jerusalem is a rebellious and bad "city," and that the prosperity of the church would be injurious to kings and provinces: for the accuser of the brethren knows how prevalent such considerations are with the princes of this world. Yet nothing can be more false: for, true godliness teaches us to honour and obey the king; to submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake; to pay tribute, and to render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's; to be upright, peaceable and blameless; and even to fulfil the oath or engagement which we have entered into to our own hurt: it admits of only a single exception; namely, where the command of God requires one thing, and the law of the land another, we must obey God rather than man, and patiently submit to the consequences. But it must be allowed, that ambitious and turbulent men have often disgraced the cause of God by their usurpations, seditions, rebellions, treacheries, and perjuries: real Christians also have been seduced into inconsistent practices: and "oppression," which "maketh a "wise man mad," hath sometimes excited them to use unwarranted weapons. A few instances of this kind standing *on record*, whilst the blameless lives and patient sufferings of thousands are unnoticed and forgotten, serve through revolving ages as a pretext, by which malignant enmity misleads worldly policy. All who love the gospel, should therefore walk circumspectly, avoiding all appearance of evil, especially in this particular, lest the church of God and posterity should suffer through their misconduct; for the whole body will be condemned without hearing, if a few individuals act improperly. Indeed we cannot behave so quietly, and endeavour to serve God and to promote religion so unexceptionably, but our endeavours will be ascribed to ambition or avarice, and we shall be suspected of harbouring the basest intentions. For kings and princes are seldom able to discover the truth, in such causes, even when disposed to inquire after it. Surrounded with flatterers and interested dependents, they must see with other men's eyes, and receive every information, concerning those whom their courtiers dislike, with a false colouring; and as they are too generally careless about religion, if not prejudiced against it, Satan and his emissaries seldom find much difficulty in using them as the tools of their persecuting enmity. These considerations should teach us to count our cost; that we may be prepared for all events, and not be too easily discouraged or made remiss, as we are apt to be upon every appearance of opposition: they should excite our gratitude for our peculiar privileges, and teach us to place our dependence on that God who hath all hearts in his hands, and not on the mutable decrees of princes and senates. We should also be in haste to seize on every opportunity of doing good; even as the adversaries of the church do in their mischievous devices: for, as we receive all from our wise, gracious, and righteous God, it is not meet that we should quietly witness his dishonour, or neglect any method by which me may glorify his name, and promote his cause in the world.

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1, 2. A great part of the books of Haggai and Zechariah refers to the events here recorded, and the reader will find his account in comparing them with the history. The Jews resumed their work about fourteen years after the first opposition given to them by the Samaritans; but within two or three years after they had been compelled to desist entirely from it. In the mean time they had rebuilt their own houses, without being in the least molested. It may be supposed that they had an altar and tabernacle, and kept up their constant worship; but they were persuaded that it was not yet time to build the temple. For this neglect the Lord corrected them, and reproved them by the prophets, who came to "prophecy even "*unto*," or rather *against* "them." Their remonstrances excited the rulers and the people to assume the work; and their subsequent encouraging prophecies greatly helped them in accomplishing it.

3 At the same time came to them [g] Tatnai, governor on this side the river, and Shethar-boznai, and their companions, and said thus unto them, [h] who hath commanded you to build this house, and to make up this wall?

4 Then said we unto them after this manner, [i] What are the names of the men that * make this building?

5 But [k] the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, that they could not cause them to cease, till the matter came to Darius: and [l] then they returned answer by letter concerning this *matter*.

6 ¶ The [m] copy of the letter that Tatnai, governor on this side the river, and Shethar-boznai, and his companions the [n] Apharsachites, which *were* on this side the river, sent unto Darius the king:

7 They sent a letter unto him, † wherein was written thus, Unto Darius the king, [o] all peace.

8 Be it known unto the king, that we went into [p] the province of Judea, to the house of [q] the great God, which is builded with ‡ great stones, and timber is laid in the walls, and this work goeth fast on, and prospereth in their hands.

9 Then asked we those elders, *and* said unto them thus, [r] Who commanded you to build this house, and to make up these walls?

10 We [s] asked their names also, to certify thee, that we might write the names of the men that *were* the chief of them.

11 And thus they returned us answer, saying, [t] We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and build the house that was builded these many years ago, [u] which a great king of Israel builded and set up.

12 But [x] after that our fathers had provoked the God of heaven unto wrath, [y] he gave them [z] into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this house, and carried the people away into Babylon.

13 But [a] in the first year of Cyrus the king of Babylon, *the same* king Cyrus made a decree to build this house of God.

14 And [b] the vessels also of gold and silver of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple, that *was* in Jerusalem, and brought them into the temple of Babylon, those did Cyrus [c] the king take out of the temple of Babylon, and they were delivered unto *one*, whose name *was* [d] Sheshbazzar, [e] whom he had made § governor;

15 And said unto him, Take these vessels, go carry them into the temple that *is* in Jerusalem, and [f] let the house of God be builded in his place.

16 Then came the same [g] Sheshbazzar, *and* [h] laid the foundation of the house of God which *is* in Jerusalem: and since that time even until now hath it been in building, and *yet* [i] it is not finished.

17 Now therefore, if *it seem* good to the king, [k] let there be search made in the king's treasure-house, which *is* there at Babylon, whether it be *so*, that [l] a decree was made of Cyrus the king to build this house of God at Jerusalem, and let the king send his pleasure to us concerning this matter.

g 6. vi. 6. 13. Neh. ii. 7—9.
h 9. i. 3. Matt. xxi. 23.
i 10.
* Chal. *build.*
k vii. 6. 28. viii. 22. 2 Chr. xvi. 9. Ps. xxxiii. 18. xxxiv. 15. Phil. i. 28.
l vi. 6—12.
m iv. 11. 23.
n iv. 2. *Apharsathchites.*
† Chal. *in the midst whereof.*
o iv. 17. Dan. iii. 9. iv. 1. 19. vi 21. John xiv 27. 2 Thes. iii. 16
p ii. 1. Neh. vii. 6. xi. 3. Esth. i. 1. 22.
q i. 2, 3. vi. 10. vii. 23. Deut. x. 17. xxxii. 31. Ps. cxlv. 3. Dan. ii. 47. iii. 26. iv 24. 34—37. vi. 26
‡ Chal. *stones of rolling.* Mark xiii. 1, 2.
r 3, 4.
s 6.
t Josh. xxiv. 15. Ps. cxix. 46. Mat. x 32. Luke xii. 8. Acts xxvii. 23. Rom. i. 16. Gal. vi. 14.
u 1 Kings vi. vii. 2 Chr. iii. iv. v.
x 2 Kings xxi. 12—15. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 24, 25. xxxvi. 16, 17. Neh. ix. 26, 27. Is. lix. 1, 2. Jer. v. 29. Dan. ix. 5.
y Deu. xxviii. 15, &c. xxix. 24—28. xxxi. 17. xxxii. 30. Judg. ii. 14. iv. 2. vi. 2. 1 Kings ix. 6—9. 2 Chr. vii. 19—22. Ps. cvi. 40.
z 2 Kings xxiv. 10, &c. xxv. 1, &c. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 6. &c. Jer. xxxix. 1, &c. lii. 1, &c. Dan. i. 1, 2.
a i. 1—4. vi. 3—5. Is. xliv. 28. xlv. 1. Dan. v. 3.
b i. 7—10. vi. 5. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 7. 18. Dan. v. 2.
c vii. 27. Prov. xxi. 1.
d 16. i. 11.
e Hag. i. 1. 14. ii. 2. 21.
§ Or, *deputy.* Acts xiii. 7, 8. 12.
f i. 2. iii. 3. vi. 5.
g 14.
h 2. iii. 8. 10. Hag. i. 12—14. ii. 18. Zech. iv. 10.
i vi. 15.
k iv. 15. 19. vi. 1, 2. Prov. xxv. 2
l vi. 3—5.

V. 3. It is probable, that the governors of Samaria had been changed on the accession of Darius, for men of greater temper and impartiality. The *companions* here mentioned with the governors, seem to have been some of the chief persons of the nation who formed their council or senate. Excited, however, by the envy and jealousy of the Samaritans, they interfered, as soon as the Jews resumed the building of the temple.

V. 4. *Then*, &c. It is uncertain whether these are the words of the governors of Samaria inquiring of the Jews the names of their rulers, who presided over the work; (10;) or those of the workmen referring the inquirers to Zerubbabel and Jeshua for information. Ezra may fairly be supposed to have inserted the words of the record without alteration: so that the first person plural neither proves that he was then at Jerusalem, nor yet that he was not the writer of the history.

V. 5. The Lord so watched over his people, that the Samaritans, though full of enmity against them, were restrained from using any violence to obstruct the work; and he gave them so many encouragements, in his providence and by his word, that they were not terrified from proceeding: till at length the matter having been referred to Darius, a favourable answer was obtained.

V. 6—17. This epistle likewise seems to have been copied from the public records, and interpreted into the Chaldee language: but it forms an entire contrast to the malevolent, slanderous, and disingenuous letter of the foregoing chapter; as it fairly stated facts to the king; and the writers merely desired to know his pleasure, after proper

CHAP. VI.

Darius finds the decree of Cyrus, confirms it, allows out of his revenues the expenses of building the temple, and denounces penalties on all opposers, 1—12. *The temple is finished and dedicated, and the passover is celebrated with great joy,* 13—22.

a iv. 15. 19. v. 17. Job xxix. 16. Pro. xxv. 2.
* Chal. *books* Ps. xl. 7. Jer. xxxvi. 2—4. 20—23. 29. 32. Ez. ii. 9. iii. 1. Rev. v. 1.
† Chal. *made to descend.*
‡ Or, *Ecbatana,* or, *in a coffer.*

THEN Darius the king made a decree, [a] and search was made in the house of the * rolls, where the treasures were † laid up in Babylon.

2 And there was found ‡ at Achmetha, in the palace that *is* in the province of the Medes, a roll, and therein *was* a record thus written:

b i. 1—4. v. 13—15.
c Deut. xii. 5, 6. 2 Chr. ii. 6.
d 1 Kings vi. 2, 3. 2 Chr. iii. 3, 4. Ez. xli. 13—15. Rev. xxi. 16.
e 1 Kings vi. 36.
f vii. 20—23. Is. xlix. 23. lx. 6—10. Rev. xii. 16.
g i. 7, 8. v. 14. Jer. xxvii. 18—22. Dan. i. 2. v. 2.

3 [b] In the first year of Cyrus the king, *the same* Cyrus the king made a decree *concerning* the house of God at Jerusalem, Let the house be builded, [c] the place where they offered sacrifices, and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid, [d] the height thereof threescore cubits, *and* the breadth thereof threescore cubits;

4 *With* [e] three rows of great stones, and a row of new timber: and let [f] the expences be given out of the king's house:

5 And also let [g] the golden and silver

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search had been made. The ingenuous account also, which the Jews gave of their nation, and the cause of its calamities, (which Tatnai and his associates faithfully stated to Darius,) is worthy of observation, and of imitation.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Though the enemies of the church be active, powerful, and malicious, and its friends too often dispirited and negligent: yet the Lord will not suffer his cause to be run down, but will raise up instruments to revive and carry on his work. It is the business of the ministers of God to warn, exhort, encourage, and direct all orders of men to attend to their several duties: when this is properly performed, it will be found the most effectual means of forwarding reformation and the power of godliness: and humble and pious men, in the most exalted stations, will deem themselves helped, by the faithful labours and animated remonstrances of those who really speak to them the message of the Lord. Whilst professors of piety are satisfied with their forms, and attentive *mainly* to their secular interests and accommodations, opposition may seem to be slain: but when they bestir themselves to do the work and seek the glory of God, it will soon be found that it was not dead, but merely fallen asleep. Nothing, however, can harm those whom the Lord protects, or cause their work to cease whom he employs. He fills the hands of some opposers, he restrains others by the moderation of their superiors; some are removed by death or by revolutions in governments; and some are softened or changed, as it seemeth good to him, "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." There are men who have no true religion, yet are possessed of equity, candour, and generosity: and these qualities entitle them to *our* respect, though they will not justify them in the sight of God. A fair statement of facts forms the honest man's best method of pleading a good cause. The servants of the God of heaven need not, and must not be ashamed of so great and good a Master; and it seems at first sight strange, that they should ever be tempted to so preposterous a crime! Those religious peculiarities, which ignorant slanderers deem novel or singular, may boast an antiquity beyond all other sentiments or observances in the world; and have been maintained by the wisest, greatest, and most excellent men that ever lived upon earth. Whilst we continue in this world, we shall always have to confess, that our sins have provoked the God of heaven unto wrath; and that all our sufferings spring from this source, and all our comforts from his unmerited mercy. We ought fully to acknowledge the favours that we have received from man; but should generally be silent as to the ill-treatment that we have met with. Even when we are exposed to censure, whilst the blame belongs to others, except the honour of God and the Gospel requires it, it is seldom useful to vindicate ourselves. The faithful worshippers of God are generally traduced, before they are persecuted: their cause only demands an impartial hearing to obtain a favourable decision: and many princes have persecuted more from misinformation than from malice.

NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1, 2. The decree of Cyrus in favour of the Jews had been a matter of great notoriety, and not more than sixteen years had elapsed since it had been granted: but in the revolutions that had taken place, and the multiplicity of affairs which occurred continually in the government of so vast an empire, it is probable that its purport had been forgotten. When, however, it could not be found at Babylon, Darius ordered it to be searched for at Achmetha or Ecbatana, the chief city of Media; and there it was at length found, having probably been laid up in that city by Cyrus's orders.

V. 3. (*Marg. Ref.*) Some suppose that Cyrus did not allow the Jews to build the porch of the temple more than sixty cubits high, lest they should fortify it as a citadel; and that the sixty cubits in *breadth* included the chambers on each side the temple. Perhaps he permitted them to build the temple itself sixty cubits high and sixty wide, as well as sixty long; but they chose to build it of the same dimensions as their former temple: for it is generally agreed, that thus it was at last builded; and it is clearly proved, that the porch was raised to the same height.

V. 4. *Expenses,* &c. It is likely that the Jews had been deprived of this advantage, by the counsellors who were hired against them. (iv. 5.)

vessels of the house of God, [h] which Nebuchadnezzar took forth out of the temple which *is* at Jerusalem, and brought unto Babylon, be restored, and * brought again unto the temple which *is* at Jerusalem, *every one* to his place, and place *them* in the house of God.

6 Now *therefore*, [i] Tatnai, governor beyond the river, Shethar-boznai, and † your companions the Apharsachites, which *are* beyond the river, [k] be ye far from thence:

7 Let the work of this house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews, and the elders of the Jews build this house of God in his place.

8 Moreover ‡ I make a decree what ye shall do to the elders of these Jews, for the building of this house of God: that of the king's goods, *even* [l] of the tribute beyond the river, forthwith expences be given unto these men, that they be not ◊ hindered.

9 And that which they have need of, both [m] young bullocks, and rams, and [n] lambs, for the burnt-offerings of the God of heaven, [o] wheat, [p] salt, wine, and oil, according to the appointment of the priests which *are* at Jerusalem, let it be given them day by day without fail:

10 That they may offer sacrifices of ‖ sweet savours unto the God of heaven, and [q] pray for the life of the king, and of his sons.

11 Also I have made a decree, that [r] whosoever shall alter this word, let [s] timber be pulled down from his house, and being set up, let him be * hanged thereon; and let [t] his house be made a dunghill for this.

12 And the God, that hath [u] caused his name to dwell there, [x] destroy all kings and people that shall put to their hand to alter *and* to destroy this house of God which *is* at Jerusalem. [y] I Darius have made a decree; let it be done with [z] speed.

13 ¶ Then [a] Tatnai, governor on this side the river, Shethar-boznai, and their companions, according to that which Darius the king had sent, [b] so they did speedily.

14 And [c] the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered [d] through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they builded, and [e] finished *it*, [f] according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the † commandment of [g] Cyrus, and Darius, and [h] Artaxerxes king of Persia.

15 And this house was finished on the third day of the month [i] Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king.

2 Kings xxiv. 13 xxv. 14, 15. Jer. lii. 19.
* Chal. go.
i v. 3.
† Chal. their societies.
k Gen xxxii. 23. xliii. 14. Neh i. 11. Ps lxxvi. 10. Pro. xxi. 1 30 Is. xxvii 8. Acts iv. 26—28. Rom. viii. 31.
‡ Chal. by me a decree is made.
l 4. iv. 16. 20. Ps. lxviii. 29—31. Hag. ii. 8.
◊ Chal. made to cease. iv. 21. 23.
m Lev. i. 3-5. 10. ix. 2. Ps l. 9. 13.
n Ex. xxix 38—42 Num. xxviii. xxix.
o Lev ii. 1, &c. Num xv. 1, &c.
p 1 Chr. ix. 29.
‖ Lev. ii. 13.
‖ Chal. of rest. Gen. viii. 21. Eph. v. 2.
q vii. 23. Jer xxix. 7. 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2.
r vii. 26.
s Esth. iv. 14. vii. 10.
* Chal destroyed.
t 2 Kings ix. 37. x. 27. Dan. ii. 5. iii. 29.
u 1 Kings ix. 3. 2 Chr. vii. 16. Ps cxxxii. 13, 14.
x Ps. v. 10. xxi. 8—10. Is. lx. 12. Zech. xii. 2—4. Acts v. 38, 39. ix. 5 Rev. xix. 14—21.
y Esth. iii. 14, 15. viii. 14.
z 13. Ec. ix. 10.
a iv. 9. 23. v. 3.
b Esth. vi. 11. Job v. 12, 13. Prov. xxix. 26.
c iii 8. iv. 3.
d v. 1, 2. Hag. i. 12—14. ii 2 &c. Zech. ii. iii. iv. vi.
e Zech. iv. 9.
f Is. xliv. 28. Hag. i. 8.
† Chal. decree.
g 3. i. 1. iv. 24. v 13.
h vii. 1.
B. C. 515.
i Esth. iii. 7. 13. viii. 12. ix. 1. 15. 17. 19. 21.

V. 6—12. Darius, in order to ingratiate himself with his subjects, showed respect to the memory of Cyrus in every thing: and this might induce him to be more favourable to the Jews, when this decree was produced. But he seems to have been deeply convinced, that the God of the Jews was the God of heaven, who ought to be worshipped according to the law of Moses. His steady intention that sacrifices should be offered, at his expense, at Jerusalem, "of sweet savours to the God of heaven;" that the people of God "might pray for him and his sons;" and the expression, "the God that hath caused his name to dwell "there," show that he had been instructed in several important truths of religion, and had a conviction of his dependence upon God, and of the efficacy of the prayers of his worshippers, and entertained high and honourable thoughts of him. The account indeed given of this transaction by the Apocryphal Esdras is absurd, and inconsistent with facts; for Zerubbabel had been long at Jerusalem, before Darius granted this decree. But probably some pious Jews had access to the king, who had so explained the matter, as to give him these favourable sentiments, and to dispose him to the service assigned him by Providence. He thought that the continuance of his life, and the prosperity of his family, might be secured by the prayers of the Jews: but he seems not to have considered his future and unspeakably more important interests; and his convictions do not appear to have had any abiding effect upon his own mind or conduct. Knowing also the envy and malice of the adversaries of the Jews, Darius denounced a dreadful punishment against those who should any more molest them: and he concluded his decree with a most remarkable execration against all kings and people who should attempt to alter or destroy the temple after it was built. Thus the Samaritans, by opposing the Jews, most effectually served their interests; their governors, perceiving the king's inclinations, zealously concurred; and so the work was speedily completed.

V. 13—15. If we allow a year for the message of Tatnai to the court of Darius, the search made among the records, and all delays and obstructions, for the granting of the decree, and its publication in Judea, we shall find that it was published just seventy years after the destruction of the temple by the Chaldeans. Zechariah, who prophesied at this time, mentions, that the people had kept an-

16 And [k] the children of Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the rest of * the children of the captivity, kept [l] the dedication of this house of God [m] with joy.

17 And [n] offered at the dedication of this house of God an hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs: and for [o] a sin-offering for all Israel, twelve he-goats, [p] according to the number of the tribes of Israel.

18 And they set [q] the priests in their divisions, and the Levites in their courses, for the service of God which *is* at Jerusalem; ‡ as it is written in the book of Moses.

19 And [r] the children of the captivity [s] kept the passover, upon the fourteenth *day* of the first month.

20 For the priests and the Levites were [t] purified together, all of them *were* pure, and [u] killed the passover for all the children of the captivity, and for their brethren the priests, and for themselves.

21 And the children of Israel, which were come again out of captivity, and [x] all such as had separated themselves unto them from the filthiness of the heathen of the land, to seek the LORD God of Israel, [y] did eat,

22 And kept [z] the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy; for the LORD had made them joyful, and [a] turned the heart of [b] the king of Assyria unto them, to strengthen their hands, in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.

k 1 Chr. ix. 2. Neh. vii. 73.
* Chal. *sons of the transportation.*
l 1 Kings viii 63. 2 Chr vii 9. John x. 22
m iii. 11, 12. Deu. xii 7. 1 Chr. xv. 28. 2 Chr vii 10. xxx. 23 26. Phil. iv. 4.
n viii. 35 Num. vii. 1, &c 1 Kings viii. 63, 64. 1 Chr xvi. 1.
o Lev iv 3 13, 14. 22, 23 28. 2 Chr. xxix. 21—23.
p 1 Kings xviii. 31 Luke xxii. 30 Rev. vii. 4—8. xxi. 12.
q 1 Chr xxiii—xxvi.
‡ Chal. *according to the writing.* Num iii. 6 viii. 9, &c. 16
s Ex. xii. 6, &c. Josh v 10 2 Chr. xxx. xxxv.
t 2 Chr. xxix. 34. xxx 15—17.
u 2 Chr. xxxv. 11 Heb. vii. 27
x ix. 11. Is. lii. 11. Ez. xxxvi. 25. 2 Cor. vi. 17. vii. 1.
y Ex xii. 47—49. Ps. xciii. 5.
z Ex. xii. 15—20. xiii 6, 7 2 Chr. xxx 21. xxxv. 17. Matt. xxvi. 17. 1 Cor. v. 7, 8.
a vii. 27 Prov. xvi 7. xxi 1. John xix. 11.
b 2 Kings xxiii. 29 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11. Zech. x. 10, 11.

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nual fasts for the ruin of the city and temple, during seventy years; (*Zech.* vii. 5.) And this determines these events to the time of Darius Hystaspis; for no other Darius reigned in Persia till many years afterwards. The historian inserts the name of Artaxerxes with those of Cyrus and Darius, as concurring in this work: for though the temple was built before Artaxerxes came to the throne; yet probably it received great accessions of splendour and conveniency, under the government of Ezra and Nehemiah, whom he patronized. The temple was finished in something more than four years after the Jews returned to their work, when excited to it by Haggai and Zechariah; in something more than two years after the decree of Darius had been published; and twenty years after the Jews returned from captivity.

V. 17. *The number*, &c. The tribes of Judah and Benjamin, with the priests and Levites, which had constituted the kingdom of Judah, formed also the bulk of the people after the captivity. But numbers from the other tribes had been incorporated with them in the reign of Rehoboam, and afterwards; and many returned from Babylon, probably of all the other tribes. As the nation sprang from the twelve sons of Jacob, and some of the descendants of each of them remained; they were still considered as consisting of twelve tribes, and a sin-offering was offered up for each of them. Doubtless the same reference to the twelve tribes took place in respect of the shew-bread, and the writing of their names on the high priest's garments and breast plate, as when they had been united under one government. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 18. Moses had given laws, concerning the ministry of the priests and Levites, with reference to the place which God would choose to put his name there; and subsequent events had proved Jerusalem to be that chosen place. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 19—21. It is probable, that the returned Jews had observed the passover, before the temple was finished: but not in so regular and solemn a manner, as at this time.

V. 22. *Of Assyria*, &c. Darius, reigning over the country of Assyria, is here called the king of Assyria; though the Persian monarchy had succeeded to those of Assyria and Babylon. The pious acknowledgment of God in all these transactions, as influencing the king to be kind to the Jews, and as thus making them joyful, is highly rational: though it has now almost sunk into disuse, even among professed Christians.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—12.

Impartial and diligent investigation alone can give truth and innocence a decided advantage against lies, malice, and perjury: and much injustice may be committed merely through the indolence and inattention of magistrates.—Enmity or rapacity often intercepts the favours which were intended for the people of God; but when his plan requires the interposition of princes, he can easily dispose them to use all diligence, to exert their authority, and to expend their treasures, in supporting his cause; and for a time, these things have often been done by those who would not give him their hearts, and never became his true worshippers!—Did kings know their true interests, even in this world, they would support the worship of God, and give liberty and protection to his people; that acceptable services might be rendered to his name throughout their dominions, and that many prayers might be daily offered up for them. We ought indeed to pray for kings and all in authority, whatever be their character and conduct: yet we are very apt to be remiss and formal in this service, till encouragement enlivens our desires and expectations; but when princes decidedly favour the cause of truth and righteousness, the hearts of pious Christians are enlarged with hopes, and they pray for them with greater earnestness. Their lives are then looked upon as a public advantage: and their persons, families, and undertakings, as well as their immortal souls, are daily recommended to the favour and

CHAP. VII.

Ezra's genealogy from Aaron, 1—5. *He goes up to Jerusalem,* 6—10. *A copy of Artaxerxes' favourable commission to him,* 11—26. *He blesses God for putting this into the king's heart,* 27, 28.

NOW after these things, in the reign of [a] Artaxerxes king of Persia, [b] Ezra the son of [c] Seraiah, the son of Azariah, the son of [d] Hilkiah,

2 The son of Shallum, the son of [e] Zadok, the son of Ahitub,

3 The son of Amariah, the son of Azariah, the son Meraioth,

4 The son of Zerahiah, the son of Uzzi, the son of Bukki,

5 The son of Abishua, the son of [f] Phinehas, the son of [g] Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the [h] chief priest:

6 This Ezra went up from Babylon; and he *was* [i] a ready [k] scribe in [l] the law of Moses, which the LORD God of Israel had given: and the king [m] granted him all his request, [n] according to the hand of the LORD his God upon him.

7 And there went up *some* of [o] the children of Israel, and of the priests, and [p] the Levites, and the [q] singers, and [r] the porters, and the [s] Nethinims, unto Jerusalem, in the seventh year of [t] Artaxerxes the king.

8 And he came to Jerusalem in the fifth month, which *was* in the seventh year of the king.

9 For upon the first *day* of the first month * began he to go up from Babylon, and on the first *day* of the fifth month came he to Jerusalem, [u] according to the good hand of his God upon him.

10 For Ezra had [x] prepared his heart to seek [y] the law of the LORD, and [z] to do *it*, [a] and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.

a Neh. ii. 1.
b 10. viii. ix. x. Neh. viii. 2. 6. 9.
c 2 Kings xxv. 18. 1 Chr. vi. 4—14. ix 11. Neh xi. 11.
d 2 Kings xxii. 4. 8. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 9. 15.
e 2 Sam. viii. 17.
f Ex. vi. 25. Num xxv. 7—13. xxxi. 6. Josh. xxii 13. 31 Judg. xx. 28. 1 Chr vi. 4. 50—52. Ps. cvi. 30, 31.
g Lev. x. 6. 12. 16. Num. iii. 32. xx. 25—28 xxvii. 2 xxxi. 31. 54. Josh. xiv. 1. xxiv. 37. 1 Chr. xxiv. 1—6.
h 2 Chr. xix 11. xxvi. 20.
i 11, 12. 21. Ps. xlv. 1 Matt. xiii. 52.
k Neh. viii. 4. 9. 13 xii. 26 36. Jer. viii. 8. 1 Cor. i. 20.
l Deut. iv. 5. xxviii. 1 Matt. xxviii. 20. 1 Cor. xv. 1. 1 Thes. iv. 1.
m 11—26.
n 9. 28. vi. 22. viii. 18. 22 31. Gen. xxxii 28. Neh. i. 10, 11. ii. 8. 12. 18. iv. 15. Is. l, 2. lix. 1
o viii 1—14.
p ii. 40. viii. 15—20.
q 1 Chr. vi. 31, &c xxv. 1, &c.
r ii. 42. 1 Chr ix. 17. &c Neh. vii 45.
s 24. ii. 43, &c. viii. 20 Neh vii 46. &c x. 28.
t 11. 12 vi. 14. viii. 1. Neh. ii. 1
* Heb was *the foundation of the going up.*
u 6. Neh. ii. 8. 18
x 1 Sam. vii. 3. 1 Chr xxix. 18. 2 Chr. xii. 14. xix. 3. Job xi. 13. Ps. ix. 17. lvii. 7.
y i 1. 5. Ps xix. 7. cxix. 96—100.
z Matt. v. 19. vii. 24. John xiii. 17. Rev. xxii. 14.
a Deut. xxxiii 10. 2 Chr. xvii. 8, 9. xxx. 22 Neh. viii. 1—9 Mal. ii. 7 Acts i. 1. 1 Tim. iii 2. 2 Tim iv 2.

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blessing of the Almighty, by those effectual fervent prayers of the righteous which avail much. Such as interrupt and injure the worshippers of God, when protected by the civil government, are desperate rebels both against God and the king: and even tolerating laws will be insufficient for the protection of the harmless servants of God, if the executive power do not vigorously interpose, to punish such as *illegally* assault them. But the Lord's protection alone can be entirely depended on; and he will destroy those persecutors who attempt to destroy his people, however powerful or numerous they may be.

V. 13—22.

When the Lord turns the hearts of princes, to strengthen the hands of his servants in their work; inveterate enemies will be overawed; indifferent persons will become helpers; the commandment of the king will be regulated by the commandment of God; and good designs, that had been long interrupted, will be speedily completed. The revival of public ordinances, where they had been obstructed, should excite our rejoicing, because honour is thus ascribed to the Lord, and benefit accrues to the souls of men. Nor can the remembrance of former sorrow, of present meanness and poverty, mar the believer's joy in communion with his gracious God and Father. When sinners are redeemed from the bondage of Satan, and separate themselves from the filthiness of their wicked connexions and practices; when they humbly seek the Lord, depending by faith on the atonement of the great Redeemer, attending his ordinances, and observing his commandments, according to the duty of their place: they are children of captivity, who shall be made joyful by his salvation; they shall be feasted at his table, and enjoy the light of his countenance, and he will be glorified in them, and rejoice over them to do them good for ever. As nothing contributes more to the conversion of sinners, and to the purity and prosperity of the church, than the holiness and faithfulness of ministers; let us all unite in daily prayers to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, that all who bear that sacred character may live and preach according to his holy word, and rightly and duly administer his holy sacraments.

NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 1—5. Artaxerxes here mentioned, was evidently a different person from Darius, (vi. 14.) Xerxes, the son and successor of Darius, cannot be intended: for he reigned only twenty-one years; but Nehemiah, who was contemporary with Ezra, mentions the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes, (*Neh.* v. 14.) Artaxerxes Longimanus, the son and successor of Xerxes, must therefore be meant; and the seventh year of his reign was no less than seventy-nine years after the proclamation of Cyrus. The temple had been finished, and its worship restored; and nothing very memorable occurred during this period. In all probability Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Haggai, and Zechariah, were dead long before this time: and the civil and ecclesiastical state of the Jews remained very unsettled, until this commission was granted to Ezra. He was *the son*, that is, *the descendant*, of Seraiah, who had been dead above one hundred and thirty years; (2 *Kings* xxv. 18.) Many other persons are omitted in this abbreviated genealogy. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 6—10. Ezra had no doubt been educated to sacred learning, and had made great proficiency in it. Having therefore laid aside other employments and studies, and taking great delight in the scriptures: and having an ardent zeal for the honour of God, and to be useful to his

11 ¶ Now this *is* [b] the copy of the letter that the king Artaxerxes gave unto Ezra the priest, the scribe, *even* [c] a scribe of the words of the commandments of the LORD, and of his statutes to Israel.

12 Artaxerxes, [d] king of kings, unto Ezra the priest, * a scribe of the law of the God of heaven, perfect *peace*, [e] and at such a time.

13 [f] I make a decree, that all they of the people of Israel, and *of* his priests and Levites, in my realm, which are [g] minded of their own free-will to go up to Jerusalem, go with thee.

14 Forasmuch as thou art sent † of the king, and of his [h] seven counsellors, to inquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem, [i] according to the law of [k] thy God which *is* in thine hand;

15 And to carry [l] the silver and gold, which the king and his counsellors have freely offered unto the God of Israel, [m] whose habitation *is* in Jerusalem.

16 And [n] all the silver and gold that thou canst find in all the province of Babylon, with the free-will offering of the people, and of the priests, [o] offering willingly for the house of their God which *is* in Jerusalem:

17 That thou mayest [p] buy speedily with this money, bullocks, rams, lambs, with [q] their meat-offerings, and their drink-offerings, and [r] offer them upon the altar of the house of your God which *is* in Jerusalem.

18 And [s] whatsoever shall seem good to thee, and to thy brethren, to do with the rest of the silver and the gold, that do [t] after the will of your God.

19 [u] The vessels also that are given thee for the service of the house of thy God, *those* deliver thou before the God of Jerusalem.

20 And whatsoever more shall be needful for the house of thy God, which thou shalt have occasion to bestow, [x] bestow *it* out of the king's treasure-house.

21 And I, *even* [y] I Artaxerxes the king, do make a decree to all the treasurers which *are* [z] beyond the river, that whatsoever [a] Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, shall require of you, it be done speedily.

22 Unto an hundred talents of silver, and to an hundred ‡ measures of wheat, and to an hundred [b] baths of wine, and to an hundred baths of oil, and [c] salt without prescribing *how much.*

b iv. 11. v. 6.
c 6. Mat. xxiii. 2. 13. Mark vii. 1—13.
d 1 Kings iv. 24. xx. 1. Is. x. 8. Ez. xxvi. 7. Dan. ii. 47, 48. 1 Tim. vi. 15. Rev. xvii. 14. xix. 16.
* Or, *a perfect scribe of the law of the God of heaven*, peace, &c.
e iv. 10, 11. 17.
f v. 13 vi. 1. 2 Chr. xxx. 5. Esth. iii. 15. ix. 14. Ps. cxlviii. 6.
g i. 3 Ps. cx. 3 Phil. ii. 13. Rev. xxii. 17.
† Chal. *from before.*
h Esth. i. 14.
i 25, 26. Deut. xvii. 18, 19. Is. viii. 20.
k i. 3. v. 8. vi 12. Dan. ii. 47. vi. 20. 26.
l vi. 4. 8—10. Ps. lxvii. 29, 30. lxxii. 10. Is. xl. 6—9. Rev. xxi. 24—26.
m vi. 12 2 Chr ii. 6. vi. 2. 6. Ps. lxxvi. 2. cxxxv. 21.
n viii. 25—28.
o i. 4. 6. 1 Chr. xxix 6. 9. 17. 2 Cor. viii. 12. ix. 7.
p vi 9, 10. Deut. xiv. 24—26. John ii. 14.
q Num. xv 4—13
r Deu. xii. 5. 11
s 2 Kings xii. 15 xxii. 7.
t 23.
u viii. 27—30. 33, 34.
x vi. 4. 8, &c
y 12, 13.
z iv. 16. 20. vi. 6
a 6. 10, 11.
‡ Chal. *cors.* Luke xvi. 7.
b Ez. xlv. 14. Luke xvi. 6.
c Lev. ii. 13.

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people; he applied himself with great assiduity to obtain the suitable qualifications. He "gave himself wholly "thereunto," and was careful to do, as well as to teach others, the statutes and judgments of God. Thus he became very eminent, and waited for an opportunity of rendering important service to his people; employing himself, probably, in the mean time, in instructing the Jews at Babylon, as he had opportunity: and being a man of learning, ingenuity, and reputation, the king became acquainted with him; so that Ezra requested and obtained from him a commission to go up to Jerusalem, that he might regulate every thing which related to the worship of the God of heaven. The language used on this subject is well deserving of our most serious attention. Every thing is ascribed to God, to whom belong "the kingdom, and the power, "and the glory for ever:" yet the agency of instruments and second causes is properly noticed. The word *scribe* here used, does not merely signify *one who wrote out copies of the law*, but rather *an interpreter of the law*. The scribes mentioned in the New Testament, professed to be interpreters of the law; but they in general "made it void "by their traditions." Many learned men are of opinion, and indeed with good reason, that Artaxerxes was the Ahasuerus, who soon after this married Esther; and that this commission, as well as that of Nehemiah, was obtained through her influence. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 12. *King of kings.* The kings of Persia had many kings tributary to them; but this title seems to savour of ostentation, as if they had authority over *all* other kings. The original letter is here inserted in the Chaldee language.

V. 13. The Jews, who had not taken the benefit of the proclamation of Cyrus, seem afterwards to have been restrained from going to Jerusalem, till this decree of Artaxerxes again allowed them that liberty.

V. 14. *Seven*, &c. Seven princes of Persia having conspired against, and slain, the usurper Smerdis, and thus made way for the family that afterwards filled the throne; the Persian kings ever after had seven chief princes as their counsellors, who possessed peculiar privileges, and joined with them in all public transactions. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 16. *Canst find*, &c. That is, all the money which he could obtain by the voluntary contributions of the people, whether Jews or Babylonians.

V. 18. It is remarkable, that a heathen prince should lay no other restriction on Ezra and his brethren, in disposing of the treasures which they collected, except that they should be employed, "after the will of their God." The whole commission implied a chartered right to the Jews of living according to their own laws.

V. 22. As salt was offered with every sacrifice, Artaxerxes did not limit the quantity to be supplied, lest the stated sacrifices should be omitted.

23 * Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven: for [d] why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons?

24 Also we certify you, that [e] touching any of the priests and Levites, singers, porters, Nethinims, or ministers of this house of God, it shall not be lawful to impose toll, tribute, or custom, upon them.

25 And thou, Ezra, after [f] the wisdom of thy God that *is* in thine hand, [g] set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that *are* [h] beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God; and [i] teach ye them that know *them* not.

26 And [k] whosoever will not do [l] the law of thy God, and the law of the king, let judgment be executed speedily upon him, [m] whether *it be* unto death, or to † banishment, ‡ or to confiscation of goods, or to imprisonment.

27 ¶ [n] Blessed *be* the LORD God of our fathers, which hath [o] put *such a thing* as this [p] in the king's heart, [q] to beautify the house of the LORD which *is* in Jerusalem;

28 And hath [r] extended mercy unto me before the king and [s] his counsellors, and before all the king's mighty princes: and I was strengthened [t] as the hand of the LORD my God *was* upon me; and I gathered together out of Israel chief men to go up with me.

* Chal. *Whatsoever* is *of* the *decree*. 13.
d vi 10—12. Zech. xii. 3.
e 7. ii. 36—55.
f 14. 1 Kings iii. 28 1 Chr xxii. 12 Ps. xix. 7 cxix. 98—100 Pro ii 6 vi 23 Jam. i 5 iii. 17, 18
g Ex. xviii. 21—25 Deut xvi 18. 1 Chr xxiii. 4 2 Chr. xix 8—10.
h vi 6.
i 10. 2 Chr xvii 7—9 Neh viii. 1—3. 7. 8 ix 3 xiii 1—3. Mal. ii 7 Matt xiii 52. Mark vi. 34.
k vi. 11. Dan. iii. 28, 29
l 2 Chr. xxx. 12.
m Ex. xxi. xxii. Lev. xx Deut. xiii.
† Chal. *rooting out* Ps lii. 5.
n 1 Chr xxix. 10, &c. 2 Cor viii. 16. Phil. iv. 10.
o vi 22. Neh. ii. 12 vii. 5 Jam. i. 17. Rev. xvii. 17
p Neh. ii. 8. Pro. xxi 1
q Is. lx 13.
r ix. 9. Gen xliii. 14 Neh. i. 11.
s 14. Jon. iii. 7.
t 6. 9. v. 5 viii 18. Neh. ii 8 2 Tim. iv. 17, 18.

V. 24—26. The king exempted all employed about the worship of God, from paying any kind of tax; and as the Jews were far from being in affluent circumstances at that time, it was a seasonable encouragement. He also authorized Ezra, as governor over the Jews who lived west of the Euphrates, to constitute magistrates under him, as he saw good. He allowed him to provide for the instruction of the people in the law of God, and even to proselyte the Gentiles; and he likewise empowered him to punish all who proved refractory, according to their crimes.—David, Jehoshaphat, or Hezekiah could scarcely have done more for the Jews, than this heathen prince did: except as their examples, exhortations, and prayers, would have concurred to render these external regulations effectual.

V. 27, 28. This pious scribe, instead of expatiating in the praises of his patron, or boasting of his own services, took occasion to bless God for putting such a thing into the king's heart! Whatever external decorations might be at this time added to the temple, the provision made for the orderly conducting of its sacred worship tended most effectually "to beautify it."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

When the Lord removes some useful instruments, he raises up others to fill their places. They, who desire to be "scribes well instructed for the kingdom of God," must lay aside all inconsistent pursuits and studies, and have their hearts purified from sinful passions, weaned from inordinate earthly affections, and filled with zeal for the glory of God, and love to the souls of men. They must prepare their hearts to seek the word of the Lord; that they may first understand it, then practise it, and afterwards teach it to others. In these sacred studies they should be diligent and unwearied; and meditation, prayer, and a spiritual mind will render them delightful. Thus they will become "able "ministers of the New Testament," "men of God, "thoroughly furnished for every good work," ready scribes, apt to teach, bringing forth out of their treasures things new and old: and beginning with faithfulness and diligence in a narrow circle, they may in due time expect, "according to "the good hand of God upon them," to be favoured with more extensive opportunities of usefulness. But knowledge, even of the sacred Scriptures, except it be reduced to practice and communicated to others, will become useless and worthless.

V. 11—28.

The servants of God cannot vary from their rule at the instance of the greatest princes, or "teach for doctrines "the commandments of men;" but they may want the countenance and external assistance of rulers, in order that they may employ their gifts, and do their work, without molestation and to greater advantage. And when kings will grant them protection, intrust them with authority, and bear the expenses of their useful designs; and then leave them to conduct every thing by the rule of the word of God, and according to his will, as it appears to them and their brethren; they may without hesitation avail themselves of such assistance; nay, they may properly petition for it, when there appears a prospect of success. But in whatever way great and effectual doors are opened to them, they should regard men only as instruments; and ascribe it to the power and goodness of God, if princes grant their requests; bless his name for putting such a thing into their hearts; and receive a commission from man merely as an external opportunity of executing a higher commission from God, according to his instructions, and under his protection. The liberality of heathen kings, in beautifying the house of God, and supporting the expense of his worship, reproached the conduct of many kings of Judah, and of all that reigned in Israel; and it will rise up in judgment, and condemn the avarice of many nominal Christians, who refuse to employ their superfluous treasures in supporting the worship of God, and propagating the gospel in the world! Unconverted men may perceive that "whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven,"

CHAP. VIII.

Ezra's companions, when he was about to go up to Jerusalem, 1—14. *Finding no priests, or Levites, he sends to Iddo, at Casiphia, and obtains some,* 15—20. *They observe a solemn fast, to seek of God a prosperous journey,* 21—23. *Ezra intrusts the sacred treasures to the priests,* 24—30. *They arrive in safety at Jerusalem,* 31, 32. *The treasures, by weight, are delivered up, and sacrifices offered,* 33—35. *The king's commission is produced,* 36.

a i. 5. 1 Chr. xxvi. 32. Neh. vii. 70, 71.
b ii. 62. 1 Chr iv. 33. ix. 1.
c vii. 7. 13.

THESE *are* now [a] the chief of their fathers, and *this is* the [b] genealogy of [c] them that went up with me from Babylon, in the reign of Artaxerxes the king.

d 1 Chr. vi. 3, 4. &c.

2 Of the sons of [d] Phinehas, Gershom; of the sons of Ithamar, Daniel; of the

e 1 Chr iii. 1. 22.

sons of [e] David, Hattush;

3 Of the sons of Shechaniah; of the

f ii. 3. Neh vii. 8. x. 14. *Parosh.*

sons of [f] Pharosh, Zechariah; and with him were reckoned by genealogy, of the males an hundred and fifty.

g ii 6. Neh. vii. 21. x. 14.

4 Of the sons of [g] Pahath-moab, Elihoenai the son of Zerahiah, and with him two hundred males.

5 Of the sons of Shechaniah; the son of Jahaziel, and with him three hundred males.

h ii. 15. Neh. vii. 20. x. 16.

6 Of the sons also of [h] Adin; Ebed the son of Jonathan, and with him fifty males.

i ii. 7. 31. Neh. vii. 12. 34.

7 And of the sons of [i] Elam; Jeshaiah the son of Athaliah, and with him seventy males.

k ii. 4. Neh. vii. 9. xi. 4.

8 And of the sons of [k] Shephatiah; Zebadiah the son of Michael, and with him fourscore males.

l ii. 6. Neh. vii. 11.

9 Of the sons of [l] Joab; Obadiah the son of Jehiel, and with him two hundred and eighteen males.

10 And of the sons of Shelomith; the son of Josiphiah, and with him an hundred and threescore males.

m ii. 11. x. 28. Neh. vii. 16.

11 And of the sons of [m] Bebai; Zechariah the son of Bebai, and with him twenty and eight males.

n ii. 12. Neh. vii. 17.
* Or, *the youngest son.*

12 And of the sons of [n] Azgad; Johanan * the son of Hakkatan, and with him an hundred and ten males.

o ii. 13. Neh. vii. 18.

13 And of the last sons of [o] Adonikam, whose names *are* these, Eliphelet, Jeiel, and Shemaiah, and with them threescore males.

p ii 14 Neh. vii. 19.
† Or, *Zaccur*, as some read. (Neh. x. 12.)

14 Of the sons also of [p] Bigvai; Uthai, and † Zabbud, and with them seventy males.

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should be diligently done; and that the neglect of his worship will bring wrath upon kingdoms, and upon the persons and families of princes. But divine faith alone, as operating by love and gratitude, is capable of producing unreserved, persevering, and delightful obedience. The exorbitant and pernicious exemptions, which ambitious ecclesiastics once *claimed*, have rendered magistrates reasonably jealous in this matter: but when ministers are poor and diligent, there would be a great propriety in *favouring* them with such exemptions as consist with the welfare of society, and leave them to attend upon their work without embarrassing cares and distresses. The wisdom, which God communicates through his word, is peculiarly useful in the choice of magistrates; that they may be indeed "a terror to evil-doers, and a protection to them who do "well." It belongs to civil governors to enact laws, and to proportion punishments to offences, for the welfare of the community, the suppression of immorality, and the encouragement of those who endeavour to obey God and the king. And when wise and just laws are enacted, and impartially executed, it should animate us to proceed in our proper work with redoubled diligence and alacrity, in full confidence that the good hand of our God will be upon us, and prosper our attempts. But the weapons of our warfare, as Christian ministers, are not carnal: faithful preaching, holy lives, fervent prayers, and patient suffering, are the means that we must use, to teach the ways of God to them who know them not, and to bring increasing numbers into subjection to the obedience of Jesus Christ.

NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1—14. Doubtless Ezra took proper methods of making his commission known to his brethren, throughout their dispersions: but, though extraordinary favours were granted, and the city, temple, and land were prepared for their reception, very few were willing to undertake the journey. Most of the Jews who remained in those countries, were either settled to their minds, or were averse to labour and peril. They probably had synagogues, where they met for public worship and instructions; and they were sinfully indifferent about the temple and its service. But God, on this occasion also, raised up the spirits of a small remnant to accompany his servant Ezra. They are here numbered according to the chief of the fathers, to whose families they belonged. Some of the names of these families were mentioned before, as the descendants of those who stayed behind seem to have taken this opportunity of following their brethren. Thus we read of *the last sons of Adonikam*, as no more of that family remained in the land of their captivity. (*Marg. Ref.*)

15 ¶ And I gathered them together to [q] the river that runneth to [r] Ahava; and there * abode we in tents three days: and I viewed the people and the priests, [s] and found there none of the sons of Levi.

16 Then sent I for Eliezer, for Ariel, for [t] Shemaiah, and for Elnathan, and for Jarib, and for Elnathan, and for [u] Nathan, and for [x] Zechariah, and for Meshullam, [y] chief men; also for Joiarib, and for Elnathan, [z] men of understanding.

17 And I sent them with commandment unto Iddo the chief at the place Casiphia, and † I told them what they should say unto Iddo, *and* to his brethren [a] the Nethinims, at the place Casiphia, that they should bring unto us [b] ministers for the house of our God.

18 And [c] by the good hand of our God upon us they brought us [d] a man of understanding, of the sons of [e] Mahli, the son of Levi, the son of Israel; and [f] Sherebiah, with his sons and his brethren, eighteen;

19 And [g] Hashabiah, and with him Jeshaiah of the sons of [h] Merari, his brethren and their sons, twenty;

20 Also of the [i] Nethinims, whom David and the princes had appointed for the service of the Levites, two hundred and twenty Nethinims: all of them were expressed by name.

21 ¶ Then [k] I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might [l] afflict ourselves before our God, [m] to seek of him a right way for us, and [n] for our little ones, and for all our substance.

22 For [o] I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way: because we had spoken unto the king, saying, [p] The hand of our God *is* upon all them for good that seek him; but [q] his power and his wrath *is* against all them that forsake him.

23 So [r] we fasted, and [s] besought our God for this: [t] and he was entreated of us.

q Ps. cxxxvii. 1. Ez. i. 1. iii. 15. Acts xvi. 13.
r 21. 31.
* Or, *pitched.*
s 2. vii. 7. 11.
t 13. x. 21.
u x. 39.
x 11.
y 1.
z 18. 1 Chr. xii 32. xxvi. 14.
† Heb. *I put words in their mouth.* 2 Sam. xiv. 3. 19. Jer. i. 9. xv. 19.
a ii. 43. 58. vii. 7. Num. viii. 22—26. xviii. 6. 1 Chr. xxiii. 3—6. 26—32.
b 22. vii. 28. Neh. ii. 8. Pro. iii. 6
c 16. Pro. xxiv 3. Jer. iii. 15. Dan. i. 20. 1 Cor. xiv. 20.
d Num. iii. 20. 1 Chr. vi 19.
e 24. Neh. viii. 7. ix. 4, 5. x. 12. xii. 24.
g Neh. iii. 17. x. 11.
h 1 Chr. vi. 1. 16. 19.
i 17. ii. 43. vii. 7. 1 Chr ix. 2.
k Judg. xx. 26. 1 Sam. vii. 6. 2 Chr xx. 3. Joel i. 14. ii. 12—18. Jon. iii. 5—10.
l Lev. xvi. 29. 31. xxiii. 29. Is. lviii. 5. Jer. xxxi. 8, 9. 1. 4, 5.
m Ps. v. 8. cvii 2—8. cxliii. 8—10. Prov. iii. 6. Is. xxx. 21. xxxv. 8. xlii. 16. xlix. 10. Jer. x 23.
n Num. xiv 3. 31. Acts ii 39.
o 1 Cor. ix. 15. 2 Cor. vii. 14.
p vii. 6. 9. 28. 1 Chr. xxix 9. 2 Chr. xvi. 9. Ps. xxxiii 18, 19. xxxiv. 15. 22. Is. iii. 10, 11. Rom. viii. 28.
q Josh. xxiii. 16. 2 Chr. xv. 2. Ps. xxi. 8, 9. xc. 11. Zeph. i. 2—6. 1 Pet. iii. 12.
r Neh. ix. 1. Esth. iv. 16. Dan. ix. 3. Luke ii. 37. Acts x. 30.
s Jer. xxix. 12, 13. xxxiii 3. 1. 4, 5.
t 31. Deut. iv. 29. 1 Chr. v. 20. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 12, 13. Is. lix. 22. Mat. vii. 7, 8.

V. 15. Ahava seems to have been the name both of a town, and of a rivulet which ran into the Euphrates, near to the town. It is probable the whole company lodged in tents, during the journey, as well as before they entered on it. No Levites, who were not also priests, were found among them: for Ezra himself was a priest, and we read of two other priests who had joined them. (2.) A considerable treasure had been given to the temple at Jerusalem, by a Gentile king and his nobles; and yet no Levites offered themselves to take the charge of it!

V. 17. It is uncertain where Casiphia lay, or who Iddo the chief was. The Nethinims are called his brethren: and if he were one of that company, no doubt he had been advanced, on account of his extraordinary qualifications or services. Some, however, suppose the word rendered *his brethren* to be a proper name; and that translated *Nethinims*, to signify *appointed*. They therefore render the passage thus: "I told them what they should "say to Iddo, *and* Achio, who were constituted in the "place Casiphia." It is very probable, that there was at Casiphia a seminary for the education of priests, Levites, and Nethinims, over which Iddo presided: where they had the free exercise of their religion, and had so comfortable a support, that they were not inclined to remove. 'It is 'very probable they had their synagogues—or other places, 'where they met for religious worship. For we find the 'people resorting to Ezekiel in their captivity, and him 'preaching to them the word of God, in many places of 'his book. (*Ez.* xxxiii. 31, &c.) And Ezra in all likeli-'hood was an instructor among them!' (*Bp. Patrick.*)—Iddo, by reason of his age or his employment, was not desired to go, but to send proper persons for this service, which the men of understanding would duly explain to him. (16.) It seems Ezra knew that subordinate ministers especially were wanted for the service of the house of God; and was therefore the more earnest in this matter.

V. 18. Sherebiah, no doubt, was "the man of under-"standing" here meant; and the passage should be read —"A man of understanding—even Sherebiah." (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 20. The Gibeonites were appointed to the service of the Levites, in the time of Joshua: and some think that others, perhaps a remnant of the devoted Canaanites, or of those who were vowed to the Lord by themselves or their parents, (*Note, Lev.* xxvii. 5—8;) were added to them, or placed in rather a superior station by David and his princes, or afterwards by Solomon; and that these were, strictly speaking, *the Nethinims*.

V. 21—23. Ezra had collected his company at Ahava, in order to enter upon a journey of several hundred miles, which they were almost four months completing. It lay chiefly through the desert: and, as they were encumbered with families and possessions, they could make but slow progress, and a feeble defence in case of an assault. They carried large treasures with them, which would invite the attempts of the Arabian free-booters and others who infested that neighbourhood. In ordinary cases it would have been very proper to have required of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen for their defence, which no doubt would have been readily granted; but Ezra, in order to impress Artaxerxes with a proper sense of the power and perfections of Jehovah, had confidently declared to him; "That the hand of their God was upon all them for good, "that seek him, and that his power and wrath were against

24 ¶ Then I separated twelve of the chief of the priests, [u] Sherebiah, Hashabiah, and ten of their brethren with them,

25 And [x] weighed unto them [y] the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, *even* the offering of the house of our God, which the king, and his counsellors, and his lords, and all Israel *there* present, had offered:

26 I even weighed unto their hand six hundred and fifty talents of silver, and silver vessels an hundred talents, *and* of gold an hundred talents;

27 Also twenty basons of gold, of a thousand drams; and two vessels of * fine copper, † precious as gold.

28 And I said unto them, [z] Ye *are* holy unto the LORD; [a] the vessels *are* holy also; and the silver and the gold *are* a free-will-offering unto the LORD God of your fathers.

29 [b] Watch ye, and keep *them*, [c] until ye weigh *them* before the chief of the priests and the Levites, and chief of the fathers of Israel, at Jerusalem, in the chambers of the house of the LORD.

30 So took the priests and the Levites the weight of the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, to bring *them* to Jerusalem unto [d] the house of our God.

31 ¶ Then we departed from [e] the river of Ahava, on the twelfth *day* of the first month, to go unto Jerusalem: and [f] the hand of our God was upon us, and he delivered us from the hand of the enemy, and of such as lay in wait by the way.

32 And [g] we came to Jerusalem, and abode there three days.

33 Now on the fourth day was the silver, and the gold, and the vessels [h] weighed in the house of our God, by the hand of [i] Meremoth the son of [k] Uriah the priest; and with him *was* Eleazar the son of Phinehas; and with them *was* [l] Jozabad the son of Jeshua, and Noadiah the son of [m] Binnui, Levites;

34 By number *and* by weight of every one: and all the weight was written at that time.

35 *Also* the children of those that had been carried away, which were come out of the captivity, [n] offered burnt-offerings unto the God of Israel, [o] twelve bullocks, for all Israel, ninety and six rams, seventy and seven lambs, twelve he goats *for* a sin-offering: all *this was* a burnt-offering unto the LORD.

36 And they delivered [p] the king's commissions unto the king's [q] lieutenants, and to the governors on this side the river: and [r] they furthered the people, and the house of God.

n 18, 19.
x 33, 34. i 8. 2 Cor. viii. 20, 21. Phil. iv. 6.
y vii. 15, 16.
* Heb. *yellow* or *shining brass*
† Heb. *desirable*
z Lev. xxi 6–8. Deut. xxxiii. 8. Is. lii. 11.
a i 7—11 Num iv 4–15. 19, 20. vii. 13. 84—88. 1 Kings vii. 48—51 1 Chr xxiii 28. 2 Chr. xxiv 14.
b 1 Chr. xxvi. 20—26. Mark xiii. 34, 35 Acts xx. 31 2 Tim. iv. 5.
c 33, 34.
d 1 Chr. xxix. 2, 3. Ps cxxii. 9. Is lx 13.
e 15, 21.
f 22. vii. 9. 28. Ps. xci. 9—14. Is. xli 10—14.
g vii. 8, 9. Neh. ii. 11.
h 26. 30. 1 Chr. xxviii. 14—18. 2 Cor. viii. 20, 21.
i Neh. x. 5.
k Neh. iii. 4. *Urijah.*
l Neh. viii. 7
m Neh x. 9.
n 2 Chr. xxix 31, 32. Ps lxvi. 10—15. cxvi. 12—19. Luke i. 74, 75.
o vi 17. Num vii. 87.
p vii 21—24.
q iv. 7, &c. v. &c.
r vi. 13 Is. lvi. 6, 7 Acts xviii. 27. Rev. xii. 16.

"all them that forsook him." Being therefore afraid lest the king should not at once understand the distinction betwixt *using*, and *confiding in* means, and lest he should be led to question the power, faithfulness, and goodness of Israel's God, or the sincerity of Ezra's dependence on him; he determined to travel without a guard, except that of the Almighty, being ashamed to ask any other after his former avowed confidence in him. Yet, lest former sins should provoke God to leave them unprotected; and in order the more solemnly and publicly to put the whole company under his gracious protection, he proclaimed and observed a fast, that they might afflict themselves before the Lord, in deep repentance and self-abasement. Thus humbling themselves before God, and seeking his merciful forgiveness, they besought him to be the Guide and Guard of them, their families, their substance, and also of their consecrated treasures. Accordingly he was entreated of them, their enemies were restrained or disabled, and they arrived unmolested at Jerusalem.

V. 24. Sherebiah and Hashabiah, before-mentioned, (18, 19.) were descendants of Merari, the son of Levi, and not of Kohath, Aaron's progenitor; and consequently they were not priests. Either, therefore, the persons specified in this verse, were priests that bore the same names; or they were the above mentioned eminent Levites, who on this occasion were joined in trust with ten priests, in the care of the sacred treasures. (30.)

V. 26, 27. These treasures are computed to have been at least worth a hundred thousand pounds sterling, besides the sacred vessels, which were very valuable! All this was offered chiefly by a pagan king, with his princes and nobles!

V. 31. As Ezra departed from Babylon, on the first day of the first month, (vii. 9;) and having sent to Casiphia to procure Levites and Nethinims, the company set off from Ahava on the twelfth day of the same month; it is evident that Casiphia was not far from Ahava. It seems Ezra was aware that there were enemies who lay in wait by the way, to assault, plunder, or destroy him and his company: yet he trusted in God to protect them, and they were accordingly delivered.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—23.

Whilst love of the world, and fear of the cross, induce most men to neglect the salvation of the Gospel: they that obey the gracious call, stand recorded in the book of life,

CHAP. IX.

Ezra, learning that many of the priests and people had married heathen wives, expresses great sorrow and consternation, 1—4. He prays, and makes confession of sin unto God, 5—15.

a Jer v. 5. Mic. iii. 1.
b vi. 21 x. 10, 11. Ex xxxiv. 16. Num. xxiii 9. Neh. ix. 2. xiii. 3. Is. lii. 11. 2 Cor. vi. 14—18.

NOW when these things were done, [a] the princes came to me, saying, The people of Israel and the priests, and the Levites, [b] have not separated themselves from the people of the lands, [c] *doing* according to their abominations, *even* [d] of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, [e] the Ammonites, the [f] Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites.

2 For they have [g] taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons: so that [h] the holy seed have [i] mingled themselves with the people of *those* lands: yea, [k] the hand of the princes and rulers hath been chief in this trespass.

c Lev. xviii. 3. 24—30. Deut. xii 31. xviii. 9. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 2. Ps. cvi. 35.
d Gen xv 16. 19—21 Ex xxiii. 23. Deut. xx. 17, 18.
e Deut xxiii. 3—5 1 Kings xi. 1. 5—7. Neh iv. 3. 7. xiii 1—3.
f Num xxv. 1—5.
g x. 18—44 Deut. vii. 1—3. Neh. xiii 23, 24. Mal. ii 11
h Ex xix. 6. xxii. 31 Deut. vii. 6. xiv. 2. Is. vi. 13. Mal. ii. 15. 1 Cor. vii 14.
i Gen vi. 2. Neh. xiii 3 23, 24.
k x. 18—44. Neh xiii. 4. 17. 28.

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and will be honoured by God himself. When some of a family embrace the Gospel, they who linger behind may probably follow: till sometimes, in answer to fervent prayers, the very last are brought in. Alas! that professed ministers, who ought to take the lead in every good work, are generally so backward to labour, or venture, or suffer in the cause of God! And that they should need to be stirred up by the example and exhortations even of their lay-brethren! But such as address them on these occasions should be chief men, or men of understanding; lest they should be irritated, instead of being persuaded. They must not, however, be left to their negligence: and their superior brethren, having given them a good example, may send or speak to them, with more authority and effect than others can; and often those, that were before inattentive, will profit by meek and faithful admonitions. When ministers for the work of the house of our God are raised up, who are men of piety and understanding, we should acknowledge the good hand of our God upon us, and give him the praise; as we ought at all times to lift up our prayers unto him for this blessing to his church. It is an invariable rule, "that the hand of our God is upon all "them for good, that seek him; but his power and wrath is "against all them that forsake him:" and we ought to live in the habitual firm belief of it, and should not be ashamed to avow our confidence before the greatest monarchs upon earth. But we should be ashamed to act inconsistently with such professions, or even to appear distrustful of the Lord in the path of duty. On some occasions we should omit those precautions for personal safety, and refuse to make those provisions for our families, which in other circumstances are very lawful; lest our weaker brethren, or inquirers, should be stumbled, and so our God should be dishonoured. We ought then to ask wisdom from him, that we may know how to use or to refuse, lawful things, as expedient or otherwise; and we shall be no losers by venturing, renouncing, or suffering for his sake: as it is better to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in princes, or in armed hosts. We should acknowledge him in all our ways; but we may especially confide ourselves and our works into his hands, when we are simply endeavouring to serve the cause of true religion. Instead of anxiously seeking help from an arm of flesh, (to which we are all shamefully prone;) when unexpected difficulties or dangers obstruct our path, we should more earnestly and explicitly commit our way unto the Lord. In such circumstances, seasons appropriated to secret or social fasting and prayer, form the most effectual method that we can take: because they best prepare our own souls properly to receive the blessings, and most immediately lead us to seek the forgiveness and mortification of our sins; which are more formidable hinderances to our success, than mountains, rivers, seas, or armies of hostile invaders. Indeed few enterprises, *good in themselves*, finally fail of success, which are begun and conducted in this way. And when we thus humbly beseech the Lord, he will be entreated of us; and by his good hand upon us, we shall bring all our undertakings in due season to a happy issue.

V 24—36.

They should be holy persons, who have the charge of holy things. Ministers are stewards of the most precious mysteries of God, and watch for the souls of men, every one of which is more valuable than all the world: and if any are wanting through their default, they will be required at their hands. The meanest of them, therefore, needs *at least* as much wisdom, vigilance, integrity, fidelity, and zeal, as the chief of those who bear the vessels of the Lord. And if any of us are intrusted with the gold and silver of the free-will offerings of our brethren, or the princes of this world, to pious or charitable uses; we should "provide for "things honest, not only in the sight of God, but also in "the sight of men:" that we may be able, when required, to give a punctual account of the whole to those by whom, or for whom, we have been employed. A clear conscience, and an evidently upright conduct, are both comfortable and reputable: yet our whole dependence for the acceptance of our persons and of all our services, must be rested on the merits and sacrifice of our great Surety: through him we must devote ourselves, and consecrate our services, to our reconciled God, and then walk before him in his commandments and ordinances, as we have opportunity and ability. "When our ways please the Lord, he maketh even our ene-"mies to be at peace with us:" and if he dispose a few of the great ones of the earth to favour his cause; numbers will afford their external assistance, not to please God, but the prince. If preservation in peace and safety during our journeys on earth demand our tribute of grateful praise; what acclamations of gratitude shall we raise, when the Lord hath conducted us safe through the perilous and wearisome pilgrimage of life, and through the gloomy vale of death, out of the reach of all our enemies, into the regions of eternal felicity!

3 And when I heard this thing, [l] I rent my garment and my mantle, and [m] plucked off the hair of my head and of my beard, and [n] sat down astonied.

4 Then were assembled unto me every one that [o] trembled at the words of the God of Israel, because of the transgression of those that had been carried away; and I sat astonied [p] until the evening-sacrifice.

5 And at the evening sacrifice I arose up from my * heaviness; and, having rent my garment and my mantle, [q] I fell upon my knees, and [r] spread out my hands unto the LORD my God,

6 And said, O my God, [s] I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for [t] our iniquities are increased over *our* head, and our † trespass is [u] grown up unto the heavens.

7 [x] Since the days of our fathers *have* we *been* in a great trespass unto this day; and [y] for our iniquities have we, our kings, *and* our priests, been delivered [z] into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to a spoil, and [a] to confusion of face, [b] as *it is* this day.

l Josh vii. 6. 2 Kings xviii. 37. xix 1. Job i. 20 Jer. xxxvi 24. m Lev xxi. 5. Neh xiii.25 Is. xv 2 Jer. vii 29. xlviii. 37. 39 Ez. vii. 18. Mic i 16. n Neh i 4 Job ii. 12, 13 Ps cxliii 4 Ez. iii. 15. Dan iv 19. viii 27. o x. 3. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 27. Is lxvi. 2 p Ex. xxix 39. Dan ix 21. Acts iii 1 * Or, *affliction* q 2 Chr vi 13. Ps xcv. 6. Luke xxii. 41. Acts xxi. 5 r Ex. ix 29 33 1 Kings viii. 22. 38. 54. Ps cxli. 2. cxliii. 6. Is. i. 15.

s Job xl. 4. xlii. 6 Jer. iii. 3 5. 24, 25. vi 15. viii. 12. xxxi. 19. Ez xvi. 63. Dan. ix. 7, 8. Rom. vi 21. t Gen xiii. 13. Ps. xxxviii 4 Is. i. 18 lix 12 † Or, *guiltiness.* u 2 Chr. xxviii 9 Rev. xviii. 5 x Num. xxxii. 14. 2 Chr. xxix. 6. xxx 7 Neh ix. 32—34 Ps cvi. 6. 7. Jam v. 7. Dan. ix. 5—8. Zech i 4, 5. Matt. xxiii. 30—33 y Lev xxvi. 14, &c. Deut. iv. 25—28. xxviii. 15, &c xxix 22—28 xxx 17—19. xxxi 20. 21. 29. xxxii 15—28. 1 Sam. xii 25. 1 Kings ix. 6—9. Neh ix. 30 ——— z 2 Kings xvii. 5—8. xviii. 9—12 xxiv 1—4. 2 Chr xxxvi. 16—19. Neh ix. 36, 37. Dan ix. 11—14. ——— a Dan. ix. 7, 8. ——— b Neh. ix. 32.

NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 1, 2. After it was known that Ezra was come to Jerusalem, commissioned by the king of Persia, to be ruler over those countries, and especially to reform all abuses in the religion of the Jews; some of the princes informed him concerning the gross misconduct of their brethren, which they had not been able to prevent. There still remained some of the old inhabitants in the borders of the land; and the Jews, being poor and exposed, opened an intercourse with them and with other neighbouring nations; and they soon proceeded to intermarry with them, in violation of the law. This had always proved an introduction to idolatry: and their sin was the more aggravated and threatened the worse consequences, because the priests, whose marriages had been carefully regulated by the law, (*Lev.* xxi. 7, 8. 10—15.;) and the princes, to whom it belongs to enforce obedience to it, were ring-leaders in the transgression; and thus, both encouraged others by their example, and deterred such as wished to enforce the law against the criminals. They had not indeed yet proceeded to direct idolatry; but they were in the way to it, and already chargeable with doing in some respects "according "to the abominations of the Gentiles." (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 3, 4. When Ezra first arrived at Jerusalem, and was received with apparent cordiality; when he saw the temple prepared, and the worship regularly conducted, with apparent piety; we may suppose, that he was joyful and thankful. But having been informed of these forbidden marriages, which threatened a speedy repetition of former crimes and judgments, he was affected with deep consternation and sorrow; and he expressed his concern for the honour of God and the interests of Israel, by the customary tokens, and even by such as were used to denote the deepest indignation, terror, or distress. This seems to have been done publicly in some place of resort; and the matter being reported, many others became suitably affected, and trembled at the words of God, because of the transgression of Israel; and were prepared to join with him in humiliation before God, and in effecting a reformation. The Jews were here called, "Those that had been carried away;" which might remind them of the captivity from which they were lately returned, and which had been brought upon them by similar transgressions. Ezra observed a profound silence on this occasion, which indicated that the confusion and distress of his mind, were too big for utterance.

V. 5. Ezra seems to have chosen the time of the evening-sacrifice, to go from the place where he first showed his alarm and sorrow to the house of God; because the priests went at that hour, whilst the sacrifice was offering, to burn incense in the temple, and the people met together in the courts of the temple to pray.

V. 6. Ezra was not personally guilty in this matter; but he spake and acted as the representative and the mouth of the whole people; being a member, and in some respects the head, of that body, which had thus violated the covenant of God. He came to establish the civil and ecclesiastical state of the nation, according to the good hand of his God upon him; and he was ashamed and blushed, when he considered the rebellious and ungrateful conduct of that people, whose cause he had to plead continually before the Lord. Indeed the former crimes of Israel were like an inundation, which being swelled by their present transgressions, would flow even over their heads, and entirely overwhelm them: or they formed an enormous pile, which increasing by continual accessions of insolent and presumptuous rebellion, reached even to the heavens, to call down the vengeance of God upon them. The people, it may be supposed, persuaded themselves, that as they were free from idolatry, and adhered to the worship at the temple, all was very well and commendable among them; that such deviations were excusable, if not justifiable by necessity or policy; and that upon the whole they might expect the favour and protection of God. But this vehement language of this eminent man was well suited to show them their state and character in another light; and to convince them that they were very abominable in the sight of God, and in danger of his severest displeasure: and it loudly called upon them all, especially the criminals, to humble themselves before God in deep repentance.

V. 7. *As it is*, &c. Jerusalem and the temple had been rebuilt, and a remnant were returned from captivity: but the nation in general was in a dependent, impoverished, and abject state, in comparison with that prosperity which their fathers had enjoyed in the times of David and Solomon, and which they had forfeited by their sins; and

8 And now for a * little space [c] grace hath been *shewed* from the LORD our God, to leave us [d] a remnant to escape, and to give us † a nail [e] in his holy place, that our God may [f] lighten our eyes, and give us a little [g] reviving in our bondage.

9 For [h] we *were* bondmen; [i] yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage but hath extended mercy unto us [k] in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us a reviving, [l] to set up the house of our God, and to ‡ repair the desolations thereof, and to give us [m] a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem.

10 And now, O our God, [n] what shall we say after this? for we have forsaken thy commandments,

11 Which thou hast commanded ◊ by thy servants the prophets, saying, [o] The land unto which ye go to possess it, is an unclean land with [p] the filthiness of the people of the lands, with their abominations, which have filled it from ‖ one end to another with their uncleanness.

12 Now therefore [q] give not your daughters unto their sons, neither take their daughters unto your sons, [r] nor seek their peace, or their wealth for ever: [s] that ye may be strong, [t] and eat the good of the land, [u] and leave *it* for an inheritance to your children for ever.

13 And [x] after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our God * hast punished us [y] less than our iniquities *deserve*, and [z] hast given us *such* deliverance as this:

14 Should [a] we again break thy commandments, and [b] join in affinity with the people of these abominations? [c] wouldest not thou be angry with us till thou hadst consumed *us*, so that *there should be* [d] no remnant nor escaping?

15 O LORD God of Israel, [e] thou *art* righteous; for we remain yet escaped, as *it is* this day: behold, we *are* before thee [f] in our trespasses; for [g] we cannot stand before thee because of this.

* Heb. *moment.*
c 9. Neh. i. 11. ix. 31. Hab. iii. 2.
d 14. 2 Kings xix. 4 30, 31. Is i. 9. Jer xlii. 2. xliv 14. Ez vi 8. 9. xiv. 22. Zech. viii. 8. 12. Rom. ix. 27. xi. 5, 6.
† Or, *a piv. i.e. a sure and constant abode.* Ec. xii. 11. Is. xxii. 23 — 25. Zech. x. 4.
e Is. lvi. 5. Rev. iii 12.
f 1 Sam. xiv. 27. 29. Job xxxiii. 30. Ps. xiii. 3 xxxiv. 5.
g Ps. lxxxv. 6 cxxxviii. 7. Is lvii 15. Ez. xxxvii. 11—14. Hos. vi. 2
h Neh ix. 36, 37.
i Ps. cvi. 45, 46. cxxxvi 23, 24.
k i. 1—4. 7—11. vi. 1—12. vii. 6 11—28.
l vi. 14, 15 Hag. i. 9. Zech. iv. 6 —10.
‡ Heb. *set up.*
m Is v. 5. Dan. ix. 24. Zech. ii. 5.
n Gen. xliv. 16. Josh. vii. 8. Lam. iii. 22. Dan. ix 4—16. Rom. iii. 19.
◊ Heb. *by the hand of.*
o 1. Lev. xviii. 24 — 30. Deut. xii. 31. xviii. 12. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 2.——p vi. 21. Ez. xxxvi. 25—27. 2 Cor. vii. 1.——
‖ Heb. *mouth to mouth.* 2 Kings xxi. 16.

q Ex. xxxiv. 16. Deut. vii. 3. Josh. xxiii. 12.
r Deut. xxiii. 6. 2 Chr. xix. 2. 2 John 10, 11.
s Deut vi. 1, 2. Josh i. 6—9.
t Is. i. 19.
u Gen. xviii. 18. 19 Ps. cxii. 1, 2. Prov. xiii. 22. xx 7.
x Neh. ix. 32. Ez. xxiv. 13, 14. Gal. iii. 1.
* Heb. *hast withheld beneath our iniquities.*
y Ps. ciii. 10. Lam. iii. 22—39. 40. Hab. iii. 2.
z Ps. cvi. 45, 46.
a John v. 14 Rom. vi. 1. 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21.
b Ex. xxiii. 32. 33. Judg ii. 2. Neh. xiii. 23—27.
c Ex xxxii. 10. Num. xvi. 21. 45. Deut. ix. 9. 14
d 8. Deut xxxii. 26. 27. Is i. 9.
e Neh. ix. 33, 34. Dan. ix. 14. Rom. x. 3.
f 1 Cor. xv. 17.
g Job ix. 2, 3. Ps. cxxx. 3. cxliii. 2. Rom. iii. 19 —22.

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the bulk of it yet remained in a state of captivity and dispersion.

V. 8. A remnant of the Jews had now occupied Jerusalem and Judea for nearly eighty years; having thus had a *revival*, for a comparatively little space, from the state of national *death*, as it were, which had continued during the captivity; and it might have been supposed, that the miseries of their ancestors would have effectually deterred them from imitating their crimes: yet in so short a time, they had made considerable progress in the very same path; and in case they proceeded in that way, a speedy period would be put to their glimpse of reviving and prosperity. —"*A nail given them in the* LORD's *holy place*," seems to signify, that the rebuilding of the temple, formed a sure ground of confidence in the Lord, whilst they adhered to his service, and hung all their hopes and dependence on him. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 9. The temple, being the pledge of God's presence among them, was a wall, by which the Jews were effectually secured from their enemies: unless they provoked him to desert them. For it does not appear that Jerusalem was at this time surrounded with a wall.

V. 12. *Nor seek*, &c. The Israelites might seek the conversion of the heathen, or do them acts of common humanity: but they must not unite interests with them, nor seek their peace or prosperity in the land of Canaan, whilst they continued idolaters.

V. 14. *Should we*, &c? Both the judgments and mercies experienced by the people, aggravated the guilt of their transgressions; which would now speedily fill up their measure of iniquity, and bring final and total ruin upon them, except they took warning in time.

V. 15. Though the Jews had endured many and heavy sufferings, yet they had been punished less than they deserved; for they had broken their covenant, and merited utter ruin. Whatever therefore should hereafter befal them, the Lord would be *righteous* in his dealing with them: and if they were yet spared, it would be entirely the effect of his *mercy*. Thus Ezra closed his address, without adding one petition to his humble confessions. He knew not what to say, or to ask, or to do. He could say nothing to excuse his people; he was sure they could not stand in judgment before God. He dreaded the consequences; yet he had not given up all hopes. His own mind was affected, and his manner could scarcely fail to affect others: and by this abrupt conclusion, as one who was assured that the righteous Lord would do what was right, he referred the whole matter to him, to do what was good in his sight.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—5.

Where a *credible* profession of godliness is made by great numbers, the eye of God often perceives, and careful investigation may frequently detect, many shameful practices: and those useful designs, which are undertaken with great pleasure and sanguine hopes, will seldom be completed without many anxious and painful sensations.—They that deal in frivolous, slanderous, and malicious informations, are justly the objects of public execration; but when a pious regard to the honour of God, and a disinterested concern for the benefit of the community, induce men to give information of gross and flagrant abuses, to those who are authorized to repress them; they perform a

CHAP. X.

The people weep with Ezra, 1. Shechaniah proposes to divorce their heathen wives, and encourages Ezra to attempt it; who requires the priests, &c. to engage by oath so to do, 2—5. By proclamation he assembles the people, who promise to comply, 6—14. The measure is regularly carried into execution, 15—17. The names of those who put away their strange wives, 18—44.

NOW [a] when Ezra had prayed, and [b] when he had confessed, [c] weeping and casting himself down [d] before the

a Dan. ix. 3,4,20. Acts x. 30.
b Lev. xxvi. 40. 1 Ps. xxxii. 5. Hos. xiv. 2.
c Zech. xii. 10.
d 1 Kings viii. 30. ix. 3. 2 Chr. xx. 9.

most useful and honourable service: and even princes may glory in such an employment, though the criminals will generally hate and revile them for it. Men, that pride themselves in being free from gross iniquities, will often venture into the very path that leads to the commission of them: and even the miseries of sinners in the ways of vice fail to deter the spectators from copying their examples.—If we would, as the servants of God, a holy seed, devoted to him by solemn covenant, be preserved from the abominations of the wicked, we must separate from their society, and break off all connexions with them: and intermarriages betwixt his people and ungodly persons, have in all ages been a successful device of Satan, to prevail against the cause of truth and righteousness, and to produce apostacies, superstitions, idolatry, or impiety. Too often, through the artifice of the enemy, they who should warn or restrain others, sanction transgression by their own example, and by protecting the criminals from censure or punishment. Indeed formalists of every description make light of, and excuse such alliances or intimacies, and explain away the exhortation to come out from among them and be separate: but they that are best acquainted with the word of God, with the human heart, and with the history of the church; and that have the most affectionate regard for the souls of men, treat the subject in another manner. They mourn over such transactions, and forebode the worst of consequences from them; and are constrained most solemnly to express their concern and consternation. But, alas! the evils that are allowed and pleaded for by many who profess to be the *holy seed*, may well excite our astonishment as well as deep regret: and we ought to show our abhorrence of such abominations in the most vehement and decisive manner. When this is done by those who are had in reputation for piety or wisdom, it will excite the attention of others, and cause them to tremble at the words of God, because of the transgression of the people: and this will produce greater watchfulness, lead to self-examination and humiliation, and subserve the purposes of reformation. Silent grief and astonishment sometimes form the most expressive protestation against enormous crimes: and when men speak on such occasions, it may be more effectual to address themselves to God, than to the offender.

V. 6—15.

Whatever afflicts our hearts, we must not yield to inactive despondency, but arise from our heaviness, to spread our sorrows before the Lord with humble and reverent devotion. In confessing the sins of churches, or nations, all who form a part of them should bear a share: for every individual hath one way or other added his transgressions to the aggregate of guilt; and all are interested in the event, and stand related to such as have committed those crimes, from which they have been preserved. We should endeavour to affect ourselves and others with the greatness and heinousness of our sins: for, often when we think little of our transgressions, they have grown up even to the heavens, and are ready to overwhelm us with the vengeance of the Almighty. National guilt accumulates from age to age, whilst children copy the iniquities of their fathers. Hence spring all our miseries: in them all, the Lord punishes us less than our iniquities deserve; and no former sufferings will exempt us from greater in future, unless we repent and turn to God, and do works meet "for repentance." Every respite and every degree of former mercies and privileges, should be thankfully received; but they all say to us, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." Even the Gospel and the ordinances of God, which are "a "nail in his holy place" on which to suspend all our hopes and interests, and which are given us to lighten our eyes, and to deliver us from our bondage, and to be a reviving to our souls, will only aggravate the doom of those who rest in them and go on in their sins. In this world God afflicts sinners, yet spares them, that his goodness may lead them to repentance: he corrects, but he doth not utterly forsake his people: he extends mercy to them, by disposing others to be kind to them: yet his favour forms their best security and comfort. But what shall we say, when judgments, mercies, warnings, and respites, leave sinners hardened in impenitence! The case is dreadful, and it may be expected that the Lord will be angry with them, until they are consumed without remnant or escaping. Indeed every penitent, reflecting upon his own conduct, and comparing it with his mercies, will be ashamed, and blush before God; his mouth will be stopped, and he will not know what to say. The law is holy, just, and good; obedience would have been reasonable and profitable; his guilt is undeniable and inexcusable; the wrath of God is dreaded and deserved: he feels himself in the Lord's hands, without plea, or power to escape: it is of his mercy that he is not already consumed, and if he perish, the Lord will be righteous: his only hope arises from a belief of his plenteous mercy, and he casts himself before him with this only plea, "God be merciful to me a sinner." And though the believer habitually walks in newness of life; yet even *he* often breaks God's commandments, exposes himself to rebukes and chastisements; and must come ashamed, and confounded, and blushing before God, on account of his foolish and ungrateful conduct, and again adopting the publican's prayer. Indeed every, and in the whole church, has cause to wonder, that his individual gratitude, perverseness, and folly have not wearied out the Lord's patience, and brought utter destruction upon him. What then must be the case of the ungodly world

house of God, there assembled unto him out of Israel [e] a very great congregation of men, and women, and children: for the people wept * very sore.

2 And Shechaniah the son of [f] Jehiel, *one* of the sons of [g] Elam, answered and said unto Ezra, [h] We have trespassed against our God, and have taken strange wives of the people of the land: [i] yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing.

3 Now therefore [k] let us make a covenant with our God to † put away all the wives, and such as are born of them, [l] according to the counsel of my lord, and [m] of those that tremble [n] at the commandment of our God; and [o] let it be done according to the law.

4 [p] Arise; [q] for *this* matter *belongeth* unto thee: [r] we also *will be* with thee: [s] be of good courage, and do *it*.

5 Then [t] arose Ezra, and [u] made the chief priests, the Levites, and all Israel, to swear that they should do according to this word. And they sware.

6 ¶ Then Ezra rose up from before the house of God, and went into [x] the chamber of [y] Johanan the son of Eliashib: and *when* he came thither, [z] he did eat no bread, nor drink water: for [a] he mourned because of the transgression of them that had been carried away.

7 And [b] they made proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem unto all the children of the captivity, that they should gather themselves together unto Jerusalem;

8 And [c] that whosoever would not come within three days, according to the counsel of the princes and the elders, all his substance should be ‡ forfeited, and [d] himself separated from the

e Deu. xxxi. 12. 2 Chr. xx. 13. Neh. x. 28. Joel ii. 16—18. Acts xxi. 5.
* Heb. *a great weeping.* Judg. ii. 4, 5. Neh. viii. 9.
f x 26.
g ii. 7. 31.
h Ex. xxxiv. 12. Neh. xiii. 27.
i Ex xxxiv 6, 7. Is. lv. 6, 7. Jer. iii.12, 13 1 John i. 7—9.
k 2 Kings xi. 17. 2 Chr. xxix. 10. xxxiv. 31, 32. Neh. ix 38. x. 29, &c.
† Heb. *bring forth.*
l 2 Chr. xxx. 12.
m ix. 4. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 21. 27. Ps. cxix. 53.120. Is. lxvi. 2. Ez. ix. 4.
n Deut. vii. 2, 3. Josh. xxiii. 12, 13.
o Neh. viii. 14. xiii. 1—3. Is. viii. 20.
p Josh. vii 10, &c. 1 Chr. xxii. 16. 19. Ec. ix. 10
q Mark xiii. 34.
r Josh. i. 16—18. 1 Chr. xxviii. 10. 21.
s Is. xxxv. 3, 4. Heb. x. 24. xii. 12, 13.

t Pro. ix. 9. xv. 23. xxv. 11, 12. xxvii 9
u 3 Neh. v.12. x. 29. xiii. 25. Matt. xxvi. 63.
x Neh. xiii. 5.
y Neh. iii. 1. 20. xii. 10. 22. xiii. 28.
z Deut. ix. 18. Job xxiii. 12. John iv. 31—34.
a ix 4. Is. xxii. 12. Dan. ix. 3.
b i. 1. 2 Chr. xxx. 5.
c vii. 26. Judg. xxi. 5. 1 Sam. xi. 7.
‡ Heb. *devoted.* Lev. xxvii. 28. Josh. vi. 19.
d Neh. xiii. 3. Matt xviii. 17. John ix. 22. 34. xvi. 1. 2 Cor. v. 13.

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around us? However, though the true penitent hath nothing to plead in his own behalf, the heavenly Advocate pleads most powerfully for him; and he prevails in behalf of all those who unfeignedly condemn themselves, and cast themselves wholly upon the mercy of God, through his atoning blood.

NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1. The exceedingly deep sorrow and consternation of so eminent a person as Ezra, with his prayer, and confession of deep criminality, were no doubt speedily reported all over the city; and the high esteem generally entertained of his piety and wisdom, induced the people seriously to reflect upon their conduct, and its consequences: so that numbers, of their own accord, gathered around the governor, and united with him in lamentations and humiliation before God. And the alarm becoming general, even the women and children joined the assembly in the court of the temple; probably fearing lest the wrath of God should immediately be poured out upon them.

V. 2. Shechaniah is not mentioned among those who were guilty: but his father and several of his relations are. He spake, however, as one of the offending community, though not personally criminal: and he would not be deterred from decisive measures by regard to his nearest relatives. Probably he observed that Ezra was too desponding, and ready to conclude that reformation would be impracticable, where so many of the chief persons were concerned; (*Num.* xxv.) But he perceived very favourable symptoms in the case. The people were generally convinced of their guilt and danger; and the most daring criminals would not venture to oppose the general opinion of the governor and the congregation. There "was therefore hope in "Israel concerning this thing:" an effectual reform might be made; and then the Lord would turn from his fierce wrath against them, as always delighting in mercy.

V. 3. *To put away*, &c. This is not any where expressly commanded in the law; yet the spirit of the precept seemed to require it. The prohibition of marriages with idolaters was given to prevent temptations to idolatry: and the retaining an idolatrous wife formed a continual temptation. Divorces were permitted to the Israelites, *by the judicial law*, to prevent worse consequences; but the seducing of a man to idolatry was the worst consequence imaginable. This measure would also powerfully tend to prevent the contracting of such marriages in future. It is however probable, that none were put away, but such as continued idolaters, and that they were provided for out of the estates of those who divorced them. It does not appear, whether the children were generally sent away with their mothers, or not: but doubtless such were provided for, as were not admitted into the congregation of the Lord. Under the New Testament, the marriages of believers with ungodly persons are evidently sinful, and of very bad consequence: yet when contracted they must not be dissolved. The partition-wall between Jews and Gentiles is broken down: such matters are determined by the municipal laws of every country; and divorces, except for adultery, are disallowed.

V. 4, 5. Shechaniah's mind, being more composed than Ezra's, readily perceived that it was a favourable crisis for action: so that he exhorted him, instead of indulging grief, to arise and exercise his authority, and assured him of the hearty assistance of himself and others in the arduous attempt. Thus encouraged, Ezra entertained hopes of remedying the evil, and immediately engaged all present, by a solemn oath, to concur in this design.

V. 6. *He did*, &c. Some render the words, "*Until he* "*came, he had neither eaten bread, nor drunk water.*" He had no heart to take food, till the prospect of reformation opened to him; but spent his time in fasting, weeping, and prayer.

congregation of those that had been carried away.

9 ¶ Then all the men of Judah and Benjamin gathered themselves together unto Jerusalem within three days. It *was* [e] the ninth month, and the twentieth *day* of the month; and all the people sat in the street of the house of God, [f] trembling because of *this* matter, and for the * great rain.

10 And Ezra the priest stood up, and said unto them, Ye have transgressed, and have † taken strange wives, [g] to increase the trespass of Israel.

11 Now therefore [h] make confession unto the LORD God of your fathers, and [i] do his pleasure: and [k] separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from [l] the strange wives.

12 Then all the congregation answered and said with a loud voice, As thou hast said, [m] so must we do.

13 But [n] the people are many, and *it is* a time of much rain, and we are not able to stand without, neither *is this* work of one day or two: for ‡ we are many that have transgressed in this thing.

14 Let now [o] our rulers of all the congregation stand, and let all them which have taken strange wives in our cities come at appointed times, and with them the elders of every city, and the judges thereof, until [p] the fierce wrath of our God ∮ for this matter be turned from us.

15 Only Jonathan the son of Asahel and Jahaziah the son of Tikvah ‖ were employed about this *matter:* and Meshullam and [r] Shabbethai the Levite helped them.

16 And the children of the captivity did so. And Ezra the priest, *with* certain chief of the fathers, after the house of their fathers, and all of them by *their* names, were separated, and sat down in the first day of the tenth month [s] to examine the matter.

17 And they made an end with all the men that had taken strange wives by the first day of the first month.

18 ¶ And among [t] the sons of the priests there were found that had taken strange wives: *namely,* of the sons of [u] Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and his brethren; [x] Maaseiah, and Eliezer, and Jarib, and Gedaliah.

19 And they [y] gave their hands that they would put away their wives; and *being* guilty, *they offered* [z] a ram of the flock for their trespass.

e vii. 8, 9. Esth. ii. 16.
f 1 Sam. xii. 17, 18. Jer. x. 10—13.
* Heb. *showers.*
† Heb. *caused to dwell,* or *brought back*
g Num. xxxii. 14. Josh. xxii. 17, 18. 2 Chr. xxviii. 13. Mat. xxiii. 32.
h Lev. xxvi. 40—42. Josh. vii. 19. Ps. xxxii. 5. Pro. xxviii. 13. Jer. iii. 13.
i Is. i. 16—18. lvi. 4. Rom. xii. 2. Col. i. 10. Heb. xiii. 21.
k Neh. xiii. 3. 2 Cor. vi. 17.
l Deut. vii. 3, 4. 1 Cor. vii. 12, 13.
m 3, 4 Ps. lxxviii. 37 57.
n 18—44. Matt. vii. 13.
‡ Or, *we have greatly offended.*
o Deu. xvii. 9, 18, 19 2 Chr. xix. 5—7.
p 2 Chr. xxix. 10. Ps. lxxviii. 49.
∮ Or, *till this matter* be dispatched.
‖ Heb *stood.*
q Neh. iii. 6. x 20. xii. 33
r Neh. xi. 16.
s Deut. xiii. 14. Job xxix. 16.
B. C. 458.
t ix. 1. Lev. xxi. 7. 13—15. 1 Sam. ii. 22—24. Neh. xiii. 28. Jer. xxiii. 11. 14. Ez. xliv 22. Mal. ii. 8, 9 1 Tim. iii. 11.
u iii. 2 Hag i. 1. Zech. iii. 1. *Joshua*
x Neh. viii. 4. 7.
y 2 Kings x. 15. 1 Chr. xxix. 24. 2 Chr. xxx. 8. *Marg.* Lam. v. 6. Gal. ii. 9.
z Lev. v. 16. vi. 6.

V. 8. *All his,* &c. That is, his estate should be confiscated, and put among the sacred treasures, and he should be treated as a heathen, and denied the privileges of a Jew: (*Marg. Ref.*) Doubtless, reasonable excuses would be admitted: and the punishment was only inflicted on the refractory, and those who showed a determination to oppose the measure. Ezra was authorized to punish such persons more severely; (vii. 26:) but he was not disposed to put any to death, if it could be avoided.

V. 9. *For the great rain.* The periodical rains common at that season seem to have been more abundant than usual: and as no building could be large enough to contain the whole multitude; this providential circumstance added to the distress on this occasion, and seemed an indication of the divine displeasure.

V. 11. As Ezra mentions only the strange wives, and not their children, some think that the children were retained, and brought up in the Jewish religion.

V. 12—14. The congregation at once declared their readiness to divorce their heathen wives, in all cases where it was determined to be their duty: but the difficulties of the business would require more consideration than could be given them in their present situation, and by a popular assembly. They therefore proposed, that the principal council or senate might convene at Jerusalem, who might summon before them the parties concerned from every city, together with the judges and elders of their cities; and so deliberately investigate and decide upon every case, that the business might be settled effectually, and in an unexceptionable manner. It would be needful to determine, whether the women had been proselyted either before or after marriage; whether they had relapsed into idolatry, or shown a propensity that way, or whether they had given satisfactory evidences, that they had sincerely embraced the Jewish religion. These and many other similar questions must be resolved, before sentence was denounced; and this would take up much time. The proposal was therefore very reasonable, and Ezra readily acceded to it, and thus the business was happily terminated.

V. 15. Ezra and the chief persons in the nation, as forming a council, decided on the several cases brought before them: and on this ground some think, that the four persons here mentioned, and no more, opposed the measure. The words indeed may bear that sense; yet the more general opinion is, that these four men were appointed by the council to bring the business before them in due form.

V. 16, 17. The cases, brought before the council, were either so many, or so complicated; that, though they separated themselves from other employments, to attend on this exclusively, they were two months in finishing it. This took place just a year after Ezra left Babylon.

V. 18, 19. No doubt Jeshua had died many years be-

a ii. 37. 1 Chr. xxiv. 14. Neh. vii. 40

20 And of the sons of [a] Immer; Hanani, and Zebadiah.

b ii. 39. 1 Chr. xxiv 8. Neh. vii. 42.

21 And of the sons of [b] Harim; Maaseiah, and Elijah, and Shemaiah, and Jehiel, and Uzziah.

c ii. 38. 1 Chr. ix. 12. xxiv. 9. Neh. vii. 41.

22 And of the sons of [c] Pashur; Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nathaneel, Jozabad, and Elasah.

d viii. 33. Neh. xi. 16.
e Neh. x. 10.

23 Also of the Levites; [d] Jozabad, and Shemei, and Kelaiah, (the same *is* [e] Kelita,) Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer.

24 Of the singers also; Eliashib: and of the porters; Shallum, and Telem, and Uri.

25 Moreover of Israel: of the sons of

f ii. 3. Neh vii. 8.

[f] Parosh; Ramiah, and Jeziah, and Malchiah, and Miamin, and Eleazar, and Malchijah, and Benaiah.

g ii. 7 31. viii. 7. Neh. vii. 12. 31. h 2.

26 And of the sons of [g] Elam; Mattaniah, Zechariah, and [h] Jehiel, and Abdi, and Jeremoth, and Eliah.

i ii 8. Neh. vii. 13

27 And of the sons of [i] Zattu; Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, and Jeremoth, and Zabad, and Aziza.

k ii. 11. viii. 11. Neh vii. 16.

28 Of the sons also of [k] Bebai; Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, *and* Athlai.

l ii. 10. Neh. vii. 15. *Binnui.*

29 And of the sons of [l] Bani; Meshullam, [m] Malluch, and Adaiah, Jashub, and Sheal, and Ramoth.

m Neh. x. 4.

30 And of the sons of [n] Pahath-moab; Adna, and Chelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezaleel, and Binnui, and Manasseh.

n ii. 6. viii. 4. Neh. vii. 11.

31 And *of* the sons of [o] Harim; Eliezer, Ishijah, [p] Malchiah, Shemaiah, Shimeon,

o ii. 32. Neh. vii. 35.
p Neh iii. 11. *Malchijah.*

32 Benjamin, Malluch, *and* Shemariah.

33 Of the sons of [q] Hashum; Mattenai, Mattathah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, *and* Shimei.

q ii. 19. Neh. vii. 22.

34 Of the sons of [r] Bani; Maadai, Amram, and Uel,

r 29.

35 Benaiah, Bedeiah, Chellub,

36 Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib,

37 Mattaniah, Mattenai, and Jaasau,

38 And Bani, and Binnui, Shimei,

39 And Shelemiah, and Nathan, and Adaiah,

40 * Machnadebai, Shashai, Sharai,

* Or, *Mabnadebai*, according to some copies.

41 Azareel, and Shelemiah, Shemariah,

42 Shallum, Amariah, *and* Joseph.

43 Of the sons of [s] Nebo; Jeiel, Mat-

s ii. 29. Neh. vii. 33.

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fore this transaction: but his descendants had set a very pernicious example to the people. They, however, were the first to confess and forsake their sin, and also to present a trespass-offering on that account.

V. 44. Providence had so ordered it, that not many of the people had children by their heathen wives. Thus the separation was more easily effected; and at the same time it was a token of the divine disapprobation of such marriages. Perhaps these were the principal persons, who were criminal; for, all circumstances combine to induce an opinion, that a far greater number were concerned, than those here expressed by name. Ezra continued nearly twelve years after this in authority at Jerusalem, no doubt zealously labouring to promote a revival of true religion. And in many ways, he established the ecclesiastical state of the Jews; though he seems not to have been so well qualified as his successor Nehemiah, to attend to the civil government, to defend the city and state against enemies and invaders, and to effect outward reformation by the authority of the magistrate. Accordingly he is introduced in the ensuing book, as well employed in his proper line, though superseded by Nehemiah in his civil authority.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

Genuine humiliation before God and sorrow for sin, always produce works meet for repentance. Yet they who are greatly affected with the view of the evil and aggravation of their own sins, or those of the community, are in danger of being swallowed up by over-much sorrow, and so discouraged from present duty. In this case the grounds of hope should be pointed out to them; and, (so rich is the mercy of God, through the great Redeemer,) that there is always hope for those who are humbly willing to accept his salvation: and when the most atrocious criminals humbly mourn on account of their sins, and tremble at his word, there is good reason to expect that they will obey his commands. In order to affect others with godly sorrow and fear, hatred of sin, or holy love and gratitude, we must ourselves be greatly affected: for, evident earnestness, in such important concerns, is far more impressive upon the mind by a kind of holy *sympathy*, than the most laboured eloquence or reasoning. Indeed the effect of such earnestness frequently bears a proportion to the rank, reputation, piety, or wisdom of him who is thus affected: so that the silent grief and consternation, or the humble prayers and confessions, of one eminent person, may, by the blessing of God, excite serious alarms and inquiries among great multitudes. These are critical seasons, and call for decision in proposing and executing measures of extensive, and durable usefulness. Yet vehement passions in those, to whom great concerns belong, are attended by considerable disadvantages; and far inferior persons may give seasonable advice, suggest suitable encouragement, or propose adequate assistance. We cannot too solemnly engage ourselves and each other, to renounce all interests, connexions, or indulgences, *which are contrary to the law of God.* And when leading men

tithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jadau, and Joel, Benaiah.

t Prov. ii. 16. v. 3. 20. 44 All these had taken t strange wives: and *some* of them had wives by whom they had children.

set the example, and then propose the same things to others, many may be prevailed on by conviction, fear, or shame: and thus opposition will be prevented, or rendered ineffectual. Excessive sorrow, terror, and self-abasement; and a great engagement of heart about the things of God and the eternal world, indispose us to animal recreation: so that fasting then becomes a natural expression of our feelings, as well as a suitable concomitant of our prayers and supplications. Fervent affections should not be allowed to subside, till our most beloved sins have been renounced; and we should know no man after the flesh, when a revival of pure religion is attempted.

V. 9—44.

That which *must* be done should be set about without delay: they are not worthy of the privileges of God's people, who will not concur in promoting obedience to his commandments: and they deserve severe punishment from the civil magistrate, who oppose his authority, when he is doing his duty according to the oracles of God. When the frowns of Providence unite with the terrors of an awakened conscience, to distress the trembling sinner, he becomes an object of deep compassion: and though no favour must be shown to his lusts, much tenderness should be exercised to his person. The most effectual divorce from lucrative or beloved sins, is generally preceded by examination and deliberation: for that which is hastily resolved, seldom proves durable. Cases, at first sight similar, upon mature investigation appear very different: and in correcting abuses, caution and compassion should unite with impartiality and decision; that there may be no subsequent cause for reasonable complaint. When sin is repented of and forsaken, God will mercifully forgive: but the blood of Christ, our Sin-offering, is the only atonement which takes away the guilt of it. No *apparent* repentance, amendment, or restitution, will benefit those who reject this propitiation; for their self-dependence proves them still unhumbled. It is peculiarly afflicting to a pious mind, (though, alas! exceedingly common,) to see those who fill up the most important stations in society, or the most sacred offices in the church, and who are related to the most excellent persons, leading the way, and setting the example, in the most evident violation of the divine law. But when they confess and forsake their sins, avowing publicly their dependence on the atoning blood of the Saviour; their pattern in these respects may in some measure counterbalance the effects of their former misconduct: and all the names, which are written in the book of life, are those of penitent believing sinners; not of the self-righteous who think that *they* have no need of repentance.

THE BOOK OF

NEHEMIAH.

THIS book resumes the history of the Jews, about twelve years after the close of the book of Ezra; and contains their latest canonical records till the days of Christ, reaching down to about a hundred and ten years after the captivity. It was evidently written by Nehemiah himself, who throughout speaks in the first person: and probably it was received among the canonical Scriptures by Ezra and his assistants or successors. Nehemiah a Jew, the cup bearer to Artaxerxes king of Persia, hearing of the distressed state of his countrymen; in great affliction petitions him for leave to go up to Jerusalem, as governor, with a commission to rebuild the walls, and to provide for the security and the prosperity of his people. Having obtained his request, he executed his commission for twelve years with great success. After which he returned to Artaxerxes, but at length came back to Jerusalem; and employed various measures to promote the prosperity of the Jews, and the reformation of abuses. The frequent devout ejaculations, with which the narrative is interrupted, are peculiar to this pious writer: and his zeal, activity, and disinterestedness, are well worthy of our imitation: especially by those employed in arduous undertakings, for the good of the church or the community.—It has many internal proofs of divine inspiration, and always has been considered by the Jews as a part of their sacred Scriptures, and indeed a continuation of the book of Ezra: it does not, however, seem to contain any prophecies, nor is it explicitly referred to in the New Testament.

B. C. 446.

CHAPTER I.

Nehemiah, informed of the afflicted state of the Jews, mourns, fasts, and prays, 1—4. His prayer, 5—11.

a x. 1.
b Ezra x. 9. Zech. vii. 1.
c Ezra vii. 7.
d Esth. i. 2. iii. 15. Dan. viii. 2.

THE words of [a] Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah. And it came to pass [b] in the month Chisleu, [c] in the twentieth year, as I was [d] in Shushan the palace,

2 That [e] Hanani, one of my brethren, came, he and *certain* men of Judah; and [f] I asked them concerning the Jews [g] that had escaped, which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem.

3 And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in [h] the province, *are* [i] in great affliction and [k] reproach: [l] the wall of Jerusalem also *is* broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire.

B. C. 446.
e vii. 2.
f Ps. cxxii 6. cxxxvii. 5. 6
g Ezra ix. 8. 9 14. Jer. xliv. 14 Ez. vi 9 vii 19. xxiv. 26, 27.
h Ezra ii. 1. v. 8. i ix. 36, 37. Ps. xliv. 11—14. Is. xxxii 9—14.
k 1 Kings ix 7. Ps. lxxix. 4.
l ii. 17. 2 Kings xxv. 10. Is. v. 5. Jer. v. 10. xxxix. 8. lii. 14.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1. This book is here called, "The "*words*," (or, as it may be rendered, 'the *actions*,') of "Nehemiah," that is, the history of the services which he performed to the Jewish church and state.—It is uncertain to what tribe or family Nehemiah belonged, though tradition records that he was of the tribe of Judah. His father Hachaliah seems to have obtained a settlement in the city of Shushan or Susa, the capital of Persia where the kings had a royal palace; and thus his son Nehemiah became cup-bearer to Artaxerxes. This was a place of great trust, honour, and emolument; and it was peculiarly desired by those who sought preferment, because it gave access to the king at those seasons of hilarity, when men are most disposed to grant favours. Nehemiah was cup-bearer to the same Artaxerxes who before commissioned Ezra. The month Chisleu coincides with part of our November and part of December.

V. 2. Hanani, the brother of Nehemiah, and some other Jews, seem to have come to Shushan, in order to solicit help from the king against their enemies. Nehemiah's station in the Persian court had prevented his going to Jerusalem: but he was an eminently godly man, and deeply concerned about the city and temple of God, and the condition of his brethren in Judea.

V. 3. *The remnant*, &c. Ezra's commission, and his attention, had chiefly respected the revival of religion, and the re-establishment of the affairs of the Jewish church: and he was not empowered or enabled to fortify the city, or to repel the hostile attempts of their enemies. It is supposed, that the Samaritans and other enemies, not only hated true religion, but were provoked by being dispossessed, by the return of the Jews, from the lands which they had seized upon: and as these were but a remnant, compared with the whole nation, and in an unsettled situation, they were unable to defend themselves. The seat of

4 And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that [m] I sat down and wept, and mourned *certain* days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven,

5 And said, I beseech thee, [n] O LORD God of heaven, the great and terrible God, that [o] keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him, and observe his commandments:

6 Let [p] thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open, that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, [q] day and night, for the children of Israel thy servants, and [r] confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee: [s] both I, and my father's house have sinned.

7 We have [t] dealt very [u] corruptly against thee, and have not kept [x] the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which [y] thou commandedst thy servant Moses.

8 [z] Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandedst thy servant Moses, saying, [a] *If* ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations:

9 But [b] *if* ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them: though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, *yet* [c] will I gather them from thence, and [d] will bring them unto [e] the place, that I have chosen to set my name there.

10 Now [f] these *are* thy servants and thy people, [g] whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power, and by thy [h] strong hand.

11 O LORD, I beseech thee, [i] let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, [k] who desire to fear thy name; and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and [l] grant him mercy in the sight of this man. For [m] I was the king's cup-bearer.

m 1 Sam. iv. 17—22. Ps. lxix. 9, 10. cii. 13, 14. cxxxvii. 1. Dan. ix. 3. Zeph. iii. 18. Rom. xii. 15
n iv. 14. Deu. vii. 21. 1 Chr. xvii. 21. Ps. xlvii. 2. Dan. ix. 4.
o Ex. xx. 6. Deu. vii. 9. 1 Kings viii. 23. Heb. vi. 13—18.
p 1 Kings viii. 28, 29. 2 Chr. vi. 40. Ps. xxxiv. 15. cxxx. 2. Dan. ix. 17, 18.
q 1 Sam. xv. 11. Ps. lv. 17. lxxxviii. 1. Luke ii. 37. xviii. 7. Eph. vi. 18. 1 Thes. iii. 10. 1 Tim. v. 5. 2 Tim. i. 3.
r Ezra ix. 6, 7. x. 11. Is. lxiv. 6, 7. Lam. iii. 39—42. Dan. ix. 4. 20.
s 2 Chr. xxviii. 10. xxix. 6. Ps. cvi. 6. Is. vi. 5. Lam. v. 7. Eph. ii. 3.
t ix. 28—35. Dan. ix. 5, 6.
u 2 Chr. xxvii. 2. Hos. ix. 9. Zeph. iii. 7. Rev. xix. 2.
x Lev. xxvii. 34. Deut. iv. 1. v. 1. vi. 1. 1 Kings ii. 3. Ps. xix. 8, 9. cxix. 5—8.
y Deut. iv. 5. 2 Chr. xxv. 4. Ezra vii. 6. Dan. ix. 11. 13. Mal. iv. 4.
z Ps. cxix. 49. Luke i. 72
a Lev. xxvi. 33. Deut. iv. 25—27. xxv. ii. 64. xxxii. 26—28. 1 Kings ix. 6, 7.
b Lev. xxvi. 40—42. Deut. iv. 29—31. xxx. 2—5. Jer. xxix. 11—14.
c 1 Chr. xvi. 35. Ps. cvi. 47. Jer. xxxi. 10. xxxii. 37. Matt. xxiv. 31.
d Jer. iii. 14. Ez. xxxvi. 34.
e Deut. xii. 5. 1 Kings ix. 3.
f Ex. xxxii. 11. Deu. ix. 29. Is. lxiii. 16—19. lxiv. 9.
g Ex. xv. 13. Deut. xv. 15. Ps. lxxiv. 2.
h Ex. vi. 1. xiii. 9. Ps. cxxxvi. 12. Dan. ix. 15.
i 6. Ps. cxxx. 2.
k Prov. i. 29. Is. xxvi. 8, 9. Heb. xiii. 18.
l ii. 8. Gen. xxxii. 11. 28. xliii. 14. Ezra i. 1. vii. 6. 27, 28. Prov. xxi. 1.
m ii. 1.

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government was very distant; the king's lieutenants were in general unfavourable; and the king probably never heard a full account of the injuries done them. Either the walls had never been rebuilt after the captivity; or their enemies had thrown them down again, and burnt the gates with fire: and being thus defenceless and exposed, they were also insulted and reproached for their confidence in God.

V. 4. Nehemiah seems, immediately on hearing the afflicted state of his brethren, to have conceived the design of going to their relief, if he could obtain permission and assistance from the king his patron. But his first application was to that God, in whose hand are the hearts of kings. He therefore spent some days in mourning over the affliction of his people, and in humbling himself before God by fasting and prayer; in order to find mercy from him, and success in his undertaking.

V. 5—11. In the prayer here recorded, which probably formed the substance of Nehemiah's constant supplications day and night, he adored the greatness and terribleness of God, and his convenanted mercy to his people: and acknowledged, that if *they* had not provoked him to anger, by their numerous and heinous crimes; their enemies, instead of triumphing over them, would have experienced his terrible power by fighting for them. But, alas! Nehemiah was constrained to confess, that both the people in general, and he himself, and his father's house, were deeply guilty, and by dealing very *corruptly*, that is, perversely, ungratefully, and deceitfully, had given the Lord just cause to leave them in the hands of their adversaries. Yet, whilst he justified God in their miseries, he expressed a confidence in his mercies. The nation of Israel alone professed to worship and serve the God of heaven: he had forewarned them, that if they transgressed, he would scatter them abroad; but he had also repeatedly and expressly promised, that if they returned to him, and obeyed his commandments, he would gather them again to their own land, and to his chosen city. Now many of those, who had gone up to Jerusalem, were turned to the Lord, and "desired to fear his name:" (*Marg. Ref.*) and it might be hoped that numbers even of those who remained in other countries, were truly penitent and uprightly obedient; among whom Nehemiah was conscious he was one. And as the Lord had already done great things, both in former ages, and not long before, in redeeming and delivering his people from their enemies; he trusted that he would compassionately hear his prayer, and the prayers of all those who were pleading with him in that behalf. The particular request which he made on this occasion, is remarkable: He prayed that God "would grant him mercy in the sight "of this man." The mighty monarch of the Persian empire would be addressed by his flatterers, as if he were more than man; yet Nehemiah knew, that in the sight of God, he was upon a level with his meanest subjects.—'A 'deep sense of our own unworthiness is a good qualifica- 'tion for the mercy we beg of God. This, Nehemiah ex- 'presses very sensibly.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—4.

Eminent men of God may sometimes be found in situations where they might least be expected: his grace will be sufficient for them, wherever his providence has cast their lot; and it is seldom adviseable to leave the place, where He has blessed us, without an evident call, or a substantial reason; even though we might remove into situations, apparently more favourable to our growth in grace. The church militant is like the bush which burned but was not consumed, because the Lord was there; afflictions and re-

CHAP. II.

Artaxerxes observing Nehemiah sad before him, asks the cause. Nehemiah, afraid, assigns the reason; prays; petitions the king; and obtains authority to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, 1—8. *He delivers the king's letters to the governors beyond the river; the enemies of the Jews are much grieved; and he arrives at Jerusalem,* 9—11. *He examines the state of the walls, secretly by night,* 12—16. *He encourages the Jews to build,* 17, 18. *The scorn and menaces of their enemies, and his answer,* 19, 20.

AND it came to pass, in the month [a] Nisan, and in [b] the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, *that* wine *was* before him: and [c] I took up the wine, and gave *it* unto the king. Now I had not been *beforetime* sad in his presence.

2 Wherefore the king said unto me, [d] Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? this *is* nothing *else* but [e] sorrow of heart. Then I was very sore afraid,

a Esth. iii. 7.
b i. 1. Ezra vii. 1.
c i. 11. Gen. xl. 11. 21.
d Gen. xl. 7.
e Prov. xv. 13.

proaches are its portion in this evil world: its enemies often presumptuously expect finally to prevail; and its friends in unbelief are sometimes ready to fear that they will. But in the crisis, some unexpected help is afforded, and again it revives and flourishes. No prosperity can render the real believer regardless of the interests of God's cause and people. The prevalence of iniquity, the decays of piety, and the ravages of persecution, whilst infidels or idolaters insult and reproach, are like "a sword in his bones;" (*Psalm* xlii. 10.) As a member of the suffering body of Christ, he will sympathize in its affliction: but this must not suffice. He will be inquiring, what service he can render to the common cause, by improving his talents and the advantages of his situation? If he has no more in his power, he may lift up his prayer without ceasing for the remnant that is left: and fasting joined with supplication may well express the believer's penitent sorrow for sin, sympathy with his afflicted brethren, his distress to see the cause of God run down, and earnestness in seeking help from him; so that he hath no relish for common comforts and enjoyments. Such fervent humble prayers have always been honoured with signal prevalence and success. And these seasons of humiliation are peculiarly suitable, when we are entering upon arduous or perilous undertakings for the benefit of the church. When worldly men would solicit any favour from kings or nobles, they spare no pains, to obtain the interposition of those who have influence with them: but the children of God must seek to their Father, who could at once secure them the assistance of all the kings upon earth, if good for them; and though other means may be used, yet "the effectual fervent prayer "of a righteous man availeth" most of all.—As the people of God all over the earth form one body: it is good to inquire how our brethren fare in the most remote regions, that we may at least know in what manner we may direct our prayers and praises in their behalf.

V. 5—11.

In all our addresses to the God of heaven we must remember his greatness and terrible majesty; that we may worship with reverence and godly fear, and in deep humiliation before him. His infinite holiness, justice, truth, and power, are terrible to all the workers of iniquity: and they would be so to us all, were he not also infinitely merciful, and did he not deal with such as repent and believe the Gospel, according to a new and gracious covenant. For all have broken his perfect law, in numberless instances: and indeed all are disposed to reject, oppose, or abuse his Gospel. And if, by his grace, we are now true believers; we have even since we became so "dealt very corruptly, "in not keeping the commandments of God." He therefore is righteous in our sufferings, and merciful in all our comforts. We must still come before him as sinners, pleading his gracious promises, and craving to be gathered into his church, and finally into heaven, the place where he displays those glories, which here by faith we feebly apprehend, love, and adore. And in this humble supplicating manner we may expect all desirable success. May he then grant unto us a spirit of simple dependence on his mercy and grace, united with zeal for his glory, and affection to his people. May we endeavour to improve every talent, as those who are waiting for his coming; and never tarnish or defeat the success of our endeavours, by pride and self-confidence. And may our gracious God stir up those, to whom he hath committed many talents, thus humbly and zealously to serve his cause, with faith and prayer, with self-denial, promptitude, and diligence, and with simple dependence on him and devotedness to him!

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1, 2. About four months passed from the time that Nehemiah made his inquiry, before he presented his petition to the king: for Nisan answers to part of March and part of April. It is probable, that his turn of waiting on the king did not arrive before this; and he could not come into his presence uncalled, except at the hazard of his life; (*Esth.* iv. 11;) but he could approach the King of heaven at any time, and doubtless all the while continued instant in prayer. Yet when at length he attended on his office, his inward concern was so visible in his countenance, (which no doubt had before been very open and cheerful;) that the king observed it; and, not perceiving that he was ill, seemed ready to impute his melancholy to discontent, or disaffection. Indeed the words rendered *sad* and *sorrow of heart*, might be rendered *evil* and *wickedness of heart*. This excited great alarm in Nehemiah: and in fact these arbitrary monarchs were generally suspicious,

3 And said unto the king, [f] Let the king live for ever: why should not my countenance be sad, when [g] the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres *lieth* waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?

4 Then the king said unto me, [h] For what dost thou make request? [i] So I prayed to the God of heaven.

5 And I said unto the king, [k] If it please the king, and [l] if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it.

6 And the king said unto me, (the * queen also sitting by him,) For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? [m] So it pleased the king to send me; and [n] I set him a time.

f 1 Kings i. 31. Dan ii. 4. v. 10. vi. 21.
g i. 3.
h 1 Kings iii 5. Esth v. 3. 6. vii. 2. Mark x. 51.
i i. 11. 2 Sam xv. 31. Prov iii. 6.
k Ezra v. 17. Esth i. 19. v. 8. vii. 3. viii. 5.
l Ruth ii. 13 2 Sam. xiv. 22.
* Heb *wife*.
m 4 i 11. Is. lxv. 24.
n v. 14. xiii. 6.

7 Moreover I said unto the king, If it please the king, [o] let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over till I come into Judah;

8 And a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber, to make beams for the gates of the palace which *appertained* to the house, and [q] for the wall of the city, and [r] for the house that I shall enter into. And [s] the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.

9 ¶ Then I came [t] to the governors beyond the river, and gave them the king's letters. (Now [u] the king had sent captains of the army and horsemen with me.)

10 When [x] Sanballat the [y] Horonite, and Tobiah [z] the servant, [a] the Ammonite, heard *of it*, [b] it grieved them ex-

o 9. Ezra vi. 6. vii. 21.
p Ezra viii. 22
q 17. iii. 1, 6.
r iii. 7 vii 2.
s 18. Ezra v 5. vi. 22. vii 6 9. 27, 28 Dan i 9. Acts vii 10. xxvi. 22. xxviii. 15. 2 Cor. viii. 16.
t 7.
u Ezra viii 22. x 19 iv. 1—3. 7. vi 1.
y 1s xv 5 Jer. xlviii 5. 34.
z Prov xxx. 22 Ec. x 7.
a xiii. 1.
b Num. xxii 3, 4. Ps. cxxii 6—8. Prov xxvii. 7. Ez. xxv 6—7. Mic. vii 9, 10 16, 17. Acts iv 7 v. 24. xix. 25 27.

in proportion to their tyranny. Lest poison should be mixed with their wine, they required the cup-bearers to drink before them out of the same cup: and some conjecture that Nehemiah, being oppressed with grief, had forgotten to observe this custom. Had, however, the least suspicion been excited of criminal designs, the immediate torture or execution of Nehemiah might have been the consequence, for the Persian monarchs frequently with little ceremony thus treated those who had before been their chief favourites. He might also fear failing of his purpose, as the king seemed displeased, and no favourable opportunity for his request was yet afforded.

V. 3. Nehemiah in answering the king, testified his cordial and loyal affection, by wishing the long continuance of his life and prosperity in the customary manner. He perhaps meant the words likewise as a prayer for his salvation: but they were not generally understood in that sense. Thus "God save the king," as generally used, means no more, than "Let the king live and prosper:" but the words, when duly attended to, contain a solemn prayer to God, for his temporal preservation, and his eternal salvation!—Nehemiah said nothing to Artaxerxes concerning the *religion* of the Jews; perhaps he saw that he was more regardless in that respect than formerly. (*Ezra* vii.) Or perhaps he supposed that he would not attend to that subject so candidly from a young courtier, as he had done from an aged priest and learned scribe of the law of God: but some think he was induced to wave it, because the company present were unfavourable. He therefore represented the afflicted defenceless state of that city, where his ancestors lay interred; and how could he but be grieved that their sepulchres should be so disgraced? or how avoid sympathizing with his distressed countrymen?—Arguments of this kind the men of the world well understand: but, alas! they little feel the force of those which are infinitely more important.

V. 4. Nehemiah could not in this emergency retire for prayer; but he lifted up his heart in a silent ejaculation to the God of heaven, to prosper him, according to the tenour of those prayers which he had for a long time been presenting before him; and perhaps the concluding part of the prayer contained in the preceding chapter, was secretly offered at this time.—"Prosper thy servant *this day*, and "grant him mercy in the sight of this man."

V. 6. It is probable that it was Esther, the queen, who was present at this time, and that she seconded Nehemiah's request. Perhaps he had been preferred through her interest, and that of Mordecai: and her presence seems to be mentioned, as a favourable and not common circumstance, and an answer to his prayers. The king was not willing to be long deprived of the service of one, who possessed his confidence and affection; and we may suppose, that Nehemiah obtained leave of absence for a shorter time than he actually continued at Jerusalem: but he either returned to obtain a new commission, or had it renewed in his absence by the special favour of the king.

V. 7. Ezra went as a priest and a scribe, though armed with civil authority; and in consistency with his character and profession he would not require a guard. But Nehemiah went to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, and to defend the Jews against their enemies: and it was very consistent with his avowed design, to petition the king, that the governors should be ordered to escort him with proper military attendants, which would both afford him protection, and add dignity to his undertaking. Indeed the king likewise ordered him a guard, till he had crossed the Euphrates, (9.)

V. 8. The palace here mentioned seems to mean the temple, or some of those buildings which surrounded it. Nehemiah proposed to build a house also for the governor, and to do all other things, which might place his people in a more secure and respectable situation.

ceedingly, that [c] there was come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel.

11 So [d] I came to Jerusalem, and was there three days.

12 ¶ And [e] I arose in the night, I and some few men with me; [f] neither told I *any* man what [g] my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem: neither *was there any* beast with me, save the beast that I rode upon.

13 And I went out by night by [h] the gate of the valley, even before the dragon-well, and to [i] the dung port, and viewed [k] the walls of Jerusalem, which were broken down, and the gates thereof were consumed with fire.

14 Then I went on to [l] the gate of the fountain, and to the king's pool: but *there was* no place for the beast *that was* under me to pass.

15 Then went I up in the night by [m] the brook, and viewed the wall, and turned back, and entered by [n] the gate of the valley, and *so* returned.

16 And [o] the rulers knew not whither I went, or what I did; neither had I as yet told *it* to the Jews, nor to the priests, nor to the nobles, nor to the rulers, nor to the rest that did the work.

17 Then said I unto them, [p] Ye see the distress that we *are* in, how Jerusalem *lieth* waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: [q] come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more [r] a reproach.

18 Then I told them of [s] the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also the king's words that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build. [t] So they strengthened their hands for this good *work*.

19 But when [u] Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, [x] and Geshem the Arabian, heard *it*, [y] they laughed us to scorn, and despised us, and said, What *is* this thing that ye do? [z] will ye rebel against the king?

20 Then answered I them, and said unto them, [a] The God of heaven, he will prosper us; therefore we his servants will arise and build: but [b] ye have no portion, nor right, nor [c] memorial, in Jerusalem.

c Ezra iv. 4, &c.
d Ezra viii 32.
e Gen. xxxii. 22—24. Josh x. 9 Judg vi. 27. ix. 32. Matt. ii. 14.
f Ec. iii 7. Am. v. 13. Mic vii 5. Matt. x 16
g Ezra vii.27 Jer xxxi 33 xxxii 40. 2 Cor viii. 16. Jam. i 16, 17
h 15 iii.13. 2 Chr. xxvi. 9.
i iii.13, 14. xii,31.
k 17. i.3. Jer. v. 10.
l iii. 15. 2 Kings xviii 17 xx 20. 2 Chr. xxxii. 30.
m 2 Sam. xv. 23. Jer xxxi. 40. John xviii. 1.
n 13.
o 12.
p Lam. iii. 51
q Ezra v. 1, 2. x. 2—4 Is. xxxv. 3, 4.
r i. 3 1 Sam xi.2. Ps. xliv. 13. lxxix 4. lxxxix. 50, 51 Lam iii. 45, 46. Ez. v. 14, 15. xxii. 4, 5.
s 8
t 2 Sam ii. 7. 1 Chr xi. 10. xix 13 Hag i. 13, 14 Eph vi. 10. Phil. ii. 17.
u 10. vi. 1, 2.
x vi. 6. Gashmu.
y Job xxx. 1. Ps. xliv. 13, 14. Jer xx. 8. Mark v. 40. Heb. xi 36.
z vii. 6 Ezra iv. 15, 16 Luke xxiii 2. John xix. 12 Acts xxiv 5
a Ps xx 6. xxxv. 27. cxxii. 6.
b Ezra iv. 3. Acts viii 21.
c Zech vi. 14 Acts x. 4 31.

V. 10. Sanballat is supposed to have been a Moabite, of Horonaim, a city of Moab: and Tobiah was an Ammonite. Moab and Ammon were subjugated and carried captive by the kings of Babylon: but it appears they had been restored, according to the predictions of Jeremiah. (*Jer.* xlviii. 47. xlix. 6.) And it is likely that Sanballat and Tobiah, (as well as Geshem the Arabian afterwards mentioned,) were placed by the king of Persia in authority over their own people, and the Samaritans or rather tribes in that neighbourhood, who were generally enemies to the Jews. Sanballat and Tobiah, however, were full of malice against them, and exceedingly grieved to find that one was come from the king of Persia, to protect them from further injuries.

V. 11. It would doubtless soon be known that Nehemiah was come with a commission from Artaxerxes; but he did not disclose the nature of his business, till he had made previous observations, and consulted with a few select friends, in whom he could place the most entire confidence.

V. 12—16. Nehemiah seems to have used every precaution to conceal his intentions, till he had obtained the unanimous consent of the people, and they were actually employed in the work; knowing that their enemies would attempt to divide or discourage them. We may suppose that the moon shone when he made his observations, and that he had provided skilful guides to accompany him in this survey. Yet even they, who afterwards presided and did the work, were not at this time consulted. The account here given, is well suited to show us the ruinous and defenceless state of the city, nearly a hundred years after the return of the Jews from captivity; and Nehemiah's personal survey formed a suitable preparation to his address to the people, and would enable him to obviate any objections, and prevent any misrepresentations, that might be made. Nothing more is known of the several places mentioned, than what may be collected from the marginal references.

V. 17, 18. The reader will note the piety of the language, used by Nehemiah on this as well as every other occasion. When he exhorted the Jews to arise and exert themselves in rebuilding the wall of the city; he showed them that the kindness of the Persian king to him, was the effect of the powerful interposition of God in their behalf. Thus they were animated and emboldened to undertake the work.

V. 19, 20. Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem, as determined enemies to the Jewish nation, soon got intelligence of Nehemiah's designs, notwithstanding his precautions; (vi. 17, 18;) and they attempted to deride the efforts of the Jews, as if the work was impracticable: nay, they represented the undertaking, as an act of rebellion against the king; though they could not but know that Nehemiah acted by his commission. But they meant, if possible, to frighten, to disunite, and to dishearten the people, that they might abandon the undertaking. But Nehemiah only answered, that the God of heaven would prosper his servants: and as to the Samaritans, they had no *portion* in him, no *right* to interfere; nor any *memorial* in Jerusalem

CHAP. III.

The names and order of those who built the walls of Jerusalem, 1—32.

a xii. 10. xiii. 28. THEN [a] Eliashib the high-priest rose up, with his brethren the priests, and they builded [b] the sheep-gate; they [c] sanctified it, and set up the doors of it; even unto the tower of Meah they sanctified it, unto [d] the tower of Hananeel.

b xii. 39. John v. 2. c xii. 30. Deut. xx. 5. Ps. xxx. *title* Prov. iii. 6 9. d Jer. xxxi. 38 Zech. xiv. 10.

to prove, that either by birth, or by being proselyted, they were Israelites, as they pretended to be. He very prudently avoided all further communication.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

Unavoidable delays, when employed in fervent persevering prayer, often forward the success of pious undertakings. —Though cheerfulness is in general an ornament to religion: yet there are also seasons for mourning when it cannot be concealed. The children of this world can understand the propriety of our grieving, when we are sick and in pain; when impoverished, bereaved, or disappointed in our temporal pursuits: but they cannot conceive, why the heart should be heavy, or the countenance sad, if no outward calamity have befallen us. Yet conscious guilt, the fear or sense of God's displeasure, the afflictions of his people, the prevalence of impiety, and the decays of religion, are far more reasonable and important causes of grief; under which no confluence of earthly delights can comfort the children of God. We must however expect that worldly men will ascribe such sorrows to melancholy, discontent, moroseness, or even some more criminal cause; and they, who are strangers to the believer's consolations, are apt to infer from his complaints, that religion is uncomfortable, and unfits men for social life. We should therefore in general conceal our grief, or disclose it to the Lord and to his people. The very persons, from whose favour many advantages may be expected, are also greatly to be dreaded. Inconstancy is connected with all the partialities and affections of absolute princes; and suspicions are multiplied in proportion as power is abused. They cannot confide in those, who do not, as they think, serve them from affection: but so many causes may induce courtiers to feign attachment, that they cannot but distrust at times even their favourites. Hence the speedy ruin or disgrace of those, on whom honours and emoluments have been most lavished; without any cause, but caprice or groundless jealousy. "It is therefore better to trust in the LORD, "than to put any confidence in princes." A meek and modest explanation best tends to banish groundless suspicions. Yet we should study consistency with our character, professions, and relative situations, and consider those of the person we speak to; if we would behave "with wis-"dom towards them that are without," avoid giving any needless disgust, and do good to the church of God by their means. We must not speak falsehood; but we are not bound always to speak all we think, when a part of it will best answer every useful purpose. Ejaculatory petitions may be presented to the Lord in any place or company, and should be intermixed with every transaction in which a Christian is engaged. They neither supersede, nor are rendered unnecessary by, our more stated devotions: and the habit of thus keeping up an intercourse with Heaven is of vast importance and advantage. Indeed we ought never to engage in any pursuit, in which it would be improper thus to expect, and seek the divine direction, assistance, and blessing. The Lord so orders every circumstance, as may best answer the prayers of his people. He turns their most distressing fears into grateful praises: he exceeds their largest hopes; and even they, who know him not, will be inclined to favour his servants, "accord-"ing to the good hand of their God upon them."

V. 9—20.

The enemies of the Lord must grieve, in proportion as his servants rejoice, when those in authority, and endowed with suitable qualifications, are raised up to promote the cause of truth and holiness, and the welfare of his church: for the enmity of the serpent's seed against the cause of Christ is confined to no age or nation; it springs from hatred of God himself, and is irritated in proportion as he is glorified. But we ought steadily to proceed with our proper work, possessing our souls in patience, and uniting in our conduct, wisdom and zeal, vigilance and courage, self-denial and activity. If we even attempt any thing good, in a proper manner, "God hath put it into our "hearts." But, we should first carefully consider what most wants doing, both in the concerns of our own souls, and in those of the church: and investigation will generally discover a great deal that needs to be rectified. When matters are fairly proposed, and men in authority or reputation take the lead, and animate others also, the most timid and indolent may be roused and encouraged to action. But favourable opportunities should be seized; and they, who would accomplish any useful design, to rescue the church of God from just occasion of reproach, must be strengthened to endure contempt, reviling, and menaces, as well as labour and hardship. The God of heaven will prosper his people, and clear their characters from aspersions, as well as deliver them from affliction: but wretched are they, who have no portion, nor right, nor memorial in the new Jerusalem, the city of our God! However, we should always be ready to give a meek and reasonable answer to objectors; and, blessed be God, even despisers and revilers, whilst they are warned of their danger, may be invited to cease from their opposition, and to be reconciled to God; that, after all, they may have their lot among his people, and not among his enemies.

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1. It is supposed that the *sheep-gate* immediately communicated with the temple; and that the cattle for sacrifices were usually brought in that way. The

2 And * next unto him builded [e] the men of Jericho. And next to them builded [f] Zaccur the son of Imri.

3 But [g] the fish-gate did the sons of Hassenaah build, who *also* laid [h] the beams thereof, and set up [i] the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof.

4 And next unto them repaired [k] Meremoth the son of [l] Urijah, the son of Koz. And next unto them repaired [m] Meshullam the son of Berechiah, the son of Meshezabeel. And next unto them repaired Zadok the son of Baana.

5 And next unto them [n] the Tekoites repaired; but [o] their nobles [p] put not their necks to the work of their LORD.

6 Moreover [q] the old gate repaired Jehoiada the son of Paseah, and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah; they laid the beams thereof, and set up the doors thereof, and the locks thereof, and the bars thereof.

7 And next unto them repaired Melatiah [r] the Gibeonite, and Jadon the Meronothite, the men of Gibeon, and of [s] Mizpah, unto [t] the throne of the governor on this side the river.

8 Next unto him repaired Uzziel the son of Harhaiah, of [u] the goldsmiths. Next unto him also repaired Hananiah, the son of *one* [x] *of* the apothecaries, and they † fortified Jerusalem unto the [y] broad wall.

9 And next unto them repaired Rephaiah the son of Hur, [z] the ruler of the half part of Jerusalem.

10 And next unto them repaired Jedaiah the son of Harumaph, even over against his house. And next unto him repaired [b] Hattush the son of Hashabniah.

11 Malchijah the son of [c] Harim, and Hashub the son of [d] Pahath-moab, repaired the ‡ other piece, and [e] the tower of the furnaces.

12 And next unto him repaired Shallum the son of Halohesh, [f] the ruler of the half part of Jerusalem, [g] he and his daughters.

13 [h] The valley-gate repaired Hanun, and the inhabitants of [i] Zanoah; they built it, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof, and a thousand cubits on the wall unto the dung-gate.

14 But [k] the dung-gate repaired Malchiah the son of Rechab, [l] the ruler of part of [m] Beth-haccerem; he built it, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof.

15 But [n] the gate of the fountain repaired Shallum the son of Col-hozeh, [o] the ruler of part of [p] Mizpah; he built it, and covered it, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof, and the wall of the pool of [q] Siloah by the king's garden, and unto

* Heb. *at his hand.*
e vii. 36.
f x. 12.
g xii. 39. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 14. Zeph. i. 10.
h 6. ii. 8.
i vi. 1. vii. 1.
k 21. x. 5.
l Ezra viii. 33. *Uriah.*
m x. 7.
n 27. 2 Sam. xiv. 2. Am. i. 1.
o Judg. v. 23. Jer. v. 5. 1 Cor. i. 26.
p Jer. xxvii. 2. 8. 12. xxx. 8, 9. Matt. xi. 29.
q xii. 39.
r Josh. ix. 3, &c. 2 Sam. xxi. 2.
s 19. 2 Chr. xvi. 6.
t ii. 8.
u 31, 32. Is. xlvi. 6.
x Ex. xxx. 25. Ec. x. 1.
† Or. *left.*
y xii. 38.
z 12. 17.
a 23. 28–29.
b x. 2.
c x. 5.
d vii. 11. Ezra viii. 4.
‡ Heb. *second measure.*
e xii. 38.
f 9. 14, 15. 18, 19.
g Ex. xxxv. 25. Acts xxi. 8, 9. Phil. iv. 3.
h ii. 13.
i Josh. xv. 34.
k ii. 13. xii. 31.
l 9. 12. 15. 18, 19.
m Jer. vi. 1.
n ii. 14. xii. 37. 2 Chr. xxxii. 30.
o 9. 12. 14.
p 7. xi. 5. Judg. xx. 1, 3. *Mizpeh.* Jer. xl. 6.
q Is. viii. 6. *Shiloah.* Luke xiii. 4. John ix. 7. *Siloam.*

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high-priest, and his brethren, either his near relations or the chief priests, the heads of their several courses, rebuilt this part of the wall at their own expense; and perhaps some of them on this emergency laboured at it with their own hands. Of this part alone it is said, that "they "sanctified it;" which may mean, that they began the work with prayer, and concluded it with praise, and thus consecrated their service to the Lord, for the security of his temple and worshippers. Little is certainly known concerning the situation of the several gates and places mentioned in this chapter. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 5. *Their nobles*, &c. The chief persons of Tekoah refused to give any assistance, either by their labour, their substance, or their servants. Disregarding the authority of God himself, whose work it was, no wonder that they would not submit to the commands of Nehemiah, their governor, who seems to be meant by the expression "their lord:" and for this they are branded with disgrace in the word of God.—But the inferior citizens, instead of following their example, undertook a second part, when they had completed that which was first allotted them: (27.) The expression *put not their necks*, renders it probable, that those who were well disposed, of whatever rank, assisted by their personal labours.

V. 7. *The throne*, &c. This seems to have been some judgment-hall, to which the governors of the kings of Persia came, from time to time, to administer justice. Probably Nehemiah now occupied it; for his particular commission superseded their more general authority.

V. 10. Several persons are mentioned who built, or repaired, the wall which was over against their own houses, or chambers. They lived near to the wall; so that this arrangement was most convenient for them: and thus at the same time they provided for their own security, and the common benefit of the city.

V. 11. It is not known what the expression *the other piece*, or *the second measure*, refers to.

V. 12. Several rulers of half parts of cities are mentioned. (*Marg. Ref.*) It is probable that two superior magistrates were placed over the principal cities, with equal authority, to reside in different parts of them. Shallum seems to have had no sons; and his daughters as heiresses

the stairs that go down from the city of David.

16 After him repaired Nehemiah the son of Azbuk, [s] the ruler of the half part of [t] Beth-zur, unto *the place* over against [u] the sepulchres of David, and to [x] the pool that was made, and unto [y] the house of the mighty.

17 After him repaired the Levites, Rehum the son of Bani. Next unto him repaired Hashabiah, [z] the ruler of the half part of [a] Keilah, in his part.

18 After him repaired their brethren, Bavai the son of Henadad, the ruler of the half part of Keilah.

19 And next to him repaired Ezer the son of [b] Jeshua, the ruler of [c] Mizpah, another piece over against the going up to the armoury, at [d] the turning *of the wall.*

20 After him Baruch the son of * Zabbai [e] earnestly repaired the other piece, from the turning *of the wall* unto the door of the house of [f] Eliashib the high-priest.

21 After him repaired [g] Meremoth the son of Urijah, the son of [h] Koz, another piece, from the door of the house of Eliashib, even to the end of the house of Eliashib.

22 And after him repaired the priests, [i] the men of the plain.

23 After him repaired Benjamin and Hashub [k] over against their house. After him repaired [l] Azariah the son of [m] Maaseiah, the son of Ananiah, by his house.

24 After him repaired [n] Binnui the son of Henadad [o] another piece, from the house of Azariah unto [p] the turning *of the wall*, even unto the corner.

25 Palal the son of Uzai, over against the turning *of the wall*, and the tower which lieth out from [q] the king's high house, that *was* [r] by the court of the prison. After him [s] Pedaiah the son of [t] Parosh.

26 Moreover the [u] Nethinims † dwelt in ‡ Ophel, unto *the place* over against [x] the water-gate toward the east, and the tower that lieth out.

27 After them [y] the Tekoites repaired another piece, over against the great tower that lieth out, even unto [z] the wall of Ophel.

28 From above [a] the horse-gate repaired the priests, [b] every one over against his house.

29 After them repaired Zadok [c] the son of Immer over against his house. After him repaired also Shemaiah the son of [d] Shechaniah, the keeper of [e] the east gate.

30 After him repaired Hananiah the son of Shelemiah, and Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph, [f] another piece. After him repaired [g] Meshullam the son of Berechiah over against his chamber.

31 After him repaired Malchiah [h] the goldsmith's son unto the place of the Nethinims, and of the merchants, over against the gate Miphkad, and to the ◊ going up of the corner.

32 And between the going up of the corner unto [i] the sheep-gate repaired [k] the goldsmiths and the merchants.

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contributed with him to the expense of the work. Perhaps they were widows.

V. 15. *Stairs.* It is probable, these *stairs* formed a communication between the city of David, and the other parts of Jerusalem.

V. 16. *The house of the mighty* is thought to have been a guard-chamber, where the most valiant soldiers kept guard to defend the palace of the kings of Judah.

V. 20. *Earnestly*, &c. Baruch, being more assiduous than others, probably stirred them up to greater diligence.

V. 25. *The king's high house* perhaps was some lofty building from which the watchmen might make their observations.

V. 31. *Miphkad* signifies *judgment, visitation*, or *correction;* and it is thought a prison was situated near this gate.

V. 32. *Sheep-gate.* Thus the whole city was surrounded with a wall: for Eliashib began at the sheep-gate.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Ministers should always be ready to labour and venture for the good of their brethren; and they, who have the precedency, should take the lead, in setting that good example which gives energy to their instructions: but especially they should thus teach the people how to sanctify their secular employments, by beginning, conducting, and completing them with prayer and thanksgiving, according to the word of God, and to his glory. The security and prosperity of the church, in every part of the world, is the common cause of all Christians wherever they reside:

CHAP. IV.

Sanballat and his company are wroth, and ridicule the Jews: but Nehemiah prays, and builds the wall, 1—6. *He discovers that they secretly are plotting against him, and setteth a watch,* 7—12. *He arms the builders, and gives them suitable orders and directions,* 13—23.

BUT it came to pass, that when Sanballat heard that we builded the wall, [a] he was wroth, and took great indignation, and [b] mocked the Jews.

2 And he spake before his brethren, and [c] the army of Samaria, and said, What do these [d] feeble Jews? will they * fortify themselves? [e] will they sacrifice? will they make an end in a day? will they [f] revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burned?

3 Now [g] Tobiah the Ammonite *was* by him, and he said, Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone-wall.

4 [h] Hear, O our God; for we are † despised: and [i] turn their reproach upon their own head, and give them for a prey in the land of captivity:

5 And [k] cover not their iniquity, and let not [l] their sin be blotted out from before thee: for they have provoked *thee* to anger [m] before the builders.

a ii. 10. 19. Ezra iv. 1—5. Acts v. 17.
b Ps xxxv. 15, 16. xliv. 13, 14. Matt. xxvii 29 Heb. xi. 36.
c Ezra iv. 9, 10.
d 1 Sam. xiv. 11, 12. xvii 43, 44. 1 Cor i. 27
* Heb. *leave to themselves.*
e xii 27 43.
f Ez. xxxvii. 3—13. Hab iii 2.
g ii. 10. 19. vi. 1.
h Ps. cxxiii. 2, 3.
† Heb. *despite.*
i Ps lxxix. 12. Prov. iii.
k Ps. lix. 5—12, 13. lxix 27 28. cix. 14, 15 Jer. xviii 23 2 Tim. iv. 14
l Ps. li 9. Is. xliii 25. xliv 22.
m Is. xxxvi 11, 12.

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and all orders of men should assist in promoting them. No age, sex, or station of life, can dispense with this obligation: every one, in one way or another, may do something towards it; and where much is given much will be required. But, alas! the rich and noble generally count it their privilege to be *useless*, which they cannot be, without setting an example, mischievous in proportion to their influence: and no wonder that they disregard the proclamations of the prince, which call them to attend the service of God; when they disdain the yoke of the Almighty Lord himself. But before him they are upon a level with the meanest of their inferiors; except that a more dreadful punishment and deeper disgrace await their impenitent and ungrateful rebellion! Sometimes the zeal and activity in the cause of God, of those in the inferior orders, expose and condemn the pride, sloth, and self-indulgence, or impiety of those who are intrusted with more talents; and thus they whom men despise, obtain and engross that honour which cometh from God. If in times of prevalent ungodliness, numbers in different stations would agree, first to look to themselves, and to reform their families as far as they could: and then to use all their influence to promote the general work of reformation, much good might be expected to be speedily done: and though most men still neglect this their duty; let those who lament the triumphs of iniquity, and the desolations of piety, every one "repair "opposite to his own house, or chamber;" and let all endeavour to do what they can, by their prayers, example, education of their children, and pious conversation, to promote and recommend that cause which they have espoused. And when such attempts are directed by men of vigour, prudence, and piety, and conducted with entire harmony, to the exclusion of envy, contention, or divisions: and when every one, beside doing his proper work earnestly, is ready to assist those who are overburthened, there is no reason to doubt of success: "for the fruit of righteousness is sown in "peace of them that make peace." May the Lord stir up the hearts of all his people, to lay aside their disputes, and to disregard their worldly interests in comparison of "building the walls of Jerusalem," and defending the cause of evangelical truth and vital godliness against the assaults of avowed enemies. May those offences cease, which weaken the common cause, and expose it to reproach. And may the church of Christ thus fortified, as "a city that is at unity in itself," and adorned by the beauties of holiness, attract the attention, the admiration, and the love of beholders; silence the reproaches of calumniators, and dismay the heart or repel the assaults of every hostile invader! Amen.

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1—3. Sanballat, and the other enemies of the Jews, though enraged at them for undertaking to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, were restrained from openly opposing them, in part by contempt. They concluded, that either they would not venture on such a work, or if they did, that they would make little progress, notwithstanding their earnestness. But when they heard that all hands were diligently employed, they were very angry; yet they affected to treat the business with the utmost disdain. Sanballat uttered his sarcasms before his brethren (or the principal commanders in that neighbourhood,) and the army of Samaria; whom he knew to be more inveterate against the Jews, than any other of the tribes under his command: but he supposed they would soon be reported at Jerusalem, and tend to discourage the builders. With a mixture of scorn and indignation, he inquired, what the feeble Jews were doing? Could *they* think of fortifying so large a city? Did they intend to complete such a work in a day, and to secure themselves from interruption, while they spent the next in sacrificing? And what would they do for materials? The stones formerly used in this work were broken in pieces, or decayed by lying so long under the rubbish; the builders could not *revive* or make them new again, nor could they procure any others. With equal disdain Tobiah replied, that a wall built *by them* in such haste and of such materials, would be no security at all; for that the weight of a fox running over it would break it down! But this contempt and ridicule induced them to lose the opportunity of attempting more effectual opposition.

V. 4, 5. The Jews were at this time the church of

6 So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people [n] had a mind to work.

7 ¶ But it came to pass, *that* when [o] Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and [p] the Ammonites, and [q] the Ashdodites, [r] heard that the walls of Jerusalem * were made up, *and* that the breaches began to be stopped, [s] then they were very wroth,

8 And [t] conspired all of them together, to come *and* to fight against Jerusalem, and to † hinder it.

9 Nevertheless [u] we made our prayer unto our God, and [x] set a watch against them day and night, because of them.

10 And Judah said, [y] The strength of the [z] bearers of burdens is decayed, and *there is* much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall.

11 And our adversaries said, [a] They shall not know, neither see, till we come in the midst among them, and slay them, and cause the work to cease.

12 And it came to pass, that when the Jews which dwelt by them came, they said unto us [b] ten times, ‡ from all places whence ye shall return unto us *they will be upon you.*

13 Therefore [c] set I in ◊ the lower places behind the wall, *and* on the higher places, I even set the people after their families with [d] their swords, their spears, and their bows.

14 And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, [e] Be not ye afraid of them: [f] remember the LORD, *which is* [g] great and terrible, and [h] fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses.

15 And it came to pass, when our enemies heard that it was known unto us, and [i] God had brought their counsel to nought, that we returned all of us to the wall, [k] every one unto his work.

n vi. 14. 1 Chr xxix 3. 14. 17, 18. 2 Chr xxix. 36. Ps. cx. 3. 2 Cor viii. 16, 17. Phil. ii. 13. Heb. xiii. 21.
o 1. ii 16 19.
p Judg x. 7, &c. xi. 12, &c 1 Sam. xi. 2. 2 Sam x 1 — 5. 2 Kings xxiv. 2 2 Chr xx. 1. Ez. xxv. 3 — 7. Am i. 13.
q xiii. 23, 24. 1 Sam. v. 1, 2. 2 Chr. xxvi 6—8. Jer. xxv 20. Am i 8. iii 9. Zech ix. 5, 6.
r Ezra iv. 4—16. v 6.
* Heb *ascended*
s Gen. iii 15 Acts iv 17, 18. v. 33. Rev. xii. 12. 13. 17
t Ps. ii. 1 — 3. lxxxiii 4—11 Is viii 9, 10 Acts xxiii. 12, 13
† Heb *make an error to it*
u i 11 Gen. xxxii. 9 — 11. 28 2 Kings xix. 14—19. Ps l. 15. lv 16 - 18. Luke vi 11, 12. Acts iv 24—30.
x Matt xxvi. 41 Luke xxi. 36. 1 Pet. v. 8
y Num. xiii. 31 xxxii 9. Ps. xi. 1, 2. Hag i. 2. ——z 2 Chr. ii. 18. Ez. xxix. 18.——a Judg. xx. 29, &c. Ps.lvi 6. Is xlvii. 11. 1 Thes. v. 2.

b Gen. xxxi. 7. 41. Num xiv. 22. Job xix 3.
‡ Or, *That from all places ye must return to us*
c Gen xxxii 13 — 20. 2 Chr. xxxii. 2—8. Ps. cxii 5 Matt. x 16. 1 Cor. xiv 20.
◊ Heb. *from the lower parts of*, &c.
d 17, 18. Cant. iii. 7, 8. Eph. vi. 11—20.
e Num xiv. 9. Deut. i 21. xx. 3, 4 Josh. i. 9. 2 Chr xx 15—17. xxxii 7. Ps. xxvii. 1 xlvi. 11. Is xli 10—14. Heb xiii 6.
f Is. xx 7 lxxvii. 10—20. cxliii. 5. Is. li. 12, 13. lxiii. 11—13.
g 5 Deut. x. 17. Job xxxvii. 22. Ps. lxv. 5. lxvi 3 Is lxiv. 1—3. Nah i. 2—7 Heb. xii. 20, 21 28, 29.
h 2 Sam x 12.
i 2 Sam xv. 31. xvii. 14. Job v. 12, 13 Ps xxxiii. 10, 11 Pro xxi. 30 Is. viii 10. xliv. 25. Lam. iii. 37 1 Cor. iii 9. 10
k Mark xiii. 34. Rom xii. 11 1 Thes iv. 11.

God: they were actually employed in his service: their enemies, without the smallest ground of complaint, despised and hated them for his sake: if they succeeded in their designs they would subvert true religion; and their condign punishment would form a salutary example to all other adversaries, and subserve the cause of truth and righteousness. So that zeal for the honour of God, and love to his people, induced Nehemiah to pray that these scorners might be exposed to that reproach which they cast on the Jews, and become a prey to their enemies in the land of their captivity, as these had been; and that their sins might not be covered, or blotted out, by the merciful forgiveness of God; seeing they had endeavoured to discourage the builders, and render them disaffected to their work; (*Marg. Ref.*) Such scriptural requests are *prophetical*, or *declaratory* of the judgments of God against persecutors: and the subsequent doom of these nations was an answer to this prayer.

V. 6. *The half*, &c. The whole circuit of the wall was completed to half of the intended height.

V. 7, 8. As all these nations, (except perhaps the Arabians,) were subjects of the kings of Persia; and were induced by Sanballat to unite against the Jews when acting by the king's commission, their attempt was a *conspiracy* in the most criminal sense. Dreading either his resentment, or the valour of the Jews; they dared not to attack them openly, notwithstanding the greatness of their malice.

V. 9. The connexion, here marked, between the greatest simplicity and piety in trusting God alone and seeking help from him, and the most vigilant and diligent activity in the use of proper means, is well worthy of notice.

V. 10. The princes of Judah, while the work was in hand, represented to Nehemiah, that the people were so worn down, and the remaining labour (especially in removing the rubbish to get materials) was so great, that their design was impracticable, and must be abandoned, at least for the present. This must have been a great discouragement to him, in conjunction with all his other difficulties and dangers.

V. 11. Some think, that the princes reported these sayings of the adversaries; in order to intimidate the builders: being themselves weary of the labour, and not cordially affected to the cause. But it was not likely, that Sanballat could introduce into the city so large a number of soldiers, as would suffice to overpower and destroy all the Jews, and stop the work, without being discovered, till he and his troops were in the midst of the builders. Indeed their conduct in reporting such a design was more suited to intimidate the inconsiderate, than to convince wise men that they really expected to carry it into execution.

V. 12. This verse is of difficult construction; and this seems to have been the effect of the abrupt manner, in which the persons intended expressed their excessive terror. They lived near to the hostile nations, and were continually coming to Jerusalem with information, that the enemy was preparing to attack the people from every quarter; and would certainly fall upon them, whether they continued at their work or attempted to return home. Probably they meant to put their brethren upon their guard: but these rumours tended to intimidate them, and drive them from the work. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 15. After all the preparations which Nehemiah and the Jews had made, their conspirators did not venture to attack them: and neither being able to surprise them nor fright them from their work, they for the present desisted.

16 And it came to pass from that time forth, *that* the half of [l] my servants wrought in the work, and the other half of them held both the spears, the shields, and the bows, and the habergeons; and the rulers *were* behind all the house of Judah.

l 23. v. 15, 16. Ps. ci. 6.

17 They which builded on the wall, and they that [m] bare burdens, with those that laded, *every one* [n] with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other *hand* held a weapon.

m 10.

n Dan. ix 25 1 Cor. ix 26. xvi. 13. 2 Cor vi 7 Eph. vi. 11, &c. 2 Tim. ii. 3. iv. 7.

18 For the builders, every one had his sword girded * by his side, and *so* builded: and [o] he that sounded the trumpet *was* by me.

* Heb. *on his loins.*

o Num. x. 9. 2 Chr. xiii. 12—17.

19 And I said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, The work *is* great and large, and we are separated upon the wall, one far from another.

20 In what place *therefore* ye hear the sound of the trumpet, resort ye thither unto us: [p] our God shall fight for us.

p Ex. xiv. 14. 25. Deut. i. 30 iii 22. xx 4 Josh xxiii 10.

21 So [q] we laboured in the work: and half of them held the spears, from the rising of the morning till the stars appeared.

q 1 Cor xv. 10. 58 Gal. vi. 9

22 Likewise at the same time said I unto the people, Let [r] every one with his servant lodge within Jerusalem, that in the night they may be a guard to us, and labour on the day.

r xi. 1, 2.

23 So neither [s] I, nor my brethren, nor my servants, nor the men of the guard which followed me, none of us put off our clothes, † *saving that* every one put them off for washing.

s v. 16, 17. vii. 3. Judg ix. 48.

† Or, *Every one went with his weapon for water* Judg. v. 11

V. 16—18. The builders could not possibly have made any progress, if they had literally held a weapon in one of their hands. Indeed it is evident, that they wore their swords by their sides. But the expression is figurative, implying that every man was both a builder and a soldier. They worked and bare arms by turns: they wore swords at their labour, and those behind them had other arms ready, when the alarm should be given.

V. 20. The priests were directed to blow the sacred trumpets; and no doubt one at least of them constantly attended, to sound the alarm when needful: and this was a token that the Lord would fight for his people against their enemies. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 22. They who lived in the adjacent cities and villages, were required to lodge, with one or more servants in Jerusalem, to guard the work, and be ready for it in the morning; for this was to be attended to in preference even to their own families, as being more exposed to the assaults of their enemies.

V. 23. *Every one*, &c. Nehemiah and his attendants, in order that they might always be prepared against any alarm, took necessary rest by turns, in their clothes and armour; never undressing themselves, except for cleanliness, or ceremonial purification. Or as the margin renders the words, "When they went to fetch water, they carried "their arms."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

The pious labours of those, who try to promote true religion, must excite the indignation of such as are "haters "of God," and his truth and holiness: nay, in this case, the wisest and most excellent behaviour will be reproached and derided as madness and folly. The most sacred things may easily be represented in so ridiculous a light, as to excite profane laughter: a small measure of wit, united with competent malice, impiety, and imprudence, will suffice; and such presumptuous jesters whet one another's ingenuity, and embolden each other to the most daring blasphemies! Contempt and derision are indeed very painful to us: but they prove the Christian's protection, and give him leisure to effect his designs without more formidable opposition. The means which he uses appear feeble to proud despisers: but by the power and blessing of God, they produce durable and extensive effects; and all the efforts of man, seconded by the power and policy of hell, have failed, and ever will fail to subvert that cause, which infidels have dreamed would fall of itself, or on the first assault! Ere long the church on earth will triumph over every adversary; and all believers will soon offer the sacrifice of praise, for complete and eternal victory and salvation; notwithstanding the scoffs and rage of all their enemies. When insulted or injured, let us then give up ourselves to prayer: and the supplications of believers, throughout the world, for the prosperity of the church, and the spread of the Gospel, will eventually be answered in the reproach and merited punishment, of all impenitent opposers. As they reject the atonement, their sins cannot be covered; and their endeavours to hinder the progress of the Gospel will provoke the Lord above all their other sins. They, who disagree in almost every other thing, will often unite in persecution: and that enmity, which at one time dictates contempt and derision, will at another suggest more violent and cruel measures; especially when the servants of God are active, united, and successful. So that proud scorners are not fit to be trusted with power; whatever they may profess concerning candour and toleration. When we engage in important and useful undertakings, we should expect discouragement from every quarter. For we shall be tried not only by the anger, contempt, treachery, and cruelty of enemies, but also by the inconstancy and lukewarmness of friends and helpers: and many that wish well to us will weaken our hands by regarding and reporting the menaces, slanders, or boastings of our adversaries.

V. 13—23.

No opposition will prove any real hindrance to us, in our endeavours to do good, if we are led by it to a more simple

CHAP. V.

The poor Jews complain of their unavoidable debts, which compelled them to mortgage their lands, and sell their children, 1—5. *Nehemiah rebukes the rich usurers, who oppressed their brethren; and obliges them to engage on oath to make full restitution,* 6—13. *He refuses the Governor's customary allowances, and maintains great hospitality at his own charge,* 14—19.

AND there was [a] a great cry of the people, and of their wives, against [b] their brethren the Jews.

2 For there were that said, [c] We, our sons, and our daughters, *are* many: therefore [d] we take up corn *for them,* that we may eat and live.

3 *Some* also there were that said, [e] We have mortgaged our lands, vineyards, and houses, that we might buy corn, [f] because of the dearth.

4 There were also that said, We have borrowed money for [g] the king's tribute, *and that upon* our lands and vineyards.

5 Yet now [h] our flesh *is* as the flesh of our brethren, our children as their children: and, lo, [i] we bring into bondage our sons and our daughters to be servants, and *some* of our daughters are brought into bondage *already:* neither *is it* in our power *to redeem them;* for other men have our lands and vineyards.

6 And [k] I was very angry when I heard their cry, and these words.

7 Then * I consulted with myself, and [l] I rebuked the nobles and the rulers, and said unto them, [m] Ye exact usury, every one of his brother. And [n] I set a great assembly against them;

a Ex. iii. 7. xxii. 25—27. Job xxxi 38, 39. xxxiv 28. Is. v. 7. Luke xviii 7. Jam. v. 4.
b Lev. xxv. 35—37. Deut. xv. 7, 11. 1 Cor. vi. 6—8.
c Ps. cxxvii. 3—5. cxxviii. 2—4. Mal. ii. 2.
d Gen. xli. 57. xlii. 2. xliii. 8.
e Gen. xlvii. 15—25.
f Mal. iii. 8—11.
g ix. 37. Deut. xxviii. 47, 48. Josh. xvi. 10. 1 Kings ix. 21. Ezra iv. 13. 20.
h Gen. xxxvii. 27. Is. lviii. 7. 1 Cor. vi. 8.
i Ex. xxi. 1—11. Lev. xxv. 39—43. 2 Kings iv. 1. Matt. xviii. 25.
k xiii. 8. 25. Ex. xi. 8. Num. xvi. 15. Mark iii. 5. Eph. iv. 26.
* Heb. *my heart consulted in me.* Ps. iv. 4. xxvii. 8.
l Lev. xix. 15. 2 Chr. xix. 6, 7. Ps. lxxxii. 1—4. Prov. xxvii. 5. 2 Cor. v. 16. Gal. ii. 11. 1 Tim. v. 20. Tit. ii. 15.
m Ex. xxii. 25. Lev. xxv. 36. Deut. xv. 2, 3. xxiii. 19, 20. xxiv. 10—13. Ez. xxii. 12. xlv. 9.
n Matt. xviii. 17.

confidence in God, and to the more diligent use of proper means for obtaining success. A believing remembrance of his power, truth, and love, will prove a sufficient support in every danger; for "if God be for us, who can be "against us?" and, however craftily the plots of opposers are laid, he is able to detect them, and to bring to nought all their counsels. If our enemies cannot fright us from our duty, or deceive us into sin, or find us unwatchful, they cannot hurt us. When ministers, or other active instruments, add the example of diligence, courage, self-denial, and patience to their exhortations; others will be stirred up, who were before drawn or driven from their work. Every true Christian is both a labourer and a soldier, working with one hand and fighting with the other, and called by the sound of the Gospel, alternately to his work and to the conflict. We are widely dispersed in our several employments; but we all form one army, and must prepare to unite against the common enemy, in whatever place the assault is made. In this important cause, personal and relative interests must be comparatively disregarded: or rather they are most wisely attended to, when we commit them to the Lord, and labour for the benefit of his church. Whilst we stand armed and watching, as for the battle, we shall have the best security for peace; for Satan fears assaulting the vigilant Christian: or if we are attacked, our God will fight for us. Thus must we wait to the close of life, never putting off our armour, till our work and warfare be ended; and then we shall be welcomed to the rest and joy of our Lord.

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1—5. It seems, that the attention of Nehemiah was interrupted, before the wall was completed, by the affair recorded in this chapter. Amidst the depredations to which the Jews were exposed, and their attention to self-defence, it is likely that tillage was neglected, and that a scarcity of corn ensued. It is also supposed by learned men, that these events occurred in the sabbatical year; which would increase the difficulties of the poor, as well as aggravate the guilt of those who thence took occasion to oppress their brethren. The nation seems also to have been visited with scarcity for their sins. Such persons therefore as were in low circumstances, and had large families, were unable to buy necessary food except upon credit; and they were also compelled, in the same manner, to raise money for the tribute imposed by the king of Persia. Of these difficulties the monied men took advantage, and obtaining mortgages of their lands, got them into their possession; taking usury also for the money, of one hundredth part every month, or twelve per cent. a year (as it is generally supposed;) which soon reduced the debtors to deep poverty; and at length to the necessity of selling into slavery their sons, and even their daughters, who would be peculiarly exposed in that situation; and there appeared no prospect of redress, no hope of redeeming either their lands or their children, no period to their accumulating distresses, but an entire and perpetual bondage. Yet they were not only of the same nature, but of the same chosen seed, the children of the covenant, equally with the more prosperous Jews. They had the same affection for their children, and accounted a numerous family a blessing, as long as they could provide for them. They had not reduced themselves to this distress by prodigality; but were necessitated to contract debts through hard times and heavy taxes, and for necessary provisions: and the conduct of their oppressors was contrary to the letter and the spirit of the whole law; (*Marg. Ref.*) In this extremity they appealed to Nehemiah, and he immediately determined to do them justice.

V. 6, 7. Nehemiah appears to have possessed a far more bold and eager spirit, than his contemporary Ezra. For, in a situation something similar, Ezra fasted, prayed, wept,

8 And I said unto them, We, [o] after our ability, have [p] redeemed our brethren the Jews, which were sold unto the heathen; and will ye even [q] sell your brethren? or [r] shall they be sold unto us? Then [s] held they their peace, and found nothing *to answer*.

9 Also I said, [t] It *is* not good that ye do: ought ye not [u] to walk in the fear of our God, because of [x] the reproach of the heathen our enemies?

10 [y] I likewise, *and* my brethren, and my servants, might exact of them money and corn: [z] I pray you let us [a] leave off this usury.

11 [b] Restore, I pray you, to them, even this day, [c] their lands, their vineyards, their olive-yards, and their houses, also the hundredth *part* of the money, and of the corn, the wine, and the oil, that ye exact of them.

12 Then said they, [d] We will restore *them*, and will require nothing of them; so will we do as thou sayest. Then [e] I called the priests, and took an oath of them, that they should do according to this promise.

13 Also [f] I shook my lap, and said, [g] So God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise, even thus be he shaken out and * emptied. And all the congregation said, [h] Amen, and [i] praised the LORD. And [k] the people did according to this promise.

14 ¶ Moreover from the time that I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, [l] from the twentieth year, even unto the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes the king, *that is*, twelve years, [m] I and my brethren have not eaten [n] the bread of the governor.

15 But the former governors, that *had been* before me, were chargeable unto the people, and had taken of them bread and wine, besides forty shekels of silver; yea, [o] even their servants bare rule over the

o Matt. xxv. 15. 29. 2 Cor. viii. 12. Gal vi. 10.
p Lev. xxv. 47—49.
q Ex. xxi. 16. Deut. xxiv. 7.
r Rom. xiv. 15 1 Cor. viii. 11.
s Job xxxii. 15, 16. Matt xxii. 12. Rom. iii. 19.
t 1 Sam. ii. 24. Prov. xvi. 29. xvii. 26. xviii. 5. xix. 2. xxiv. 23. 15. Gen. xx. 11. xlii. 18. Acts ix. 31.
u Gen. xiii 7, 8. 2 Sam. xii. 14. Ez. xxxvi. 20. Rom. ii. 24. 1 Pet. ii. 12.
y Mic. ii. 1. Luke iii. 13, 14. 1 Cor. ix. 12. 18
z 2 Cor. v. 11. 20. vi. 1. Philem. 8, 9
a 7. Ex. xxii. 25—27. Ps. xv. 5. Ez. xviii 8. 13.
b Lev. vi. 4, 5 1 Sam. xii. 3. 2 Sam. xii. 6. Is. lviii. 6. Luke iii. 8.
c 3, 4.
d 2 Chr. xxviii. 14, 15. Ezra. x 12. Matt. xix. 21, 22. Luke xix. 8.
e x. 29. xiii 25. 2 Chr. vi. 22, 23. xv. 13, 14 Ezra x. 5. Jer xxxiv. 8—10. Matt. xxvi. 63.
f Matt. x. 14 Acts xiii. 51. xviii. 6.
g 1 Sam. xv. 23. 1 Kings xi. 29, 30. Zech. v. 3, 4.
* Heb. *empty*, or *void*.
h Num. v. 22. Deut. xxvii. 14—26.
i 1 Chr. xvi. 36.
k 2 Kings xxiii 3. Ps. l. 11. cxix. 106.
l ii. 1
m 1 Cor. ix. 4—15. 18. 2 Thes. iii 8, 9
n Ezra iv. 13, 14. Rom. xiii. 6, 7.
o 1 Sam. ii. 15—17. viii. 15. Prov. xxix. 12.

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and almost desponded: but Nehemiah, fired with a holy indignation, proceeded immediately with all his authority and influence, to redress the grievances of his oppressed brethren; neither fearing the resentment of their powerful oppressors, nor doubting but he should be able to effect his purpose. He did not, however, act without consideration; but, having formed his plan, he first rebuked the nobles and rulers, who, instead of punishing other criminals, were themselves the most notorious usurers and extortioners. And as he feared lest they should prove refractory, he convened an assembly of the people, that perceiving how generally their conduct was disapproved, they might be shamed into proper concessions, without the necessity of direct compulsion.

V. 8. Nehemiah, and Ezra, and other pious persons, had not only, with great zeal and earnestness, endeavoured to establish the security and prosperity of the nation; but they had redeemed from slavery several of the poor Jews, who had been sold among the heathen. What a contrast then was the conduct of these usurers, to their disinterested love! Did the one company redeem their enslaved brethren, that the other might sell them again for slaves, in direct violation of the divine law? Or did they expect to sell their enslaved brethren to Nehemiah and his friends?—It was impossible to reply to this animated and reasonable expostulation.

V. 9. When Nehemiah said, "It is not good that ye "do," his words imply that they had acted very wickedly. (*Marg. Ref.*) The exposed and distressed condition to which sin had reduced the nation, and the recent mercies they had received, combined to enforce it upon them, to "walk in the fear of God," lest he should give them up as a *reproach* to their enemies; or rather, lest the heathen, who were full of malice, should reproach them, as they justly might, for their avarice and cruelty; and thence take occasion to revile their religion, and blaspheme the name of God himself.

V. 10—13. Had Nehemiah and his brethren and servants acted towards the people as these oppressors did, the authority of the Persian king would have enabled them to exact large contributions from the rich especially. But as they, instead of such exactions, did not so much as take what was justly their due; surely the rich should be ashamed of extorting from the poor what they could have no shadow of a right to! Nehemiah therefore urged them voluntarily to leave off their usury, and to restore the lands of their poor brethren, and the increase of money and provisions, which they had exacted from them; to lend them *without pledge, or usury*, in this time of distress; and to wait for payment till better times. This seems the immediate purport of his proposal: though probably he required the free remission of former debts, and the liberating of the children which were in bondage, as in the year of release. His remonstrance had its desired effect, and the guilty persons promised to do so: but lest they should delay, or go back from their word; he called the priests as witnesses, and bound them with a solemn oath to perform their promise: and then with a significant action, he denounced the vengeance of heaven in kind, against every one who failed of this engagement. To this the congregation solemnly assented, and praised the Lord for sending them so just and merciful a ruler. Thus this matter was in one assembly amicably settled, by motives and arguments taken from religion, and the law of God. Yet one of a similar kind distracted the Roman state for ages, and the oppression was never effectually prevented!

people: but [p] so did not [q] I, because of the fear of God.

16 Yea, also [r] I continued in the work of this wall, [s] neither bought we any land: and [t] all my servants *were* gathered thither unto the work.

17 Moreover *there were* [u] at my table [x] an hundred and fifty of the Jews and rulers, besides those that came unto us from among the heathen that *are* about us.

18 Now *that* [y] which was prepared *for me* daily *was* one ox, *and* six choice sheep; also fowls were prepared for me, and once in ten days store of all sorts of wine: yet for all this [z] required not I the bread of the governor, because the bondage was heavy upon this people.

19 [a] Think upon me, my God, for good, [b] *according* to all that I have done for this people.

p Matt. v. 47. 2 Cor xi. 9 xii. 13
q 9. Job xxxi 23. Ps. cxii 1 cxlvii 11. Prov. xvi 6. Ec. xii. 13, 14. Is 1 10 Luke xviii 2—4.
r Luke viii. 15. Rom ii 7. 1 Cor. xv. 58. Gal. vi. 9.
s Num. xvi. 15. Acts xx 33—35. 1 Thes. ii 5, 6.
t 2 Cor xii. 16—18 Phil. ii. 20, 21.
u 2 Sam. ix. 7, 13. 1 Kings xviii. 19.
x Is. xxxii. 8. Rom. xii 13. 1 Pet. iv. 9, 10.
y 1 Kings iv. 22, 23.
z 14, 15.
a xiii. 14, 22. 31. Gen. xl. 14 Ps xxv. 6, 7. cvi. 4. Jer. xxix. 11.
b Ps. xviii. 23—25 Matt. x. 42. xxv. 34—40.

V. 14—18. This passage must have been added by Nehemiah several years after the date of the transaction before recorded: for that occurred soon after he came to Jerusalem. The former governors had received from the people an income of about five pounds a day, (as it is generally interpreted;) besides a proportion of bread and wine for their households: whilst their attendants, as is too commonly the case, lorded it over the people, and increased their burdens. It is not said who these governors were. Perhaps Ezra, who seems not to have been rich, was necessitated to take sufficient for the expenses of his station; but we may be sure that he allowed of no oppression. It is however probable, that the Persian governors west of the Euphrates were meant: for they seem to have had authority over the Jews, until Nehemiah's commission was granted. But he, acting in the fear of God, and from the pure motives of religion, and perceiving the poverty of the people, would not receive this customary emolument: and being very rich and liberal, he supported his dignity with great hospitality at his own expense, all the time he filled his exalted station; setting his rich countrymen an example of receding from legal claims for the public good. At the same time he spared neither trouble nor expense in forwarding the fortifications of the city; and required his attendants to assist also; and would neither himself take, nor allow them to take, any advantage of the poverty of the Jews, by purchasing estates at a low price, as they might easily have done. In reading this account which he gave of himself, we should remember, that he wrote under the guidance of the Holy Spirit: and it was proper that his magnanimous, disinterested, and liberal conduct should stand upon record, for an example to all others, what use to make of great riches, how to render authority a public blessing, and how to induce mankind to justice and every good work, by taking the lead in them.

V. 19. Nehemiah had shown great kindness to his brethren, to which they had not in strict justice any claim; and he lifted up his heart to God, when recording it, entreating him to show like kindness to him. His conduct in these circumstances evidenced that he was a true believer: he desired no recompense from man, but confidently expected one from a merciful God: he evidently spoke and acted as one that knew himself to be a sinner; and he did not expect a recompense as of debt; but in the manner that the Lord rewards a cup of cold water given to a disciple for his sake. 'It was no more than St. Paul was 'constrained to speak of himself in his epistle to the Corinthians, of whom he would take nothing, that he might 'stop the mouths of false apostles and covetous people.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—13.

Every domestic or relative comfort may become to us an occasion of increasing anguish: we should not then be discontented in the want of children, or anxious about temporal things; but seek our whole happiness from God alone. It is peculiarly the duty and privilege of the poor, to trust the promise and providence of God to supply their families with food and raiment, and to be content with necessaries: and of the rich, and of those who have no children, to contribute liberally to the support of their indigent brethren. But, alas! too many take advantage of the necessities to which others are reduced, in order to exact on them; that they may increase their own useless abundance, or support their luxuries and extravagant expenses. They wilfully forget that the poor are of the same nature with themselves; and that they have the same wants, inclinations, natural affections, and feelings of pain and suffering. Instead of doing to others as they would that others should do to them, they grow careless of the welfare, and callous to the miseries of their fellow-creatures, and usurp authority over them as bond-slaves, in proportion as wealth, power, and prosperity increase. Every gratification is deemed requisite for the lordly oppressor; but the meanest morsel is good enough for the poor and enslaved, though bearing a much better character than themselves. Thus men prey upon their own species, and by "despising the "poor, reproach their Maker;" and aggravate, instead of relieving those distresses which are always entitled to compassion; but especially, when they are not the effect of extravagance or sloth, but of hard times, heavy taxes, large families, and debts contracted for bare necessaries. Such conduct disgraces *human nature:* but who can express sufficient abhorrence of it when adopted by *professing Christians*? It exposes our holy religion to the reproach, scorn, and abomination even of heathen, and gives occasion to our enemies to blaspheme that worthy name, by which these selfish wretches are improperly distinguished! Yet in all the four quarters of the globe, millions of Mahometans and Pagans abhor Christianity, through the avarice, treachery, and cruelty of men called Christians!—Well then may the report of such crimes, and the cry of the oppressed, kindle an honest indignation in the breast of

CHAP. VI.

Sanballat and his party practise against Nehemiah, by insidious attempts, false rumours, and the hired counsel of pretended prophets, 1—14. *The wall is finished, and the enemies are disheartened,* 15, 16. *The nobles of Judah traitorously correspond with Tobiah,* 17—19.

a ii. 10. 19. iv. 1. 7.
b 6. *Gashmu.*

NOW it came to pass, [a] when Sanballat and Tobiah, and [b] Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies, heard that I had builded the wall, and *that* there was [c] no breach left therein; (though [d] at that time I had not set up the doors upon the gates;)

c iv. 6, 7. Dan. ix. 25.
d iii. 3. 6.

2 That Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me, saying, [e] Come, let us meet together in *some one of* the villages in the plain of [f] Ono. But [g] they thought to do me mischief.

e 2 Sam. iii. 27. xx. 9 Ps. xxxvii. 12. Prov. xxvi. 24—26. Ec. iv. 4.
f xi. 35. 1 Chr. viii. 12.
g Ps. xii 2. xxxvii. 12. 32. Jer xli. 2. Ez. xxxiii. 31. Mic. vii. 4, 5.

3 And [h] I sent messengers unto them, saying, I [i] *am* doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the

h Prov. xiv. 15. Matt. x. 16.
i Ec. ix 10. Luke xiv. 30. John ix. 4. 1 Tim. iv. 15, 16.

every friend of mankind, of his country, and of the Gospel. Those in authority should consult with themselves and with each other, how to redress these scandalous abuses: and if fair means will not do, rough and decisive measures should be employed, notwithstanding the clamours of interested oppressors, if princes would have the blessing of God upon their respective dominions. Too often nobles and rulers are the chief in such exactions; and their power and affluence seem to defy investigation, and frequently prevent or intimidate those who should promote the execution of justice; yet neither rank nor authority should screen them; nay, they should be first dealt with for an example to others: and if they disregarded the rebuke of an individual, *the great assemblies of nations* should be convened against them. If, however, they can be ashamed or persuaded into a proper conduct, harsher measures are ineligible: and when earnestness, affection, wisdom, piety, humanity, a decided example, and cogent reasonings concur, they will sometimes operate beyond expectation. In expostulating with selfish people, it is good to contrast their conduct with that of others, who are remarkably liberal and benevolent: but, it is best to point out to them *his* example, who, "though "he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we "through his poverty might be rich." When this is compared with the conduct of those who care not how many they reduce to beggary or slavery, to enrich themselves; the contrast between the Master and his professed disciples is so striking, that it implies an argument, which is silencing, and unanswerable upon any scriptural principles. It may further be inquired whether such oppression is good in itself, or consistent with the fear of God, and a regard to his authority, and his command to love our neighbours as ourselves? Whether men can deny that the enemies of our holy religion do reproach us because of such practices, and are prejudiced to their irreparable damage? How they would like it, if their superiors tyrannized over and extorted from them, as they do from their inferiors? and what will become of them, if God show them no more mercy than they show their poor brethren? If our oppressors and slave-dealers were not by habit more callous than these Jews, we might be encouraged to entreat and beseech them to leave off their extortion; to make restitution to the injured, and to show mercy to the poor. But, alas! such methods are seldom successful; and more conclusive reasons alone prevail. This remains for the magistrate; and here the preacher must leave them. If arguments, expostulations, warnings, and persuasions will not induce them "to repent and to do works meet for "repentance:" we must "shake off the dust of our feet, "as a testimony against them;" assuring them that God will soon shake them out from their ill-gotten treasures; and cast them down into destruction, if they continue to neglect the salvation of Christ, or refuse to imitate his example of loving-kindness and mercy: and when the righteous Judge shall denounce this tremendous sentence against them, all the multitudes of the redeemed will cry, Amen, and praise the Lord. We may further observe, that wise and good men may be of very different tempers, and consequently go about the same thing in a different manner. But they should not censure each other, nor should others censure them: let them serve God according to that ability which he hath given them: and let it never be supposed, that one man is a perfect model for all others to follow.

V. 13—19.

We must not do our works to be seen of men, and it is seldom expedient to speak of them ourselves. Yet we should "let our light shine before men, that they may see "our good works," and glorify God; and sometimes a good man may be called upon, as in his presence, and with an appeal to the consciences of many witnesses, to declare his own disinterested and upright conduct, and the motives of it, for a reproof, an instruction, and an example to mankind. But it is *always* necessary for those to set a decided good example who are bold reprovers, and active reformers of others, and who speak and act with sharpness against their crimes. In this case a man should give up his right, neglect opportunities of gain, be willing to labour and endure hardship without recompense, and even to expend his substance in the support of a good cause. And it is not enough for public characters to avoid evil, and the appearance of it themselves; their servants and dependants must be restrained also. But the fear and love of God, and genuine love of the brethren, will influence a man to this and much more; and will constrain him to abound in hospitality, and every good work, according to the ability that God hath given him. These are proper evidences and expressions of living faith; and our reconciled God will look for good on such as abound in these fruits of righteousness, according to all that they have done to his people.

work cease while I leave it, and come down to you?

4 Yet they sent unto me [k] four times after this sort; and I answered them after the same manner.

5 ¶ Then sent Sanballat his servant unto me in like manner, the fifth time, with [l] an open letter in his hand;

6 Wherein *was* written, [m] It is reported among the heathen, and [n] Gashmu saith *it*, [o] *that* thou and the Jews think to rebel: for which cause thou buildest the wall, [p] that thou mayest be their king, according to these words.

7 And thou hast also [q] appointed prophets to preach of thee at Jerusalem, saying, *There is* [r] a king in Judah: and now shall it be reported to the king according to these words. [s] Come now therefore, and let us take counsel together.

8 Then I sent unto him, saying, [t] There are no such things done as thou sayest, but [u] thou feignest them out of thine own heart.

9 For [x] they all made us afraid, saying, [y] Their hands shall be weakened from the work, that it be not done. [z] Now therefore, *O God*, strengthen my hands.

10 Afterward I came unto the house of [a] Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, the son of Mehetabeel, who *was* [b] shut up; and he said, [c] Let us meet together in [d] the house of God, within the temple: and [e] let us shut the doors of the temple: for they will come to slay thee; yea, [f] in the night will they come to slay thee.

11 And I said, [g] Should such a man as I flee? and who *is there*, that, *being* as I *am*, [h] would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in.

12 And, lo, [i] I perceived that [k] God had not sent him; but that he pronounced this prophecy against me: for Tobiah and Sanballat had [l] hired him.

13 Therefore *was* he hired, [m] that I should be afraid, and do so, and sin, and [n] *that* they might have *matter* for an evil report, [o] that they might reproach me.

14 [p] My God, [q] think thou upon Tobiah and Sanballat, according to these their works, and [r] on the prophetess Noadiah, and the rest of the prophets, that would have put me in fear.

k Judg xvi. 6 11. 14. 17—20. Prov. vii. 21. Luke xviii 5. 1 Cor. xv. 58. Gal. ii. 5.
l 2 Kings xviii. 26—28. 2 Cor. ii. 11. xi. 13—15. Eph. vi. 11. 2 Thes. ii. 16.
m Jer. ix. 3—6. xx. 10. Matt. v. 11. Rom. iii 8. 2 Cor. vi 8. 1 Pet ii 12, 13. iii. 16.
n 1, 2. *Geshem.*
o ii. 19. Ezra iv. 12. 15.
p Luke xxiii 2. John xix. 12. Acts xxiv. 12.
q 12, 13.
r 2 Sam. xv. 10—12 1 Kings i. 7 18. 25 34.
s Prov. xxvi 24—26. Acts xxiii 15
t Acts xxiv. 12, 13. xxv. 7. 10
u Job xiii. 4. Ps xxxvi 3. xxxviii 12. lii. 2. Is. lix. 4 Dan. xi. 27 Matt xii. 34. John viii. 44.
x 14. iv. 10—14. 2 Chr xxxii. 18.
y 2 Chr. xv. 7. Ezra iv. Is. xxxv. 3, 4. Jer. xxxviii. 4 Heb. xii 12.
z Ps lvi. 3 lxviii. 35. cxxxviii 3. Is. xli. 10. Zech. x. 12 2 Cor. xii. 9. Eph iv 16 vi. 10. Phil iv. 13. 1 Pet. v. 10.

a 12. Ezra viii. 16. x. 31. Prov. xi. 9. Matt. vii 7.
b 2 Kings ix. 8. Ez. iii. 24.
c Ps. xii. 2. xxxvii. 12. cxx. 2, 3.
d 1 Kings vi. 5
e 1 Sam. iii 15. 2 Chr xxviii. 24 xxix. 3 7. Mal i. 10. Acts xxi. 30
f Job xxiv. 13—17. John iii 20
g 3. 1 Sam xix 5. Job iv. 3—6. Ps. xi. 1, 2. Prov. xxviii 1. Is. x. 18. Luke xiii. 31—33 Acts viii. 2. xx. 24. xxi. 13 Heb. xi. 27.
h 9. Num. xxxii. 7—9. Ec. x. 1. Phil. ii. 17 30.
i Ez. xiii. 22. 1 Cor. ii. 15. xii. 10.
k Jer. xiv. 14. xxiii. 16. 25. xxviii. 15. Ez. xiii 7. 1 John iv. 1.
l Is. lvi. 11 Ez. xiii. 19. Mic. iii. 11. Acts xx. 33. 1 Tim. iii. 3. Tit i. 7. 1. Pet. v. 2. 2 Pet. ii. 3. Rev. xviii. 13.
m Prov. xxix. 5. Is. li 7. 12, 13. lvii. 11. Jer. i. 17. Ez. ii. 6. Matt. x 28. 2 Tim. i. 7 Rev. xxi. 8.
n 6. Prov. xxii 1. Ec. vii. 1.
o Jer. xviii. 18. xx. 10. Dan. vi. 4, 5. Matt xxii. 15. xxvi 59.

Acts vi. 13 2 Cor xi. 12. 1 Tim v. 14. Tit. ii. 8.——p v 19 Ps. xxii. 1. lxiii 1.——q iv. 4, 5. xiii 29. Ps cxl. 5—8. Jer. xi. 20—33 xviii. 20—23. 2 Tim. iv. 14, 15. 1 John v. 16.——r 1 Kings xxii. 22—24 Is ix. 14, 15. Jer xiv. 15, 16. xxviii. 1. 10. 15. Ez. xiii 16, 17. Matt. vii. 15. xxiv. 11. 24 2 Tim iii. 8 Rev. xix 20.

NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1—4. Sanballat and his confederates, not daring openly to attack the Jews, yet earnestly desiring to prevent the completion of the fortifications which seemed to be at hand, formed a scheme to draw Nehemiah from his station, and to slay him, or confine him, when they had him in their power. They therefore, on some plausible pretence, invited him to an interview: but he was aware of their intentions; and *on that account* would not have gone if he had not been engaged. He, however, only answered, that being fully employed in a most important work, his presence was necessary, that the work would stop if he left it; and therefore he could not come. This was true, and a sufficient reason: and their subsequent importunity could not induce him either to comply, or to enter into any altercation with them: as indeed it was well calculated to confirm their suspicions.

V. 5—9. When these most inveterate enemies had been baffled in their design, they devised a more dangerous stratagem. Sanballat sent, under a pretence of friendship, to inform Nehemiah of a report in circulation, that the Jews were preparing to revolt from the king of Persia, and place him on the throne; and that he employed prophets, who should preach this to them as the will of God. This *Gashmu* or *Geshem* attested to be fact, and was prepared to prove; and being circulated in all the surrounding nations, it was likely soon to come to the ears of Artaxerxes, and to bring upon the Jews the whole weight of his indignation. If such reports had indeed been circulated and credited, there would have been cause for alarm: for those despotic kings, upon the least suspicion, often drove their lieutenants into rebellion, as their only hope of self-preservation. But it was all a fiction to fright Nehemiah, or to render him incapable of proceeding. The letter was sent open, that the contents being known to the people, might excite them to mutiny, or to forsake the work, for fear of the Persians: and the proposal of taking counsel with him, as if Sanballat and his friends were desirous of concerting measures for the common safety, was an artful device, made in order to get him into their hands, that they might do him mischief. But Nehemiah, being conscious of his innocency, and satisfied that no such reports were circulated, only denied the charge, and let them know, that he was aware the whole was their own fiction: and, as they intended to weaken his hands from his work, he took occasion to "beg "of God to strengthen his hands." The words, "*O God*," are not in the original; and some interpret the sentence, as Nehemiah's resolution to proceed with increasing earnestness; but they seem rather to be an ejaculation; and the omission of the address implies the holy yet reverend familiarity, with which this pious man communed with his condescending Father and Friend, and shows that his heart was habitually employed in thinking of his God.

V. 10—14. Sanballat and his party being once more baffled, employed a still more subtle and dangerous expedient; suborning prophets to give Nehemiah bad counsel

s Ezra vi. 15. Ps. i. 3. Dan. ix. 25.

15 ¶ So [s] the wall was finished in the twenty and fifth *day* of *the month* Elul, [t] in fifty and two days.

t iv. 1, 2.

u ii. 10. iv. 1. 7. vi. 1.

16 And it came to pass, that [u] when all our enemies heard *thereof*, and all the heathen that *were* about us saw *these things*, they were much cast down in their own eyes: [x] for they perceived that this work was wrought of our God.

x Ex. xiv. 25. Num. xxiii. 23. Josh v. 1. Ps. cxxvi. 2.

y iii. 5. v. 7. xii. 7. xiii. 29. Mic. vii. 3—6

*Heb. *multiplied their letters passing to Tobiah.*

17 ¶ Moreover in those days [y] the nobles of Judah * sent many letters unto Tobiah, and *the letters* of Tobiah came unto them.

18 For *there were* many in Judah sworn unto him, because he *was* the son-in-law of [z] Shechaniah the son of Arah; and his son Johanan had taken the daughter of [a] Meshullam the son of Berechiah.

z vii. 10. Ezra ii. 5.

a iii. 4. 30.

19 Also [b] they reported his good deeds before me, and uttered my * words to him. *And* Tobiah sent letters [c] to put me in fear.

b Prov. xxviii 4. 8 John vii 7. xv 19. 1 John iv. 5.

* Or, *matters.*

c 9. 13. Is xxxvii. 10 — 4 Acts iv. 18—21.

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in the name of God. The principal person concerned was Shemaiah, of whom Nehemiah seems previously to have had a good opinion. He was *shut up* in some chamber adjoining the sanctuary, probably as a token of his own fear, and a sign to Nehemiah of what he ought to do; who, perhaps being sent to, went to confer with him, as a friend and a prophet. The environs of the temple were secured by walls and gates; whilst the gates of the city were not set up. Shemaiah therefore pretended great concern for Nehemiah's safety, and counselled him to take refuge in the temple with him, lest his enemies should come and murder him by night; or *that very night*, as his words seem to imply. If Nehemiah had followed this advice, he would have lost his reputation for courage and confidence in God; and have appeared weak and contemptible: the people would have taken the alarm, deserted the work, and shifted for their safety: the accusations of his enemies would have gained credit, even in the Persian court; and he would have seemed conscious of bad intentions. In short, it would have overturned his whole design, and given his enemies their desired advantage. But Nehemiah soon saw through this project likewise. From the nature of the counsel, and by proper investigation, he perceived that Shemaiah was not delivering a message from God; but that he pronounced this prophecy against him, intending his ruin, having been hired by Tobiah and Sanballat, that Nehemiah might contract guilt, and expose himself to reproach.—When the rank of Nehemiah and his authority were considered, with his conscious integrity and professed confidence in God; and the importance of his work, it appeared very inconsistent for him to flee and hide himself. In such circumstances, even the preservation of life formed but a subordinate consideration: the support of the public cause, by an example of intrepidity, firmness, and consistency, was to be first considered. Any brave commander would venture his life, when the event of a decisive battle, and the fate of his country were at stake, and would scorn to flee at the appearance of danger: how much more then should Nehemiah venture his, for the glory of God and the benefit of his church! To take refuge in the temple in such a case would be to prefer a disgraceful short-lived safety to the most important of all causes. Nehemiah, therefore, not only with decided firmness rejected this counsel, as inconsistent with the most evident scriptural principles: but, as Shemaiah, and Noadiah the prophetess, and the other pretended prophets, had most basely sold their services to the enemies of God and religion; he joins along with them in his prayers for their confusion and disappointment.

V. 15, 16. This important and difficult work was completed in so short a time, and under so many disadvantages, that even the adversaries of the Jews were convinced that God had prospered them. He had given them health, strength, courage, and unity; he had restrained their opposers, and kept off interruptions; and he succeeded the whole by his blessing: so that "the work was wrought of "their God." This dejected their enemies, and made them forebode the future prevalence of the Jews; but it did not allure them to desire a portion among that favoured people. (*Num.* xxiii. 23.)

V. 17—19. Whilst the wall was building, and afterwards, several of the nobles of Judah were in the interest of Tobiah, and held a traitorous correspondence with him: some of them, having joined affinity with him, had engaged others to swear to serve him, as they had opportunity. Nay, they had the confidence, or rather insolence, to report the good deeds, or supposed excellent endowments of this bitter enemy of God and his people, to Nehemiah; either intimating to him that he should copy them, or that he should form an alliance with so worthy a character! And at the same time they betrayed Nehemiah's measures to him. But this pious and excellent man, who had so strenuously pleaded the cause of the oppressed poor, would not, in his present circumstances, exercise the authority with which he was invested against his own enemies in Judah, however basely they acted towards him; but persevered in serving his people, notwithstanding their treachery and ingratitude!

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—9.

The whole power and policy of Satan and his servants have always been directed against those who zealously seek the welfare of the church of God: and though often baffled, they are unwearied in their projects. The rage of persecutors, though terrible, is not so dangerous as the professed friendship of enemies. So that, except there is good evidence of men's reconciliation to God, they cannot safely be trusted when they court the favour of his people, but should rather be suspected of some mischievous design. If we receive no other damage from their insincere friendship, we should thereby be taken off from our work to no

CHAP. VII.

Nehemiah, having finished the wall, and regulated the attendance of the Levites, commits the charge of the city to Hanani and Hananiah, 1—4. He finds a register of those who first came from Babylon, 5—7. The register, 8—69. The oblations made to the temple, 70—73.

NOW it came to pass, when [a] the wall was built, and [b] I had set up the doors, and [c] the porters, and the

a iii. 1 &c. vi. 15.
b iii. 3 vi. 1.
c x. 39 xi. 3. xii. 24. 1 Chr. xxiii. xxv. xxvi 2 Chr. xxxi. 2. Ezra iii. 8.

purpose: we should not then suffer ourselves to be overcome by importunity; for we had better offend man by a refusal, than sin against our God by compliance. Even our common *lawful business* ought to have a decided preference to all matters of mere compliment: how much more then our peculiar duties as Christians, magistrates, or ministers, in proportion to their importance and difficulty! It is therefore desirable to be constantly engaged in some useful employ; among other reasons, that we may have an answer ready for those invitations which we cannot profitably accept of, and scarcely know how to refuse. The active servant of God may, on any such occasion, say, "I "am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down; "why should the work cease, while I leave it, and come "down to you?" And this is enough, as a reason for avoiding those circles where no good can be got or done; and which interfere with the duties of the closet and the family, and prevent the redeeming of our time, and the improvement of our talents. The deceitful smiles of the world generally form our first temptations in the path of duty. But if we steadfastly withstand them, and will not be diverted from our work; we must prepare for reproaches, slanders, and menaces from the same quarter. Our *firmness* will be called *obstinacy*, our *zeal*, *rashness*, and our *activity*, *ambition*: nay, we shall be warned, that we are about to affront all our friends, and turn them into enemies; and to bring ourselves into dangers and difficulties, from which we cannot extricate ourselves, unless we follow other counsels, and act more circumspectly. Moreover, the zealous servants of God have always been unjustly traduced as rebellious to the ruling powers: and their malicious enemies have often represented their own slanders, as the general sentiments of mankind. Such misrepresentations tend to weaken the hands of the most courageous; and they prejudice, alarm, and draw off such as were helpful to their pious designs. But a clear conscience, a lively faith, an assured persuasion that we are doing our duty, and a zeal for the honour of God, will carry us above such discouragements: and being satisfied with denying the charges brought against us, it is best to persevere in our work, without wasting time in altercations or self-vindication; only lifting up our prayer to God to strengthen our hands, and encourage our hearts.

V. 10—19.

A thousand slanders will die away, one after another; whilst the malice of the authors of them shall be exposed; but one real crime sometimes leaves an indelible stain upon a man's character, and precludes all his future usefulness: let us then fear the least sin far more than any calumny. But those temptations are the most dangerous of all, which come from *professed* servants of God, and friends to us. When such persons, with apparent piety and affection, counsel the zealous to be more moderate and cautious, the diligent *to spare himself*, and the bold, *to take care of himself*; the insinuation has great effect. Our appeal, however, in this case, must be to the word of God. That cannot be from him, let who will speak it, which contradicts his plain precept or truth; or which would induce us to neglect our duty, or prefer our own ease, emolument, credit, liberty, or life, to his glory and the welfare of his church; or which would persuade us to shrink from the cross, or refuse self-denial. Many such counsellors are in the pay of the enemy: for, being induced to time-serving from interested motives, they consider the conduct of the more zealous as a reproach, and want to be kept in countenance by their example: and if we knew from what motives grave advice is sometimes given, we should understand from what quarter it came, without further information. We need not always, however, judge the *adviser*; but we ought to try the *advice*, and without scruple to reject all that is contrary to the word of God. Every man should also study consistency with his profession, former character, station, and engagements. That which is allowable in one man, may be very improper in another: and we ought to venture any thing in a good cause, trusting in the Lord, and committing ourselves to his protection. It is therefore useful frequently to inquire, 'Should such a man as I do so and so?' 'Should I, who am a Christian, a saint, a child of God, a 'member of Christ, a temple of the Holy Spirit, a ransom-'ed sinner, an heir of heaven; one set up to be a light in 'the world, and the salt of the earth; a preacher of right-'eousness, and a steward of the mysteries of God: should 'I *appear* to be covetous, or sensual, or proud, or envious? 'Should I yield to impatience, discontent, or anger? 'Should I be slothful, unbelieving, or unmerciful? What 'effects will such conduct in me have upon others? Will 'not some be grieved, others misled and prejudiced; others 'emboldened in ungodliness, and enmity to the truth? 'Will not this prevent the effect of my exhortations or 'persuasions in my family, amongst my connexions, or 'from the pulpit?' Thus, all that God hath done for us or by us, may become an argument for watchfulness, diligence, self-denial, and perseverance. It is also peculiarly instructive to consider how others in similar circumstances would act. Would Peter or Paul have done so, to save their money, to indulge their sloth or pride, to escape a cross, a prison, or death? Do the men of the world suffer themselves so easily to be diverted from their object, by every appearance of difficulty or peril?—In all cases, indeed, they who would lead others in arduous services, must share the danger and the hardship: and this is the reason why the enemy of souls employs so many instruments and forms so many projects, to discourage, or bring a reproach on, the active servants of God. If the shepherd can be

singers, and the Levites, were appointed,

2 That I gave [d] my brother Hanani, and [e] Hananiah [f] the ruler of the palace, charge over Jerusalem: for he *was* [g] a faithful man, and [h] feared God above many.

3 And I said unto them, [i] Let not the gates of Jerusalem be opened until the sun be hot: and while they stand by, let them shut the doors, and bar *them:* and appoint watches of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, every one in his watch, and every one *to be* over against his house.

4 Now the city *was* * large and great: but the people *were* few therein, and [k] the houses *were* not builded.

5 And [l] my God [m] put into mine heart to gather together the nobles, and the rulers, and the people, [n] that they might be reckoned by genealogy. And I found a register of the genealogy of them which came up at the first, and found written therein;

6 [o] These *are* the children of the province, that went up out of the captivity, of those that had been carried away, [p] whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away, and came again to Jerusalem and to Judah, every one unto his city;

7 Who came with [q] Zerubbabel; [r] Jeshua, Nehemiah, [s] Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, [t] Mispereth, Bigvai, [u] Nehum, Baanah; the number, *I say,* of the men of the people of Israel, *was this;*

8 The children of [x] Parosh, two thousand an hundred seventy and two.

9 The children of [y] Shephatiah, three hundred seventy and two.

d i. 2.
e x. 22.
f ii. 8.
g Num xii 7. Ps. ci. 6. Dan. vi. 4. Matt. xxiv. 45. xxv. 21. Luke xvi. 10–12. 1 Cor. iv. 2 2 Tim. ii. 2.
h v. 15 Ex. xviii. 21. 1 Kings xviii 3. Is. lxxiii. 5, 6.
i xiii. 19. Ps. cxxvii. 1. Matt. x. 16.
* Heb. *broad in spaces.*
k Is. lviii. 12 Hag. i. 4–6. Mat. vi. 33.
l v. 19. vi 14.
m Ezra vii. 27. 1 Cor. xv. 10. 2 Cor. iii. 5. viii. 16. Phil ii. 12, 13. Col. i. 29 Jam. i. 16, 17.
n 64. 1 Chr. ix. 1 Ezra ii. 62
B. C. 536.
o Ezra ii. 1, &c. v. 8. vi. 2.
p 2 Kings xxiv. 14–16. xxv 11. 2 Chr. xxxvi. Jer. xxxix. lii.
q Ezra i. 11 *Sheshbazzar* ii. 2. Hag. i. 1. Matt. i 12, 13. *Zorobabel.*
r Ezra iii. 8, 9. v. 2 Zech iii. 1–3. *Joshua.*
s Ezra ii. 2. *Seraiah, Reelaiah.*
t Ezra ii 2 *Mizpar.*
u Ezra ii. 2. *Rehum.*
x Ezra ii 3. viii 3. *Pharosh.* x. 25.
y Ezra ii. 4. viii 8.

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frighted away, the flock will be scattered. Every success of the Gospel discourages the enemies of God: and they sometimes perceive that it is his work, and yet hate it the more! but false brethren are the severest trial to his faithful servants: "they who forsake the Lord praise the "wicked;" and they that form marriages with the avowed opposers of the Gospel, will probably soon join their party, notwithstanding their present pretensions. Many leading men, yea, preachers and prophets in the visible church of God, will be found workers of iniquity. But under every discouragement, we should "consider Jesus, who endured "the contradiction of sinners against himself, lest we be "weary, and faint in our mind:" and who "laid down "his life for his sheep;" that after his example we may persevere in our duty amidst every danger and opposition, not being overcome by the treachery, ingratitude, or perverseness of those around us, but still endeavouring to overcome evil with good; and "in due season we shall "reap, if we faint not."

NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 1. *The singers,* &c. This either refers to some regulations made by Nehemiah concerning the ministrations of the Levites at the temple; or to his preparations for solemnly dedicating the wall. (xii.)

V. 2, 3. It has been supposed that Nehemiah, having finished the wall and made other needful regulations, returned to the Persian court; but that he not long after came again to Jerusalem with a new commission: and that on this occasion he placed his brother Hanani, (i. 2.) and Hananiah over the city, and gave them instructions how to manage in his absence. The charge however here given, and the service required, would be necessary even when Nehemiah resided at Jerusalem: for he could not superintend the gates and the watchmen, without being taken off from his other important and numerous engagements. Doubtless Hanani was a proper person, or else Nehemiah would not have preferred him to this important trust; but of Hananiah it is expressly said, that "he was a faithful "man, and feared God above many;" being possessed with a deep sense of religion, he was a man of singular fidelity and integrity, and one who might be thoroughly confided in.

V. 4. The walls had been built upon their old foundations, in confidence that God in due time would replenish the city: but there were only a small number of inhabitants compared with those of former ages; so that large spaces remained unoccupied. This would render it the more requisite that a strict watch should be kept, lest their enemies should scale the walls unobserved; and thus measures for replenishing the city with inhabitants were become necessary.

V. 5, 6. This account was taken of the people, in order to bring the tenth part of them to reside in Jerusalem, (xi. 1:) and as it proved a useful measure, Nehemiah justly and piously ascribed the first thought of it to God, who put it into his heart. In conducting this business, he found the register of those who came up with Zerubbabel; which is here inserted nearly as we had it before. But why the old register was again inserted, and the new one, formed by Nehemiah on the same plan, was omitted, does not appear. Indeed some learned men suppose that this is the new register, and thus account for the variations in it from that in Ezra. But as by far the greatest part of the families consist of exactly the same number in both places; and the sum total in each, with several other particulars, entirely coincides, it can hardly be conceived, that almost a hundred years should have made no greater changes. Should any, however, conjecture that some ancient copyist had inserted the wrong register, and that his mistake had been generally followed, the very conclusion would show, that such alterations are almost always liable to detection; and no reasonable man would think it the least objection o the divine inspiration of the sacred Scriptures.

10 The children of [z] Arah, six hundred fifty and two.

11 The children of [a] Pahath-moab, of the children of Jeshua and Joab, two thousand and eight hundred *and* eighteen.

12 The children of [b] Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty and four.

13 The children of [c] Zattu, eight hundred forty and five.

14 The children of [d] Zaccai, seven hundred and threescore.

15 The children of [e] Binnui, six hundred forty and eight.

16 The children of [f] Bebai, six hundred twenty and eight.

17 The children of [g] Azgad, two thousand three hundred twenty and two.

18 The children of [h] Adonikam, six hundred threescore and seven.

19 The children of [i] Bigvai, two thousand threescore and seven.

20 The children of [k] Adin, six hundred fifty and five.

21 The children of [l] Ater of Hezekiah, ninety and eight.

22 The children of [m] Hashum, three hundred twenty and eight.

23 The children of [n] Bezai, three hundred twenty and four.

24 The children of [o] Hariph, an hundred and twelve.

25 The children of [p] Gibeon, ninety and five.

26 The men of [q] Beth-lehem and Netophah, an hundred fourscore and eight.

27 The men of [r] Anathoth, an hundred twenty and eight.

28 The men of [s] Beth-azmaveth, forty and two.

29 The men of [t] Kirjath-jearim, Chephirah, and Beeroth, seven hundred forty and three.

30 The men of [u] Ramah and Gaba, six hundred twenty and one.

31 The men of [x] Michmas, an hundred and twenty and two.

32 The men of [y] Beth-el and Ai, an hundred twenty and three.

33 The men of the other [z] Nebo, fifty and two.

34 The children of [a] the other Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty and four.

35 The children of [b] Harim, three hundred and twenty.

z vi 18. Ezra ii. 5. 775.
a Ezra ii. 6. 2812.
b Ezra ii. 7. viii. 7. x. 26.
c Ezra ii. 8. 945.
d Ezra ii. 9.
e Ezra ii 10. *Bani.* 642.
f Ezra ii. 11. 623.
g Ezra ii. 12. 1222.
h Ezra ii. 13. 666.
i Ezra ii. 14 2056.
k Ezra ii. 15. 454.
l Ezra ii. 16.
m Ezra ii. 19. 223.
n Ezra ii. 17. 323.
o Ezra ii. 18. *Jorah.*
p Ezra ii. 20. *Gibbar.*
q Ezra ii. 21, 22 179.
r Ezra ii. 23 Is. x. 30. Jer i. 1. xi. 21
s Ezra ii. 24. *Azmaveth.*
t Josh. ix 17 Ezra ii. 25 *Kirjath-arim.*
u Josh. xviii 24, 35. Ezra ii. 26.
x 1 Sam. xiii. 5 23. Ezra ii. 27. Is. x 28. *Michmash.*
y Josh. viii. 9 17. Ezra ii. 28. 223.
z Ezra ii. 29.
a 12. Ezra ii. 31.
b Ezra ii. 32. x. 31.

36 The children of [c] Jericho, three hundred forty and five.

37 The children of [d] Lod, Hadid, and Ono, seven hundred twenty and one.

38 The children of [e] Senaah, three thousand nine hundred and thirty.

39 ¶ The priests: the children of [f] Jedaiah, of the house of Jeshua, nine hundred seventy and three.

40 The children of [g] Immer, a thousand fifty and two.

41 The children of [h] Pashur, a thousand two hundred forty and seven.

42 The children of [i] Harim, a thousand and seventeen.

43 ¶ The Levites: the children of Jeshua, of Kadmiel, *and* of the children of [k] Hodevah, seventy and four.

44 [l] The singers: the children of Asaph, an hundred forty and eight.

45 [m] The porters: the children of Shallum, the children of Ater, the children of Talmon, the children of Akkub, the children of Hatita; the children of Shobai, an hundred thirty and eight

46 ¶ The [n] Nethinims: the children of Ziha, the children of [o] Hashupha, the children of Tabbaoth,

47 The children of Keros, the children of [p] Sia, the children of Padon,

48 The children of Lebana, the children of [q] Hagaba, the children of [r] Shalmai,

49 The children of Hanan, the children of Giddel, the children of Gahar,

50 The children of Reaiah, the children of Rezin, the children of Nekoda,

51 The children of Gazzam, the children of Uzza, the children of [s] Phaseah,

52 The children of Besai, the children of Meunim, the children of [t] Nephishesim,

53 The children of Bakbuk, the children of Hakupha, the children of Harhur,

54 The children of [u] Bazlith, the children of Mehida, the children of Harsha,

55 The children of Barkos, the children of Sisera, the children of [x] Tamah,

56 The children of Neziah, the children of Hatipha.

57 ¶ The children of [y] Solomon's servants: the children of Sotai, the children of Sophereth, the children of [z] Perida,

58 The children of [a] Jaala, the children of Darkon, the children of Giddel,

c Ezra ii. 34.
d vi. 2. xi. 34, 35. 1 Chr viii. 12. Ezra ii. 33. 725.
e Ezra ii. 35. 3630.
f 1 Chr. xxiv. Ezra ii. 36.
g 1 Chr. xxiv. 14. Ezra ii 37.
h 1 Chr. ix. 12. xxiv. 9. Ezra ii. 38. x. 22.
i 1 Chr xxiv. 8. Ezra ii. 39. x. 31.
k Ezra ii. 40 *Hodaviah* Ezra iii 9. *Judah*
l 1 Chr. xxv. 2. Ezra ii. 41. 128.
m 1 Chr. xxvi. Ezra ii. 42.
n Lev. xxvii. 2—8. Josh. ix. 23—27. 1 Chr. ix. 2.
o Ezra ii. 43. *Hasupha.*
p Ezra ii. 44. *Siaha.*
q Ezra ii. 45, 46. *Hagabah*, or *Hagab.*
r Ezra ii. 46. *Shamlai.*
s Ezra ii. 49. *Paseah.*
t Ezra ii. 50. *Nephusim.*
u Ezra ii. 52 *Bazluth.*
x Ezra ii. 53. *Thamah.*
y xi. 3.
z Ezra ii. 55. *Peruda*
a Ezra ii. 56. *Jaalah.*

59 The children of Shephatiah, the children of Hattil, the children of Pochereth of Zebaim, the children of [a] Amon.

a Ezra ii. 57. Ami.

60 [b] All the Nethinims, and the children of Solomon's servants, *were* three hundred ninety and two.

b Ezra ii. 58.

61 And these *were* they which went up *also* from Tel-melah, [c] Tel-haresha, Cherub, Addon, and Immer: but they could not shew their father's house, nor their * seed, whether they were of Israel.

c Ezra ii. 59. Tel-harsa. Addan.

* Or, *pedigree.*

62 The children of Delaiah, the children of Tobiah, the children of Nekoda, [d] six hundred forty and two.

d Ezra ii. 60. 652.

63 ¶ And [e] of the priests: the children of Habaiah, the children of Koz, the children of Barzillai, which took *one* of the daughters of [f] Barzillai the Gileadite to wife, and was called after their name.

e Ezra ii. 61—63.

f 2 Sam. xvii. 27. xix. 31 — 39. 1 Kings ii. 7.

64 These sought their register *among* those that were reckoned by genealogy, but it was not found: therefore were they, as polluted, put from the priesthood.

g 5. 1 Chr. ix. 1.

65 And † the Tirshatha said unto them, [h] that they should not eat of the most holy things, [i] till there stood *up* a priest with Urim and Thummim.

† Or, *the governor.* viii. 9. x. 1. Ezra ii. 63.
h Lev. ii. 3. 10. vi. 17. x. 17, 18. xxi. 21—23.
i Ex. xxviii. 30. Num. xxvii. 21.

66 ¶ The [k] whole congregation together *was* forty and two thousand three hundred and threescore;

k Deut. xxxiii. 6.
k Ezra ii. 64.

67 Besides [l] their man-servants and their maid-servants, of whom *there were* seven thousand three hundred thirty and seven: and they had [m] two hundred forty and five singing men and singing women.

l Is. xiv. 1, 2. Jer. xxvii. 7.

m Ezra ii. 65. 200.

68 [n] Their horses, seven hundred thirty and six: their mules, two hundred forty and five:

n Ezra ii. 66, 67.

69 *Their* camels, four hundred thirty and five: six thousand seven hundred and twenty asses.

70 ¶ And ‡ some of [o] the chief of the fathers gave unto the work. [p] The Tirshatha gave to the treasure a thousand drams of gold, fifty basons, five hundred and thirty priests' garments.

‡ Heb. *part.* Ezra ii. 68—70.
o 1 Chr. xxix. 3—9.
p viii. 9. x. 1.

71 And *some* of the chief of the fathers gave to the treasure of the work [q] twenty thousand drams of gold and two thousand and two hundred pounds of silver.

q Job xxxiv. 18. Luke xxi. 1—4. 2 Cor. viii. 12.

72 And *that* which the rest of the people gave *was* twenty thousand drams of gold, and two thousand pounds of silver, and threescore and seven priests' garments.

73 So the priests, and the Levites, and the porters, and the singers, and *some* of the people, and the Nethinims, and all Israel, dwelt in their cities; and [r] when the seventh month came, the children of Israel *were* in their cities.

r Ezra ii. 70. iii. 1.

V. 7—69. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, Ezra* ii.)

V. 70—72. This seems to have been a distinct oblation from that recorded in Ezra; and was probably made after the people were registered, by Nehemiah, the Tirshatha or governor, and the chief of the people.

V. 73. It is remarkable, that this registering took place at the same time of the year in which the people with Zerubbabel arrived at Jerusalem. If the events next recorded took place in the same year with the building of the wall, (as it is probable they did,) there could be no time for Nehemiah to go to Babylon: for Elul was the sixth month. (vi. 15.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The active servants of God and his Church will never want employment; for the completion of one design will make way for the commencement of another. The fear of God, powerfully possessing the heart, will produce proportionable fidelity and conscientiousness in a man's whole character and conduct: and it is happy for the community, when men of this character have the charge of public affairs.—"Except the Lord keep the city," the walls are built, and "the watchmen wake in vain:" yet in this and all other concerns, God is to be *trusted* in the use of prudent and proper means, and not to be *tempted* by the neglect of them. Magistrates and ministers have more extensive charges: but every man ought to watch over his own heart and his own house, that sin, the worst enemy, may be kept out at a distance, as much as possible. Provision is made in the Gospel, and in the city of our God for far greater numbers than have yet been enrolled citizens: we should therefore be devising means for replenishing it with inhabitants, as well as for building its walls. 'All holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works are 'from God:' to him belongs the praise, when good thoughts are suggested; we should be careful not to "quench the "Spirit," by rejecting them: and we ought continually to pray, that our God would put more and more of them into our hearts, and enable us to bring them to good effect; and that he would do the same for increasing numbers. Then we might hope that many would concur in designs, as yet unthought of, for spreading the Gospel and promoting the salvation of souls. The Lord delighteth to honour those who willingly face danger and endure hardship for his sake: he knoweth the names of all his people, and will

CHAP. VIII.

The people being assembled, Ezra, with solemn worship, reads and expounds the law, 1—8. *They are greatly affected: but Nehemiah, Ezra, and the Levites, exhort them to joy in God, cheerful feasting, and liberality to the poor,* 9—12. *Being instructed from the law concerning the feast of tabernacles, they keep it with great solemnity,* 13—18.

AND [a] all the people gathered themselves together [b] as one man into the street that *was* [c] before the water-gate; and they spake unto [d] Ezra the scribe to [e] bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had commanded to Israel.

2 And Ezra [f] the priest brought the law before [g] the congregation, both of men and women, and all that *could hear with understanding, upon [h] the first day of the seventh month.

3 And [i] he read therein before the street that *was* before the water-gate, from the † morning until mid-day, before the men and the women, and those that could understand; and [k] the ears of all the people *were attentive* unto the book of the law.

4 And Ezra the scribe stood upon a ‡ pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah, and Shema, and Anaiah, and Urijah, and Hilkiah, and Maaseiah, on his right hand; and on his left hand, Pedaiah, and Mishael, and Malchiah, and Hashum, and Hashbadana, Zechariah, *and* Meshullam.

5 And Ezra [l] opened the book in the ‖ sight of all the people; (for he was above all the people:) and when he opened it, all the people [m] stood up:

6 And Ezra [n] blessed the LORD, the great God. And all the people answered, [o] Amen, amen, [p] with lifting up their hands: and they [q] bowed their heads, and worshipped the LORD [r] with *their* faces to the ground.

7 Also [s] Jeshua, and [t] Bani, and [u] Sherebiah, Jamin, [x] Akkub, Shabbethai, [y] Hodijah, [z] Maaseiah, [a] Kelita, [b] Azariah, [c] Jozabad, [d] Hanan, [e] Pelaiah, and the Levites, [f] caused the people to understand the law: and the people *stood* in their place.

a Ezra iii. 1.
b Judg. xx. 1. 8.
c 16. iii. 26. xii. 37.
d 4. 9. Ezra vii 6. 11. Jer. viii. 8, 9. Matt. xiii. 52. xxiii. 2. 13 34.
e 2 Chr. xxxiv. 15. Is. viii. 20. Mal. iv. 4.
f Mal ii. 7.
g Deut. xxxi. 11—13 2 Chr. xvii. 7—9.
* Heb *understood in hearing.* Is. xxviii. 9.
h Lev. xxiii. 24. Num. xxix. 1—6.
i Luke iv. 16—20. Acts xiii. 15. 27. xv. 21.
† Heb. *light.* Acts xx. 7. 11. xxviii. 23.
k Matt vii 26, 29. Mark xii. 37. Luke viii. 18. xix. 48. Acts xvi 14. Heb. ii. 1—3.
‡ Heb. *tower.*
l Luke iv. 17.
‖ Heb. *eyes.*
m Judg. iii. 20. 1 Kings viii. 14.
n 1 Chr xxix 20. 2 Chr. vi. 4 Ps xvi. 13. lxxii. 18, 19. Eph. i. 3. 1 Pet. i. 3.
o v. 13 Jer. xxviii. 6 Matt. vi 13. 1 Cor. xiv. 16.
p Gen. xiv. 22. Ps. xxviii. 2. lxiii 4 cxii 2. Lam iii. 41. 1 Tim ii. 8.
q Gen xxiv 26. Ex. iv. 31. xii. 27 2 Chr xx. 18. xxix 30.
r Lev. ix 24. Rev. vii 11.
s iii. 19. ix. 4. x. 9 xii. 24.
t iii. 17. ix. 4. x 13
u ix 4. x. 12. xii, 24 Ezra viii 18.
x xi. 16. 18. xii. 25.
y x. 10. 13
z 4. iii. 23. xii. 41. 42. Ezra x. 22.
a x. 10. Ezra x. 23.
b iii 23. x. 2 xii 33.
c Ezra x. 22, 23.
d x. 10.
e x. 10.
f Lev. x. 11. Deut. xxxiii 10. 2 Chr. xvii. 7—9. Mal. ii. 7.

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produce the register at last. But wo to those who turn back from him, loving this present world: and happy they who willingly come to dedicate themselves, and consecrate their substance to his service and glory.

NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1, 2. The feast of trumpets was observed on the first day of the seventh month; and the people assembled to celebrate it though not explicitly required. It is probable that Nehemiah, having formed a plan for their instruction from the law, called upon them by their early attendance to concur in it. Doubtless the appointed sacrifices were offered, (*Marg. Ref.*) but the courts of the temple not being so spacious or convenient, the congregation assembled in a broad street of the city, to hear the law read and expounded: and not only the women, but even the children who were capable of understanding, attended. Accordingly Ezra the priest, being a learned and ready scribe, having long been bestowing much labour on the sacred Scriptures, and preparing correct copies of them, was called on to take the lead in this service: and though it does not appear that the measure originated with him, he yet most cordially concurred in it. Some conjecture that he had been at Babylon during the late events, in which he is not mentioned; and that he had lately returned; but perhaps he had been privately occupied in his own line for the good of his people, and was well satisfied to leave public affairs entirely to Nehemiah.

V. 3. The reading and expounding continued about *six hours*: and as most of the people seem to have *stood* in the open air all the time, it appears that they were not soon wearied: for indeed "the ears of all the people were unto "the book of the law," fixed upon it with profound attention.

V. 4. *Beside,* &c. Some conjecture that these persons being priests or Levites, under Ezra's direction, assisted by turns in the service, to prevent his being worn down with it: but others think, that they only showed their concurrence, by standing on his right hand and on his left: or that they were thus preparing for the same service on future occasions.

V. 5, 6. Ezra having solemnly opened the sacred volume, before he began to read "blessed the LORD the great "God:" he gave him thanks for that good gift and for all his mercies; he adored his great and glorious Majesty, and probably he craved his blessing on the service before him. To this the people gave a cordial and repeated assent; and, prostrating themselves on the ground, added their most solemn worship. This was an excellent preparation for a due regard to the sacred Scriptures.

V. 7. The persons mentioned in this verse, must not be confounded with those who stood by Ezra in his pulpit or tower: for no more than one of the same names occurs in

8 So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, [g] and gave the sense, and caused *them* to understand the reading.

9 And [h] Nehemiah, which *is* the * Tirshatha, and [i] Ezra the priest the scribe, and [k] the Levites that taught the people, said unto all the people, [l] This day *is* holy unto the LORD your God; [m] mourn not nor weep. For [n] all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law.

10 Then he said unto them, [o] Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and [p] send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared; for *this* day *is* holy unto our LORD: neither be ye sorry; for [q] the joy of the LORD is your strength.

11 So the Levites [r] stilled all the people, saying, Hold your peace, for the day *is* holy; neither be ye grieved.

12 And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth, [s] because they had understood the words that were declared unto them.

13 ¶ And on [t] the second day were gathered together the chief of the fathers of all the people, the priests, and the Levites, unto Ezra the scribe, even † to understand the words of the law.

14 And they found written in the law which the LORD had commanded ‡ by Moses, that the children of Israel should [u] dwell in [x] booths in the feast of the seventh month:

g Hab ii 2 Matt. v 21, 22 27, 28. Luke xxiv. 27. 32. Acts viii. 30—35. xvii 2, 3 xxviii 23.
h vii 65 70 x 1.
* Or, *governor.*
i Ezra vii 11.
k 7, 8 2 Chr. xv. 3. xxx. 22. xxxv. 3. Hos. iv. 6.
l 2 Lev. xxiii. 24. Num xxix 1—6
m Deut xii 7 12. xvi 11. 14, 15. xxvi. 14. Ec. iii. 4. Mal ii. 13.
n 2 Kings xxii 11. 19. Rom. iii 20. 2 Cor. vii. 9—11.
o Ec. ii. 24. iii. 13. v. 18. ix 7. 1 Tim. vi 17, 18.
p Deut. xxvi. 11—13 Esth ix. 19—22. Job xxxi. 16—18. Ec xi. 2. Luke xi. 41. Rev. xi. 10
q Ps. xxviii 7, 8. Prov. xvii. 22. Is. vi. 7, 8. xii. 1—3. xxxv. 1—4 2 Cor. viii. 2. xii. 8, 9,——r Num xiii. 30

s 7, 8. Job xxiii. 12. Ps. xix 8—11. cxix. 14. 16. 72 97 103, 104. 111 127, 128. 130. 171 174. Prov ii. 10, 11. xxiv. 13. 14. Jer. xv 16. Luke xxiv. 32.
t 2 Chr xxx 23. Prov ii 1—6. viii. 33, 34. xii. 1 Mark vi 33, 34. Luke xix 47. 48. Acts iv. 1. 5, 6. xiii. 42.
† Or, *that they might instruct in* 7, 8. Luke xxiv. 32. 2 Tim. ii 24.
‡ Heb. *by the hand of*
u Lev xxiii. 34—40—43. Deut. xvi 1. 13.
x Gen. xxxiii. 17

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both places; and, no doubt, in that instance, different men of the same name were meant. These were most, if not all, priests and Levites, (*Marg. Ref.*) and as they "caused the people to understand the law," and were not in the pulpit with Ezra; and as it can hardly be supposed that he merely read, and that they expounded what he read, it is not unlikely that they had separate audiences in different places, where they read and expounded the law, as Ezra did in the station assigned him: for one man's voice could not reach so great a multitude. Perhaps different orders and descriptions of persons formed separate circles: and therefore it is added, that "the people stood "in their place," as it had been appointed to each of them.

V. 8. It is here said that *they read*, &c.; which confirms the preceding supposition, there being evidently more than one reader. The persons engaged in this service, read the text distinctly, and then gave the interpretation; thus the meaning was declared to the people, with all plainness, and application to their present circumstances and conduct, for their conviction and instruction. This seems the obvious meaning of the passage: but many learned men suppose, that the Jews had forgotten the Hebrew during the captivity; and that the expositors merely rendered what was read into Chaldee. 'But if this were true, why did the 'prophets write in Hebrew after their return from cap-'tivity? And this very book shows the contrary, (xiii. '23, 24.) where the Jews' language appears to have been 'spoken by the people. Nor is the custom of reading the 'targum, (or Chaldee version) after the law very ancient.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 9. The people, when the law of God was read and explained to them, were convinced of their own guilt and danger; and, with tender consciences and broken hearts, mourned for their transgressions. This was indeed a proper effect of that ordinance: but as it was a holy festival, which the Lord would have kept with joy and gladness; they were instructed by their teachers to repress their grief, and to turn their thoughts to the mercy of God, and to hope and rejoice in him.

V. 10. After the former part of the day had been spent in the ordinances of religion, the people were allowed, and even required, (it is likely, by a public notice from Nehemiah, enforced by the priests and Levites,) to spend the remainder in cheerful feasting, as a representation of the believer's joy in the service of his gracious God. Probably peace-offerings had been offered, and they were now called to feast together upon them: and might lawfully drink the *sweet* or *rich* wines which their vineyards produced, in as liberal a manner as consisted with temperance. But then they must remember to send portions to those for whom nothing had been prepared; to the poor, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. For this would distinguish their religious feasting from the sensual indulgence of carnal men, and complete the due solemnization of the holy day. They were also again reminded not to indulge grief on the present festival; "for the joy of the LORD was their "strength." A grateful adoring recollection of his late mercies, and his ancient distinguished favours to the nation, and powerful interposition in their behalf; with cheerful meditation on his promises and perfections, inspiring confidence, love, and zeal, and leading them to abound in joyful praises and thanksgivings, would fortify their souls to meet the dangers, encounter the difficulties, resist the temptations, and perform the duties, which still lay before them. Whereas indulged sorrow would induce desponding fear, enfeeble their resolutions, and unfit them for labours, trials, and conflicts.

V. 12. The people had not only understood from the law the will of God and their own sinfulness, but they had learned, in some degree, the grounds of holy rejoicing: and having begun by sowing in tears, they soon were enabled to reap in joy.

V. 13. This was no festival; but having profited from the word the day before, the people were desirous to be further instructed: and the chief of the fathers, priests, and Levites, were the most forward to request Ezra to favour them with an exposition of some other part of the law, being convinced of his superior knowledge in it. Hence it appears, that he instructed even those who assisted in teaching the people.

15 And [y] that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities, and [z] in Jerusalem, saying, Go forth unto [a] the mount, and [b] fetch [c] olive-branches, and pine-branches, and myrtle-branches, and [d] palm-branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as *it is* written.

16 So the people went forth, and brought *them*, and made themselves booths, every one upon [e] the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in [f] the courts of the house of God, and [g] in the street of the water-gate, and [h] in the street of the gate of Ephraim.

17 And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity, made booths, and [i] sat under the booths: for since the days of [k] Jeshua the son of Nun, unto that day, [l] had not the children of Israel [m] done so. And [n] there was very great gladness.

18 Also [o] day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he read in the book of the law of God. And they kept the feast seven days, and on the eighth day *was* * a solemn assembly, [p] according unto the manner.

y Lev. xxiii. 4.
z Deut. xvi. 16.
a Matt. xxi. 1.
b Lev. xxiii. 40.
c Gen. viii. 11.
d John xii. 13. Rev. vii. 9.
e Deut. xxii. 8. 2 Sam. xi. 2. Jer. xix. 13. xxxii. 29.
f 2 Chr. xx. 5. xxxiii. 5.
g 3. iii. 26. xii. 37.
h xii. 39. 2 Kings xiv. 13.
i John i. 14. Heb. xi. 13.
k Josh. i. 1. *Joshua.* Heb. iv. 8. *Jesus.*
l 2 Chr. vii. 8—10. Ezra iii. 4.
m 2 Chr. xxx. 26. xxxv. 18.
n 1 Chr. xxix. 22. 2 Chr. vii. 10. xxx. 21—23.
o Deut. xxxi. 10—13.
* Heb. *a restraint.*
p Lev. xxiii. 36. Num. xxix. 35. John vii. 37.

V. 14. It may be supposed, that Ezra selected those portions of the law which prescribed the feast of tabernacles, as it had not in general been duly observed, and the season was approaching for it: (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 17. *Done so*, &c. It is evident that this and the other solemn feasts were *totally* neglected at some times, and for a long while together: yet we in a few instances read of the feast of tabernacles being kept; and must therefore understand these words, of the exactness, fervency, unanimity, and joyfulness, with which it was at this time celebrated. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 18. The reading of the law every seventh year at this feast had been enjoined: but it seems not in general to have been duly attended to; at this time, however, it formed a part of the daily service, through the whole continuance of the feast. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

Pious men of different dispositions may serve the church in their several ways. The studious may, as it were, prepare materials with which the active may work: and the active may make way for the studious, to bring forth their treasures for public use. They ought therefore reciprocally to assist each other, and to welcome such assistance, without envy, competition, or prejudice. The public reading, expounding, and preaching of God's word, has in all ages been the grand method of promoting true religion: they, therefore, who are eminently capable of this service, should be called forth from obscurity and retirement, and excited to abound in it; all of every age, sex, or rank, who are capable of understanding, ought to be assembled to attend, and to "give earnest heed to the things which "they hear;" they who are in reputation, should set an example of diligent attendance; and even teachers should be "swift to hear" other ministers, as they have opportunity, that they may become more competent for the work. —When the value of the Scriptures and of the soul is properly understood; and when we are earnestly engaged, and can relish heavenly pursuits, we shall not soon be weary of divine ordinances. Short sermons, therefore, or tired hearers, prove a very low state of religion: for facts demonstrate that where the word of God is precious, even inconvenient situations and uneasy postures will be patiently endured: and when ministers, who are themselves in earnest, perceive the people thirsting for instruction and drinking it in, they will be encouraged to proceed, and to preach as much and as often as required, whilst God gives them health for the work. Reading and preaching should be attended with solemn worship: the perfections of our God are worthy of all adoration; his mercies call for our grateful acknowledgment; and a sense of our own wants and unworthiness, love to his people, compassion for sinners, and regard to all orders of mankind, where they prevail, will dictate many prayers and supplications. In these services one person must speak, but all should join in their hearts, and express their solemn and cordial assent. We cannot too humbly or reverently worship the LORD, the great God: yet, blessed be his name, we may call him Father, in filial confidence and hope. Whenever we open the sacred volume, we should bless the Lord for that precious gift, and proceed to peruse it, with solemn submission to his teaching and authority. Ministers should endeavour to make it evident to every one, that they preach according to these sacred oracles, producing clear scriptural warrant for all their doctrine, reading the word distinctly, diligently causing the people to understand it by familiar explanations and illustrations, and applying it in the most plain and simple manner to their hearts and consciences.

V. 9—18.

The divine law, when faithfully unfolded in its extensive demands and righteous sanction, is generally made successful by the Holy Spirit, in bringing the stout, hard, and proud hearts of sinners to tremble, to melt into godly sorrow, and to become abased before God: for it pierces the conscience, fills the soul with dismay, and thus prepares for the sweet consolations of the gospel, by which is the knowledge of salvation, through the remission of sins. Thus the broken heart is bound up, and the sinner learns to rejoice in God our Saviour. Both godly sorrow and holy joy are profitable, and beautiful in their season: and it is peculiarly desirable to have all our passions regulated according to the will of God, and the duty of the present occasion. They who mourn for sin, should be comforted, instructed, and directed to rejoice in the Lord.

CHAP. IX.

A solemn fast observed, 1—3. The Levites piously acknowledge the manifold goodness of God to Israel, and humbly confess the sins of the nation, as the cause of their miseries, 4—37. The people solemnly covenant with God, 38.

a Lev. xxiii. 34. 39. 2 Chr. vii. 10.
b viii. 2
c Judg. xx. 26. 2 Chr. xx. 3. Is. xxii. 12. Joel i. 13, 14. ii. 15—17. Jon. iii. 5—8.

NOW in the [a] twenty and fourth day [b] of this month, the children of Israel were assembled with [c] fasting, and with sackclothes, and [d] earth upon them.

d Josh. vii. 6. 1 Sam. iv. 12. 2 Sam. i. 2. Job ii. 12.

2 And [e] the seed of Israel separated themselves from all * strangers, and stood and [f] confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers.

e xiii. 3. 30. Ezra ix. 2. x. 11.
* Heb. *strange children*
f i. 6. Lev. xxvi. 39, 40. Ezra ix. 6, 7. 15. Ps. cvi. 6, 7. Dan. ix. 3—10. 20.

3 And [g] they stood up in their place, and read in the book of the law of the LORD their God, [h] *one* fourth part of the day; and *another* fourth part they confessed, and worshipped the LORD their God.

g viii. 4. 7, 8.
h viii. 3.

This they have abundant reason to do, however many their sins have been, when they humbly come to trust in his mercy. His salvation is perfectly free; the provisions of his grace are plenteous; his righteousness is for ever; his ways are pleasantness; his protection sure; his consolations strong; and hope in his mercy and of his glory "maketh "not ashamed, when his love is shed abroad in our hearts "by the Holy Ghost." Joy in God, if genuine, adds strength and courage to the soul for every duty, and for every trial; it inspires resolution for service, and vigour in resisting temptation; it satisfies, and sanctifies, and enlarges the heart to cheerful obedience, and in love to our brethren: Indeed that joy is a mere counterfeit, which has not these effects; and they are enemies to their own sanctification, who always indulge sorrow even for sin, and put from them those consolations which are tendered to them by the word and Spirit of God. It is consistent with true godliness, cheerfully and moderately to use the comforts of Providence, when they are received with thanksgiving, and sanctified by the word of God and prayer, and by liberally communicating to the poor and needy. But they who "eat the fat and drink the sweet," but send no portion, or but little, to those for whom nothing is prepared, have not this sanctified enjoyment of their abundance. This especially distinguishes a Christian feast from the revellings and banquetings which are ranked by the apostle with abominable idolatries. (1 *Peter* iv. 3.) Whatever calls a believer to rejoice, should excite him to abound in thanksgivings to God and liberality to the poor. But his joy will not so much arise from worldly prosperity or indulgence, as from having understood the words of God, and from perceiving that sinners may hope in his mercy and in the prospect of eternal glory. They who have profited by the preached word, will be glad of an opportunity of hearing it on any day, as far as consistent with other duties: and when the people are so disposed, the minister is called to be "instant in season and out of season." Some portions of Scripture are more suitable to the circumstances of our congregations than others would be, especially when they remind them of present duty. For even true Christians neglect many things through ignorance and forgetfulness, and for want of *particular* instructions. But it is beautiful, when they no sooner hear the command of God, than they prepare for obedience; when attending on the word excites an appetite after it; and when the ordinances afford great gladness to their souls. Yet, alas! how little have the commandments and institutions of our God been hitherto observed, even in his professing church! So that when individuals, or collective bodies, come near the standard of his word, in the power of godliness, they become men wondered at: But though none, from age to age, or through whole nations of professed Christians, have ever served God, as some small company may aim to do: yet if these be evidently obeying the plain meaning of Scripture, they ought not to be censured as singular, precise, or affected; but to be commended and imitated. True religion will render us strangers and pilgrims upon earth: and they who refuse conformity to the world, and have their conversation in heaven, and their joy in the Lord, must appear strange and uncouth in the eyes of the servants of that other master, who "worketh in all the children of "disobedience."

NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 1. No doubt the day of atonement, on the tenth day of the seventh month, had been duly observed: and the feast of tabernacles lasted from the fifteenth to the twenty-second day of it: and then, one day having intervened, the people kept a solemn fast, with every customary expression of godly sorrow and humiliation. This seems to have been done, not only by the authority of the governor, but by the general approbation of the people; who, by hearing the law read and expounded, had discovered their own numerous and heinous transgressions, with those of their fathers and nation in all preceding ages: and it was intended as an introduction to their solemn covenanting with God, as afterwards recorded.

V. 2. Before the appointed fast began, the Israelites carefully separated from among them those strangers or Gentiles, who either by marriage or amity were intermingled with them. This was intended as a preparation for the solemn observance: for it seems the people had again intermarried with the surrounding nations, after Ezra had separated them from their heathen wives.

V. 3. The persons afterwards mentioned stood up to perform the services of the day; and they spent *one fourth* of it in reading the law, (probably expounding it also, as in the former instances,) and *one fourth* in confessing their sins and in other acts of solemn worship. Some think that six hours, (a fourth part of the twenty-four,) were at once spent in each of these sacred duties. Others suppose that 'they read the law, and confessed, (that is, praised God,) 'interchangeably. For in one fourth part of the day, from 'the first hour to the third, they did the one; and from 'thence to the sixth hour, (that is, till twelve o'clock,) they 'did the other. Then they began the former again, till 'the ninth hour; and from thence to the evening they

4 Then stood up upon the * stairs, of the Levites, [i] Jeshua, and Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, *and* Chenani, and [k] cried with a loud voice unto the LORD their God.

5 Then the Levites, Jeshua, and Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabniah, Sherebiah, Hodijah, Shebaniah, *and* Pethahiah, said, [l] Stand up *and* [m] bless the LORD your God for ever and ever: and blessed be [n] thy glorious name, which is [o] exalted above all blessing and praise.

6 [p] Thou, *even* thou art LORD alone; [q] thou hast made heaven, [r] the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all *things* that *are* therein, the seas, and all that *is* therein, and thou [s] preservest them all; and the [t] host of heaven worshippeth thee.

7 Thou *art* the LORD the God, who didst [u] choose Abram, and broughtest him forth out of [x] Ur of the Chaldees, and [y] gavest him the name of Abraham;

8 And [z] foundest his heart faithful before thee, and [a] madest a covenant with him, to give the land of [b] the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Jebuzites, and the Girgashites, to give *it, I say,* to his seed, [c] and has performed thy words; for thou *art* [d] righteous:

9 And [e] didst see the affliction of our fathers in Egypt, and [f] heardest their cry by the Red sea;

10 And [g] shewedst signs and wonders upon Pharaoh, and on all his servants, and on all the people of his land: for thou knewest that [h] they dealt proudly against them. So [i] didst thou get thee a name, as *it is* this day.

11 And thou didst [k] divide the sea before them, so that they went through the midst of the sea on the dry land; and [l] their persecutors thou threwest into the deeps, [m] as a stone into the mighty waters.

12 Moreover [n] thou leddest them in the day by a cloudy pillar, and in the night by a pillar of fire, to give them light [o] in the way wherein they should go.

13 Thou [p] camest down also upon

* Or, *scaffold.*
i 5. vii. 7. x 9—13
k 2 Chr. xx. 19. Ps. lxxvii. 1. cxxx. 1. Lam iii. 8. John xi. 43 Acts vii. 60.
l 1 Kings viii. 14. 22. 2 Chr. xx. 13. 19. Ps. cxxxiv. cxxxv. 3.
m 1 Chr. xxix 20. 2 Chr. xx. 21. Ps. ciii. 1. 2. cxvii. cxviii. 1. cxlv. 2. cxlvi 2. Mat. xi 25. Eph. i. 3. 1 Pet. i 3.
n Ex xv. 6. 11. Deu. xxviii 58 1 Chr. xxix 13. Ps lxxii. 18, 19. cxlv. 5. 11, 12. Tit. ii 13.
o 1 Kings viii 27. 1 Chr xxix. 11. Ps. cvi. 2.
p Deut. vi. 4. 2 Kings xix. 15. 19. Ps lxxxvi. 10. Is. xliii. 10. xliv. 6. 8. Mark xii. 29, 30. John x 30.
q Gen. i. 1. ii. 1. Ex. xx. 11. Ps. xxxiii 6. cxxxvi. 5—9. cxlvi 6. Jer. x. 11, 12. Col. i 15, 16. Rev. iv 11. xiv. 7.
r Deut x 14. 1 Kings viii. 27
s Ps. xxxvi. 6 Col i. 17. Heb. i 3
t Gen. ii. 1. xxxii. 2. 1 Kings xxii. 19. Ps. ciii. 21. cxlviii. 2—4 Is. vi. 2, 3. Heb. i. 6 Rev. v. 13.———u Gen xii. 1, 2 Deut. x. 15 Josh xxiv 2, 3. Is xli. 8, 9. li. 2 ———x Gen xi. 31. xv 7. Acts vii. 2—4 ———y Gen xvii. 5 ———
z Gen. xii. 1—3. xv. 6. Acts xiii 22. xvi 15 1 Tim. i. 12, 13 ——— a Gen. xii. 7. xvii. 7, 8. xxii. 16—18 Deut. vii 8, 9. ix. 5. Ps. cv. 8, 9. Luke i. 72, 73
b Gen xv 19—21 Ex iii 8 17. Deut. vii. 1 Josh iii 10. xi 3
c Deut. xxvi 9 Josh. xi 23 xxi. 43—45. xxiii. 14 Ps. cv. 43, 44
d Num. xxiii. 19. Ps xc. ii. 14. 17. Ps. i 2. Rev. xvi 18 Heb. ix 28.
e Ex. ii 25 iii 7, 9. 16 Acts vii. 34.
f Ex. xiv. 10—12.
g Ex vii. viii. ix. x. xii 29, 30. xiv. 15—31. Deut. iv 34. xi. 3, 4. Ps lxxviii. 12, 14. 43—53. cv. 27—37. cvi. 7—11. cxxxv. 8, 9. cxxxvi. 10—15. Acts vii. 36.
h Ex. v 2 7, 8 ix. 17. xviii. 11. Job xl 11, 12 Dan. iv. 37. 1 Pet. v. 5.
i Ex. ix. 16. Ps. lxxxiii 18. Is. lxiii. 12, 14. Jer. xxxii. 20. Ez. xx. 9. Dan ix. 15. Rom. ix. 17.
k Ex. xiv. 21, 22. 27, 28. xv. Ps. lxvi. 6. lxxviii. 13. cxiv. 3—5. Is. lxiii 11—13.
l Ex xv 4, 5 19. Ps. cvi. 11. Heb. xi. 29
m Ex. xv. 10. Rev. xviii 21.
n 19. Ex. xiii 21, 22 xiv 19, 20. Ps. lxxviii. 14. cv. 39.
o Ps cvii. 7. cxliii. 8
p Ex. xix. 11. 18—20. Deu. xxxiii. 2. Is lxiv. 1. 3. Hab. iii. 3.

'spent their time in the other!" (*Bp. Patrick.*) But perhaps the three hours, previous to the offering of the morning-sacrifice, were assigned for the people to prepare themselves and their families for the public solemnity; and the three hours, after the evening-sacrifice, for their consenting to and sealing the covenant, and the improvement of what they had heard, by meditation, pious converse, and devotion: for on solemn fasts it was customary for the Jews to take no food till after sun-set. At least, however, the public services of the day continued six hours without intermission.

V. 4. It is probable that these Levites were placed at proper distances, (so as not to interfere with each other, when they "cried with a loud voice unto the LORD their "God;") upon pulpits or scaffolds erected for that purpose, with distinct auditories around them.

V. 5. Eight Levites are mentioned both in this verse and the preceding, and five of the names are the same: it may therefore be supposed, that the same persons are intended, of whom some were known by different names.—Perhaps the people were prostrate on the ground, or kneeling, while they humbly craved mercy from God, each for himself and for his people: but they were called upon to *stand up*, when the public worship began, and to bless and praise God for ever and ever, or as long as they had any being. He indeed is exalted above all blessing and "praise." His essential glory is incomprehensible and infinite; so that the most sublime adorations of the highest created beings must fall unspeakably below his majesty and excellency. Yet he accepts their praises, when they worship him according to their capacities. Nay, he delights in the feeble praises and blessings of sinners, when they come before him in humble faith and cordial grateful love; and counts himself glorified by them, though they are not only defective, but also defiled!

V. 7. 'Here follows a compendious history of the 'affairs of the Hebrew nation, in this confession of God's 'benefits and of their ingratitude; which Nehemiah and 'Ezra, it is likely, composed in the form of a prayer, and 'delivered it to the Levites, whom they ordered to speak 'it distinctly before the whole congregation, from their 'several scaffolds, which were conveniently placed in se-'veral parts of the assembly, that they might be heard.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) But, as at least three hours were employed in this part of the service, vastly more must have been spoken than is here written; which seems to have been a kind of compendium or directory to those who officiated, that all might be evidently of one mind; on the several parts of which each of them enlarged according to his ability.

V. 8. The Lord tried the faith of Abraham on many occasions; especially when he commanded him to offer up Isaac: but "he found his heart *faithful.*" Abraham stood every trial, and was approved. God also showed himself *righteous* towards Abraham and his posterity; both in faithfully performing his covenant-engagements, and in justly punishing their cruel and haughty oppressors. (*Marg. Ref.*)

mount Sinai, and [q] spakest with them from heaven, and [r] gavest them right judgments and * true laws, good statutes and commandments;

14 And [s] madest known unto them thy holy sabbath, and [t] commandedst them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of [u] Moses thy servant;

15 And [x] gavest them bread from heaven for their hunger, and [y] broughtest forth water for them out of the rock for their thirst, and promisedst them that they should [z] go in to possess the land which thou hadst † sworn to give them.

16 But they and our fathers [a] dealt proudly, and [b] hardened their necks, and [c] hearkened not to thy commandments,

17 And [d] refused to obey, neither were [e] mindful of thy wonders that thou didst among them; but hardened their necks, and in their rebellion [f] appointed a captain to return to their bondage: but thou *art* [g] a God ‡ ready to pardon, [h] gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and [i] forsookest them not.

18 Yea, [k] when they had made them a molten calf, and said, This *is* thy god that brought thee up out of Egypt, and had wrought great provocations;

19 Yet thou, [l] in thy manifold mercies, forsookest them not in the wilderness: [m] the pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way; neither the pillar of fire by night, to shew them light, and the way wherein they should go.

20 Thou [n] gavest also thy [o] good Spirit to instruct them, and [p] withheldest not thy manna from their mouth, and [q] gavest them water for their thirst.

21 Yea, [r] forty years, didst thou sustain them in the wilderness, *so that* they lacked nothing; [s] their clothes waxed not old, and their feet swelled not.

22 Moreover [t] thou gavest them kingdoms and nations, and didst [u] divide them into corners: so they possessed [x] the land of Sihon, and the land of the king of Heshbon, and the land of Og king of Bashan.

23 Their children also [y] multipliedst thou as the stars of heaven, and [z] broughtest them into the land, concerning which [a] thou hadst promised to their fathers, that they should go in to possess *it*.

24 So the children went in and possessed the land, and [b] thou subduedst before them the inhabitants of the land,

q Ex. xx. 1 22. Deut iv. 10—13. 34. v. 4. 22—26 Heb.xii. 18—25
r Deut iv. 8 x 12, 13. Ps. xix. 7—11 cxix 127, 128. Ez. xx. 11. —13 Rom. vii. 12—14.
* Heb. *laws of truth.* Ps cxix 66. 160.
s Gen. ii. 3 Ex. xvi 29. xx 8—11. Ez xx. 12. 20.
t Ex. xxi. xxiii. Lev. i 1. xxvii. 34. Deut. iv 5. 45. v. 31.
u i 8.
x Ex. xvi 1. 14. 15. Deut viii 3 16 Ps. lxxviii. 24, 25. cv. 40 John vi. 31—33. 1 Cor x. 3.
y 20 Ex. xvii. 6. Num. xx 9—11. Deut. viii. 15. Ps lxxviii. 15—20 cv 41. cxiv. 8. 1 Cor. x. 4.
z Deut. i 8. Josh. i. 2—4
† Heb *lift up thine hand to* Gen xiv. 22 Num xiv. 30 Ez. xx. 15.
a 29 Ex xxxii 9. Deut. ix 6. 13. 23, 24. 27 xxxii. 15. Ps. lxxviii 8. cvi 6. Is lxiii 10. Jer ii 31. Acts vii. 51.
b Deut. xxxi. 27. 2 Kings xvii 14 2 Chr. xxx 8. xxxvi. 13. Ps. xcv. 8—10. Prov xxix 1 Is. xlviii 4. Jer xix. 15. Rom. ii. 5. Heb. iii. 13. 15.
c Ex. xv 26 Deut. v 29. Ps lxxxi 8 11 — 14 Is xlviii 18 —— d Num xiv. 3. 4. 11. 41. xvi 14. Ps. cvi 24. 25 Prov. i 24 Heb xii. 25
e Ps lxxviii. 11. 42. 43 cvi 7 13. Matt xvi 9—11. 2 Pet. i. 12—15 —— f Num xiv. 4
g Num xiv 13, 19. Ps lxxxvi. 5 15. cxxx 4. Mic. vii 18, 19 —— ‡ Heb. *of pardons*
h Ex xxxiv 6. 7. Ps lxxviii. 38. ciii. 8—18. cxlv 8, 9. Is lv. 7—9. Joel ii 13 Rom ix. 15. Eph i. 6, 7 —— i 1 Kings vi 13 viii. 57 Ps cvi. 43—46 —— k Ex. xxxii. 4—8 31, 32. Deut x. 12—16 Ps. cvi 19—23. Ez. xx. 7, &c.

l Ps. cvi 7, 8. 45. Lam iii 22 Ez. xx. 14. 22 Dan. ix. 9. 18. Mal iii. 6.
m 12. Ex xl. 38. 1 Cor. x. 1.
n Num. xi. 17. 25—29. Is. lxiii. 11.
o 30 Ps. cxliii. 10. Rom. xv 30. 2 Pet. i 21.
p Ex. xvi. 35. Josh. v. 12.
q Ps. cv 41.
r Deut. ii 7.
s Deut. viii. 4. xxix. 5. Ps. xxxiv. 10.
t Josh x. xi. Ps. lxxviii. 55. cv. 44.
u Deut. xxxii 26. Josh. xi. 23.
x Num xxi 21—35 Deut. ii 26—36 iii. 1—17. Ps cxxxv 10—12. cxxxvi 17—22.
y Gen xv 5. xxii. 17 1 Chr. xxvii. 23
z Josh i ii, &c.
a Gen. xii. 7. xiii. 15—17. xv. 18. xvii. 8. xxvi. 3.
b Ps. xliv. 2, 3.

V. 13. God spake the law of ten commandments *from heaven*, in respect of its heavenly original, as distinguished from the statutes of earthly lawgivers. Or the word *heaven* may mean the higher regions of the air. The moral law is right, *true*, and good: grounded upon eternal *truth*, resulting from the nature of God and man, and our relations to him and to each other; and forming the standard of excellency and the rule of felicity. The *judgments* given to Israel were more consistent with the true difference betwixt right and wrong, and the relative proportion of crimes and punishments, than the municipal laws of any other country have been: and the ritual law prefigured the true way of a sinner's justification, sanctification, and eternal life.

V. 14. By the observance of the sabbath, the Israelites were distinguished as the worshippers of the great Creator, who had also been their Deliverer from Egyptian bondage: and in this holy day they enjoyed a most important means of promoting true religion in their own hearts and in their families. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 15—17. (*Notes, Num.* xiii. xiv.)

V. 20. *Thy good Spirit.* The Spirit of prophecy, in Moses, Joshua, the seventy elders, and the subsequent prophets, both instructed the Israelites by their ministry, and testified against them when rebellious. (30.) The example, conversation, and exertions of those who partook of his sanctifying influences, tended to reform the nation: and no doubt the Spirit of God, by his convictions, powerfully excited in the consciences of the unconverted a sense of guilt and dread of punishment; and in other ways strove with them. But in all these respects they resisted the Holy Ghost. (*Marg. Ref.*) The unspeakable condescension and compassion of the blessed Spirit of God, in his operations upon the polluted souls of sinful men, as well as the tendency of those operations, are strongly marked in the words, "thy good Spirit."

V. 22. *Corners.* That is, into all the corners of the promised land from which the old inhabitants had been driven. Some expositors think, that the situation of Canaan, as favourable to Israel's separation from other nations, being divided by seas, mountains, and deserts, from the most flourishing kingdoms in the world, was denoted by this expression. And indeed it is observable, that Jerusalem, which God chose for the metropolis of his people, was situated at a distance from the sea, and from all navigable rivers; and therefore could not become a place of extensive commerce. Others however suppose, that the dispossessed nations are meant, who were driven into corners. Heshbon being the city of Sihon, the words should be rendered, "*even* the land of the king of "Heshbon."

the Canaanites, and gavest them into their hands, with their kings, and the people of the land, that they might do with them * as they would.

25 And they took [c] strong cities, and [d] a fat land, and possessed houses full of all goods, † wells digged, vine-yards, and olive-yards, and ‡ fruit-trees in abundance: so they [e] did eat, and were filled, and became fat, and [f] delighted themselves in thy great goodness.

26 Nevertheless [g] they were disobedient, and rebelled against thee, and [h] cast thy law behind their backs, and [i] slew thy prophets, which testified against them to turn them to thee, and [k] they wrought great provocations.

27 [l] Therefore thou deliveredst them into the hand of their enemies, who vexed them: and [m] in the time of their trouble, when they cried unto thee, thou heardest *them* from heaven; and according to thy manifold mercies thou gavest them [n] saviours, who saved them out of the hand of their enemies.

28 But after they had rest, they ∮ did evil again before thee: therefore leftest thou them in the hand of their enemies, so that they had the dominion over them; yet when they returned, and cried unto thee, thou [o] heardest *them* from heaven, and [p] many times didst thou deliver them, according to thy mercies;

29 And [q] testifiedst against them, that thou mightest bring them again unto thy law: [r] yet they dealt proudly, and hearkened not unto thy commandments, but sinned against thy judgments, (*which if a man do, he shall live in them,) and ‖ withdrew the shoulder, [t] and hardened their neck, and would not hear:

30 Yet [u] many years didst thou * forbear them, and testifiedst against them [x] by thy Spirit in * thy prophets; yet would they not give ear; [y] therefore gavest thou them into the hand of the people of the lands.

31 Nevertheless, [z] for thy great mercies' sake thou didst not utterly consume them; nor forsake them; for thou *art* [a] a gracious and merciful God.

32 Now therefore, [b] our God, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who [c] keepest covenant and mercy, let not all the † trouble seem [d] little before thee, that hath ‡ come upon us, [e] on our kings, on our princes, and on our priests, and on our prophets, and on our fathers, and on all thy people, [f] since the time of the kings of Assyria unto this day.

33 Howbeit [g] thou *art* just in all that is brought upon us; for thou hast done right, but [h] we have done wickedly:

34 Neither have our kings, our princes, our priests, nor our fathers, kept thy law, nor hearkened unto thy commandments, and [i] thy testimonies, wherewith thou didst testify against them.

35 For [k] they have not served thee in their kingdom, and in [l] thy great goodness that thou gavest them, and in the large and [m] fat land which thou gavest before them, neither turned they from their wicked works.

36 Behold, [n] we *are* servants this day; and *for* the land that thou gavest unto our fathers, to eat the fruit thereof, and the good thereof, behold, we *are* servants in it.

37 And [o] it yieldeth much increase unto the kings, whom thou hast set over us because of our sins: also they have [p] dominion over our bodies, and over our cattle, at their pleasure, and we *are* in great distress.

* Heb. *according to their will.* 2 Tim. ii. 26.
c Num. xiii 27, 28. Deut. iii 5. vi. 10—12. ix. 1—3.
d 35 Deut viii. 7—10 xxxii. 13 Ez xx 6.
† Or, *cisterns.*
‡ Heb. *tree of food*
e Deut. xxxii. 15. Ps. lxv. 11. Is vi. 10. Jer. v. 27, 28. Hos. xiii. 6.
f 1 Kings viii. 66. Jer. xxxi. 14. Hos. iii. 5. Rom. ii. 4
g Judg. ii. 11, 12. iii. 6, 7. x. 6. 13, 14 Ps. lxxviii. 56, 57. cvi. 34—40. Ez. xvi. 15, &c xx. 21. xxiii. 4, &c.
h 1 Kings xiv. 9. Ps. l 17. Ez. xxiii. 35.
i 1 Kings xviii. 4. 13. xix. 10. 2 Chr. xxiv. 20, 21. xxxvi 16. Jer. xxvi. 20—23. Matt. xxi. 35. xxiii. 34—37 Acts vii. 52.
k 18. 2 Kings xxi. 11. Ez xxii 25—31.
l Deut xxxi. 16.—18. Judg ii. 14, 15. iii. 8, &c. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 17. Ps. cvi 41, 42. Dan. ix. 10—14.
m Deut iv. 29—31. Judg. iii. 15. vi. 6—10. x. 15, 16. Ps. cvi. 43—45.
n Judg ii. 18. iii. 9. 15. 1 Sam. xii 10, 12. 2 Kings xiii. 5. xiv. 27. Ob. 21.
∮ Heb *returned to do evil* Judg. iii. 11, 12. 30 iv. 1. v. 31 vi. 1.
o 1 Kings viii. 33, 34. 39. Is. lxiii. 15.
p Ps cvi. 43—45
q Deut. iv 26. xxxi. 21. 2 Kings xvii. 13. 2 Chr. xxiv. 19. xxxvi. 15. Jer. xxv. 3—7. Hos. vi. 5. 16. Ex. x. 3. Jer. xiii. 15—17. xliii. 2. xliv. 10. 16, 17 Dan. v. 20. Jam. iv. 6. 10.
r Lev. xviii. 5. Ez. xx 11. Luke x. 28 Rom x 5 Gal. iii. 12.
‖ Heb *gave a withdrawing shoulder.* Zech. vii. 11, 12 —— t 17. Jer. vii. 26. xvii. 23. xix. 15 —— u Ps. lxxxvi. 15. Rom. ii. 4 2 Pet iii. 9. —— * Heb. *protract over them.*

x 20. Is lxiii. 10 Acts vii 51 xxxviii. 25. 1 Pet. i. 11. 2 Pet i. 21.
* Heb. *the hand of thy prophets*
y Is. v. 5. xlii. 24. Jer. xliv. 22. Zech. vii. 13.
z Jer. iv. 27. v 10 18 Lam iii. 22 Ez. xiv. 22, 23 Dan. ix. 9
a 17 Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. 2 Kings xiii. 23. 2 Chr. xxx. 9 Ps ciii 8, 9. cxlv. 8, 9
b i. 5. Deut. vii 21. Ps xlvii. 2 lxvi 3. 5.
c Deut. vii. 9. 1 Kings viii. 23. Dan. ix. 4 Mic. vii. 18—20.
† Heb *weariness*
d Lev. xxvi. 18. 21. 24 28. Ezra ix. 13.
‡ Heb. *found us*
e 2 Kings xxiii 29. 33, 34. xxv 7. 18—21. 25, 26. Jer. viii. 1—3. xxii. 18, 19. xxxiv. ‖19—22. Dan. ix. 6. 8.
f 2 Kings xv. 19 29. xvii. 3. Is vii. 17, 18. viii 7, 8. x. 5—7.
g Gen. xviii. 25 Job xxxiv. 23. Ps. cxix. 137 Lam. i. 18. Dan ix. 7. 14.
h Lev. xxvi. 40, 41. Job xxxiii 27. Ps. cvi. 6. Dan ix. 5—16.
i 2 Kings xvii. 15
k Deut. xxviii. 47. Rom. ii. 4, 5.
l 25.
m Deut. viii. 7—10. xxxii. 12—15.
n. Deut. xxviii. 48. 2 Chr. xii 8. Ezra ix. 9.
o Deut. xxviii. 33. 51. ∮Ezra iv. 13. vi. 8. vii. 24
p v. 8. Lev. xxvi. 17. Deut xxviii. 48. John viii. 33.

V. 25. *Delighted*, &c. 'Their highest pleasure indeed ought to have been, in the thought how good he was unto them. But the meaning of these words is no more than this,—God had bestowed so many blessings upon them, that they took great pleasure in the enjoyment of them.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 27. *Saviours*, &c. The deliverers which God immediately raised up for his people, as the Judges and king David, by whom they were rescued from the miseries into which their sins had plunged them, were all types of the great Saviour, who delivers us from wrath and from our enemies, that we may become the servants of that God whom we have offended.

V. 29. *And testifiedst*, &c. (26.) The prophets were sent from God to explain to the people his judgments and mercies; and to testify against them, that their miseries were deserved by their sins, and that worse would come upon them, unless they turned to him with true repentance.

If a man, &c. (*Note, Lev.* xviii. 5.)

V. 36, 37. The situation of Israel was very different

q x. 29. 2 Kings xxiii. 3 2 Chr. xv. 12, 13 xxiii. 16. xxix. 10. xxxiv. 31. Ezra x. 3.

38 And because of all this, [q] we make a sure *covenant*, and write *it*; and our princes, Levites *and* priests, * seal *unto it*.

* Heb. are by the sealing, or sealed. x. 1.

from what it had been under their own kings, and in the days of their prosperity. God had for their sins set over them the kings of Persia, who exacted from them heavy taxes, and who had their property, liberty, and lives entirely in their power. It was very distressing for the worshippers of God, to be in slavery to the worshippers of dumb idols: and though they had no intention of revolting from the kings of Persia, who allowed them to live according to their own laws: yet they hoped, that upon their deep repentance, and more entire return to God, he would more effectually deliver them from captivity and bondage, and restore them in due season to their former prosperity. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, Ezra* ix. *Ps.* lxxviii. cv. cvi. *Dan.* ix.)

V. 38. *A sure*, &c. This solemn covenanting with God seems to have been the object that Nehemiah and Ezra, and other leading men, aimed at, in all these instructions and religious observances.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

The diligent study of God's word will more and more show us both our own sinfulness, and the plenteousness of his salvation, and thus alternately call us to mourn for sin, and to rejoice in him. Seasons of comfort should remind us of his condescending goodness, and so lead us to deeper self-abasement on account of our crimes against him: and thus joyful feasts and solemn fasts may properly succeed, and prepare our hearts for each other. Our sorrow and humiliation for sin must be evidenced to be genuine by separation from it, and from every occasion or temptation to it. Every discovery of the truth and will of God should endear to us his sacred word, and render us more unwearied in our attendance on it and on his worship. A few hours, or even occasionally a whole day, cannot be too long to spend in those exercises and meditations, which are preparations for heaven, and anticipations of its sacred joys: yet, alas, we are most of us sooner weary in the courts of the Lord, than the trifler is at his diversions, or even the labourer at his work! Our God knoweth our thoughts before we speak, and mental prayer may suit our secret intercourse with him: but they who address him in public, should speak audibly and with animation, that the people may hear and be affected: and if, on some occasions, "they cry with a loud voice "unto the LORD their God," or be more copious than usual, they cannot be censured, without involving those who are commended in the sacred Scriptures. Whether we feast and rejoice, or fast and mourn for sin, we should be ready to bless and praise the Lord our God, both for his eternal excellencies, for his goodness to us as our Creator, and the sole author of all our temporal comforts; and above all, as the God of salvation, for the wonders he hath done for his church of redeemed sinners from the beginning hitherto.

V. 7—31.

In reviewing this abstract of the Lord's conduct towards Israel, as a people, from the choice and call of Abraham to the days of Nehemiah, we perceive a continued display of his power, wisdom, truth, and love, requited by persevering ingratitude, and perverse disobedience. All their distinguishing advantages originated from his choice of them, and his gracious promises, which he most faithfully performed. But whilst surrounded with the riches of his bounty, and the demonstrations of his power and presence; whilst his holy law yet sounded in their ears, Sinai's fiery top was before their eyes, and they were guided, guarded, sustained, and instructed by miracles; they rebelled against God, set up idols, attempted to return to Egypt, and rushed vehemently into the most daring provocations! Yet he did not destroy them; he withdrew not his mercies from them; he was ever ready to hear their prayers, to pardon their sins, and to do them good: though they still continued their ingratitude, their murmurings, and provocations. The dealings of the Lord toward them, as a nation, in their warnings, corrections, and deliverances, throughout the whole history; and their abuse of his goodness, relapses into idolatry, neglect of his worship, contempt and persecution of his prophets, and other enormities, tended only to show the riches of his goodness, forbearance, and long-suffering, and the hardness of their impenitent hearts. And even when at length justice demanded that they should be given up into the hands of their enemies, and their temple, city, and country desolated; his tender mercy prevented him from utterly casting them off! Their miseries had been great and terrible; but the Lord was just in all that he had done: yet it was of his mercies that they were not consumed, and that a remnant had been brought back to their own land, who soon began to show the same spirit of ingratitude and disobedience. And is not their conduct a specimen of human nature? Our land, for instance, hath for ages been favoured with deliverances, opportunities, and benefits, little, if at all, inferior to those vouchsafed Israel! and have we not copied their ingratitude, rebellion, and iniquity? Oh, may a general reformation, whilst yet we are spared, prevent our being given up into the hands of foreign conquerors, or domestic oppressors!

But especially we should study our own history. Let us look back to the time when we received our being, as rational creatures, from the goodness and power of the Lord; let us recollect the distinguishing advantages of our infancy and childhood: then let us ask ourselves, what were our first returns to our kind Friend and Benefactor? what were our first thoughts, words, and works? As our faculties began to unfold, revolving years brought with them recent comforts and advantages: and did they not witness increasing perverseness, ingratitude, and ungodliness? Let us divide our lives past into distinct periods, and carefully investigate the mercies and the transgressions of each, until we have brought down the inquiry to the present hour: praying the Holy Spirit to assist our recollection: to enable us to form a proper estimate of God's dealings with us, and our behaviour towards him; and to deduce proper inferences from the whole, with suitable affections: and if prejudice, ignorance, or self-flattery do not blind our

CHAP. X.

The names of those who sealed the covenant, 1—27. *The rest of the people bind themselves to observe it,* 28, 29. *The particulars to which they bound themselves,* 30—39.

NOW * those that sealed *were* [a] Nehemiah the † Tirshatha, the [b] son of Hachaliah, and Zidkijah,

* Heb. *at the sealings.* ix. 38
[a] viii. 9.
† Or, *governor* vii. 70.
[b] i. 1.

minds, we shall certainly see abundant cause for deep humiliation and for admiring gratitude; and to acknowledge, that all our sufferings have been justly merited, all our comforts mercifully bestowed. Besides the temporal provision which we have from the Lord's bounty, though not by miracle, we are favoured with means and opportunities of becoming wise unto salvation, even beyond what Israel enjoyed in their most favoured times. We have the sacred oracles, now completed and ever at hand, to give us light, and to show us the way in which we should go. We have the Gospel preached among us, and the holy sabbaths and ordinances of our God: but have we never neglected, profaned, and despised them? We have not been without salutary chastisements, and merciful deliverances, perhaps in answer to prayer; but we requited them by returning into sin! We have had not only the testimony of God's servants, but the strivings of his good Spirit: but have we never hated or despised the one, and quenched the other? nay, we are especially under the ministration of the Spirit; yet perhaps have neglected to pray for his gracious influences, and derided those who did! And have not we proudly cast off the authority of God's law; and as proudly endeavoured to justify ourselves before him? This I say was the case with us once, perhaps is still so with some who read these observations. Yet, whilst others have been cut off, we are spared! May this review of the Lord's mercies and our sins bring us to true repentance, and induce us to condemn ourselves, as having imitated and vindicated all the transgressors who have gone before us: may it bring us to submit to the Lord's righteousness, to accept of his salvation, and to set our seal to his new covenant of mercy and grace; that "being delivered from all our enemies, "we may serve him in righteousness before him," the remainder of our days.

Even, if by the Lord's choice of us, and his grace given to us, we have on the whole been *made* and found *faithful* to him; and if his covenant hath been ratified to us with all its precious promises, we shall not only have cause to adore him for these inestimable mercies, and for his Son Jesus Christ as the foundation of them all, but we shall, upon every review, see cause to admire his present patience and gentleness, and to lament our ingratitude and disobedience. We have been delivered from a worse oppression than that of the Egyptian tyrant, and by a far more wonderful exertion of Almighty power and love. We are guided by a better light, sheltered by a more glorious protection, and favoured with stronger consolations, than Israel of old. We feed upon "the Bread of life, which came down "from heaven, to give life unto the world:" we drink the Waters which flow from the Rock of ages who was smitten for us; we are clothed with the robe of righteousness and salvation; our feet are shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; and the good Spirit of God is not only our condescending Instructor and Sanctifier, but our Comforter also, who deigns to make our hearts his temple; and we possess the hope and earnests of everlasting glory. But, whilst we rejoice in the Lord's great goodness to us, what requital do we make? We are indeed kept from habitual and gross disobedience: but we are conscious how often we are setting up our idols, and in heart returning to our bondage: how often we forget him, grieve his holy Spirit, and neglect his service: and how often we are kept from still greater revolts by no higher motives than the terror of his judgments, and the smart of his salutary chastisements, which we soon forget, when he hath mercifully removed them! Were he not slow to anger, and ready to pardon, he would have cast us off long ago. But our heavenly Advocate still pleads, and we are spared; and his mercies and our privileges are continued to us!

V. 32—38.

On every review of this kind we shall find cause to lie down ashamed before God, praising his great goodness, and confessing our great unworthiness. Let us then thank him for his merciful corrections, as well as his consolations: let us renew our acceptance of his salvation, and ratification of his covenant: let us beg of him to deliver us from all our other lords, that we may serve him more entirely. And let us frequently meditate on these subjects, that we may be preserved humble, thankful, and watchful; as well as be prepared for communion with him in every sacred ordinance. It behooves all men to reflect seriously and frequently on the greatness, justice, and goodness of the Lord: to consider the terrible power of his indignation, and the infinite value of his favour. And they should remember, that pride, obstinacy, and impenitence, are the sins which ruin the soul; and that no former crimes can condemn the penitent believer. Let then the sinner trust in the mercy of Him who is a God of pardons, and ready to forgive: let the backslider repent and return to him: let the believer walk humbly with him: let the prosperous fear abusing the Lord's goodness: let the afflicted be warned to seek deliverance from the wrath to come. Let us ever remember that all our miseries are the effect of sin, and that they are all less than we deserve, though hard for us to bear; let us then pray to be delivered from the bitter pains of eternal death; and let us not forget to entreat the Lord to deliver his church from all the oppression of the enemy, and to establish it in the beauty of holiness.

NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1. We have several times read of the rulers, priests, and people solemnly covenanting before God, to renounce their transgressions and to adhere to his

2 [c] Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah,
3 [d] Pashur, [e] Amariah, [f] Malchijah,
4 [g] Hattush, [h] Shebaniah, [i] Malluch,
5 [k] Harim, [l] Meremoth, Obadiah,
6 Daniel, [m] Ginnethon, [n] Baruch,
7 [o] Meshullam, [p] Abijah, [q] Mijamin,
8 Maaziah, [r] Bilgai, [s] Shemaiah: these *were* the priests.
9 And the Levites: both [t] Jeshua the son of Azaniah; Binnui of the sons of [u] Henadad, Kadmiel;
10 And their brethren, [x] Shebaniah, Hodijah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan,
11 Micha, Rehob, [y] Hashabiah,
12 Zaccur, [z] Sherebiah, Shebaniah,
13 Hodijah, Bani, Beninu.
14 The chief of the people; [a] Parosh, Pahath-moab, Elam, Zatthu, [b] Bani,
15 Bunni, [c] Azgad, Bebai,
16 Adonijah, [d] Bigvai, Adin,
17 Ater, Hizkijah, Azzur,
18 Hodijah, [e] Hashum, Bezai,
19 Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai,
20 Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir,
21 Meshezabeel, Zadoc, Jaddua,
22 Pelatiah, Hanan, Anaiah,
23 Hoshea, Hananiah, Hashub,
24 Hallohesh, Pileha, Shobek,
25 Rehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah,
26 And Ahijah, Hanan, Anan,
27 Malluch, Harim, Baanah.
28 ¶ And [f] the rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the porters, the singers, the Nethinims, and [g] all they that had separated themselves from the people of the lands unto the law of God, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, [h] every one having knowledge, and having understanding;
29 They [i] clave to their brethren, their nobles, and [k] entered into a curse, and into an oath, [l] to walk in God's law, which was [m] given by * Moses the servant of God, and [n] to observe and do all the commandments of [o] the LORD our Lord, and his judgments and his statutes;
30 And [p] that we would not give our daughters unto the people of the land, nor take their daughters for our sons:
31 And *if* [q] the people of the land bring ware or any victuals on the sabbath day

c iii. 23. xi. 11. xii. 1. 33, 34.
d xi. 12.
e xii. 2. 13.
f iii. 11. viii. 4. x. 3. *Malchiah.*
g iii. 10.
h xii. 14.
i xii. 2.
k iii. 11.
l iii. 14. 21. xii. 3.
m xii. 4. *Ginnetho.*
n iii. 20.
o iii. 6. viii. 4. xi. 11. xii. 13. 31.
p xii. 4.
q xii. 5. *Miamin.* 17. 41. *Miniamin.*
r xii. 5. *Bilgah.*
s iii. 29. xii. 6. 13. 42. Ezra x. 21.
t iii. 19. vii. 43. viii. 7. ix. 4.
u iii. 18. 24. xii. 8. 24.
x viii. 7. ix. 4, 5. Ezra x. 23.
y xi. 15. 22. xii. 24. Ezra viii. 19. 24.
z viii. 7. ix. 4. xii. 3.
a iii. 11. vii. 8. 11—13. *Zattu.*
b Ezra ii. 10.
c vii. 16, 17. Ezra ii. 11, 12. viii. 11. 12. x. 28.
d vii. 19—21. Ezra ii. 14—16. viii. 14.
e vii. 22, &c. Ezra ii. 17, &c.

f vii. 72, 73. Ezra ii. 70.
g ix. 2. xiii. 3. Ezra ix. 1, 2. x. 11—17. 2 Cor. vi. 14—17.
h viii. 2. Ec. v. 2. Jer. iv. 2.
i Is. xiv. 1. Acts xi. 23. xvii. 34. Rom. xii. 9.
k v. 12, 13. xiii. 25. Deut. xxvii. 15, &c. xxix. 12—14. 2 Chr. xv. 12, 13. Ps. cxix. 106. Acts xxiii. 12—15. 21.
l 2 Kings. x. 31. xxiii. 3. 2 Chr. vi. 16. xxxiv. 31. Jer. xxvi. 4.
m Deut. xxxiii. 4. Mal. iv. 4. John i. 17. vii. 19.
* Heb. *the hand of.*
n Deut. v. 1. 32. Ps. cv. 45. Ez. xxxvi. 27. John xv. 14. Tit. ii. 11—14.
o Ps. viii. 1. 9.
p Ex. xxxiv. 16. Deut. vii. 3. Ezra ix. 1—3. 12—14. x. 10—12.
q xiii. 15—22. Ex. xx. 10. Lev. xxiii. 3. Deut. v. 12—14. Jer. xvii. 21, 22.

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service. Such transactions were sometimes ratified with sacrifices, solemn oaths, and other expressions of the most entire consent to them: but this is the first instance met with of a covenant drawn up in writing, and ratified by the names and seals of the persons who consented to it. No doubt this was devised to render the transaction more affecting: and that the deed might remain as a durable testimony against those who violated it: the explicit ratification thus given would render the persons concerned more sensible of their obligations, and more afraid of transgression; it would fortify them against temptation, preserve them from forgetfulness, and be a constant argument for them to urge in cautioning, exhorting, or reproving each other. The same uses may be made of those professions, and of that consent to the new covenant, which are virtually made in baptism, whether personal or that of our children; and in the Lord's supper; when those ordinances are duly explained and understood, administered and attended on. To this covenant the chief persons alone set their names and seals; and Nehemiah, the governor, first: and perhaps Zidkijah was one of the princes, but no other *name* is explicitly mentioned of that order.

V. 2—8. It is observable that Eliashib, the high-priest, is not found among those who sealed the covenant. And it is probable that neither he nor his sons favoured the measure. (xiii. 4.) But it is more surprising that the name of Ezra is wanting. There is no reason to think he was absent; for he was at Jerusalem both before and after this transaction: perhaps he was confined by sickness or infirmity; or the measure so entirely originated with him, and he had bestowed so much pains in drawing up the covenant, and inducing others to consent to it, that his further ratification of it was deemed superfluous.

V. 9—17. Most, if not all, of the Levites, that led the public devotions, set their seal to the covenant; which may be admitted as a probable indication, that they were earnestly and zealously engaged in that service. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 18—27. Many of the names here mentioned, are found among those who returned with Zerubbabel, about ninety years before: so that, either the same names were preserved in the several families; or the principal descendants of these persons, when in general favourable to the measure, subscribed their family-name, that is, the name of that ancestor, by relation to whom they were commonly distinguished. (*Luke* i. 61.)

V. 28. *All they*, &c. It is probable, that these were the proselytes who, having been circumcised, separated from their idolatrous connexions, and kept the law of Moses, and thus were numbered amongst the native Jews.

V. 29. By the nobles, in this place, the superior persons, priests, or Levites, are evidently meant. The body of the people, who were old enough to be capable of knowing what was intended, assembled together, and signified, by some appointed token, their consent to the covenant as in the pesence of God, and under the solemn obligation of an oath; and to an awful curse, which was denounced against such as violated these obligations. They engaged in general to obey the whole law of Moses; and some instances were specified, in which they had been remarkably guilty, or which were peculiarly ensnaring.

to sell, *that* we would not buy it of them on the sabbath, or [r] on the holy day: [s] and *that* we would leave the seventh year, and [t] the exaction of every * debt.

32 Also we made ordinances for us, [u] to charge ourselves yearly with [x] the third part of a shekel, for the service of the house of our God;

33 For [y] the shew-bread, and for the continual meat-offering, and for [z] the continual burnt-offering, of the sabbaths, of the new moons, for the set feasts, and for the holy *things*, and for the sin-offerings, to make an atonement for Israel, and *for* [a] all the work of the house of our God.

34 And we [b] cast the lots among the priests, the Levites, and the people, for [c] the wood-offering, to bring *it* into the house of our God, after the houses of our fathers, at times appointed, year by year, to burn upon the altar of the LORD our God, [d] as *it is* written in the law:

35 And to bring [e] the first fruits of our ground, and the first fruits of all fruit of all trees, year by year, unto the house of the LORD:

36 Also [f] the first-born of our sons, and of our cattle, as *it is* written in the law, and the firstlings of our herds, and of our flocks, to bring to the house of our God, [g] unto the priests that minister in the house of our God:

37 And *that* we should bring [h] the first fruits of our dough, and our offerings, and the fruit of all manner of trees, of wine, and of oil, unto the priests, [i] to the chambers of the house of our God; and [k] the tithes of our ground unto the Levites, that the same Levites might have the tithes, in all the cities of our tillage.

38 And the priest the son of Aaron shall be with the Levites, [l] when the Levites take tithes; and the Levites shall bring up the tithe of the tithes unto the house of our God, to the chambers, into [m] the treasure-house.

39 For [n] the children of Israel and [o] the children of Levi shall bring the offering of the corn, of the new wine, and the oil, unto the chambers, where *are* the vessels of the sanctuary, and the priests that minister, and the porters, and the singers: and [p] we will not forsake the house of our God.

r Ex. xii. 16 Lev. xvi. 29 xxiii. 21. 35, 36. Col. ii. 16.
s Ex xxiii. 10, 11. Lev. xxv. 4—7. 2 Chr. xxxvi 21.
t v. 7. 12. Deut. xv. 1—3. 7—9. Matt. vi 12. xviii. 24—35. Jam ii. 13.
* Heb. *band.* Is. lviii. 3.
u Gen. xxviii. 22. Prov iii 9, 10.
x Ex xxx. 11—16. Matt xvii 24—27. 2 Cor. viii. 12.
y Lev. xxiv. 5—10. 2 Chr. ii. 4.
z Num. xxviii. xxix.
a 2 Chr. xxiv. 5—14.
b 1 Chr xxiv. 5. 7 xxv. 8, 9. Prov. xviii. 18.
c xiii 31. Lev. vi 12. Josh. ix. 27. Is. xl. 16.
d Lev. vi. 12, 13.
e Ex. xxiii. 19. xxxiv. 26. Lev. xix. 23—26. Num. xviii. 12. Deut. xxvi. 2. 2 Chr xxxi. 3—10. Mal. iii. 8—12.
f Ex. xiii. 2. 12—15. xxxiv. 19. Lev. xxvii. 26, 27. Num. xviii. 15, 16. Deut. xii. 6.
g Num viii 9—19. 1 Cor ix. 6—14. Gal. vi. 6.
h Lev. xxiii. 17. Num. xv. 19—21. xviii. 12, 13. Deut. xviii. 4. xxvi. 2.
i xiii. 5 9 1 Kings vi. 5—10. 2 Chr. xxxi 11, 12.
k Lev. xxvii. 30—33. Num. xviii. 21 24—32. 2 Chr. xxxi. 6.
l Num xviii. 26—28.
m xiii. 12, 13. 1 Chr. ix. 26 2 Chr. xxxi. 11.
n Deut xii. 6—11. 17. xiv. 23—27. 2 Chr. xxxi. 12.
o Num. xviii. 30.
p xiii 10, 11. Ps. cxxii. 9. Heb x. 25.

V. 31. It seems, that Nehemiah would not venture, in the present unsettled state of the Jews, to exercise his authority in preventing their heathen neighbours from vending provisions at Jerusalem, or in the cities of Judah, on the sabbath: and he supposed, that by engaging the people in this solemn manner, not to buy of them, they would be discouraged from coming. But he soon found, that many evaded or violated the engagement, without regard to consequences; and he was afterwards constrained to employ coercive, measures. (xiii. 15—22.) It may be concluded from this narrative, that none of the Jews attempted to carry on trade on the sabbath; yet they would buy of the Gentiles. This gave the latter an undue advantage in trade, and proportionably injured their brethren. And certainly carrying on trade is as contrary to the law of hallowing the sabbath, as any kind of labour whatever.

The exaction, &c. (*Notes, Deut.* xv. 2, 3.)

V. 32, 33. A half shekel a-piece had been collected for erecting the tabernacle in the wilderness; and that sum is supposed to have been paid from time to time, for the purchase of sacrifices, and other expenses of the stated worship. But it was now computed, that one third of a shekel a-piece, or something less than a shilling of our money, annually, would suffice for these expenses. During prosperous times, the treasury of the temple, it is probable, supplied these expenses; and on some occasions the liberality of kings and nobles rendered such contributions unnecessary; but the circumstances of the nation now required them.

V. 34. It is probable that the wood for fuel had hitherto been provided for out of the same fund with the sacrifices: but on this occasion it was deemed expedient to bear the expenses of it in another manner. It seems each family engaged to send in a regular supply at an appointed time every year; and that the order was determined by lot.

V. 35—39. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—29.

As the creatures and subjects of the Lord, we are bound by his authority to obey all his commandments, and are exposed to a tremendous curse for violating them. But our offended Sovereign, in his infinite mercy, hath provided a better covenant, according to which believers are delivered from this curse, and are taught and enabled to perform a new, sincere, and acceptable obedience through Jesus Christ The word of God calls us to consent to this covenant, and to partake of its inestimable benefits. And when we humble ourselves in godly sorrow and penitent confessions of sin; when we receive the atonement, which the Mediator of this covenant hath made by his precious blood, and seek for mercy through his intercession by fervent prayers; and when in our purposes of renewed obedience, we rely

CHAP. XI.

The rulers, with every tenth man, taken by lot, and those who offered voluntarily, dwell at Jerusalem, 1, 2. *Their names,* 3—19. *The rest dwell in the other cities,* 20—36.

AND [a] the rulers of the people dwelt at Jerusalem: the rest of the people also [b] cast lots, to bring [c] one of ten to dwell in Jerusalem [d] the holy city, and nine parts *to dwell* in *other* cities.

2 And the people [e] blessed all the men, that [f] willingly offered themselves to dwell at Jerusalem.

a vii. 4, 5. Ps. cxxii. 5.
b x. 34. Acts i. 24—26.
c Judg. xx 9, 10.
d 18. Is. xlviii. 2. lii 1. Matt. iv. 5 xxvii 53
e Deut. xxiv. 13. Job xxix. 13. xxxi. 20. 2 Cor. ix. 14.
f Judg. v. 9. Ps. cx.3 2 Cor. viii. 17, 18. 1 Pet. v.2

on his gracious assistance: when these transactions have indeed taken place in secret, between God and our souls; our public sealing and ratifying the covenant, at the Lord's table, or in any other solemn way, will be honourable to God, edifying to his people, and encouraging to ourselves; and we may trust in the Lord to enable us to fulfil the engagements with acceptance. But where this preparation of heart is wanting, such public engagements will be mere hypocrisy. This detestable evil will intrude in all great revivals of religion, after every possible precaution; yet the hypocrites must be left to the judgment of a heart-searching God. But men should be warned, that they, who in baptism, or at the Lord's table, or when admitted into the ministry, or in any other way, engage for what they do not intend, or afterwards take no care to perform, bring themselves under an additional and most awful curse: as do all who trifle with solemn oaths, vows, or sacramental engagements of any kind; and all who despise, oppose, or abuse the salvation of the Gospel. Every one, capable of understanding, is alike required to obey God's law; all need the mercy and grace of the gospel; all therefore should be exhorted and commanded to set their seals to the covenant of God: but they who have the pre-eminence in society, or take the lead in religious exercises, ought to set the example; and they who are remarkably zealous to reform others, should be as remarkably zealous in every good work. The influence and example of the great will always have a powerful effect upon their inferiors: their distinction is truly honourable, when in following and cleaving to them, others follow and cleave to the Lord: and the Christian equality of the common people, *as brethren* to believing nobles and rulers, will increase the honour and respect that they will render to them.

V. 30—39.

We are not sincere in covenanting with God, except we aim to obey all his commandments: for if we *allow ourselves in violating one of them habitually,* it is evident that we have not truly repented of our former transgressions *in that particular;* that we have never sought forgiveness of them in a due manner; that we do not desire the sanctifying Spirit of Christ, to mortify that peculiar sinful propensity: and consequently that we are not born of God, nor interested in the righteousness and atonement of Christ. —But real believers place the strongest guard where there is the greatest danger; and use every means of avoiding and subduing those sins which have the most foiled and ensnared them. Separation from intimate connexions with ungodly persons, and conscientious hallowing of the Lord's day, are peculiarly attended to by them. They will not infringe upon the sacred rest, and they will show a marked disapprobation of those who do: they will remove occasions of transgression, and previously arrange every thing, as may best promote the useful observance of that holy day. Their attention to the ordinances of God will connect with justice to all men, and mercy to those who need it. They will not *exact* from their brethren, when it would distress them; but they will trust the Lord to repay what they thus lose or expend. Though they be poor or burdened, they will find a little to spare for pious or charitable uses; that little will be accepted; and coming from great numbers, will form large funds for useful purposes. As the ordinances of God are the appointed means of sustenance to our souls, the believer should not grudge the expense of them. Even the poor will part with their money for bread; yet most men leave their souls to starve! But the covenanted servant of God honours him with his substance and with the first fruits of his increase, and that brings a blessing upon the rest: nor will he defraud or withhold from the ministers, who labour in the word and doctrine, his proportion of a suitable maintenance. In short, we must render to God, to the king, to magistrates, superiors, equals, inferiors, relatives, the poor, and all men, that which is due unto them, according to the precepts of God's word; if we would *evidence* ourselves the true disciples of Christ, and adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour: and in these things we must persevere, exhorting one another "not to for-" sake the house of our God," but to walk before him in all his ordinances and commandments blameless.

NOTES.

CHAP. XI. V. 1, 2. Jerusalem at this time was not a place of trade, by which men could acquire wealth: the houses in general were not built: the adversaries of the Jews were peculiarly hostile to that city, both as the capital of the people whose returning prosperity they envied, and the place of the holy worship they hated: and the cities of Judah, and other situations in the country, afforded a fairer prospect of living in peace and of growing rich. It was therefore deemed a necessary policy, to replenish Jerusalem, for the re-establishment of the Jews as a distinct nation; and for the honour of the temple, and the protection of the priests and worshippers from the invasion of their enemies. It was "the holy city," as chosen, separated, and sanctified of God, for his immediate presence and instituted worship; as a type of Christ and even of heaven; and as the place where the greatest advantages of becoming holy were enjoyed: yet the Jews in general had not sufficient zeal or desire after spiritual improvement, to venture the consequences of removing thither. Some indeed willingly offered themselves to dwell there; whom their brethren

g 1 Chr. ix. 2, 3.

3 Now these *are* [g] the chief of the province that dwelt in Jerusalem: but in the cities of Judah dwelt every one in his possession in their cities, *to wit*, [h] Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the Nethinims, and [i] the children of Solomon's servants.

h vii. 63. Ezra ii. 70.

i vii. 57, 60. Ezra ii. 55, 58.

k 1 Chr. ix. 3, 4.

4 And at Jerusalem, [k] dwelt *certain* of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin. Of the children of Judah; Athaiah the son of Uzziah, the son of Zechariah, the son of Amariah, the son of Shephatiah, the son of Mahalaleel, of the children of [l] Perez;

l Gen. xxxviii 29. Ruth iv. 18. *Phares* Matt. i. 3. Luke iii. 33. *Phares.*

5 And Maaseiah the son of Baruch, the son of [m] Col-hozeh, the son of Hazaiah, the son of Adaiah, the son of Joiarib, the son of Zechariah, the son of [n] Shiloni.

m iii. 15.

n Gen. xxxviii. 5. Num. xxvi. 20. 1 Chr. ix. 5.

6 All the sons of Perez that dwelt at Jerusalem *were* four hundred threescore and eight valiant men.

7 And these *are* the sons of Benjamin; Sallu the son of Meshullam, the son of Joed, the son of Pedaiah, the son of Kolaiah, the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ithiel, the son of Jesaiah.

8 And after him Gabbai, Sallai, nine hundred twenty and eight,

9 And Joel the son of Zichri *was* their overseer: and [o] Judah the son of Senuah *was* second over the city.

o 1 Chr. xi. 7. *Hodaviah*— *Hasennuah.*

10 Of the priests: [p] Jedaiah the son of [q] Joiarib, Jachin.

p 1 Chr. ix. 10. *Jehoiarib.* Ezra viii. 16

q vii. 39. Ezra ii. 36.

11 [r] Seraiah the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, *was* [s] the ruler of the house of God.

r 1 Chr. vi 7—14 ix. 11. Ezra vii 1—5.

s Num. iii. 32. 2 Chr xix. 11. xxxi. 15. Acts v. 24.

12 And their brethren that did the work of the house *were* eight hundred twenty and two: and [t] Adaiah the son of Jeroham, the son of Pelaliah, the son of Amzi, the son of Zechariah, the son of Pashur, the son of Malchiah.

t 1 Chr. ix. 12, 13

13 And his brethren, chief of the fathers, two hundred forty and two: and Amashai the son of Azareel, the son of Ahasai, the son of Meshillemoth, the son of Immer.

14 And their brethren, mighty men of valour, an hundred twenty and eight: and their overseer *was* Zaddiel, the son * of *one of* the great men.

* Or, of *Haggedolim*

15 Also of the Levites: [u] Shemaiah

u 1 Chr. ix. 14—19.

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commended, thanked, and prayed for, though they would not imitate. The rulers fixed their residence there, that the courts of justice, and the business connected with public affairs, might draw others: and in addition to these inhabitants, one family in ten was expressly required to remove to Jerusalem; the selection of which was by lot referred to the determination of God. 'They cast lots, 'that among ten men, it might be known whom God 'chose to come thither: and the lot falling by divine ap-'pointment upon such a person rather than on another, 'no doubt he removed the more contentedly to this city.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 3. *Israel*, in this verse, seems to mean those of the ten tribes, who went up with the Jews. These were not required to dwell at Jerusalem, but inhabited the cities and villages allotted to them. The priests, Levites, Nethinims, and children of Solomon's servants likewise, were left at liberty when not attending at the temple. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 5, 6. *Shiloni* is supposed by some to mean *Shelah*, Judah's youngest, but only surviving son by Shuah, the Canaanitess. (*Marg. Ref.*) If this supposition be well grounded, his descendants seem to have been included in the four hundred threescore and eight *valiant men* of Perez, or Pharez; that being the principal branch of the tribe of Judah. Many or most of these men of Judah seem to have offered themselves willingly to dwell at Jerusalem, in order to defend it; and probably they were in general heads of families: yet the number from this principal tribe, appears to have been comparatively small. In the ninth chapter of the first of Chronicles, a larger number is stated; but it may be supposed, that the descendants of Zerah, (Judah's other son,) are also included, of whom no more than one is mentioned in this chapter. (24. *Notes*, 1 *Chr.* ix.)

V. 7—9. The greatest part of Jerusalem was situated within the lot of Benjamin; and, it is probable, the men of that tribe were most desirous of having it fully replenished. Nearly twice as many Benjamites, (we may suppose with their families,) dwelt there as of Judah. The number does not exactly agree with that in the ninth of the first of Chronicles; though there can be no reasonable doubt but the same events are intended: but at this distance of time it cannot be supposed that such trivial variations can in all cases be accounted for: though the reason of them might be very evident to contemporaries. From this time Jerusalem was progressively repeopled; so that it soon became very populous, and continued to be so, till destroyed by the Romans. Joel was the principal commander of the Benjamites in Jerusalem: and Judah, or Hodaviah, was his deputy, or the next in authority under him.

V. 11, 12. Eliashib was high-priest at this time, under whom it is probable Seraiah had the oversight of all the temple-service. Some think the captain of the temple held the same office. (*Marg. Ref.*) The eight hundred and twenty-two priests here mentioned, seemed to have willingly resided at Jerusalem; besides those who attended by rotation. (*Marg. Ref.*)

the son of Hashub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Bunni.

16 And [x] Shabbethai, and Jozabad, of the chief of the Levites, * *had* the oversight of the outward business of the house of God.

17 And Mattaniah the son of Micha, the son of [y] Zabdi, the son of Asaph, *was* the principal, [z] to begin the [a] thanksgiving in prayer: and [b] Bakbukiah the second among his brethren, and Abda the son of Shammua, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun.

18 All the Levites in [c] the holy city *were* two hundred fourscore and four.

19 Moreover the porters, [d] Akkub, Talmon, and their brethren that kept † the gates, *were* an hundred seventy and two.

20 ¶ And the residue of Israel, of the priests, *and* the Levites, *were* in all the cities of Judah, every one in his inheritance.

21 But [e] the Nethinims dwelt in ‡ Ophel: and Ziha and Gispa *were* over the Nethinims.

22 The [f] overseer also of the Levites at Jerusalem *was* [g] Uzzi the son of [h] Bani, the son of [i] Hashabiah, the son of [k] Mattaniah, the son of Micha. [l] Of the sons of Asaph, the singers *were* [m] over the business of the house of God.

23 For *it was* [n] the king's commandment concerning them, that ◊ a certain portion should be for the singers, due for every day.

24 And Pethahiah the son of [o] Meshezabeel, of the children of [p] Zerah the son of Judah, *was* [q] at the king's hand in all matters concerning the people.

25 And for the villages, with their fields, *some* of the children of Judah dwelt at [r] Kirjath-arba, and *in* the villages thereof, and at [s] Dibon, and *in* the villages thereof, and at [t] Jekabzeel, and *in* the villages thereof,

26 And at Jeshua, and at [u] Moladah, and at [x] Beth-phelet,

27 And at [y] Hazar-shual, and at [z] Beer-sheba, and *in* the villages thereof,

28 And at [a] Ziklag, and at Mekonah, and *in* the villages thereof,

29 And at [b] En-rimmon, and at [c] Zareah, and at [d] Jarmuth,

30 [e] Zanoah, [f] Adullam, and *in* their villages, at [g] Lachish, and in the fields thereof, at [h] Azekah, and *in* the villages thereof. And they dwelt from Beer-sheba unto [i] the valley of Hinnom.

31 The children also of Benjamin * from [k] Geba *dwelt* † at [l] Michmash, and [m] Aija, and [n] Bethel, and *in* their villages.

32 *And* at [o] Anathoth, [p] Nob, Ananiah,

33 Hazor, [q] Ramah, [r] Gittaim,

34 Hadid, [s] Zeboim, Neballat,

35 [t] Lod, and Ono, [u] the valley of craftsmen.

36 And [x] of the Levites *were* [y] divisions *in* Judah, *and* in Benjamin.

x viii. 7.
* Heb. *were over* 1 Chr. xxvi 29.
y 1 Chr. ix. 15. *Zichri*
z xii. 8 35. 1 Chr. xvi. 4—41. xxv. 1—6.
a Phil. iv 6.
b xii. 9. 25
c 1 Kings xi 13. Dan ix. 24. Matt. xxiv. 15. Luke xxi. 20. Rev. xi. 2 xxi 2.
d vii 45. xii 25. 1 Chr. ix 17—22.
† Heb. *at the gates.*
e iii 26. 31. 2 Chr. xxvii. 3.
‡ Or, *the tower.*
f 9. 14. xii. 42. Acts xx. 28.
g xii. 42.
h iii. 17, 18. viii. 7. ix. 4, 5. x. 13.
i x. 11. xii. 24. Ezra viii. 19.
k 17. xii. 25. 35. xiii. 13. 1 Chr. ix. 15.
l 17. xii. 46. 1 Chr. xxv. 1—6.
m 11. 16. 1 Chr. ix. 26—32
n 1 Chr. ix. 33 Ezra vi. 8, 9 vii 20—24.
◊ Or, *sure ordinance.*
o x. 21.
p Gen. xxxviii. 30. *Zarah* Num. xxvi. 20. Matt i 3 *Zara*
q 1 Chr. xviii 17. xxiii 28 *Marg*
r Josh xiv. 15.
s Josh xv. 22. *Dimonah.*
t Josh xv. 21. *Kabzeel.*
u Josh. xv. 26. xix 2
x Josh. xv. 27. *Beth-palet.*
y Josh xv. 28. xix. 3
z Gen xxi 31. xxvi. 33. Judg. xx. 1.
a Josh. xv. 31 1 Sam. xxvii. 6.
b Josh. xv. 32. *Rimmon.*
c Josh. xv. 33. *Zoraah.* xix. 41. Judg. xiii. 25. *Zorah.*
d Josh. xv. 35
e iii. 13. Josh. xv. 34.
f Mic. i. 15.
g Josh x. 3. xv. 39 Is. xxxvii. 8.
h Josh. xv. 35.
i Josh xviii. 16. Jer. vii. 31, 32. xix 2 6.
* Or, *of*
k vii. 30. *Gaba.* Josh xviii 24.
† Or, *to.*
l vii. 31. *Michmas.* 1 Sam xiii. 11. 23 Is x 28.
m vii. 32. Gen. xii. 8 *Hai.* Josh. viii 9. *Ai.*
n Gen. xxviii. 19. Josh. xviii. 13.
o vii 27. Is. x. 30. Jer. i. 1.
p 1 Sam xxi. 1. xxii. 19. Is. x. 32
q Josh. xviii. 25. 1 Sam. vii 17. Matt. ii. 18. *Rama.*
r 2 Sam. iv. 3.
s 1 Sam xiii. 18.
t vii. 37. 1 Chr. viii. 12.
u 1 Chr. iv 14.
x Josh. xxi. 1 Chr vi. 54—81.
y Gen. xlix. 7.

V. 16. *The outward*, &c. (*Note*, 1 *Chron.* xxvi. 29.) These persons seem to have had the charge of providing the sacrifices, and making all the other outward preparations for the worship, which the priests performed in the courts and in the sanctuary.

V. 17. The time of the morning and evening sacrifices were the principal hours of prayer to the Jews, who then resorted to the courts of the temple for their devotions.—These were, it seems, preceded by the solemn praises and thanksgivings, which the Levites rendered to the Lord with music and singing. Over this sacred service, Mattaniah, as precentor, statedly presided; while the others here named, being descendants of Jeduthun, one of the chief singers in David's time, acted under his direction.

V. 19. Akkub and Talmon are numbered with the porters which came up with Zerubbabel, nearly a hundred years before the events here recorded. In this and a few other instances of the same kind, it must be supposed, either that the children were called by the names of their fathers; or that, having distinct names of their own, they were also honoured in their public characters by the names of their more illustrious ancestors.

V. 22, 23. The descendants of Asaph, (a chief singer in the time of David,) presided over some business relative to the temple, and its repairs; at those times when not employed in psalmody. And they were appointed to this service, because, it seems, the king of Persia allowed those employed in singing the praises of God a daily stipend, besides their maintenance as Levites.

V. 24. Pethahiah, a descendant of Judah by Zerah, probably was the king's commissioner, who received the tribute, made all payments from it, and managed all such matters, according to orders from the king. It was an advantage to the Jews to have one of their own nation in this post: and it may be supposed he was preferred to it, through Nehemiah's recommendation.

CHAP. XII.

The priests and Levites who came up with Zerubbabel, 1—9. *The succession of high-priests after the captivity,* 10, 11. *The names of some chief priests,* 12—22. *And of some eminent Levites,* 23—26. *The solemnity of dedicating the wall,* 27—43. *The offices and portions of the priests and Levites,* 44—47.

NOW these *are* [a] the priests and the Levites that went up with [b] Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and [c] Jeshua: [d] Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra,

2 Amariah, [e] Malluch, Hattush,

3 [f] Shechaniah, [g] Rehum, [h] Meremoth,

4 Iddo, [i] Ginnetho, Abijah,

5 [k] Miamin, [l] Miadiah, Bilgah,

6 Shemaiah, and [m] Joiarib, Jedaiah,

7 [n] Sallu, Amok, Hilkiah, Jedaiah. These *were* the chief of the priests, and of their brethren, in the days [o] of Jeshua.

8 Moreover the Levites; [p] Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, *and* [q] Mattaniah, *which was* over * the thanksgiving, he and his brethren.

9 Also Bakbukiah and Unni, their brethren, *were* [r] over against them in the watches.

10 ¶ And [s] Jeshua begat Joiakim, Joiakim also begat Eliashib, and [t] Eliashib begat Joiada.

11 And Joiada begat Jonathan, and Jonathan begat Jaddua.

12 And in the days of Joiakim were priests, [u] the chief of the fathers: of [x] Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah;

a vii. 7. Ezra ii. 1, 2.
b 1 Chr. iii. 17—19. Matt. i. 12.
l 13. *Zerubabel. Salathiel.*
c Hag. i. 14. *Joshua.*
d 12—21. x. 2.
e 14. *Melicu.*
f 14. *Shebaniah.*
g 15. *Harim.*
h 15. *Meraioth.*
i 16. *Ginnethon.*
k 17. *Miniamin.*
l 17. *Moadiah.*
m xi. 10. 1 Chr. ix. 10. *Jehoiarib.*
n 20. *Sallai.*
o Ezra iii 2 Zech iii. 1.
p vii. 43. ix. 4. x. 9—13.
q xi. 17. 22.
* That is, *the psalms of thanksgiving* 24. 1 Chr. ix. 33.
r Ps. cxxxiv. 1—3.
s 1 Chr. vi. 3—15. Ezra iii. 2.
t iii. 1. xiii. 4. 7 18.
B. C. 350.
u 22. 1 Chr. ix. 33, 34. xv. 12. xxiv. 6—31
x 1.

V. 25—36. No account is given of those who dwelt in the cities and villages; but merely of the places which they inhabited.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It has in all ages been justly lamented, that men prefer their own ease and emolument to the public good; that even professed Christians too commonly "seek their own, "and not the things of Jesus Christ;" and that but few have that attachment to holy places and holy things, as to renounce their secular pleasures for the sake of them. Yet surely, where opportunities of spiritual improvement most abound, and where Jesus the ruler of our holy city resides, there we should delight to dwell, in preference to all interests and connexions, and notwithstanding persecutions, tribulations, perils, and losses! Otherwise, where is our "meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light?" and how shall we be willing to depart hence, and be absent from the body, that we may be present with the Lord? For, to the carnally-minded the perfect holiness of heaven, of its inhabitants, its employments, and its pleasures, and especially of that God who there unveils his glory, would be proportionably more intolerable, than the feeble beginnings of holiness in his church on earth, which excite their disgust, their weariness, and aversion. The remnant that now willingly offer themselves to self-denying and perilous services, from love to the church and zeal for the glory of God, shall be marked with peculiar honour: and many will commend and wish them well, who, alas! have not courage to imitate them. Our habitations are allotted us by the Lord himself; and we should not be hasty in changing them, though they be in some respects incommodious, especially if convenient for attendance on divine ordinances. In every station in life we should study to be quiet, and to do our own business with diligence: and at all times to cast our cares on God, and make our requests known unto him, by prayer with thanksgiving. We cannot be so afflicted, as not to have cause for gratitude; nor so prosperous, as not to need to pray: these duties should therefore be always united. And to this the ministers ought to stir up the people, not only by their exhortations, but by their example likewise. As far as the Lord sees good, he makes even strangers to protect and provide for his servants. Let us then seek first his favour and his glory; let us study contentment, patience, and usefulness in our several stations; and wait in cheerful hope for an admission into the holy city of our God above.

NOTES.

CHAP. XII. V. 1—6. It is evident that Ezra here mentioned was not Ezra the scribe, but a priest of the same name, who came up to Jerusalem long before with Zerubbabel. Several of the names are the same with those of the priests who sealed the covenant; (*Marg. Ref.*) but different persons must be intended; and it is evident, the same names were preserved in their families.

V. 7. The chief of the priests seem to have been the heads of the courses established by David; with the next in succession to the high-priesthood, and the ruler or captain of the temple. Perhaps the twenty-four courses were not yet fully established.

V. 9. *In their watches.* Some of the Levites, in succession, seem to have sung the praises of God in the sanctuary, during the watches of the night.

V. 11. Jaddua is by most expositors supposed to have been high-priest in the time of Alexander the great, and to have met that haughty conqueror in his pontifical habit; in consequence of which Alexander greatly favoured the Jews. It is however evident, that he was high-priest long after the close of this book, for Jaddua then filled that high office; and as Darius the Persian is supposed to mean the last king of Persia, who was subdued by Alexander about a hundred years after the principal transactions recorded in this book; this verse, and the twenty-second, must of course have been added by another hand after the death of Nehemiah. (26.)

13 Of Ezra, Meshullam; of Amariah, Jehohanan;

14 Of [y] Melicu, Jonathan; of [z] Shebaniah, Joseph;

15 Of [a] Harim, Adna; of [b] Meraioth, Helkai;

16 Of [c] Iddo, Zechariah; of [d] Ginnethon, Meshullam;

17 Of Abijah, Zichri; of [e] Miniamin; of [f] Moadiah, Piltai;

18 Of Bilgah, Shammua; of [g] Shemaiah, Jehonathan;

19 And of Joiarib, Mattenai; of Jedaiah, Uzzi;

20 Of [h] Sallai, Kallai; of Amok, Eber;

21 Of Hilkiah, Hashabiah; of Jedaiah, Nethaneel.

22 ¶ The Levites, in the days of [i] Eliashib, Joiada, and Johanan, and Jaddua, *were* [k] recorded chief of the fathers: also the priests, to the reign of Darius the Persian.

23 The sons of Levi, the chief of the fathers, *were* written in [l] the book of the chronicles, even until the days of Johanan the son of Eliashib.

24 And the chief of the Levites: [m] Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and Jeshua the son of Kadmiel, with their brethren over against them, to praise *and* to give thanks, [n] according to the commandment of David [o] the man of God, [p] ward over against ward.

25 [q] Mattaniah, and Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, Akkub, *were* porters, [r] keeping the ward at the * thresholds of the gates.

26 These *were* in the days of [s] Joiakim the son of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and in the days of [t] Nehemiah the governor, and of Ezra the priest, the scribe.

27 ¶ And at [u] the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought the Levites [x] out of all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem, to keep the dedication [y] with gladness, both with [z] thanksgivings, and with singing, *with* cymbals, psalteries, and with harps.

28 And the sons of the singers gathered themselves together, both out of [a] the plain country round about Jerusalem, and from the villages of [b] Netophathi;

29 Also from [c] the house of Gilgal, and out of the fields of [d] Geba, and [e] Azmaveth: for the singers had builded them villages round about Jerusalem.

30 And the priests and the Levites [f] purified themselves, and purified the people, and the gates, and the wall.

31 Then I brought up [g] the princes of Judah upon the wall, and appointed [h] two great *companies of them that gave* thanks, *whereof one* went on the right hand upon the wall toward the [i] dung-gate;

32 And after them went Hoshaiah, and half of the princes of Judah,

33 And [k] Azariah, Ezra, and Meshullam,

34 Judah, and Benjamin, and Shemaiah, and Jeremiah,

35 And *certain* of the priests' sons [l] with trumpets: *namely,* [m] Zechariah the son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Michaiah, the son of Zaccur, the son of Asaph:

36 And his brethren, Shemaiah, and Azarael, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethaneel, and Judah, Hanani, with the [n] musical instruments of David the man of God, and [o] Ezra the scribe before them.

37 And at [p] the fountain-gate, which was over against them, they went up by

y 2. *Malluk.* z 3. *Shechaniah.* a 3. *Rehum.* b 3. *Meremoth.* c 4. d 4. *Gin etho.* e 5. *Miamin.* f 5. *Moadiah.* g 6. h 7. *Sallu.* i 10, 11. k 12, 13. l 1 Chr. ix. 14, &c. m 8. viii. 7. ix. 4. x. 9—13. n 1 Chr. xxiii. xxv. xxvi. o Deut. xxxiii. 1. Josh xiv. 6. 1 Kings xvii. 24. 1 Tim. vi. 11. 2 Tim. iii. 17. p 9 Ezra iii. 10, 11 q 8, 9 xi. 17—19 1 Chr ix. 14—17. r 1 Chr. xxiii. 32. xxvi 12. Is. xxi 8. * Or, *treasuries*, or, *assemblies*. s 10. t viii. 9. Ezra vii. 6. 11. u Deut. xx. 5. Ps. xxx. *title* x xi. 20. 1 Chr xv. 4. 12, 13. xxvi. 31, 32. 2 Chr. xxix. 4—11. 30. Ezra viii. 15—20. B. C. 444. y viii 17. Deut. xvi. 11. 2 Sam. vi. 12. 2 Chr. xxix. 30. Ezra vi 16. Ps. xcviii. 4—6. c. 1, 2. z 1 Chr. xiii. 8. xv. 16. 28. xvi. 5 42. xxiii. 5. xxv. 1—6. Ezra iii. 10, 11. Ps. xcii. 1—3 cxlix. 3. cl. 2—5. a vi. 2. b 1 Chr. ii. 54. ix. 16. c Deut xi. 30. d xi. 31. Josh. xxi. 17. 1 Chr. vi. 60. e Ezra ii. 24. f Gen. xxxv. 2 Ex xix 10 15 Num xix. 2—20. 2 Chr xxix 5. 34. Ezra vi. 21. g 1 Chr. xiii. 1. xxviii. 1. 2 Chr. v. 2. h 38. i ii. 13. iii. 13, 14 k x. 2—7. l Num. x. 2—8. Josh. vi. 4. 2 Chr. v. 12. xiii. 12. m xi. 17. n 24. 1 Chr xxiii. 5. 2 Chr. viii. 14. o Ezra vii. 1 viii. 1. p ii. 14 iii. 15.

V. 12—21. These verses contain a catalogue of the next race of chief priests, as descended from those who came up from Babylon with Zerubbabel. The marginal references show the variations that occur in respect of their names.

V. 22—26. It is not easy to determine, why these few names of the Levites were here inserted: but probably they were persons who greatly distinguished themselves, and were highly honoured and trusted by their contemporaries.

V. 27. Jerusalem was the holy city, and the wall was built under the immediate care of JEHOVAH: It was therefore proper that it should be dedicated to that God who was there worshipped, by solemn praises, thanksgivings, prayers, and sacrifices; and thus committed to his gracious protection.

V. 30. When the priests and Levites had prepared themselves by the appointed purifications, they proceeded to purify the people, the gates, and the wall; probably by the sprinkling of the water of purification, with suitable prayers and supplications. This implied, that they, and all they did, or even touched, were polluted by their sins, and unworthy of God's acceptance till purified in his appointed way.

the stairs of the city of David, at the going up of the wall, above the house of David, even unto the [r] water-gate eastward.

38 And [s] the other *company of them that gave* thanks went over against *them*, and I after them, and the half of the people upon the wall, from beyond [t] the tower of the furnaces, even unto [u] the broad wall:

39 And from above [x] the gate of Ephraim, and above [y] the old gate, and above [z] the fish-gate, and [a] the tower of Hananeel, and the tower of Meah, even unto [b] the sheep-gate; and they stood still in [c] the prison-gate.

40 So stood [d] the two *companies of them that gave* thanks in the house of God, and I, and the half of the rulers with me:

41 And the priests: Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Michaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, *and* Hananiah, [e] with trumpets;

42 And Maaseiah, and Shemaiah, and Eleazar, and Uzzi, and Jehohanan, and Malchijah, and Elam, and Ezer: and the singers * sang loud, with Jezrahiah *their* [f] overseer.

43 Also that day they [g] offered great sacrifices, and rejoiced: for [h] God had made them rejoice with great joy: [i] the wives also and the children rejoiced: so that [k] the joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off.

44 ¶ And at that time were [l] some appointed over [m] the chambers for the treasures, for the offerings, for the first-fruits, and for the tithes, to gather into them out of the fields of the cities the portions † of the law for the priests and Levites: for ‡ Judah rejoiced for the priests and for [n] the Levites that § waited.

45 And both [o] the singers and the porters kept the ward of their God, and [p] the ward of the purification, according to the commandment of David, *and* of Solomon his son.

46 For in the days of David [q] and Asaph, of old *there were* chief of the singers, and songs of praise and thanksgiving unto God.

47 And all Israel in the days of Zerubbabel, and [r] in the days of Nehemiah, [s] gave the portions of the singers and the porters, every day his portion; and [t] they ‖ sanctified *holy things* unto the Levites, and the Levites sanctified *them* unto the children of Aaron.

q iii. 15. 2 Sam.
r iii. 26. viii. 1. 3. 19.
s 31.
t iii. 11.
u iii. 8.
x viii. 16. 2 Kings xiv. 13.
y iii. 6.
z iii. 3. Zeph. i. 10.
a iii. 1. Jer. xxxi. 38.
b iii. 22. John v. 2.
c iii. 25. 31. Jer. xxxii. 2.
d 31, 32.
e 35.
* Heb. *made* their voice *to be heard.* Ps. lxxxi. 1. xcv. 1. xcviii. 4—9. Is. xii. 5, 6.
f xi. 14.
g Num. x. 10.
h Deu. xii. 11, 12. 1 Chr. xxix. 21, 22. 2 Chr. vii. 5—7. 10. xxix. 35, 36. Ps. xxvii. 6.
i 2 Chr. xx. 27. Job xxxiv. 29. Ps. xxviii. 7. xxx. 11, 12. xcii. 4. Is. lxi. 3. lxvi. 10—14. Jer. xxxiii. 11. John xvi. 22.
k Ezra iii. 13.
l x. 37—39. xiii. 5. 12, 13. 2 Chr. xxxi. 11—13.
m 1 Chr. xxvi. 21—26.
† That is, *appointed by the law.*
‡ Heb. *the joy of Judah rejoiced.*
n Num. iii. 10. viii. 24, 25. 1 Chr. xxiii. 28. 2 Chr. v. 11, 12. Pro. vii. 34. Is. xl. 31. Rom. xii. 7.
§ Heb. *stood.*
o 1 Chr. xxv. xxvi.
p 1 Chr. xxiii. 28. 2 Chr. xxiii. 6.
q 1 Chr. xxv. 1, &c. 2 Chr. xxix. 30.
r 12. 26.
s x. 35—39. xiii. 10—12. 2 Chr. xxxi. 5, 6. Mal. iii. 8—10. Gal. vi. 6.
t Num. xviii. 20—29.
‖ Or, *set apart.*

V. 31—43. The princes and priests divided into two companies on the wall, Ezra going before the one, and Nehemiah after the other. Thus they marched in a row opposite ways, in the circuit of the wall, the priests sounding the sacred trumpets, the Levites playing upon instruments, and singing the praises of God, and all the people accompanying them on each side. When they met on the opposite side of the city, they marched in a body to the temple, and offered sacrifices and thank-offerings, with rejoicings: for God, by enabling them to rebuild and fortify the city, had made them to rejoice with great joy: so that the praises and acclamations of so large a multitude were heard at a great distance. Zechariah, (35) being descended from Asaph, of the line of Gershon, was no priest; and the word *namely* is improperly added. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 44—47. The attendance and behaviour of the priests and Levites, on this solemn occasion, seems to have greatly rejoiced the pious Jews: and therefore they were zealous to provide for them, that their incomes should be properly paid, and distributed by persons appointed for that purpose. Thus matters were settled, as they had been in the days of David and Solomon. Similar regulations had been made in the days of Zerubbabel; but they were completed and put upon a durable footing, in the time of Nehemiah.—The tithes were paid to the Levites, as sanctified to their use; and the tithe of them were by the Levites sanctified to the use of the priests. 'The porters "kept the ward "of purification;" that is, duly observed the orders about 'purification, in not suffering any unclean persons or 'unclean thing to come into the house of God.' (35.) (*Bp. Patrick.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord raises up a succession of worshippers from age to age, who honour him by their sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving; and who derived instruction and encouragement from the examples and actions of those that have long before entered into their rest. The believer should undertake nothing, which he does not dedicate to the Lord, by seeking his direction and assistance in it and blessing upon it; by designing his glory, and by giving praise for success in all things: and whatever he possesses he should commit to the Lord's keeping and disposal, and use according to his will. But all that we sinners do must be purified by the blood of sprinkling, and by the grace of the Holy Spirit, or it cannot be acceptable unto God: and the whole church of God, which is the lot of his inheritance, and the object of his choice and delight, from the race of fallen Adam, must be thus purified and rendered holy unto the Lord. They, who would be instrumental in the conversion of sinners, and the sanctification of

CHAP. XIII.

On reading the law, Israel separates from the mixed multitude, 1—3. *Eliashib having, during Nehemiah's absence, prepared a chamber at the temple for Tobiah, Nehemiah on his return, grieved and indignant, causes the chambers to be cleansed,* 4—9. *He reforms abuses concerning tithes and offerings,* 10—14. *He prevents the profanation of the sabbath,* 15—22. *He opposes those who had married strange wives, and drives away the grandson of Eliashib,* 23—28. *His other services and prayers,* 29—31.

ON that day * they read in the book of Moses in the † audience of the people; and therein was found written, that [a] the [b] Ammonite and the Moabite should not come into the congregation of God for ever;

2 Because they met not the children of Israel with bread and with water, but [c] hired Balaam against them, that he should curse them: howbeit [d] our God turned the curse into a blessing.

3 Now it came to pass, [e] when they had heard the law, [f] that they separated from Israel all [g] the mixed multitude.

4 And before this [h] Eliashib the priest, ‡ having the oversight of the chamber of the house of our God, *was* [i] allied unto Tobiah;

5 And he had prepared for him [k] a great chamber, where aforetime they laid the meat-offerings, the frankincense, and the vessels, and the tithes of the corn, the new wine, and the oil, ◊ which was commanded *to be given* to the Levites, and the singers, and the porters; and the offerings of the priests.

6 But [l] in all this *time* was not I at Jerusalem: for in [m] the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon came I unto the king, and ‖ after certain days * obtained I leave of the king.

* Heb. *there was read.* viii. 3—8. ix. 3. Deut. xxxi. 11, 12. 2 Kings xxiii. 2 Is. xxxiv. 16. Luke x. 26. Acts xiii. 27.
† Heb. *ears.*
a Deu. xxiii. 3—5
b ii. 10. 19. iv. 3.
c Num xxii 5, 6. Josh xxiv 9, 10.
d Num. xxiii 8—11. 20—24 xxiv. 5—9 Ps cix. 28 Mic. vi 5.
e ix 3 xix 7 14. cxix. 3. 11. Prov. vi. 23. Rom iii. 20
f ix 2 x 28. Ezra x. 11. Jam. i 25
g Ex. xii. 38. Num. xi 4.
h 7 xii 10.
‡ Heb. *being set over* xii 44. i 28. vi 17, 18.
k x. 38, 39. xii 44.
◊ Heb. *the commandment of the Levites* Num. xviii. 21—24.
l Ex. xxxii. 1. 2 Chr xxiv. 17, 18. Matt. xiii. 25.
m ii. 6. v. 14.
‖ Heb. *at the end of days.*
* Or, *I earnestly requested.*

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believers, must begin with themselves: and when we acknowledge God in all our ways, he will so prosper and comfort us, as often to cause us to rejoice with great joy. —If our families are trained up to join in the solemn worship of God, and in attendance on his word, we may hope that they will share our joys and privileges: and the prosperity of the church gladdens the hearts of all true believers. When their affections are thus lively, they will be disposed to love and rejoice in those ministers, who are instrumental to their comfort; and to care for their suitable provision. But it is the wisdom of ministers to mind their work, and not be too anxious about their interests; and then God will stir up the hearts of the people, to supply them in a comfortable and creditable manner. This they may receive with songs of praise and thanksgiving, and need not fear sanctifying a portion, even of their portion, to the immediate service of God and the support of his cause.

NOTES.

CHAP. XIII. V. 1—3. Some expositors think, that the events recorded in these verses, took place several years after those related in the former chapter, and that during a great part of the time Nehemiah had been absent, at the Persian court. But the introductory language seems rather to imply, that they occurred immediately: and indeed, it can hardly be supposed, that, when the gross abuses stated in the sequel prevailed, the public reading of the law at the temple was regularly kept up, and the people zealous to reduce it to practice. It is therefore more probable, that, before Nehemiah left Jerusalem, namely, just after the dedication of the wall, the law was publicly read and expounded to the congregation; when the passage here referred to, coming in course, excited peculiar attention; and the people of their own accord, without compulsion, but by the concurrence of the magistrates, resolved to separate from the intimate society of the mixed multitude, especially of Ammonites and Moabites, according to the meaning of the law (*Notes, Deut.* xxiii. 2—5.) Whether intermarriages with those nations, even when fully proselyted, and with their descendants, was, or was not, intended in the law, many instances would doubtless occur, in which a separation would be required; for probably few, in comparison of those with whom alliances had been formed, were fully proselyted, or the descendants of such proselytes.—It is supposed, that from the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, synagogues were built in every part of the land, where God was publicly worshipped, and his word read, expounded, or preached; which produced very salutary effects. A copy of the Scriptures then extant, was placed in every synagogue; and the whole was divided into portions or lessons, for the several days when they were accustomed to assemble for that purpose: and probably the same became the general usage in the court of the temple.

V. 4. Eliashib had *before this* formed an alliance with Tobiah the Ammonite, but perhaps secretly, to escape censure. (*Marg. Ref.*) It does not appear that the high-priest, or his sons, ware married to any of Tobiah's family; but he was confederated with, and related to, those that were: and his authority over the temple and all its buildings, enabled him to commit that scandalous profanation, which is next related. The word rendered *chamber*, seems to mean the out-buildings in general.

V. 5, 6. Nehemiah was first commissioned by Artax-

7 And I came to Jerusalem, and [n] understood of the evil that Eliashib did for Tobiah, [o] in preparing him a chamber in the courts of the house of God.

8 And [p] it grieved me sore; therefore [q] I cast forth all the household stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber.

9 Then I commanded, and [r] they cleansed the chambers: and thither brought I again the vessels of the house of God, with the meat-offering and the frankincense.

10 ¶ And I perceived that [s] the portions of the Levites had not been given *them:* for the Levites and the singers, that did the work, were fled every one [t] to his field.

11 Then [u] contended I with the rulers, and said, [x] Why is the house of God forsaken? And I gathered them together, and set them in their * place.

12 Then [y] brought all Judah the tithe of the corn, and the new wine, and the oil, unto the † treasuries.

13 And [z] I made treasurers over the treasuries, [a] Shelemiah the priest, and Zadok the scribe, and of the Levites, [b] Pedaiah: and ‡ next to them *was* Hanan the son of [c] Zaccur, the son of [d] Mattaniah: for they were [e] counted faithful, and § their office *was* [f] to distribute unto their brethren.

14 [g] Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and wipe not out my ‖ good deeds that I have done [h] for the house of my God, and for the * offices thereof.

15 ¶ In those days saw I in Judah *some* [i] treading wine-presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all *manner of* [k] burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the sabbath

n Ezra ix. 1. 1 Cor i. 11.
o 1. 5. Lam. i. 10. Matt. xxi. 12, 13. Acts xxi. 28, 29.
p Mark iii. 5.
q Mark xi. 15—17. John ii. 13—17.
r xii. 45. 2 Chr. xxix. 5. 15—19.
s x. 37. xii. 47. Mal. i. 6—14. 1 Tim. v. 17, 18.
t Num. xxxv. 2.
u 17 25. v. 5—13. Job xxxi 34. Prov. xxviii. 4. x. x 39. Mal iii. 8—11.
* Heb. *standing.*
y x 37—39. Lev. xxvii 30 Num. xviii. 20—26. Deut xiv 22.
† Or. *storehouses.*
z xii. 44. 2 Chr. xxxi 12—15.
a iii. 30.
b viii. 4.
‡ Heb. *at their hand*
c x. 12.
d xi 22. xii. 35.
e vii. 2 Luke xii. 42. xvi 10—12. Acts vi 3. 1 Cor. iv 2. 1 Tim i 12.
§ Heb it was *upon them*
f Acts iv.35 vi. 1.
g 22 31. v 19. Heb.vi. 10 Rev. iii 5
‖ Heb *kindnesses.*
h 1 Chr xxix 3. 2 Chr xxiv 16. xxxi. 20. 21. Ezra vii. 20 24. 27 Ps. cxxii. 6—9.
* Or, *observations.*
i Ex xx 8—11. xxxiv 21 xxxv. 2. Is. lviii. 13. Ez. xx 13.
k x. 31 Num xv. 32—36. Jer. xvii. 21, 22 24. 27.

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erxes in the twentieth year of his reign; and this journey to court took place in his thirty-second year: so that twelve years had elapsed, concerning which we have little account. When Nehemiah was gone from Jerusalem, Eliashib seems to have invited Tobiah thither: and though all Moabites and Ammonites had been publicly excluded from the congregation, according to the law of God; yet the high-priest admitted this unproselyted Ammonite, who was as bitter an enemy to his people as Balak himself, even into the chambers of the temple; casting out thence the consecrated oblations to make room for him, and probably forming him a sumptuous apartment, by throwing many of them into one!—This was as great a contempt of God's law, a profanation of the temple, and disgrace of the priesthood, as could well be imagined.

V. 7—9. Nehemiah is generally supposed to have been absent from Jerusalem only one year: but the great abuses which prevailed at his return, favour the opinion of those who think that about five years intervened; and there is nothing in the text that militates against it: for the words rendered *after certain days*, or *at the end of days*, do not necessarily signify *after one year*, but may denote a longer time. (*Dan.* xii. 13.) At his return, he was greatly afflicted and displeased at what had taken place, and he soon exercised his authority, in the most decided manner, to clear the temple from such a profanation, and to purify the chambers, that they might be restored to their proper use. It is probable, that Eliashib was dead before Nehemiah returned; and Tobiah would not choose to appear at Jerusalem to see after his furniture.

V. 10—13. As the high-priest had ventured profanely to appropriate the chambers of the temple for the entertainment of an Ammonite, perhaps he had also sacrilegiously intercepted the revenues of the Levites for similar purposes: or the people were reluctant to pay their tithes, when so bad a use was made, or so little care taken of them. Thus the Levites were driven from their work, to get their living by cultivating the land, or by other secular employments; and the temple-service, especially the psalmody, was interrupted. The rulers, who had been left in trust, ought to have exerted their authority to prevent such mismanagement; but probably they had concurred in it, out of regard to their secular interests; and therefore Nehemiah called them to account for their misconduct. Malachi is supposed to have prophesied about this time, and he seems to refer to these abuses in several places. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'It is a great artifice of the devil, by his instruments, 'to defraud the ministers of religion of their necessary 'maintenance, that he may thereby abolish religion itself.' (*Wolphius, in Bp. Patrick.*) Nehemiah, however, not only recalled the Levites, but having, it seems, without difficulty, induced the people to bring their tithes, he placed the distribution of them in the hands of faithful men, in whom all parties reposed confidence.

V. 14. (*Marg. Ref.*) It is evident Nehemiah expected that the Lord would remember his good deeds, and vouchsafe them a *gracious* recompense, notwithstanding defects in them, and sin in him; after the same manner, as even the apostle Paul assures the Hebrews, that the Lord would not forget their work and labour of love; and not as claiming a *reward of debt.* But it is also worthy of notice, that these *good deeds or kindnesses* which he had done to the house of God, consisted in using his authority to protect the ministers of religion, from those who defrauded them of their maintenance. There have been times, when enriching the clergy beyond all bounds, and without requiring them to attend on their ministry, was thought the height of piety; but it may be questioned whether rulers may not at present, as well as for some past ages, run into the contrary extremes: and Nehemiah's firm and prudent conduct in this respect, might be imitated with good effect by Christian princes and rulers.

day: and [l] I testified *against them*, in the day wherein they sold victuals.

16 There dwelt [m] men of Tyre also therein which brought fish, and all manner of ware, and sold on the sabbath unto the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem.

17 Then [n] I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing *is* this that ye do, and profane the sabbath day?

18 [o] Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet [p] ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the sabbath.

19 And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem [q] began to be dark before the sabbath, [r] I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath: and *some* of my servants set I at the gates, *that* there should no burden be brought in on the sabbath day.

20 So the merchants, and sellers of all kind of ware, lodged without Jerusalem once or twice.

21 Then [s] I testified against them, and said unto them, Why lodge ye *about the wall? if ye do *so* again, [t] I will lay hands on you. From that time forth came they no *more* on the sabbath.

22 And [u] I commanded the Levites that they should [x] cleanse themselves, and *that* they should come *and* keep the gates, to [y] sanctify the sabbath day. [z] Remember me, O my God, *concerning* this also, and [a] spare me according to the † greatness of thy mercy.

23 ¶ In those days also saw I Jews [b] *that* had ‡ married wives of [c] Ashdod, of [d] Ammon, *and* of Moab:

24 And their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and § could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of ‖ each people.

25 And [e] I contended with them, [f] and * cursed them, and [g] smote certain of them, and [h] plucked off their hair, and [i] made them swear by God, *saying*, [k] Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves.

26 [l] Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? [m] yet among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel: nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin.

27 [n] Shall we then hearken unto you to do all this great evil, to transgress against our God, in marrying strange wives?

28 And *one* of the sons of [o] Joiada the son of [p] Eliashib, the high-priest, *was* [q] son-in-law to [r] Sanballat the Horonite: therefore [s] I chased him from me.

29 [t] Remember them, O my God, † because they have defiled the priesthood,

l. ix. 29. Deut. viii. 19. Ps. l. 7. Jer. xlii. 19. Acts ii. 40. xx. 21. 1 Thes. iv. 6.
m Ex. xxiii. 12. Deut. v. 14.
n 2. 25. v. 7. Ps. lxxxii. 1, 2 Jer. xiii. 18. xxii. 2.
o Jer. xvii. 23. 27. Ez xxii. 8. 26. Zech. i. 4, 5
p Lev. xxvi. 18. 28. Num. xxxii. 14. Josh. xxii. 17, 18.
q Lev. xxiii. 32.
r vii. 3 Ex. xxxi. 14—17. Jer. xvii. 19—21.
s 15.
* Heb. *before*.
t Rom. xiii. 3, 4.
u vii. 64, 65. 2 Kings xxiii. 4. 1 Chr xv. 12—14. 2 Chr. xxix. 4, 5. 24. 27. 30. Is. xlix. 23.
x xii. 30.
y Deut. v. 12.
z 14. 31. v. 19. Ps. cxxxii. 1—5. Is. xxxviii. 3. 2 Cor i. 12. 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.
a Ps. xxv. 6, 7. li. 1. cxxx. 3, 4. 7. cxliii 1, 2.
† Or, *multitude*. Ps. v. 7. Is. lv. 7.
b x. 30. Ezra ix. 2. 11, 12. 2 Cor. vi 14
‡ Heb *made to dwell* with them.
c 1 Sam. v. 1.
d 1—3.
§ Heb. *they discerned not to speak*
‖ Heb. *people and people*
e 11. 17 Prov. xxviii. 4.
f v 13. Deut. xxvii 14—26.
* Or, *reviled* Luke xi 45, 46.
g Deut. xxv. 2, 3. Ezra vii 26.
h Is l. 6.
i x 29, 30 Deut. vi 13. 2 Chr. xv. 12—15 Ezra x 5.
k Ex. xxxiv. 16. Deut. vii. 3
l 1 Kings xi. 1—8. Ec. vii 26.
m 2 Sam xii. 24, 25. 1 Kings iii. 13. 2 Chr. i. 12.
n 1 Sam. xxx 24.
o xii. 10. 22.
p iii. 1.
q 4, 5. vi. 17—19.
r ii. 19.
s 25. Ps. ci. 8. Prov. xx. 8 26. Rom. xiii. 3, 4.
t vi. 14. Ps lix. 5—13. 2 Tim. iv. 14.
† Heb. *for the defilings of* Lev. xxi. 1—7.

V. 15—18. It can hardly be supposed, that in the course of *one year* of Nehemiah's absence, such gross and open profanation of the sabbath should have been introduced. The Tyrians, as heathens not regarding the sabbath, tempted the Jews to break it by trading with them. The magistrates must have been shamefully negligent, in conniving at these abuses till they were become so notorious: and the nation seemed to be proceeding, in many respects, as their fathers had done, in provoking the wrath of God against them.

V. 19. *Some of*, &c. Nehemiah could place more dependence in this case on his own attendants, than on the porters appointed by the nobles of Judah: who probably countenanced this profanation, in order to indulge their luxury or their avarice.

V. 20—22. The merchants and dealers still hoped to find some opportunity of trading on the sabbath, either with the citizens or countrymen: but as they were trying to induce the Jews to break the law of God, and that of their rulers, Nehemiah solemnly assured them, that if they did not desist, he would proceed to inflict punishment on them. He also appointed the Levites to watch the gates, perhaps supposing they would be more regarded than his servants; and also, because he would have the watch continued, even if he should leave Jerusalem. This reformation seems to have produced very durable effects; for in the after ages of the Jewish church, they became exact even to superstition in observing the sabbath. Probably his other regulations were at last equally effectual: but we have no more canonical history concerning them.

Remember, &c. 'Nehemiah had besought God to remember his good deeds, (14.) but to show that he did not think there was any proper merit or worthiness in them, which required a reward as a debt in justice due to them, he here explains himself; and desires to be rewarded, or rather pardoned, out of God's free goodness, according to the *greatness*, or *the multitude* of his mercies.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

t Num. xvi. 9, 10 xxv. 12, 13. 1 Sam. ii. 30. Mal. ii. 4–8. 11, 12.
u Neh. x. 30.

and u the covenant of the priesthood, and of the Levites.

30 Thus cleansed I them from all strangers, and appointed the wards of the priests and the Levites, every one in his business;

y xii. 2–26 1 Chr. xxiv. xxv. xxvi.

V. 23—30. Some time must have elapsed after Nehemiah's departure from Jerusalem, before the children of these marriages could betray their origin by their speech; yet probably they were not contracted before that event, and the reform seems to have been made very soon after his return. This separation also evidently was diverse from that recorded before, (1—3:) for that was the effect of reading the law, and by voluntary consent; this by more vehement measures. When this zealous reformer found these undeniable proofs of the people's guilt, he began without delay to put a stop to the evil. He contended, or vehemently argued the matter, with those who were concerned; proving the criminality and fatal effects of such marriages from the Scriptures, in an unanswerable manner. He then denounced the awful curse of God upon such as persisted in disobedience, and perhaps excluded them from the congregation: he punished such as were refractory with immediate scourging, and put others of them under some disgraceful stigma: and made them all solemnly swear to separate from their heathen wives. Among the other examples of his impartial severity, he banished the grandson of Eliashib, who had married the daughter of Sanballat. (*Lev.* xxi. 7—15.) Josephus relates that this young man was named Menasseh, and that at his instance Sanballat and the Samaritans built their temple upon mount Gerizzim, in opposition to that at Jerusalem; at which he officiated, in some measure according to the ritual appointments of Moses. Hence schism, emulation, and rancorous enmity between the two nations were perpetuated to future ages.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—13.

The public reading of the whole word of God, as far as it relates to our faith and practice, is of immense advantage to true religion. Though we have heard many sermons, and have the Bible in our hands, few of us are acquainted with every part of it; and many live in violation of its injunctions, through ignorance or inattention. But when they who are well disposed hear the word of God condemn any part of their conduct, they are reminded to break off the sin, and to do the neglected duty. They who are unkind to the people of God, who attempt to afflict them, or who wish them evil, will be punished as his enemies; and he will turn their curses and malicious deeds into blessings to those who trust and obey him. Alas, how prone is human nature to evil! When the restraints of influence or authority are withdrawn, men break out into those excesses of which they seemed incapable; whilst the eye and authority of God are treated with atheistical disregard! They who have enjoyed the highest dignities in the visible church by *divine right*, have sometimes been equally distinguished by sacrilegious impiety; and have openly committed those crimes which the most profane of the laity would not have ventured on without hesitation and dismay! But if sacredness of character will not restrain men from setting a pernicious example; it should not shelter them from censure or condign punishment by the magistrate. As nobles have too generally, in every age and country, deemed themselves privileged to disregard the divine law, and many human institutions obligatory on others; magistrates and reformers need courage and resolution, as well as impartiality and integrity. Our grief for the sins we witness, should stimulate us to oppose them strenuously, according to the duty of our station, and induce us not to yield to unmanly despondency. It is not expedient that magistrates or ministers should be long absent from their respective charges: for one sinner will often take advantage of their absence, to destroy much good; and by example, insinuation, and influence, to subvert their most useful regulations, and to render their designs abortive. Few ministers will continue willing to labour under the pressure or the prospect of indigence; but most will turn themselves to more profitable occupations: so that depriving the clergy of a suitable maintenance forms one of Satan's projects for causing the house and ordinances of God to be forsaken. Pious magistrates should peculiarly attend to this: they should take care that the ministers of the Gospel be encouraged to labour in their proper places, and that a competent provision be made for them: nor are any, except men of approved fidelity, to be trusted in such concerns.

V. 14—31.

The due observance of the Lord's day forms an important object for the attention of those who would promote true godliness: and the Christian magistrate should take proper measures to prevent that sacred day deing profaned by labour, merchandise, or the carrying on of those occupations which subserve the luxury and pride of life. And, as nobles too commonly set the example both of breaking God's commandments, and of disregarding royal edicts in this particular; they must first be contended with, and vigorously urged to do their duty. Persons, in the higher orders of society in general, little consider the effects of their misconduct: if they violate the holy day of God, others will assuredly imitate their impiety; and thus the flood-gates of ungodliness and wickedness will be thrown open, which must bring the wrath of God on guilty nations. Indeed the present state of unprincipled profligacy in these kingdoms, may be shown in great measure to originate from the relaxed sentiments which some time after the reformation began to prevail concerning the spending of the sabbath. And as these have gained ground, that holy day has gradually become more and more the time when the lower orders have been let loose to corrupt one another. It is also necessary to repeat the observation, that improper marriages have ensnared the wisest men, have always led to apostacies, and have tended to the ruin of succeeding generations. The children readily imbibe the principles of the infidel or ungodly parent, and soon forget the very language or appearance of piety; or sub-

z x. 34. 31 And for [z] the wood-offering, at times appointed, and for the first-fruits. [a] Remember me, O my God, for good. a 14 22. Ps. xxv. 7. cvi. 4. Luke xxiii. 42.

stitute a corrupt religion in the stead of that which comes from God and leads to him. Mothers likewise have a vast share in forming the manners of mankind; as the care of children in their tender years is almost wholly committed to them. It is therefore of great consequence to society, that females should be educated with a view to this most important employment, and qualified for the discharge of their duty in it. Every wise man, in contracting marriage, should consider whether the object of his choice would be a proper person to intrust with his children's tuition: and every mother should consider, that this is the most important part of her charge, and most of all calls for assiduity, prudence, and circumspection. In opposing fashionable and reputable vices; conclusive arguments, vehement expostulations, apposite examples, awful declarations of the wrath of God, and solemn engagements, may have the proper effect upon some: but the magistrate must often use more vigorous measures. He must disgrace, punish, and chase away, the ringleaders in iniquity, without respect of persons or families: and severity to a few will prove mercy to many. But in every thing the word of God must be our rule; the love and fear of God our principle; and his glory, in the prosperity of his cause, and the welfare of his people, our great object. Whilst we labour in this manner, we must expect the enmity and opposition of a wicked world: but we may go on with confidence in the spirit of faith and prayer. We may humbly hope, that the Lord will remember us, and not wipe out our services, though defective and defiled; that he will spare us according to the greatness of his mercy, and accept both our persons and our services: and if he remember us for good, that will be a sufficient recompense and happiness for ever: whilst they who impenitently sin against him, and especially such as disgrace a sacred character, will be remembered for evil, to their everlasting shame, confusion, and destruction.

THE BOOK OF

E S T H E R.

THIS book, which takes its name from the principal character introduced in it, was most probably written by Mordecai, and inserted into the canon of Scripture by Ezra and his assistants, or by their successors: but there are various opinions among learned men on this subject. The Jews have always held the book of Esther in great veneration; and as the feast of Purim, (ix. 26—32,) *is observed by them to this day, no reasonable doubt can be entertained on the authenticity of the narrative.—Perhaps it was written after all the other books of the Old Testament; though in this respect also, learned men differ exceedingly. And, as it contains no prophecies, so it is not referred to in the New-Testament.—It is also very remarkable, that there is no clear mention in it of any of the names, by which the God of Israel is distinguished in the sacred oracles: yet it is most evidently intended, as well as admirably calculated, to illustrate the doctrine of Providence; and the methods and instruments by which the great Ruler of the world accomplishes his purposes, both of mercy and of judgment. Perhaps this omission of the Lord's name was* designed. *Facts well known, concerning the worshippers of* JEHOVAH, *the plot formed for their extirpation, and the wonderful deliverance vouchsafed them, were thus simply stated; in order that every reader might judge for himself, whether these facts did not demonstrate, the God of the Jews to be the great Ruler of the universe. Had this conclusion been urged on the Gentiles by a despised Jew, their prejudices might have been excited: let the simple narrative then speak for itself.—Several additional chapters are found in the Apocrypha; but they never were in the Hebrew text, and the Jews never received them: they principally contain repetitions or additions, intended to decorate the history; but which in fact destroy its simple unity and beauty: and some things in them cannot be reconciled with the times to which the history must relate. —The preceding books form a specimen of the Lord's care of his church in Judea; this shows his favour to the nation at large. Many of those who continued in remote countries, were blameable in that respect: yet he would not leave the nation in the hand of their enemies, or deprive them of his mercy and grace on that account.*

B. C. 489.

CHAPTER I.

Ahasuerus, king of Persia, makes a royal feast, 1—9. *He sends for Vashti his queen, who refuses to come,* 10—12. *By the advice of his counsellors, he divorces her, and asserts by decree, the authority of men over their wives,* 13—22.

NOW it came to pass in the days of B. C. 489.
[a] Ahasuerus, (this *is* Ahasuerus which reigned [b] from India even unto Ethiopia, *over* [c] an hundred and seven and twenty provinces:)

a Ezra iv 6 Dan. ix. 1
b viii. 9.
c Dan. vi. 1.

2 *That* in those days, when the king Ahasuerus [d] sat on the throne of his kingdom, which *was* in [e] Shushan the palace,

d 2 Sam. vii. 1. 1 Kings i. 46. Dan iv. 4.
e Neh. i 1. Dan. viii. 2.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. It is evident that these events took place, after the first establishment of the Persian empire; for Shusan was a royal city of Persia. But various have been the opinions of learned men, concerning the Persian king, who is here called Ahasueurs. I am, however, satisfied with the arguments of Dean Prideaux; and consequently suppose him to have been Artaxerxes Longimanus, who commissioned both Ezra and Nehemiah. The extent of his dominions, his liberality, and his kindness to the Jews, favour the supposition. The Septuagint translation calls him Artaxerxes, and Josephus calls him Artaxerxes Longimanus: but the discussion of so contested a point would not suit the design of this publication.

3 In the third year of his reign, [f] he made a feast unto all his princes, and his servants; the power of Persia and Media, [g] the nobles and princes of the provinces, *being* before him:

4 When [h] he shewed [i] the riches of his glorious kingdom, and the honour of his [k] excellent majesty many days, *even* an hundred and fourscore days.

5 And when these days were expired, the king made a feast unto all the people that were * present in Shushan the palace, both unto great and small, [l] seven days, in the court of the garden of the king's palace;

6 *Where were* [m] white, green, and † blue *hangings*, fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings, and pillars of marble: [n] the beds *were of* gold and silver, upon a pavement of ‡ red, and blue, and white, and black marble.

7 And they gave *them* drink in [o] vessels of gold, (the vessels being diverse one from another,) and ∮ royal wine in abundance, according to the ‖ state of the king:

8 And the drinking *was* according to the law; [p] none did compel: for so the king had appointed to all [q] the officers of his house, that they should do according to every man's pleasure.

9 Also Vashti [r] the queen made a feast for the women, *in* the royal house which *belonged* to king Ahasuerus.

10 ¶ On the seventh day, when [s] the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, [t] Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the seven * chamberlains, that served in the presence of Ahasuerus the king,

11 To bring [u] Vashti the queen before the king with the crown royal, to shew the people and the princes her beauty: for she *was* † fair to look on.

12 But the queen Vashti [x] refused to come at the king's commandment ‡ by *his* chamberlains: therefore [y] was the king very wroth, and his anger [z] burned in him.

13 Then the king said to [a] the wise men, which [b] knew the times, (for so *was* the king's manner towards all that knew law and judgment:

14 And the next unto him *was* Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, *and* Memucan, [c] the seven princes of Persia and Media, which [d] saw the king's face, *and* which sat the first in the kingdom;)

15 ∮ What shall we do unto the queen Vashti according to law, because she hath not performed the command-

f ii. 13. Gen. xl. 20. 1 Kings iii. 15. Dan. v. 1. Mark vi. 21.
g Dan. iii. 2, 3. vi. 1. 6, 7.
h Is xxxix 2 Ez. xxviii. 5. Dan. iv. 30.
i v. 1. Matt. vi. 13 Rom. ix. 23. Eph. i 18. Col. i. 27 Rev. iv. 11.
k 1 Chr. xxix. 11, 12. 25. Job xl. 10. Ps. xxi. 5. xlv. 3. xciii. 1. cxv. 12. Dan iv. 36. v. 18. 2 Pet. i. 16, 17.
* Heb. *found.*
l 2 Chr. vii. 8, 9. xxx. 21—25.
m Ex. xxvi. 1. 31, 32 36, 37.
† Or, *violet.*
n vii. 8. Ez. xxiii. 41. Am. ii. 8. vi. 4.
‡ Or, *of porphyre, and marble, and alabster, and stone of blue colour*
o 1 Kings x. 21.
∮ Heb. *wine of the kingdom.*
‖ Heb. *hand.*
p Jer. xxxv 5. Ii. 7. Hab. ii. 15, 16.
q John ii. 8.
r v. 4. 9
s Gen. xliii. 34. 1 Sam xxv. 36, 37. 2 Sam xiii. 28 Prov xx 1. Ec. viii 2—4 x 19
t vii 9. *Harbonah*
* Or, *eunuchs* Dan. i. 3 — 5. 18, 19.
u Prov. xvi. 9. xxiii 29 — 33. Mark vi. 21, 22.
† Heb. *good of countenance*
2 Sam xiv 25. Prov xxxi. 30.
x Gen iii 16. Eph v. 22 24. 1 Pet iii 1
‡ Heb *which was by the hand of* his *eunuchs* vii. 7.
y Prov. xix 12. xx. 2 Dan iii. 13. 19. Nah ii. 6 Rev vi. 16.
z Ex. xxxii 19. 22 Deut xxix. 20 Ps lxxiv. 1. lxxix. 5.
a Jer x. 7 Dan. ii 12
b 1 Chr xii. 32. Matt. xvi. 3.
c Ezra vii. 14.
d 2 Kings xxv. 19.
∮ Heb. *What to do.* Col. iii. 19.

V. 4. The princes from the several parts of Ahasuerus's immense dominions seem to have been entertained in rotation, during six months, with the greatest *ostentation* of wealth and liberality that could be conceived: and afterwards all the citizens of Shushan, without any distinction, were feasted for seven days in like manner. (5.)

V. 6. *The beds.* On these the guests sat, or reclined, at table.

V. 8. The absurd practice, of urging people to drink more strong liquor than they are of themselves inclined to, has prevailed in all ages; though it is a most gross violation of common sense, freedom, and civility, as well as of morality and religion. It seems to have been devised and supported by drunkards, that the more sober part of mankind might be drawn in to keep them in countenance by a reluctant intoxication. The regulation enjoined by the king was very necessary in the midst of so many incentives to intemperance; and his mind, being thus made known, doubtless prevented many disorders which otherwise would have been committed.

V. 10—12. When the customs of the Persians relative to their women, especially the wives of their kings, are considered, this injunction of Ahasuerus must appear highly improper and unreasonable. He sent seven of his chamberlains, (which no doubt so far was honourable to his queen;) commanding her to appear in her royal attire, in order that a number of princes and nobles, who were heated with wine, might be gratified by a sight of her singular beauty! A reluctancy therefore to an exhibition, so contrary to the decorum observed by her sex, became her rank and modesty; but as the king was peremptory, and every one must have known that she came at his command, it was very imprudent in her to persist in a refusal, which could only terminate in an open contest and the most fatal effects.

V. 13, 14. These wise men being acquainted with the records of the kingdom, might be able to bring precedents how former kings had acted in circumstances in any respect similar, according to the laws and customs of the kingdom; as well as to understand in general what was proper to be done in the present emergency. (*Note*, 1 *Chr.* xii. 32.) And it was the king's manner, in all such matters, to confer with those who knew law and judgment.—The seven counsellors here mentioned had free access to the king, and were the first subjects in the kingdom. (*Note*, *Ezra* vii. 14.)

ment of the king Ahasuerus, by the chamberlains?

16 And Memucan answered before the king and the princes, Vashti the queen hath not [e] done wrong to the king only, but also to all the princes, and to all the people, that *are* in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus.

17 For *this* deed of the queen shall come abroad unto all women, so that they shall [f] despise their husbands in their eyes, when it shall be reported, The king Ahasuerus commanded Vashti the queen to be brought in before him, but she came not.

18 *Likewise* shall the ladies of Persia and Media say this day unto all the king's princes, which have heard of the deed of the queen. Thus *shall there arise* too much contempt and wrath.

19 If * it please the king, let there go a royal commandment † from him, and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and the Medes, that ‡ it be not altered, that Vashti come no more before king Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal estate unto § another [g] that is better than she.

20 And when the king's decree which he shall make shall be published throughout all his empire, (for it is great,) [h] all the wives shall give to their husbands honour, both to great and small.

21 And the saying ‖ pleased the king and the princes; and the king did according to the word of Memucan:

22 For he sent letters into all the king's provinces, [i] into every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language, [k] that every man should bear rule in his own house, and that * *it* should be published according to the language of every people.

e Acts xviii. 14. xxv. 10. 1 Cor. vi. 7, 8.

f 2 Sam. vi. 16. Eph. v. 33.

* Heb. *it be good with the king.*
† Heb. *from before him.*

‡ Heb. *pass not away.* viii. 8. Dan. vi. 8. 12. 15.

§ Heb. *her companion.*
g 1 Sam. xv. 28. 1 Kings ii. 32.

h Eph. v. 33 Col. iii. 18 : Pet iii. 1—7.

‖ Heb. *was good in the eyes of the king.* Gen xli. 37.

i viii. 9. Dan. iii 29. iv 1.

k 1 Tim. ii. 12 Tit. ii. 4, 5.
* Heb. *one should publish it according to the language of his people.* iii. 12. Luke xvi. 8. 1 Cor xiv. 19.

V. 15. Some suppose, that Ahasuerus was inclined to forgive Vashti, if it might stand with the honour of his government, and the laws of the realm. But others think, that he was disposed to divorce her, or otherwise punish her; but wished to proceed against her under colour of law and justice.

V. 16—18. Memucan is mentioned last of the seven counsellors; and it is supposed he was the youngest, or last in order on some account; and that he was required to give his opinion first, that he might not previously be biassed by the sentiments of the seniors or superiors. It is uncertain whether Memucan really deemed the queen's disobedience a dangerous precedent, whilst it remained unpunished; or whether he paid court to the king, by counselling him to follow his own humour, and by suggesting a plausible reason for so doing. He, however, argued that the queen's rank, and the notoriety and pertinacity of her disobedience, would encourage other women to despise the persons and authority of their husbands; which contempt would excite their wrath, and thus destroy domestic subordination and peace. Yet if the husbands had been careful not to act contemptibly, or to give foolish and improper commands, they might have ruled by reason and affection, without either such fatal consequences or such violent measures. But despotism in civil government leads to despotism in domestic life: men imagine, that there is no way to rule, but by force and terror: and thus the superior relations become tyrants, and the inferiors slaves, submitting by constraint, without either conviction or affection.

V. 22. By this irrevocable edict, which was published in the various languages spoken through the vast empire of the Persians, that all might understand it; Ahasuerus's example was virtually proposed for general imitation: so that every husband was allowed to divorce his wife, if she disobeyed his command, even when evidently foolish and unreasonable! But whether pride, resentment, policy, or lust predominated in the councils of Ahasuerus; the Lord was thus making preparation for defeating Haman's diabolical project, long before it ever entered into his heart, and before he arrived at the height of his power and prosperity.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—9.

No extent of possessions or dominion can satisfy the human heart, and give contentment or felicity even in this present life. Cares, fears, and temptations are augmented by every accession; the power of doing good or harm is enlarged, and, alas! the latter is generally chosen. But "to whom much is given, of him will much be required" by the great Proprietor, who is continually saying to monarchs, as well as subjects, "Give an account of thy "stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward."—An ostentation of generosity and magnificence for a man's own honour and glory, that his wealth, bounty, and taste may be admired and applauded, is a common idolatry of the great and noble: and except grace prevail in the heart, self-exaltation and self-indulgence, in some form or other, will be the ruling principles. But indeed the honour of every endowment, possession, or achievement of created beings, belongs solely to the underived unchangeable Creator: his glory, in our felicity and that of our fellow creatures, should be our great end in every action; and all other considerations ought to be subordinated to it and regulated by it. But if the feast of an earthly monarch, when he would "show the riches of his glorious kingdom "and the honour of his excellent majesty," was so magnificent; what will be that feast, which the King of kings

CHAP. II.

By advice of his servants, Ahasuerus causes fair virgins to be sought out in every province of his kingdom, that he might choose a queen, 1—4. Esther had been brought up by Mordecai, 5—7. She obtains favour with the keeper of the women; pleases the king; and is made queen, having observed Mordecai's directions, 8—20. Mordecai discovers a plot against the king; the criminals are punished; and his service is registered in the chronicles of the kingdom, 21—23.

AFTER these things, when the wrath of king Ahasuerus was appeased, [a] he remembered Vashti, and [b] what she had done, and what was decreed against her.

[a] Dan. vi. 14—18.
[b] i. 12—19.

hath prepared, to show the riches of his glorious kingdom, and the honour of his excellent majesty, in heaven, for ever and ever? There will be unfading splendour, inexhaustible abundance, and unalloyed pleasures, without interruption or satiety! There will be no danger or fear of excess, nor the least discord to mar enjoyment, through all the ages of eternity! "All things are ready" for this feast; sinners without exception are invited: may we accept the gracious invitation, seek and find the wedding-garment, and sit down at the marriage-supper of the Lamb! —But in all other feasts, the pleasure is greatly alloyed, and soon palls; and too generally they prove unfavourable, not only to wisdom and piety, but even to present comfort and advantage. Seldom do we frequent them, without being led into some degree of excess, injurious to our strength of body and vigour of mind. They are scenes of temptation, suited to excite our various evil propensities. The enemy of souls will be sure to avail himself of our unguarded moments: and he has strangely prevailed to render it creditable, for men to become tempters of each other to intemperance; so that few public entertainments amongst professed Christians are conducted by such good rules as this *heathen* feast. But *real* Christians must not only shun such scenes, and separate from those who frequent them; but likewise by warnings and exhortations, endeavour to preserve their brethren from sin: and if, by this conduct at their own tables, they incur the censure of being penurious; "the poor, whom they always have with them," afford them a fair occasion of refuting the slander. Indeed that will go very far in hospitality to the indigent, which is quickly wasted by pampering the luxury of the affluent.

V. 10—22.

Seasons of peculiar festivity often terminate in vexation. Wine and jovial company elate the mind, add strength to the passions, and stun the voice of reason and conscience. On such occasions caprice generally dictates the conduct; unreasonable claims are started or projects formed; and the eagerness of men's spirits ill brooks contradiction or affront, whilst it disposes to give them. Thus anger is excited and exasperated; and discords, revenge, duels, and murders are the frequent consequences of pleasurable meetings! Propriety and decorum are also often disregarded: the respect and attention due to relatives are forgotten: improper requisitions are sometimes made; by which contempt and imprudent opposition are excited: affection is suspended, during the reign of haughty resentment; and all parties forget their reciprocal interests and duties, until their reputation and peace receive such wounds, as can seldom admit of a complete cure. Let it also be specially noted, that superiors should be careful not to command what may *reasonably* be disobeyed; for this must weaken their authority, and prove a temptation to those over whom they rule: yet inferiors ought never to persist in a refusal, except when it is a point of conscience towards God.—There would be safety in the multitude of counsellors, if men did but welcome plain-dealing; and if the counsellors of princes did not generally consult their inclinations, rather than their interests. Domestic subordination doubtless ought to be preserved: and the wife ought to honour and obey her own husband: yet surely this may be effected by other means than severe laws, divorces, and measures more pernicious than the evil they are intended to remedy! Regard to mutual interest, comfort, and reputation, serve to keep the world in tolerable order: the prudence and affection of the husband will do great things, where properly exercised: the general regard, which the more decent members of the community have to the precepts and authority of God, has considerable effect: true grace radically cures that evil, from which domestic discord arises: and where the peace of society is *materially* violated, the magistrate may properly interpose. All other evils arising from this source may better be tolerated, than to attempt a remedy, by making the men tyrants and the women slaves: whilst it is evident that the former fail as much, and commonly far more, in the duty of their relation than the latter. Nor should even the interests of kingdoms be promoted, were it possible, by evident injustice. The example of the great has a very extensive effect, and they are the more concerned not to exhibit a pernicious pattern to their inferiors: but human policy sometimes overshoots its mark; and to prevent the effect of one injurious precedent, forms another of still more fatal tendency. Let us then keep to the rule of God's word, and it will guide the humble obedient believer through all these labyrinths; and be "a lantern to his feet, and a light unto all his paths." Let us be upon our guard against every incentive to our passions; watching and praying against wrath, pride, and self-will. Let us learn to bridle our tempers, and to conquer by yielding; and to "leave off contention before it be "meddled with." And let us rejoice that the Lord reigns, and will over-rule all the madness and folly of mankind, for the purposes of his own glory, and the safety and felicity of his people.

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1. When the vehemency of the king's anger subsided, his affection for Vashti revived; and he

2 Then said the [c] king's servants, that ministered unto him, [d] Let there be fair young virgins sought for the king:

3 And let the king appoint officers [e] in all the provinces of his kingdom, that they may gather together all the fair young virgins unto Shushan the palace, to the house of the women, unto * the custody of [f] Hege the king's chamberlain, keeper of the women; and let [g] their things for purification be given *them:*

4 And let the maiden which pleaseth the king be queen instead of Vashti. And the thing pleased the king; and he did so.

5 ¶ *Now* in [h] Shushan the palace there was [i] a certain Jew, whose name *was* Mordecai, the son of Jair, [k] the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite;

6 Who had been carried away from Jerusalem, with the captivity which had been carried away with [l] Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away.

7 And he † brought up [n] Hadassah, that *is* Esther, [o] his uncle's daughter: for she had neither father nor mother, and the maid *was* † fair and beautiful: whom Mordecai, when her father and mother were dead, [p] took for his own daughter.

8 ¶ So it came to pass, when the king's commandment and his decree was heard, and when many maidens were gathered together unto Shushan the palace, to the custody of [q] Hegai, that Esther was brought also unto the king's house, to the custody of Hegai, keeper of the women.

9 And the maiden pleased him, and [r] she obtained kindness of him; and he speedily gave her [s] her things for purification, with such ‡ things as belonged to her, and seven maidens, *which were* meet to be given her, out of the king's house: and he ◊ preferred her and her maids unto the best *place* of the house of the women.

10 Esther [t] had not shewed her people nor her kindred: [u] for Mordecai had charged her that she should not shew *it.*

c i. 10. 14. vi. 14.
d Gen. xii. 14, 15. 1 Kings i. 2, 3.
e i. 1.
* Heb. *the hand.*
f 8. *Hegai.*
g 12—14. Is. iii. 18—23.
h i. 2.
i iii. 4. x. 3.
k 1 Sam. ix. 1. 2 Sam. xvi. 5.
l 2 Kings xxiv. 14, 15. 2 Chr xxxvi. 9, 10 *Jehoiachin* Jer. xxiv. 1.
† Heb *nourished* Eph. vi. 4.
n Dan. i. 6, 7.
o 15.
† Heb. *fair of form and good of countenance.* i. 11.
p Gen xlviii. 5. 1 John iii. 1.
q 3. *Hege.*
r Gen. xxxix. 21. 1 Kings viii 50. Ezra vii 6. Neh. ii. 8. Ps. cvi. 46. Prov. xvi. 7. Dan i. 9.
s 3. 12.
‡ Heb. *her portions.*
◊ Heb. *changed her.*
t iii. 8. Matt. x. 16
u 7 20 Eph. vi 7. 1 Pet. i. 14.

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was probably sensible, that he had acted with precipitation and severity, and had done her injustice. But with all his authority, he could not again receive her into favour, without violating a fundamental constitution of the Persian government; which required that no edict, that the king had once established, should be reversed; (*Dan.* vi. 15.) The fatal effects of this absurd policy will be sufficiently illustrated, in the sequel of this narrative. Under colour of ascribing infallibility to the sovereign, and thus flattering his pride, this restriction perpetually exposed him, in his unguarded hours, to be deluded into the most pernicious measures; and would not so much as allow him to remedy the injustice or impolicy into which he had been betrayed, when reflection and experience had made him sensible of his errors. And this was the more absurd and dangerous in its nature and effects, if they may be depended on who inform us, that the Persian monarchs, and their counsellors, commonly framed their edicts at feasts, and when they were drinking.

V. 2—4. It is uncertain whether this was the project of the seven counsellors, or of some other servants who more immediately ministered to the king's pleasures. It seems, however, to have been devised, in order to prevent him from thinking any more of Vashti, whose restoration to favour must be guarded against, for the safety of those who had counselled the king to exercise such severity against her. For if he had been greatly desirous of Vashti's company, the law of the Medes and Persians would scarcely have prevented him from recalling her. This will appear by the following instance. Cambyses king of Persia, having conceived a violent passion for his own sister, inquired of his counsellors whether it was lawful for him to marry her? And they dreading the effects of his resentment if they opposed his will, answered, that there was no law in Persia by which a man was allowed to marry his sister, but that it was lawful for the king of Persia to do what he pleased.

V. 5—7. Mordecai, though a Benjamite, is repeatedly called *the Jew:* for the whole nation was now called after *Judah.* (*Note, Gen.* xlix. 8—10.)—Some of Mordecai's ancestors, (perhaps Kish,) had been carried to Babylon with Jeconiah; and the family afterwards settled at Shushan. But it seems that they were diminished in number, or impoverished: so that Mordecai's own cousin had been left an orphan; and he, probably being much older than she was, had brought her up, and in all respects behaved as a father to her. Her Jewish name was Hadassah; but the Persians called her Esther. The conjectures of some learned men concerning her, taken from rather a slight similarity of names between her and the wives of some of the Persian kings mentioned in Pagan historians, seem entirely groundless: as the dissimilarity of character and other circumstances vastly preponderates against them.

V. 8—10. As Mordecai was so scrupulous in respect to Haman, it has been wondered how he could consent to Esther's becoming the wife or concubine of a heathen prince, contrary to the law of Moses. But it does not seem to have been left to the choice either of Mordecai or of Esther. By a public edict, the most beautiful virgins were selected from all parts of Ahasuerus's dominions; and it would have been unavailing, as well as dangerous, to have opposed the persons employed in this business. The word

x v 2, 3

11 And Mordecai [x] walked every day before the court of the women's house, to know ‖ how Esther did, and what should become of her.

‖ Heb *the peace of Esther.* Gen. xxxvii 14 1 Sam. xvii.18. Acts xv. 36.

12 ¶ Now when every maid's turn was come [y] to go in to king Ahasuerus, after that she had been twelve months, according to the manner of the women, (for so were the days of their purifications accomplished, *to wit,* [z] six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with sweet odours, and with *other* things for the purifying of the women;)

y 1 Thes iv. 4, 5.

z Prov. vii. 17. Cant. iii. 6. Is lvii. 9. Luke vii. 37, 38.

13 Then thus came *every* maiden unto the king; whatsoever she desired was given her, to go with her out of the house of the women, unto the king's house.

14 In the evening she went, and on the morrow she returned into the second house of the women, to the custody of Shaashgaz, the king's chamberlain, which kept the concubines: she came in unto the king no more, except the king [a] delighted in her, and that [b] she were called by name.

a iv. 11. Gen. xxxiv. 19. Is. lxii. 4, 5.
b Is. xlv. 4.

15 ¶ Now when the turn of Esther, the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, [c] who had taken her for his daughter, was come to go in unto the king, she required nothing but what Hegai the king's chamberlain, the keeper of the women, appointed. And [d] Esther obtained favour in the sight of all them that looked upon her.

c 7.

d Cant. vi. 9. Acts vii 10.

16 So Esther was taken unto king Ahasuerus into his house royal in [e] the tenth month, which *is* the month Tebeth, in [f] the seventh year of his reign.

e i. 3 v. 9.

f Ezra vii 8.

17 And the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and * favour † in his sight more than all the virgins; [g] so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti.

* Or, *kindness.*
† Heb. *before him*
g 1 Sam. ii. 8. Ps. lxxv. 6, 7. cxiii. 7, 8. Ez. xvii. 24. Luke i. 48—52.

18 Then the king [h] made a great feast unto all his princes and his servants, *even* Esther's feast; and he made a ‡ release to the provinces, and [i] gave gifts according to the state of the king.

h i. 3–5. Gen. xxix. 22. Judg. xiv. 10–17. Mat xxii. 2.
‡ Heb. *rest.*
i ix. 22. 1 Sam. xxv. 5. Neh. viii. 12 Rev. xi. 10.

19 And when [k] the virgins were gathered together the second time, then Mordecai [l] sat in the king's gate.

k 3, 4.
l 21. iii. 2, 3. v. 13

20 Esther [m] had not *yet* shewed her kindred nor her people: as Mordecai had charged her: for Esther did the commandment of Mordecai, like as when she was brought up with him.

m 10.

21 ¶ In those days, while Mordecai sat in the king's gate, two of the king's chamberlains, [n] Bigthan and Teresh, of those which kept the § door, were wroth, [o] and sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus.

n vi. 2. *Bigthana.*
§ Heb. *threshold.*
o Ps cxliv. 10.

22 And [p] the thing was known to Mordecai, who told *it* unto Esther the queen;

p Ec. x. 20. Acts xxiii. 12–22.

'we translate *was brought,* may be rendered *was taken;* 'and that by force, as the word sometimes signifies; and 'as the former Targum explains it, *She was brought by violence.*' (*Bp. Patrick.*) If Esther had made known to what nation she belonged, it might have interfered with her advancement to the rank of queen; because of the contempt with which the Jews were generally treated: but she could not have avoided becoming one of Ahasuerus's concubines. Polygamy was connived at, even by the Mosaic law, so that the situation of a concubine was not deemed dishonourable or unlawful; and in her peculiar circumstances, the *ritual* law of not *giving their daughters to those* of another nation might not be thought obligatory. The conduct of Providence, however, should be chiefly noticed: though it does not appear that either Mordecai or Esther could have acted otherwise, if they had been inclined.

V. 16. *In the seventh,* &c. About four years were spent before another queen was chosen in the stead of Vashti: so long a time had been employed in collecting the virgins from all parts of Ahasuerus's dominions, and in other preparations which were thought requisite. Ezra obtained his commission this same year if Artaxerxes were the same as Ahasuerus.

V. 19, 20. It is probable that a number of virgins had been collected before Vashti was made queen: in relation to which it is here said, "When the virgins were gather-"ed together the *second time.*"—About this time Mordecai seems to have been appointed to some station in the service of the king: and the historian seems merely to have intended to connect the account of Mordecai's discovery of the treason, with Esther's advancement to be queen; as introductory to the subsequent narrative.—Esther, after her high preferment, still continued as attentive to Mordecai's command as she had been before, out of gratitude for his kindness, and confidence in his wisdom, piety, and affection.

V. 21. Many conjectures have been formed of the cause of this conspiracy, and the manner in which it was discovered; but curiosity alone is concerned in such inquiries. It suffices for us to know, that a conspiracy was formed, that Mordecai detected it, and that the account of it was written in the records of the kingdom. The transaction itself was nowise uncommon: but the event showed the hand of God in it, in a most remarkable manner, and for the most important purposes.

q vi. 2. Rom. xi. 33
r Phil. ii. 4

and [q] Esther certified the king *thereof* in [r] Mordecai's name.

23 And when inquisition was made of the matter, it was found out; therefore they were both [s] hanged on a tree: and it was written in the book of the chronicles before the king.

s v. 14. vii. 10. Gen. xl. 19. 22. Deut. xxi. 22, 23. Josh. viii. 29.
t vi. 1, 2. Mal. iii. 16.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14.

Resolutions formed in anger, and executed without deliberation, make work for bitter recollection and repentance! A wise man therefore will not proceed even to punish the guilty, till passion has subsided and reason resumed her sway. The depravity of nature, and the fallibility of our judgment render it indispensable to our interest and happiness, that we be allowed to change our sentiments and conduct, and correct our mistakes. Our gracious God hath mercifully placed us under a dispensation which admits of this: and though many painful effects must follow from our transgressions, we shall not be ruined by them, if we avail ourselves of this provision. But whilst pride and obstinacy seem to arrogate infallibility, and to aspire to a dignity incompatible with fallen nature; they forfeit the real advantages of our situation, and leave a man without redress, exposed to all the fatal consequences of every false step that he takes. No one, however, should be too proud to confess that he hath been mistaken: and as this would preclude the absurdity of human laws, that may never be repealed or reversed; so it would strike at the root of that self-justifying pertinacious temper, which induces sinners to neglect the Gospel, and go on in sin. But even when men are in some measure made sensible of their folly and iniquity, new projects, amusements, and gratifications, are devised, to silence conscience, and to carry them forward without uneasiness in the broad road of ungodliness. The servants of mighty monarchs, though themselves princes and nobles, have often stooped to be pimps and parasites, in order to support their present authority, to purchase impunity for past crimes, or to procure future and still greater preferment! But how degrading is it to our rational nature, that numbers of able men and of superior rank, as well as of inferior station, should exert all their ingenuity and diligence in enabling an individual more devotedly to pamper those "fleshly lusts "which war against the soul!" Even reason, (as well as religion,) if her voice could be heard, would command men to moderate and restrain their passions, and teach them submission, by habituating them to brook denial. But the higher human beings are advanced in authority, the lower they often sink into the most abject slavery to their sensual appetites! as if the superiority was intended merely as a medium for the more unrestrained licentiousness, and to enable them to be *avowed* in those excesses, which inferior libertines indulge with a more decent reserve!—How low is our nature sunk, when these are the leading pursuits and the highest felicity, of many millions of rational creatures! When every consideration of decency, equity, and conscience; when domestic comfort, relative duties, and the natural rights of mankind; when even reputation, interest, and health; when life, and the immortal soul itself, are habitually sacrificed to such a vile and hateful idol! Yet after a prostituted ingenuity has done its utmost, disappointment, vexation, and loathing must ensue; and that man most wisely consults even the enjoyment of this present life, who most exactly obeys the precepts of the divine law. We ought also to be thankful for revelation, which is needful to teach us how to act in the common affairs of life. But without the supernatural efficacy of God's Spirit, men will not pay a due regard to that revelation: for with the Bible in their hands, numbers deviate at least as widely from reason and Scripture as ever the Persian monarchs did; except as the want of power, and the law of the land restrain their licentiousness. For these laws indeed, and for many other advantages, we have great cause to be thankful: and especially, that the children of Britons are not liable to be forced into the Seraglio of any licentious ruler. Yet, alas! after all, who can bear steadily to contemplate the corrupt state of our favoured nation, in this respect, without a mixture of shame, regret, and consternation!

V. 15—23.

It is peculiarly useful to consider the providential conduct of God fulfilling his wise, faithful, righteous, and merciful purposes, in the midst of the extravagancies occasioned by the mad passions of wicked men. He careth for his people, and he is the Father of the fatherless: orphans are often peculiarly favoured in his providence, to encourage us to intrust our children to his care whilst we live, and when we are about to die and leave them. It is our duty, in some cases, if we are able, to provide for the orphan children of our near relations; and by so doing, men often provide for their own comfort and safety, and for their families also. The Lord not only confers personal and mental endowments, and enriches the soul with wisdom and grace; but he gives favour likewise, and notwithstanding prejudices and general contempt, he can, when he pleases, secure to his people the most endeared affection of those who know him not. If wealth or kingdoms were good for them, they would certainly have them: but prosperity too generally feeds the distempers of corrupt nature, and poverty and obscurity are more advantageous. Even those high stations, which some few believers occupy for the good of their brethren, will be their cross, if not their snare: and their comforts must flow from the same source, and be of the same nature, with those of the poorest Christian; and are generally in a more scanty measure. We ought, however, to be passive in the Lord's hands; and only be careful to avoid sin and to perform our duty, in whatever station we are placed. Our *profession* of religion, and many things relating to it, must be often regulated and timed according to circumstances; so that we not only need to regard the advice of wise and experienced Christians, but daily to ask for that wisdom, which is from above, or we shall be liable to perpetual mistakes. It is a singular proof that men have obtained a good measure of that wisdom, when unexpected prosperity and favour leave

CHAP. III.

Haman is advanced by the king, who commands his servants to bow down to him; but Mordecai refuses to do it, 1—3. *Haman, in revenge, purposes to destroy the whole Jewish nation,* 4—6. *He chooses a day, by casting lots, for executing his purpose,* 7. *By calumny he obtains a commission from the king to extirpate the Jews, and publishes it through all the provinces,* 8—15.

AFTER these things did king Ahasuerus [a] promote Haman, the son of Hammedatha the [b] Agagite, and advanced him, and set his seat [c] above all the princes that *were* with him.

a Ps. xii. 8. Prov. xxix. 2.
b Num xxiv. 7. 1 Sam. xv. 8.
c i. 14. Ezra. vii 14.

2 And all [d] the king's servants, that *were* in the king's gate, [e] bowed, and reverenced Haman: for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai [f] bowed not, nor did *him* reverence.

d ii. 19. 21.
e Gen. xli. 43. Phil. ii. 10.
f 1. Ex. xvii 11. 16. Deut. xxv. 19. 1 Sam. xv. 3. Ps. xv. 4.

3 Then the king's servants which *were* in the king's gate, said unto Mordecai, [g] Why transgressest thou the king's commandment?

g Ex. i. 17. Matt. xv. 2, 3.

4 Now it came to pass, [h] when they spake daily unto him, and he hearkened not unto them, [i] that they told Haman, to see whether Mordecai's matters would stand: for [k] he had told them that he *was* a Jew.

h Gen. xxxix. 10.
i Dan. iii. 8, 9 vi 13.
k Ezra i. 3. Dan. iii. 12 16—18. 28—30. vi. 20.—23. 26—28. Jon. i. 9

5 And when Haman saw [l] that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman [m] full of wrath

l 2. v. 9.
m i. 12. Job v. 2. Prov xii. 16. xix. 19 xxi 24. xxvii. 3, 4. Dan. iii. 19.

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them humble and teachable, attentive to every relative duty, grateful to benefactors, and disposed to listen to prudent and pious counsellors. No men are exposed to so great danger, from treachery, resentment, and ambition, as absolute monarchs: and their servants, when really attached, often confer obligations upon them which they never can adequately compensate. But the servant of God must be faithful to every trust, and watchful for the safety and interest of those who employ him: and though he seem at present neglected, he may be remembered hereafter. However, his conscientious and upright conduct is registered in heaven, and will be graciously rewarded by his God; when all his enemies shall be driven into utter destruction.

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1. Haman is supposed to have been an Amalekite, descended from the stock of the ancient kings of that people, many of whom were named Agag.—If his descent was generally known, his advancement to be the king's chief minister and favourite would be peculiarly displeasing to the Jews; as they were expressly commanded to extirpate all the Amalekites. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 2. It has been much disputed, why Mordecai so pertinaciously and absolutely refused to bow before Haman, when commanded by his prince: and many, supposing that nothing more was meant than civil obeisance, such as Joseph's brethren and the Egyptians rendered to him; and such as they suppose Ezra and Nehemiah, and even Daniel must have paid to the Persian kings, have ascribed Mordecai's refusal to his contempt of Haman's character, or his dislike to him as an Amalekite. But these reasons do not seem sufficient to justify his conduct, when the fate of the whole nation was at stake: yet he evidently acted conscientiously, and was accepted by the Lord; so that we must not ascribe his behaviour to pride, moroseness, resentment, or envy. It is, however, well known, that the Persian monarchs required an obeisance, which even the Greeks often refused or evaded, as express adoration: and it is not at all unlikely, but Ahasuerus required a similar act of adoration to be offered to his favourite. 'To bow 'the knee or body, to all great persons, was a common 'respect; for which there needed not a particular com-'mand, with respect of Haman. There was therefore 'some kind of divine honour intended, such as was paid 'to the Persian kings themselves, to whom the Greeks 'would not pay this sort of respect, because it was ac-'counted divine. And the word *reverence* imports some-'thing beyond *bowing;* which was falling flat on their 'faces to the ground.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The original words may be rendered, "They *kneeled down and fell prostrate* "before Haman," or *worshipped him:* and perhaps the two expressions are never united, except when adoration is expressly meant. (*Matt.* iv. 9. *Acts* x. 25, 26. *Rev.* xxii. 8, 9.) In the apocryphal addition to this book, Mordecai is introduced as thus appealing to God: 'Thou 'knowest, Lord, that it was neither in contempt or pride, 'nor for any desire of glory, that I did not bow down to 'proud Haman; for I could have been content, with good 'will, for the salvation of Israel, to kiss the soles of his 'feet: but I did this, that I might not prefer the glory 'of man above the glory of God, neither will I worship 'any but thee.' Indeed it is most probable that the homage required by Haman was idolatrous: and we may reasonably conclude, that the king himself dispensed with the customary ceremonies, out of regard to the conscientious scruples of those few Jews that were admitted into his presence, and whom he peculiarly favoured; but that Haman, despising Mordecai and hating his people, was not so condescending. And though we do not read that other Jews refused Haman this honour; yet numbers might be of the same opinion, who were not put to the trial, not being employed in any places of honour or profit about the king: and indeed it does not appear that Mordecai was blamed by any of them, even amidst the most imminent danger to which the nation was exposed.

V. 3—5. Haman seems not to have noticed Mordecai's

6 And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone; for they had shewed him the people of Mordecai: wherefore
n Ps. lxxxiii. 4. Rev. xii. 12—17. Haman [n] sought to destroy all the Jews, that *were* throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, *even* the people of Mordecai.

o Neh. ii. 1. 7 ¶ In [o] the first month, that *is* the
p i. 3. ii. 16. month Nisan, [p] in the twelfth year of
q ix 24. Pro. xvi. 33. Ez. xxi. 21 king Ahasuerus, [q] they cast Pur, that *is*, the lot, before Haman from day to day, and from month to month, *to* the twelfth
r ix 1 15 17—19 21. Ezra vi. 15. *month*, that *is* the month [r] Adar.

8 And Haman said unto king Ahasuerus, There is a certain people [s] scattered abroad and dispersed among the people, in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and [t] their laws *are* diverse from all people, neither keep they the king's laws: therefore *it* is not * for the king's profit to suffer them.

s John vii. 35. Jam. i. 1. 1 Pet. i. 1.

t Ezra iv. 12—15. Acts xvi 20, 21. xvii 6, 7 xxiv. 5 xxviii 22.

* Heb. *meet*, or *equal*.

9 If it please the king, let it be written † that they may be destroyed; and I will ‡ pay [u] ten thousand talents of silver to the hands of those that have the charge of the business, to bring *it* into the king's treasuries.

† Heb *to destroy them*

‡ Heb *weigh*. Gen. xxiii. 16.

u Matt xviii 24

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singularity, (amidst the homage he received from all others,) till it was pointed out to him by the other servants of Ahasuerus. These at first remonstrated with Mordecai for his disobedience to the king: but when he disregarded them, they desired to know whether "his matters would "stand: for he had told them that he was a Jew." This proves, that he vindicated himself on the ground of his religion: and it implies, that he expected Ahasuerus to admit of this plea; which favours the supposition, that the kings of Persia had been used to excuse their Jewish servants from such obeisance as they could not conscientiously render. It is, however, likely that these informers thought this a good opportunity of paying court to the favourite, or of obtaining his post for some of them or their dependents; or they did not approve of his singularity, by which he seemed to reproach their compliance.

V. 6. A wise man would have treated this information with neglect: and had he even thought that the refusal proceeded from pique, pride, malice, or insolence, he would have left Mordecai to his humour. But Haman was a man of a weak and vain-glorious mind, and intoxicated with prosperity. Being therefore fired with indignation, that these honours were refused him by one so far inferior, and having understood that the refusal was the effect of principles which were common to all the Jews; he considered the whole nation as his enemies, and determined, if possible, to involve them all in one common destruction. The ancient enmity of an Amalekite seems also to have revived; and perhaps he meant to revenge the quarrel of his nation, as well as the affront which he had received from Mordecai. His rank and authority, and unbounded influence over Ahasuerus, emboldened him to expect success in so daring an attempt. His self-importance made him think it a mean revenge to crush an individual who had offended him: and his pre-eminence seemed only to suggest the idea of being able to do more mischief, and diffuse more extensive misery, than an inferior could have done. His diabolical ambition and cruelty therefore thirsted for the extirpation of the whole people of the Jews, at one blow; at least all of them who dwelt in the vast kingdom of Persia, including those in Judea, which was a province of that kingdom. We may therefore fairly conclude that the device was not his own, but was suggested by that ambitious spirit, who aspires to be the god of this world, who has been a murderer from the beginning, and whose enmity to the *Seed of the woman*, to Christ and his church, is communicated to all his children. And in this view, it was a plan worthy of the vast capacity, enmity, malice, ambition, and desperation of that arch rebel against his Maker.

V. 7. Esther had now been queen five years: yet her nation and kindred had not become publicly known: for Haman did not suspect that the queen was a Jewess, or that Mordecai was her near relation. Had Mordecai been ambitious of preferment, no doubt he would have counselled Esther to make known her kindred, when she was *first* in high favour: but he seems to have foreseen, that she was advanced for some future service to her people, for which she ought to reserve herself. The word *Pur* signifies *the lot*. And Haman, having formed his project, inquired of his idols according to his own superstition, by casting lots what day would be most propitious to its execution: for he made himself sure of the king's concurrence. And it pleased God so to order it, that the day which had the favourable token was above eleven months distant. Haman's superstition was such that he did not venture to attempt any thing till that time came; though he could not but perceive, that many things might occur to prevent the execution of his intentions. The king might change his mind, or might die: or the Jews might take refuge in other countries, or make such preparations for their own defence, as to render the attempt most perilous, and the success of it very hazardous. The event showed the vanity of his oracles or auguries: and illustrated the doctrine of a particular providence over all the affairs of men, and the care of God over his church.

V. 8, 9. Haman seems not even to have mentioned to Ahasuerus the name of the people whom he purposed to extirpate; they would be sufficiently known from his description of them. He probably acted as prime-minister under the king, who, like most of those eastern monarchs, giving himself up to his pleasures, left the management of his affairs entirely to him. Nay, the ascendency of Haman was so absolute, that none of the other counsellors seem to have been advised with in this most important matter; and probably the proposal was made and consented to, whilst the king was heated with wine!—The laws and customs of the people of God were indeed diverse from those of any other: but there is no proof that they refused obedience to the laws of Persia, except as Mordecai refused to worship Haman; for we do not find that the kings of Persia

10 And the king [x] took his ring from his hand, and gave it unto Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the Jews' * enemy.

11 And the king said unto Haman, The silver *is* given to thee, the people also, [y] to do with them as it seemeth good to thee.

12 Then were the king's † scribes called on the thirteenth day of the first month, and there was written, according to all that Haman had commanded, unto the king's lieutenants, and to the governors that *were* over every province, and to the rulers of every people of every province, [z] according to the writing thereof, and *to* every people after their language; [a] in the name of king Ahasuerus was it written, and [b] sealed with the king's ring.

13 And the letters were sent [c] by posts into all the king's provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, [d] both young and old, little children and women, [e] in one day, *even* upon the thirteenth *day* of the twelfth month, which *is* the month Adar, und *to take* [f] the spoil of them for a prey.

14 The [g] copy of the writing, for a commandment to be given to every province, was published unto all people, that they should be ready against that day.

15 The posts went out, being [h] hastened by the king's commandment, and the decree was given in Shushan the palace. And the king and Haman [i] sat down to drink; but [k] the city Shushan was perplexed.

x viii. 2. 8. Gen. xli. 42. 1 Kings xxi. 8.

* Or, *oppressor.* vii. 6.

y Ps lxxiii 7 Jer. xxvi. 14. xl. 4. Luke xxiii. 25.

† Or, *secretaries.*

z i. 22. viii. 9.

a 1 Kings xxi. 8 Dan. vi. 8. 12.15.

b viii. 8.

c viii 10 14 2 Chr. xxx 6 Job ix. 25 Jer li 31. Rom. iii. 15.

d 1 Sam. xv. 3.

e viii. 12—14. Ps. xxxvi. 4. Jam. ii. 13.

f viii. 11. ix. 10. Is x. 6.

g viii. 13, 14.

h Pro. i. 16. iv.16

i Am vi. 6. John xvi. 20. Rev. xi 10.

k iv. 16. viii. 15. Prov. xxix. 2.

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required them to worship idols, or even forbade them to observe their sabbaths, festivals, and ceremonial institutions. The horrible cruelty and injustice of the proposal did not, as far as it appears, at all startle the king. Indeed Haman seems to have been more apprehensive that he would object to the impolicy of diminishing the revenue, by decreasing the number of his subjects. He therefore offered the king ten thousand talents of silver, or about four millions sterling, if reckoned according to the talent of the Jews, by way of compensation for the loss. But it seems, that he meant to indemnify himself from the property of the slaughtered Jews: and the expression, "that he would pay "the money into the hands of those that had the charge of "the business," implies that he would engage to raise the sum at once from the execution of his project; which would, as he pretended, be more than equivalent to all subsequent disadvantages.

V. 10, 11. Without some acquaintance with the human heart, and with the history of mankind, we should find a difficulty in conceiving how any prince could be induced to consent to such a horrid and ruinous proposal, without objection or hesitation! It would be absurd to give *a reason* for so infatuated a measure. But when an arbitrary monarch has become the dupe of a wicked favourite; it has always been observed, that the first object of his life, the main and almost the only use that he makes of his power, is to gratify and aggrandize him: and the lives of subjects or the interest of empires, have on such occasions often been wantonly sacrificed to the avarice, the ambition, the revenge, or the caprice of a worthless minion!—'So 'loth are men that love their pleasure, to take any pains to 'distinguish between truth and falsehood.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) —As a token that the request was granted, Ahasuerus gave the ring, with his royal signet from his own hand, to the enemy and oppressor of the Jews; and he also granted to him all the spoil, without making any payment into the treasury; thus Haman seemed about to obtain the most complete gratification of his avarice, ambition, and revenge.

V. 12—15. Haman hasted to get the grant of the king established into a decree, and published throughout the empire; that the sentence might be looked upon as irreversible, and that all the subjects might prepare to carry it into execution, as they tendered the favour of the king, and of his minister. Thus he expected, that the hope of ingratiating themselves at court, and the enmity borne the Jews, would unite the inhabitants of every city and province in this bloody massacre; and doubtless he intended to stir them up, and lead them to the attack, by his emissaries; and to further encourage them, they were allowed to take the spoil of the Jews to themselves as a prey. That his meaning might not be mistaken, he caused the edict to be drawn up with a remarkable repetition, and almost in the style of modern law: they were commanded, "to de-"stroy, kill, and cause to perish," all the Jews in one day! When this strange decree was published, it caused much perplexity and consternation, not only to the Jews, but to all considerate men, especially at Shushan: for they could not but tremble for themselves, when they perceived what a bloody tyrant had possession of authority: and they must foresee, that terrible effects would follow from such a mad and rash attempt, which would render an immense number of people desperate, and drive them to the most furious courage in their own defence. But Haman, insensible to every thing, but the gratification of his revenge; and to keep such reflections and reports at a distance from the king, engaged him in pleasure and indulgence; and they sat down to drink, as perfectly unconcerned in the event!

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—6.

The favourites of earthly princes have often been chiefly distinguished by their folly, pride, and profligacy; but

CHAP. IV.

Mordecai and the Jews fast, and mourn exceedingly, 1—3. Esther, sending to inquire of Mordecai the reason, is informed of the decree, and required to petition the king for the people, 4—9. She excuses herself; but being shown the consequences, she appoints a fast of three days, and consents at the peril of her life, 10—17.

WHEN Mordecai perceived [a] all that was done, Mordecai [b] rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth [c] with

a iii. 8. 13
b 2 Sam. i. 11. Job i. 20. Job iii. 4—9.
c Josh. vii. 6 Job ii. 8. Ez. xxviii. 30.

those of the King of heaven are endowed with wisdom and grace, and prepared for usefulness in their several situations. The vanity and worthlessness of earthly dignities and possessions, are shown by their being so commonly lavished upon the basest of the human species; God having provided better things for the objects of his special love. The poison of the old serpent, infused by his first temptation, "Ye shall be as gods," still rankles in the human heart: and when the pride of man is emboldened by great prosperity, it is capable of openly affecting the honour and worship that belongs to God alone! We are all by nature idolaters, and self is the most favourite of our idols: and whilst we admire and glory in our own supposed excellences, we delight that others should join the incense of this adulation; we are pleased to be treated as if every thing were at our disposal, and within the reach of our capacity, and that all around should submit to and bow before us. And when this vast ambition occupies a narrow mind, and the possessor climbs the pinnacle of earthly grandeur, he forgets that he is a man; and acts as if the world was made for him, and was to be governed by him; and as if all its inhabitants were created to be his slaves, and to worship at his shrine! The desire of the favour, and the fear of the wrath, of monarchs, influence most men to allow of such arrogant claims, and to conform to this strange idolatry: and those princes who have literally demanded altars, sacrifices, and incense to their own deity, have generally met with a ready and zealous compliance from the most of their subjects! But the true believer can neither obey such edicts and conform to such fashions, nor be induced, by any persuasions or menaces, to violate the law of God or the dictates of his own conscience. He must "obey God rather than men," and leave the consequences to him; and whether *his matters will stand*, and his religion excuse his disobedience to unlawful commands in human courts of justice or not, he will certainly be justified in so doing before the tribunal of God. Who can know the desperate wickedness of the human heart, or prescribe any bounds to its devices? When a man possesses the dangerous privilege of doing as he pleases, without control and with impunity; when pride and ambition meet with an unexpected rebuff, and when indignation and revenge occupy the heart; the most horrible and diabolical designs will be considered as the evidences of a noble and daring mind. In such circumstances the infuriated wretch will think scorn of the petty rapines and assassinations of inferior villains, and become ambitious of being as much distinguished by a vast revenge, as by the eminency of his rank: and what massacres and crimes will not in that case be perpetrated without remorse, and even with pride and pleasure; whilst vast numbers both fall victims to his fury, and are involved with him in the guilt of murder and other enormities! We have therefore cause to be thankful for external restraints to our headstrong passions; and we ought to watch and pray continually against pride, anger, malice, and every sinful propensity; for if left under the power of them, we cannot conceive how far they will hurry us. And let us also remember to be thankful for a limited, mild, and equitable government; and to beg of God to extend the same blessing to all other nations.

V. 7—15.

The world, as lying in wickedness, must hate the people of God, who bear his image and do his will: but they will be peculiarly obnoxious to tyrants; as they must refuse unreserved compliance with their mandates and humours; being the subjects of another kingdom, and governed by laws diverse from, and opposite to, their favourite maxims and pursuits. They are indeed, and ought to be, a peculiar and singular people, not conformed to this world, whilst they are dispersed in the various parts of it: and they should be willing to be treated as precise, conceited, and unpliant. But they who persuade princes that it is not for their profit to tolerate them; and that they had better persecute, destroy, or banish them, are as much enemies to the state as to the church of God. Whatever mere professors may be, true Christians are the best subjects under every government: not only because they are more peaceable, honest, and industrious than their neighbours, and conscientiously pay tribute, and render obedience in all things lawful; but because their examples and conversation edify many, and their prayers bring down a blessing upon the land where they live in peace. No acquisitions of wealth therefore could compensate the loss of them, even in a political view of the question; and without bringing into the account the enormous load of national guilt which persecution rapidly accumulates. Men are often lavish in the expenses of their lusts; and thus, shame those Christians that are penurious in promoting the cause of God: ungodly men, however, often find means by one of their crimes to bear the expenses of the rest; and it is through defect of ingenuity or power, if they do not always accomplish it. Inconsiderate princes, who are the slaves of pleasure and dupes to their favourites, may, though humane in their own dispositions, become as mischievous as the most bloody tyrants; by consenting, through false accusations, to that injustice and cruelty which they would have abhorred, if they had taken the pains to inquire into the business. Thus the most important interests of millions are sacrificed to the humour, emolument, or revenge of some worthless wretch; who regards the humour of his

ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and [d] cried with a loud and a bitter cry;

2 And came even before the king's gate: for none *might* enter into the king's gate clothed with sackcloth.

3 And in every province, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, *there was* [e] great mourning among the Jews, and fasting, and [f] weeping, and wailing; and * many lay in sackcloth and ashes.

4 So Esther's maids and her † chamberlains came and told *it* her. Then was the queen exceedingly grieved; and she sent raiment to clothe Mordecai, and to take away his sackcloth from him; [g] but he received *it* not.

5 Then called Esther for Hatach, *one* of the king's chamberlains, whom he had ‡ appointed to attend upon her, and gave him a commandment to Mordecai, [h] to know what it *was*, and why it *was*.

6 So Hatach went forth to Mordecai unto the street of the city, which *was* before the king's gate.

7 And Mordecai told him of [i] all that had happened unto him, and of the sum of the money, that Haman had promised to pay to the king's treasuries for the Jews, to destroy them.

8 Also he gave him [k] the copy of the writing of the decree, that was given at Shushan to destroy them, to shew *it* unto Esther, and to declare *it* unto her, and [l] to charge her that she should go in unto the king, [m] to make supplication unto him, and [n] to make request before him for her people.

9 And Hatach came, and told Esther the words of Mordecai.

10 Again Esther spake unto Hatach,

d Gen xxvii. 34. Is. xv. 4 Mic i. 8. Rev. xviii. 17—19.

e 1 Sam iv 13, 14 Is. xxii 4, 5. 12

f Matt. xiii 42. xxii. 13 xxv 30.

* Heb *sackcloth and ashes were laid under many* Is. lviii 5. Dan. ix. 3.

† Heb. *eunuchs.*

g Gen. xxxvii 35. Ps lxxvii. 2. Jer. xxxi. 15.

‡ Heb *set before her.*

h Rom. xii. 15. 1 Cor. xii. 26. Phil. ii. 4. Heb.

i iii 2—13.

k iii. 14, 15.

l ii. 20. 1 Tim. vi. 13. 17

m Job ix. 15 Prov. xvi 14, 15 Ec x. 4. Acts xii. 20.

n vii. 3, 4. viii. 6. Neh. ii. 3—5. Prov. xxi. 1.

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patron no more than he does the happiness of the people, and is as insensible to gratitude as to compassion. But we may cease to wonder that such things have been done, when we consider how individuals in every station of life sacrifice their credit, interest, health, and connexions, and even shorten their lives, as well as ruin their souls, for the sake of the most contemptible gratifications: and though sensible of their danger, they have no power to resist the craving of an inordinate unreasonable inclination! When this becomes the case of one in authority, and unites with his other passions and partialities; intoxication and excess extinguish every remaining spark of humanity, and stupify conscience and reflection; and he and his companions will be revelling with unfeeling and unseasonable mirth, whilst thousands are deploring the fatal effects of their pernicious counsels. But the Lord bounds the effects of man's malice, as he does the raging waves of the ocean: even superstition, though baneful in itself, may sometimes operate as a useful restraint on those who are free from every other; and it has often so dismayed wicked men, in the full career of prosperous wickedness, that they have receded from, or postponed their purposes, till opportunity has been given to render them abortive. Thus "the counsel of the LORD shall stand, and he will do all his "pleasure:" and "they that trust in him shall never be "confounded."

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1. Mordecai, besides giving vent to his own sorrows, by his open lamentations, and by the habit of a penitent mourner, doubtless intended to excite the attention of his people to the extent of their danger, and to the proper method of seeking deliverance. Probably he was the most considerable Jew in Shushan, and so immediately struck at by the decree; and therefore he thus avowed his relation to the Jews, and called upon them to unite in seeking protection from God.

V. 2. Nothing was allowed to enter within the palace which did not bear the aspect of joy and pleasure, or which could remind the king of misery or mortality. Thus, whatever oppressions were committed upon the subjects, all complaints were discouraged, and care was taken to prevent the king from being troubled with the report of them. Mordecai, therefore, when expressing his grief by the customary tokens, might not enter to his usual place of attendance: but he walked as near it as he could, that being noticed Esther might hear of him; through whom he seems already to have entertained hopes of deliverance.

V. 3. We cannot doubt but the fastings and weeping of the Jews were attended by constant prayers and supplications; yet all mention of them, and of the object of their worship, seems to have been carefully and purposely avoided, both here and elsewhere.

V. 4. Some of the queen's attendants were, it seems, acquainted with her relation to Mordecai, and his excessive grief being noticed, she soon heard of it. As a token of her sincere sympathy with him in his sorrow, and her unabated affection for so kind a benefactor, she sent him change of raiment, according to the custom of the times: in order perhaps, that he might resume his place: but she seems not to have known the cause of his affliction; and his refusal to be comforted would lead her to conclude, that it was for some very great and terrible calamity.

V. 5. The wives and concubines of the Persian kings were watched with such jealous strictness, that the queen herself had not liberty to go out of the precincts of the palace, to confer in person with so near a relative; nor might he have access to her, especially in mourning! So that she could only inquire the cause of his excessive sorrow, by the interposition of the chamberlains, whom the king had appointed to attend on her.

and gave him commandment unto Mordecai;

11 All the king's servants, and the people of the king's provinces, do know, that whosoever, whether man or woman, shall come unto the king into [o] the inner court, who is not called, *there is* [p] one law of his to put *him* to death, except such to whom [q] the king shall hold out the golden sceptre, that he may live: but I have not been called to come in unto the king these thirty days.

12 And they told to Mordecai Esther's words.

13 Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, [s] Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews.

14 For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, [t] *then* shall there * enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but [u] thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth [x] whether thou art come to the kingdom [y] for *such* a time as this?

15 ¶ Then Esther bade *them* return Mordecai *this answer*,

16 Go, gather together all the Jews that are † present in Shushan, and [z] fast ye for me, and neither [a] eat nor drink three days, night or day: [b] I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which *is* not according to the law: and [c] if I perish, I perish.

17 So Mordecai ‡ went his way, and did according to all that Esther had commanded him.

o v. 1.
p Dan. ii. 9.
q v. 2. viii. 4.
r i. 19. ii. 14. 1 Pet iii. 7.
s Prov. xxiv. 10—12 Matt. xvi. 24, 25 John xii 25. Phil. ii. 30. Heb. xii. 3.
t Gen. xxii 14. Num. xxiii. 22. — 24. Deut. xxxii. 26, 27. 36. 1 Sam. xii. 22. Is liv. 17. Jer. xxx. 11. xxxiii. 24—26. xlvi. 28. Am. ix. 8, 9. Matt. xvi. 18. xxiv. 22.
* Heb. *respiration* Ezra ix. 9. Job ix. 18.
u ii. 7. 15 Judg. xiv. 15—18. xv. 6.
x Gen. xlv. 4—8. Is xlv. 1—5. xlix. 23. Acts vii. 20—25.
y 1 Sam xvii. 29. 2 Kings xix. 3. Neh. vi. 11.
† Heb. *found.*
z 2 Chr. xx. 3. Is. xxii. 12 Joel i. 14, 15 ii. 12. —17. Jon. iii. 4. —6.
a v 1. Matt. xii. 40, Acts ix. 9. xxvii. 33.
b Gen. xviii. 19. Josh. xxiv. 15. Acts x. 7.
c Gen. xliii. 14. 1 Sam xix. 5. 2 Sam. x 12 Luke ix. 44 Acts xx. 24 xxi. 13. Rom. xvi. 4 Phil. ii. 30.—‡ Heb. *passed.*

V. 11. *That whosoever*, &c. It may be supposed, that this law was framed under the pretext of securing the person of the king from the assaults of conspirators; and of maintaining his dignity; that being seldom seen, he might be considered as a kind of deity: but it would serve also to protect his ministers and favourites from detection, in their oppressions or pernicious measures; for in general the king must see with *their* eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and receive *their* reports: and if any one would venture to present to him a complaint, petition, appeal, or information, he must do it at the hazard of his life; for the king would seldom call for any person, in opposition to his counsellors and ministers. By this method he was also excluded from liberal society and converse; so that his palace in the city, and his pavilions in the camp, became a kind of prison: and no wonder, that princes who were so immured, became morose and humoursome, and prepared for every kind of tyranny and cruelty. As the law extended to the women likewise, we may suppose that this was intended to free the monarch from molestation, when his affections had been transferred from former objects to more successful rivals; for if the queen went into his presence uncalled, immediate death was the inevitable consequence, if he happened to be displeased at her intrusion. And as Esther had not been called for, during a whole month, she had some reason to fear that she had lost the king's favour; and that she should also lose her life, if she presumed to enter uncalled into his presence. Probably Haman had occupied the king's mind with every species of licentious pleasure, that he might think no further of the edict which he had confirmed and published.

V. 13, 14. Mordecai represented to Esther, that in case the decree against her people should be executed, she would certainly be known to be a Jewess, and would be slain even in the king's palace, by some of the envious and malicious enemies of that nation. But, being strong in faith, he was assured, that God would by some means deliver his people; and that, if she refused to venture her life in the cause, their enlargement would be attended by some remarkable judgment upon her, and all her remaining relations. He also thought it very likely, that she had been advanced to her present dignity, on purpose to be the deliverer of her nation in this perilous crisis. It is remarkable that sentiments so replete with faith and piety are conveyed to us, without the mention of God or Providence! This seems to have been done intentionally.

V. 16. *Neither*, &c. Some think that this only means, that the Jews were required to abstain from all delicacies, and to fast each day till after sun-set: but perhaps on this extraordinary occasion, all, who had no good excuse, fasted from the morning of the first, until some time on the third day, without eating any thing. The queen herself, however, conformed to the same rule which she prescribed to others: and she had obtained some attendants, who were willing to unite with her in the exercises of devotion, though it is not probable that they were Jewesses: and when preparation had been made, by solemn humiliation before God, no doubt accompanied by fervent, united, and persevering prayer, she determined, by an heroic act of faith and love, to venture her life in the cause of her people: and if it were the will of the Lord, that she should be put to death, she was ready to acquiesce in his appointment.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

Public calamities, especially those which oppress the church of God, should more affect our hearts than any private affliction: and it is peculiarly distressing to a generous mind to be even the occasion of suffering to others. —Vain is the attempt of man to banish misery from his heart by any of those varied devices which he tries for that purpose. A refuge from the wrath to come is indeed provided: and an effectual support under temporal afflictions, and victory over death itself: but most men content themselves with striving to forget their misery, instead of seeking and securing happiness! Yet the approach of

CHAP. V.

Esther, venturing uncalled before the king, is graciously received; and being encouraged to make her request, she invites the king and Haman to a banquet, 1—5. *Being again asked what was her request, she invites them to another banquet the next day,* 6—8. *Haman, proud of this distinction, and elated by prosperity, is disquieted by Mordecai's neglect, and complains of it to his friends and his wife,* 9—13. *By their advice he erects a gallows for his execution the next morning,* 14.

NOW it came to pass [a] on the third day, that Esther put on *her* [b] royal *apparel*, and stood [c] in the inner court of the king's house, over against the king's

a iv. 16.
b i. 11. viii. 15. Matt. x. 16. xi 8. 1 Pet. iii. 3—5.
c iv. 11. vi. 4.

death, as well as its consequences, must be formidable, in proportion as it is unexpected and unprepared for. Exalted stations and envied distinctions abridge the liberty of the possessors, and preclude them from the most agreeable society. Pride, envy, suspicion, and other unreasonable passions, render them slaves to cumbrous forms; and to preserve their dignity, or from fear of giving offence, they often have less opportunity of enjoyment or improvement than their inferiors, and become the ignorant dupes of designing men in matters of the greatest importance! Too often laws also are framed to subserve men's lusts: and in every government, the more cause is given for complaint, the less liberty is allowed to complain. But let us rejoice that the righteous Lord reigneth, and upon a mercy-seat. To him we have access at all times, his golden sceptre is ever held forth to encourage our approach; we cannot come uncalled into his presence when we plead the Saviour's name; our danger consists in keeping at too great a distance, not in drawing too near; if he hath taken us for the objects of his peculiar love, he will never cast us off; and it is our own fault if we have not daily access to him and communion with him. Though we have no reason to complain of his dispensations, we have frequently cause to bemoan our afflictions, to deprecate the miseries we are exposed to, and to appeal to him against our oppressors, persecutors, and tempters: and we are *charged* to present our daily petitions at his throne of grace, for the whole church of God and all the members of it, according to their several difficulties, trials, and services; as well as for the conversation and salvation of our fellow-sinners. For this purpose, we should inquire of the state of our brethren, how they fare? and of the cause of God, how it prospers? that we may be directed in our prayers, and in our endeavours to serve the common cause by the due improvement of our talents. And if we be thus disposed, we shall seldom want opportunities of comforting the mourners, protecting the oppressed, or succouring those that are in tribulation or necessity.

V. 10—17.

As the enemies of the church are instigated by malice to be unwearied in mischief, surely *we* should be constrained by love to be as unwearied in doing good. But we are prone to shrink from perilous and self-denying services: and to think ourselves sufficiently excused for neglecting an opportunity of important usefulness, if we can truly say, that it would have been embraced at the hazard of liberty or life. Yet, as the disciples of him who laid down his life for us, we ought also, if properly called to it, to lay down our lives for the brethren: and no labour, loss, or suffering in the way, will justify us in neglecting the duty of our station. If then Christians, who are placed in exalted stations, show a disposition to consult their own ease and safety rather than the public good, they should be plainly remonstrated with, and reminded that their interest and that of God's people are inseparable; that their enemies are the same; that he who sinfully determines "to save his life, shall lose it;" that enlargement and deliverance will arise to the church of God from some quarter; but if they from selfish motives refuse the privilege of being his instruments, the honour will be given to others, and disgrace or ruin will come upon them and their's for deserting the cause when the emergency called for their interposition; and that Providence has raised them to their high stations, that they may serve him, and do good to mankind: and will they then neglect the opportunity that is presented to them? That perhaps this was the very service for which they were raised up; and it is preposterous to fear man in doing the evident will of God. Such remonstrances, when urged by men of consistent character, have a powerful effect in exciting the timorous and reluctant to venture in a good cause. They who are called to stand forth boldly in perilous services, have a right to demand the concurrent prayers of all their brethren. And in great emergencies and adversities especially, solemn seasons of fasting, humiliation, and prayer, are peculiarly useful, to prepare the mind for expecting and receiving deliverance from the mercy of God, in a proper manner. Believers may have fellowship with each other in the same duties, who are not able to meet in the same place. They who stir up others to self-denial, should set the example of it: and a winning deportment, a pious conversation, and a holy life, will generally induce others to join us in seeking the Lord, wherever we are placed. Having solemnly commended our souls and our cause to God, we may venture under his protection upon any service, without distressing fear: we are perfectly safe, if he please to preserve us; and should we lose our lives in doing his will, that loss would be our greatest gain. Indeed all dangers are trivial, except the danger of losing our souls. When this is apprehended, the trembling sinner is often as much afraid of casting himself, without reserve, upon the Lord's free mercy, as Esther of coming before the king. But let him venture, as she did, with earnest prayers and supplications, saying, "if I perish, I perish," and he shall certainly succeed in the event. And as the cause of God will at last be triumphant, it is our highest interest cordially to adhere to it, whatever cross we may be required to endure.

house: and the king [d] sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the gate of the house.

2 And it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, *that* [e] she obtained favour in his sight: and the king held out to Esther [f] the golden sceptre that *was* in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre.

3 Then said the king unto her, [g] What wilt thou, queen Esther? and what *is* thy request? it shall be even given thee [h] to the half of the kingdom.

4 And Esther answered, [i] If *it seem* good unto the king, let the king and Haman come this day unto [k] the banquet that I have prepared for him.

5 Then the king said, [l] Cause Haman to make haste, that he may do as Esther hath said. So the king and Haman came to the banquet that Esther had prepared.

6 And [m] the king said unto Esther at the banquet of wine, What *is* thy petition? and it shall be granted thee: and what *is* thy request! even to the half of the kingdom it shall be performed.

7 Then answered Esther, and said, My petition and my request *is;*

8 If I have found favour in the sight of the king, and if it please the king to grant my petition, and to * perform my request, let the king and Haman come to the banquet that I shall prepare for them, and [n] I will do to-morrow as the king hath said.

9 ¶ Then went Haman forth that day [o] joyful and with a glad heart: but when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, that [p] he stood not up, nor moved for him, [q] he was full of indignation against Mordecai.

10 Nevertheless Haman [r] refrained himself: and when he came home, he sent and † called for his friends, and [s] Zeresh his wife.

11 And Haman told them of [t] the glory of his riches, and [u] the multitude of his children, and all *the things* wherein the king had promoted him, and [x] how he had advanced him above the princes and servants of the king.

12 Haman said moreover, Yea, Esther the queen did let no man come in with the king unto the banquet that she had prepared, but myself; and [y] to-morrow am I invited unto her also with the king.

13 Yet [z] all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate.

d 1 Kings x. 18—20. Luke xxii. 30. Rev. iii. 21.
e Ps cxvi. 1. Pro. xxi. 1. Acts vii 10. x. 4.
f iv. 11. viii. 4.
g 6. vii. 2. ix. 12. 1 Kings ii. 20. iii. 5 Matt. xx. 20—22. Luke xviii. 41.
h Mark vi. 23.
i 8. Prov. xxix. 11.
k Gen. xxvii. 25 xxxii. 20. Ps. cxii. 5. 1 Cor. xiv. 26.
l vi. 14.
m vii. 2. ix. 12.
* Heb. *do.*
n vi. 1, &c Pro. xvi. 9.
o Am. vi. 12, 13. Luke vi. 25. John xvi 20. Jam iv. 9.
p iii. 2 Ps xv. 4. Mat. x. 28.
q iii. 5. 1 Kings xxi. 4 Job xxxi. 31. Ps. xxvii. 3. Dan iii. 13. 19. Mat. ii. 16 Acts vii. 54.
r Gen. xliii. 30, 31. xlv. 1 2 Sam. xiii. 22, 23 Ec. vii. 8, 9.
† Heb. *caused his friends to come.*
s vi. 13.
t i. 4. Gen. xxxi. 1. Job xxxi. 24, 25. Ps. xlix. 6. 16, 17. Is. x. 3. Jer. ix. 23, 24. Dan. iv. 30. Mark x. 24. Luke xii. 19, 20. 1 Tim. vi. 17.
u ix. 7—10.
x iii. 1.
y Job viii. 12, 13. xx. 5—8. Ps. xxxvii. 35, 36. Pro. vii. 22, 23. xxvii. 1. Luke xxi. 34, 35. 1 Thes v. 3.
z 1 Kings xxi. 4—6. Job xviii 4. Ec. i. 1. 14. Phil. iv. 11, 12.

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1—3. Esther, having intrusted herself to the protection of God, and put on her royal apparel, ventured into the presence of the king; most probably before the conclusion of the solemn fast, and while the Jews were still engaged in prayer. Her conduct was contrary to law: but the king, by holding forth the golden sceptre, granted her a pardon; and by his subsequent inquiry and promise, relieved her anxiety and raised her expectations, (*Marg. Ref.*) The apocryphal addition to this book, says, that at first the king frowned, and Esther fainted; and that God then put it into his heart to behave kindly towards her.

V. 4. Esther seems to have intended to make a previous trial of the king's disposition, before she presented her important petition, which immediately tended to ruin his principal favourite. It might also be improper to make her request before the king's attendants; and she meant to do it in the presence of Haman. The delay likewise expressed her respect for the king, whom she reluctantly troubled, because the matter was urgent: and probably she well knew that blandishments, and the exhilaration of wine, disposed him to grant such petitions as he would otherwise have rejected.

V. 8. *And,* &c. Whether Esther's courage failed her, or whether she had some good reason for this delay; the providential wisdom of God was wonderfully manifested by it, as the event sufficiently shows.

V. 9. *He stood,* &c. Mordecai had before refused Haman the exorbitant honours which he claimed: but now he "stood not up, nor moved for him," which probably he had before done; for Haman's prodigious wickedness rendered him unworthy even of common respect. He would also show that base man, that so far from abject submission out of dread of his cruel revenge, he had trusted his cause with God, and did not "fear what man could do "to him." It seems that at the close of the solemn fast, Mordecai hastened to put off his sackcloth, and to be found in his place.

V. 11, 12. Haman's wife and friends must have before known the particulars of his prosperity: but he loved to talk on these subjects; and the queen's invitations, which he supposed to spring from esteem and respect, was a recent distinction that flattered his pride.

V. 13. The neglect of Mordecai, by Haman's own confession, more than counterbalanced all his prosperity, and marred all his enjoyment. His proud heart rankled with malice and impatience, because this Jew still lived, kept

14 Then [a] said Zeresh his wife, and all his friends unto him, [b] Let a ‡ gallows be made of fifty cubits high, and tomorrow [c] speak thou unto the king that Mordecai may be hanged thereon: then [d] go thou in merrily with the king unto the banquet. And [e] the thing pleased Haman; and [f] he caused the gallows to be made.

a 2 Sam xiii 3—5. 1 Kings xxi. 7. 25. 2 Chr. xxii. 3, 4. Mark vi. 19—24.
b vii. 9.
‡ Heb. *tree.*
c iii. 8, &c. vi. 4.
d iii. 15. 1 Kings xxi 7. Am. vi. 4—6 Rev. xi. 10.
e 2 Sam. xvi 21—23. xvii 1—4. Mark xiv 10, 11. Acts xxiii. 14, 15. xxv. 2, 3. Rom i. 32
f vii. 10. Prov. i. 18 iv. 16 Rom. iii. 15

CHAP. VI.

The king, unable to sleep, orders the records to be read, discovers that Mordecai's service had not been rewarded, and considers how to honour him, 1—3. *Haman, coming early to ask that Mordecai might be hanged, is himself required to confer the highest honours upon him,* 4—11. *He is extremely mortified; his friends and wife predict his ruin; and he is called in this state of mind to attend Esther's banquet,* 12—14.

ON [a] that night * could not the king sleep, and he commanded to bring [b] the book of records of the chronicles; and they were read before the king.

2 And it was found written that Mordecai had told of [c] Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's chamberlains, the keepers of the † door, who sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus.

a v. 8 Gen. xxii 14. 1 Sam xxiii. 26, 27. Is xli. 17. Rom xi 33
* Heb. *the king's sleep fled away.*
b ii. 23. Mal. iii. 16.
c ii. 21. *Bigthan*
† Heb. *threshold.*

his place, and refused to bow to him. The destruction of the nation was determined on at a distant day; but he thirsted for Mordecai's blood, as an anticipation of that more complete revenge! 'How small a matter will spoil 'all the satisfaction of those who have arrived at the top 'of human felicity! Immense riches, glory, and honour, 'gave not Haman so much pleasure, as he felt pain from 'one man's disrespect.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 14. Zeresh and Haman's friends supposed that he could not relish the royal banquet, if he had not previously gratified his malice by the death of Mordecai. They were confident, that at the first word the king would consent to Mordecai's execution: and they advised the immediate erection of a gibbet for that purpose, that no time might be lost: and in order that all men might witness the death of him who refused honour to the favourite, it must be more than twenty-five yards high! This cruel and foolish counsel was calculated to please Haman; and though night was approaching, the gallows was immediately prepared: but little did he dream for whom it was erected!

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In those things which must be done, and which require great courage, needless delays should be shunned: and it is best to proceed when our affections are lively, and our faith in exercise. Costly or royal apparel is not the Christian's *ornament*, being utterly worthless when compared with wisdom and grace: yet on some occasions, and in some stations, it may and ought to be worn. But the great evil is, that inferior persons ape the fashions and emulate the expense of their superiors: and thus they often injure their families and creditors, or lavish that which belongs to the poor, and at the same time expose their own weakness and folly. The best method of prevailing with men is first to prevail with God by earnest prayer; for he can dispose the heart of any prince, or even persecutor, to favour his people, as far as he pleases. Yet whilst we trust in his omnipotent protection, we should be wise as well as courageous: and God will generally teach those who consult him to conciliate men's affections by attention and respect, and to watch for favourable opportunities, before they propose important matters. But after all, however largely men may profess or promise, it is best not to ask or expect too much from them. A slight affront, which a humble man would scarcely notice, will torment a proud man even to madness; destroy all his comforts, and sometimes fill him with diabolical rage and misery! Such men delight in boasting of the commendations, honours, and favours conferred on them; every new distinction gives a momentary gratification to their vanity: and they receive every attention as a tribute to their merit, or as homage paid to their superior talents! They *invite* and even *hire* men to listen to their praises; and often glory most in those things which tend to their immediate disgrace and ruin! For vanity and vexation are at last the inventory of all sublunary things. All availeth nothing, whilst this is wanted and the other wrong: whilst a beloved child or friend is dead, or an enemy lives and prospers; whilst some are mounted higher, and others refuse the most servile flattery. Prosperity increases insolence and arrogance, which stir up envy and enmity, and provoke affronts and oppositions; and thus the most envenomed resentments, and tormenting passions are excited, and the fair edifice of fancied felicity vanishes like the enchanted castles of romantic poets. May we then seek happiness in the favour of God, in peace of conscience, and dominion over our own spirits; and in that humble holy "love, which is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, behaveth not unseemly, seeketh not her own, "rejoiceth not in iniquity, and never faileth," but shall be perfected in the eternal felicity of heaven.

NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1, 2. No reason is assigned why Ahasuerus was not able to sleep: but the Lord so ordered it that *sleep fled from him;* and instead of calling for the ministers of his pleasure to entertain him, he was disposed to examine the records of his kingdom! It does not appear, that he had any express intention in having recourse to this extraordinary way of employing his sleepless hours during the night: but the only wise God so appointed it. And he likewise led the reader to open the records in that

3 And the king said, [d] What honour and dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this? Then said the king's servants that ministered unto him, [e] There is nothing done for him.

4 And the king said, [f] Who *is* in the court? Now Haman was come into [g] the outward court of the king's house, [h] to speak unto the king to hang Mordecai on the gallows that he had prepared for him.

5 And the king's servants said unto him, Behold, Haman standeth in the court. And the king said, Let him come in.

6 So Haman came in. And the king said unto him, What shall be done unto the man * whom the king delighteth to honour? Now Haman thought in his heart, [i] To whom would the king delight to do honour more than to myself?

7 And Haman answered the king, For the man † whom the king delighteth to honour,

8 ‡ Let the royal apparel be brought which the king *useth* to wear, and [k] the horse that the king rideth upon, and the crown-royal which is set upon his head;

9 And let this apparel and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that they may array the man *withal* whom the king delighteth to honour, and § bring him on horse-back through the street of the city, and [l] proclaim before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour.

10 Then the king said to Haman, [m] Make haste, *and* take the apparel and the horse, as thou hast said, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew, that sitteth at the king's gate: ‖ let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken.

11 Then [n] took Haman the apparel and the horse, and arrayed Mordecai, and brought him on horse-back through the street of the city, and proclaimed before him, Thus shall it be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour.

12 ¶ And Mordecai [o] came again to the king's gate: but Haman [p] hasted to his house mourning, and [q] having his head covered.

d Judg. i. 12, 13. 1 Sam. xvii. 25, 26. 1 Chr. xi. 6.
e Gen. xl. 23. Ec. ix. 15.
f Prov. iii. 27, 28. Ec. ix. 10.
g iv. 11. v. 1.
h v. 14. vii. 9. Job v. 13. Ps. ii. 4. xxxiii. 10.
* Heb. *in whose honour the king delighteth.* Ps. xxxv. 27. Jer. xxxii. 41.
i Prov. xvi. 18. xviii. 12. xxx. 13. Ob. 3.
† Heb. *in whose honour the king delighteth.*
‡ Heb. *Let them bring the royal apparel, wherewith the king clotheth himself.*
k 1 Kings i. 33.
§ Heb. *cause him to ride.*
l Gen. xli. 43. Zech. ix. 9.
m Dan. iv. 37. Luke xiv. 11.
‖ Heb. *suffer not a whit to fall.* 2 Kings x. 10.
n Ezra vi. 13. Is. lx. 14. Luke i. 52. Rev. iii. 9.
o ii. 19. 1 Sam. iii. 15. Ps. cxxxi. 1, 2.
p 2 Sam. xvii. 23. 2 Chr. xxvi. 20. Job xx. 5.
q vii. 8. 2 Sam. xv. 30. Job ix. 24. Jer. xiv. 3, 4.

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part where Mordecai's important service was written! Had not this circumstance intervened, Haman no doubt would have prevailed in his request against Mordecai; and this would have been extremely unfavourable to the success of Esther's petition for her people, and against Haman.

V. 3. Instead of a reward, Mordecai and all his people for his sake, were actually condemned to die! Probably some recompense had been intended: but so obscure and unassuming a person, who would not cringe and flatter, and who presented no requests for preferment, was soon forgotten by a mighty prince, surrounded by his courtiers and pleasures, and engrossed by a multiplicity of affairs. 'But there was a special Providence in it, that he 'went without a reward then, which procured it for him 'most opportunely at this time.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 4, 5. 'Haman came early to court, that he might 'gratify his revenge, and go with more pleasure to the 'banquet. This was another part of God's providence, 'to bring him so soon to court, when the king was so dis-'posed.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)—Even Haman might not enter the inner court till called for.

V. 6—11. We may suppose that Haman was much pleased to be so speedily called into the king's chamber; but his request was prevented, by his advice being asked in a very different business. Probably the king was considering what good preferment was vacant, which might suit Mordecai, whom he should delight to honour and reward as the preserver of his life: but he did not name the person, and Haman was so full of himself that he could not think, the king *would honour any one above him*, or would *delight to honour any one beside him*. His excessive vanity, ambition, presumption, and ostentation, as well as the emptiness of his worthless mind, are illustrated by the honours which he chose. He must, forsooth, have the use of the king's own robe, and horse, and crown; one of the most noble princes must be his lacquey and his herald; and by proclamation it was to be made known, what delight the king had in honouring him! Perhaps Ahasuerus understood his meaning, and was disgusted at his exorbitant pretensions: and whilst he peremptorily commanded him to do all this to Mordecai *the Jew*, he could scarcely help remembering the edict which Haman had obtained against that people. Haman, however, dared not to object or demur; his request for leave to hang Mordecai was adjourned *sine die;* and he was constrained to become the page to a man, comparatively obscure, whom he hated and contemned above all others on earth, whilst this extraordinary honour was conferred on him! Imagination itself cannot devise a more painful mortification. Indeed it can hardly be supposed that Mordecai was greatly pleased with this unmeaning pageantry, which would confer no solid advantage, but expose him to greater envy. Yet he probably considered it as a favourable presage of Esther's success, and of the deliverance of his people from their malicious enemies. Some learned men think, that the *crown-royal* denotes an orna-

r v. 10—14.

13 And Haman told [r] Zeresh his wife, and all his friends, every *thing* that had befallen him Then [s] said his wise men, and Zeresh his wife unto him, [t] If Mordecai *be* of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, [u] but shalt surely fall before him.

s Gen. xli. 8. Dan. ii. 12.
t Gen. xl. 19. 1 Sam xxviii. 19, 20. Dan. v 26. 28. Zech xii 2, 3.
u Job xvi. 2.

14 And while they *were* yet talking with him, came the king's chamberlains, and [x] hasted to bring Haman unto the banquet that Esther had prepared.

x v. 14. Deut. xxxii. 35, 36.

ment by which the king's horse was distinguished; and not the crown which the king himself wore.

V. 12. Mordecai was no ways elated with the honour he had received, but returned to his place and duty as if nothing had happened. But Haman went home as a condemned criminal, aware of the consequences of this unexpected disaster. If Mordecai had been a person before unknown to Haman, it would have been no real degradation to be employed in honouring him, as the preserver of the king's life; though his pride would have been mortified: but as he was the man whom he had mortally hated, and one of that nation whose destruction he had sought; he must think that this favour indicated the purpose of the king to prefer Mordecai; and consequently foreboded Haman's ruin. For in such a contest there can be no alternative between victory and destruction.

V. 13. The *wise men* whom Haman consulted seem to have been astrologers or magicians; and perhaps they pretended to found their judgment on the principles of their art. Yet what hath been observed of the contest betwixt Haman and Mordecai, and the sudden and rapid falls of court-favourites in absolute monarchies; as well as what they must have heard of the wonderful works of JEHOVAH in behalf of his people, were sufficient to convince them that this disaster was the forerunner of more fatal consequences. But they drew no salutary counsel from these apprehensions, and their conclusions were entirely calculated to drive Haman to despair!

V. 14. *And hasted*, &c. Haman, in the anguish of his heart, seems to have neglected his appointment; and he would willingly have been excused from the banquet, to which he expected to go so *merrily*: but there was no alternative; he *must* attend, to hear his accusation, and the judgment in consequence awarded against him.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We are in every thing entirely dependent upon God; nor can the whole world purchase an hour's refreshing sleep, if he be pleased to withhold it: from him therefore we should seek this solace to our cares, and praise him for it when we enjoy it. But when, by any means, he withholds sleep from us, it is of great importance to be able usefully to employ our waking hours. The cares and duties of our station in society may occupy our reflection, to the exclusion of those thoughts that are vain and injurious: but it is best, when we can think upon God, and his works, his truths, precepts, and promises: and when we can bless him for his mercies, and pour out our hearts before him in prayer; (*Ps.* lxxvii. 4—6.) The providence of God superintends the most minute concerns of men. Those actions which are the result of caprice, and appear unaccountable, fall in with his wise and gracious purposes, and not a sparrow falls to the ground without him. Gratitude even to man, though commended by all, is practised by very few; and commonly least by those who have most in their power. Pride of rank and birth, a variety of pleasures and occupations, and the presence of agreeable flatterers, combine to induce neglect and forgetfulness of those who have most faithfully and effectually served them; especially if obscure, modest, and unassuming. Yet thus they not only become guilty of the odious sin of ingratitude; but they actually yield the superiority to the very man whom they affect to despise: for he that *confers*, is always superior to him who *receives*, an unmerited and unrequited favour. Those qualifications which demand esteem, and those actions which merit a reward, generally expose men to neglect, if not to abuse, in the circles of the great, and in the courts of kings. The instruments of pleasure and amusement, who help men to forget their misery, and to waste their fleeting moments; the forward, the subtle, and the artful; and they who can sacrifice conscience, honour, and honesty, to wit, ingenuity, and politeness, have hitherto always met with most favour from the great. Let us then learn to serve a Master, who will not let the least well-meant service lose its reward. And if any reader should recollect, that nothing hath been done to requite some former benefactor, let him not think that the obligation is out of date: but rather let him study how he may, effectually and without further delay, do that which should have been done long ago: and let him delight to honour his benefactors, if he can do them no other service. Pride, envy, and ambition are insatiable; and every sinful passion grows more exorbitant by indulgence. When a man heartily idolizes his important self, he readily fancies that others equally admire him, and are disposed to do him honour. If any one open his lips in commendation, to be sure *he* must be the object! if a favour be mentioned, it must be intended for *him!* if a preferment be vacant, *who but he* can be thought of to fill it, provided it be not beneath his acceptance!—But "before honour is humility, "and a haughty spirit before a fall:" both God and man delight in rendering the mortifications of proud worms proportioned to their ambition: and they meet with many presages of that everlasting contempt and misery which await them, if not cured of this diabolical vice. They that have flattered them in prosperity will prove miserable comforters in the time of their distress: worldly pleasures will soon become tasteless and even nauseous, to those who have a conscience burdened with guilt or appalled with terror: and even the wise men of this world have often foreseen the ruin of those who have been engaged in the unequal contest with the church of God. But the depth of the believer's distress is the seed time of his joys; and every victory and comfort is to him an earnest of his final triumph and felicity. The honour which the Father delighteth to confer upon his beloved Son, is a pledge of the

CHAP. VII.

Esther at the banquet petitions the king for her own life, and the lives of her people; and accuses Haman as their enemy, 1—6. The king, in wrath and jealousy, condemns Haman, who is hanged on the gallows prepared for Mordecai, 7—10.

SO the king and Haman came to *banquet with Esther the queen.
2 And the king said again unto Esther on the second day [a] at the banquet of wine, What *is* thy petition, queen Esther? and it shall be granted thee: and what *is* thy request? and it shall be performed, *even* to the half of the kingdom.
3 Then Esther the queen answered and said, If I have found favour in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, [b] let my life be given me at my petition, and [c] my people at my request:
4 For [d] we are sold, I and my people, † to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. [e] But if we had been sold for bond-men and bond-women, I had held my tongue, although the enemy could not countervail the king's damage.
5 Then the king Ahasuerus answered and said unto Esther the queen, [f] Who is he? and where is he, ‡ that durst presume in his heart to do so?
6 Then Esther said, § The adversary and enemy *is* [g] this wicked Haman. Then Haman [h] was afraid ‖ before the king and the queen.
7 ¶ And the king, arising from the banquet of wine [i] in his wrath, *went* into the palace-garden: and [k] Haman stood up to make request for his life to Esther the queen; [l] for he saw that there was evil determined against him by the king.
8 Then the king returned out of the palace-garden into the place of the banquet of wine; and Haman was fallen upon [m] the bed whereon Esther *was*. Then said the king, Will he force the queen also * before me in the house? As the word went out of the king's mouth, they [n] covered Haman's face.

* Heb. *drink.*
a v. 6. John xvi. 24.
b 2 Sam. xx. 19. Job. ii. 4. Jer. xxxviii. 26.
c iv. 3. Ps. cxxii. 6—9.
d iii. 9. iv. 7, 8. Deut. xxviii. 62 1 Sam xxii. 23.
† Heb. *that they should destroy, and kill, and cause to perish.* iii. 13. viii. 11. Ps. xliv. 22, 23.
e Josh. ix. 23. Neh. v. 5.
f Gen. xxvii. 33.
‡ Heb *whose heart hath filled him?* Acts v. 3.
§ Heb. *The man adversary.*
g Ps. xxvii. 2. cxxxix. 19—21, 22. Prov. xxiv. 24. 26 Ec. v. 8.
h Neh. vi 16 Job xv. 21, 22. xviii. 5—12.
‖ Or, *in the presence of.* i i 12.
k Prov. xix. 19
l 1 Sam xx 7 9. xxv. 17. Ps cxii 10. Prov. xix 12.
m i. 6. Is. xlix 28.
* Heb. *with me.*
n vi. 12. Job ix 24. Is. xxii. 17.

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security and salvation of all whom he represents, and who commit their cause into his hand: their bitterest enemies shall help forward, and be constrained to witness, their exaltation, and to perceive how "it shall be done to the "men whom the LORD delighteth to honour;" and how much their eternal weight of glory exceeds the worthless transient honour of the world! whilst the sight shall increase the anguish and despair of those, who expected to be gratified in compassing their misery and destruction.

NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 3, 4. Whilst the king repeatedly urged Esther to make her request, and in language more expressive than before, promised to grant it, though it were to the value of half his kingdom; she, with the greatest modesty and respect, and in the most simple and affecting manner, besought him, that her own life might be spared, and the lives of her people, which were all involved in one common danger. Without complaining of his conduct in any degree, she stated that she and her people had been sold as sheep for the slaughter; alluding to the money which Haman had offered to pay into the treasury for their destruction: she quoted the words of the unrighteous decree, "to be destroyed, to be slain and to perish," as proving that her life, as well as those of the other Jews, was certainly in danger: and she added, that if they had been only sold for slaves, she would not have interposed; though the enemy could never have made up the loss the king would have sustained, by thus oppressing his peaceable and industrious subjects. But some interpret the last clause to mean, that if the sufferings of the enslaved Jews, though extreme and undeserved, had not been likewise detrimental to the king's interest, Esther would have held her peace. The whole speech, however, was replete with natural eloquence, and suited to affect and persuade the king.

V. 5. Perhaps Ahasuerus at first scarcely recollected his edict against the Jews, or was not aware of its consequences; or he did not immediately perceive that Esther referred to it: and therefore he could not conceive that any one could be so daring, as to attempt the life of his queen, as well as the destruction of his subjects!

V. 6. The events and presages of the morning no doubt tended to increase Haman's terror on this occasion. He had found, that the king delighted to honour Mordecai the Jew; he now discovered that the queen was a Jewess, and strongly attached to her people; he had heard the king repeatedly promise to grant her request to the half of his kingdom; and he could not but be aware that his own ruin was impending.

V. 7. We may suppose, that at the moment when Esther mentioned "wicked Haman," as an enemy of her and her people, the whole affair of the edict rushed into the king's mind, and appeared to him in its true colours; and that he was filled with rage, when he reflected how his worthless favourite had seduced him into a measure calculated to ruin his kingdom, to take away the life of his beloved queen, and exceedingly to tarnish his own reputation; and that he walked about in agitation of mind, not knowing what could be done in such an emergency.

V. 8. Haman had prostrated himself against the couch on which Esther reclined at the banquet. His only design was to deprecate, with the most abject submission, her

o i. 10. *Harbana.*
p vi. 14
q v. 14 Job xxvii. 22, 23.
*Heb. *tree.*

9 And [o] Harbonah, [p] one of the chamberlains, said before the king, [q] Behold also, the * gallows fifty cubits high, which Haman had made for Mordecai, [r] who had spoken good for the king, standeth in the house of Haman. Then the king said, Hang him thereon.

r ii. 21–23. vi. 2.

10 So [s] they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. [t] Then was the king's wrath pacified.

s ix. 25. 1 Sam xvii. 51. Ps vii. 15, 16. ix. 15, 16. xxxv. 8. xxxvii. 35, 36. lxxiii. 19. Prov. xi 5, 6. Dan vi. 7 24.
t Judg. xv. 7. Ez. v. 13. Zech. vi. 8

CHAP. VIII.

Haman's estate is given to Esther; and Mordecai, as her near relation, is preferred in Haman's stead, 1, 2. *Esther with tears entreats the king to reverse the decree against the Jews,* 3—6. *The king authorizes the Jews to defend themselves, and sends letters to that effect, throughout the provinces,* 7—14. *The honours of Mordecai, and the joy of the Jews,* 15—17.

ON that day did the king Ahasuerus [a] give the house of Haman the Jews' enemy unto Esther the queen. And Mordecai [b] came before the king; for Esther had told what he *was* unto her.

a Job xxvii. 16, 17. Ps. xxxix. 6. xlix. 6 — 13. Prov. xiii. 22. xxviii. 8. Ec. ii. 18, 19. Luke xii. 20.
b i. 14. ii. 7. 15.

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displeasure, and to entreat her to intercede for his life. But the king, being convinced that he was capable of any villany, and growing more enraged by reflecting upon his former machinations; suspected, or professed to suspect, him of having designs against the queen's honour also.—This word sufficiently informed the attendants of his determination; and they directly treated Haman as a condemned criminal, who was never more to see the face of the king, or even the light of the sun, but to be hurried away to immediate death.

V. 9. Harbonah, going to call Haman to the banquet, had seen the gallows, and discovered for what purpose it was prepared. Haman had doubtless been greatly envied for his prosperity and hated for his insolence, in the midst of all the homage that was paid him. But now that the king's mind was evidently alienated from him, all the courtiers were glad to please him and the queen, by assisting in his downfall.

V. 10. It is immaterial to us, whether Haman died by crucifixion, or was strangled, or put to death in some other way before he was suspended on the gibbet: but crucifixion seems to have been a Roman punishment, not in use at this early period. It is enough to know, that he suffered the punishment which he had devised for Mordecai. *Nec lex est æquior ulla, quam necis artficeartes perire sua.* 'There is no law more equitable, than that the devisers of 'death should perish by their own art.'

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The repeated promises even of weak, mutable, and selfish men, encourages us to make our requests to them with expectation of success: much more then should the exceedingly great and precious promises of the unchangeable God embolden us to present many and large petitions to him, in behalf of ourselves and others, and with the full assurance of receiving far more than we ask. If the love of life inspires such earnest and pathetic pleadings, with those that can only kill the body; how fervent and importunate should our continual prayers be to "Him, who "is able to destroy both body and soul in hell!" And how affectionately should we pray for the eternal salvation of our relatives, friends, neighbours, and all around us! In supplicating the great men of this world, we must be very cautious not to withhold proper respect, or to give needless offence; even just complaints must be suppressed, and that asked as a great favour, which might equitably be demanded as a debt. But when we approach the king of kings, provided we come with humble reverence and uprightness of heart, we cannot ask or expect too much: for though nothing but wrath is our due, he is able and willing to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. Persecution is as impolitic as it is unjust: nor would the wealth of both the Indies compensate the loss, which must arise to every prince and state, who put to death their conscientious industrious subjects, immure them in prisons, drive them out of their dominions, harass them with oppressions, and tempt them to hypocrisy. Men often commit crimes without remorse, which when described in their nature and cosequences by proper language, or pointed out to them in the conduct of others, appear most horrible and atrocious: and when they find upon reflection, the nature and effects of their own heedless conduct, they are filled with anguish and remorse. Yet, alas! their indignation frequently alights upon their tempters or accomplices, instead of producing unreserved self-condemnation and abhorrence. But when such convictions are excited in those in authority, though they do not terminate in true repentance, they may yet produce many salutary effects, by inducing them to punish atrocious criminals, to protect the innocent, and to rectify grievous abuses. They who are most insolent in prosperity, are commonly the most abject in adversity: and the enemies of God shall all be brought down before his people, and made to know his love towards them. When men have proved themselves capable of the most daring and horrid crimes, they have no reason to expect any other but to be suspected where they are not guilty, and to have the worst constructions put upon their most innocent actions. The favour of men is deceitful and precarious: the higher wicked ambition climbs, the more rapid and terrible will be its fall. When haughty favourites, either of mighty princes, or of fickle multitudes, begin to totter upon their slippery eminence, all hands join to hurry them down, either out of envy, revenge, hatred, or similar ambition: and even they, who have most caressed and delighted to honour them, will often as much delight in their misery and ruin. Thus the fear of the wicked cometh upon him,

2 And the king took off [c] his ring which he had taken from Haman, and gave it unto Mordecai. And [d] Esther set Mordecai over the house of Haman.

3 ¶ And Esther spake yet again before the king, and [e] fell down at his feet, and * besought him with tears, to put away [f] the mischief of Haman the Agagite, and his device that he had devised against the Jews.

4 Then the king [g] held out the golden sceptre towards Esther. So Esther arose and stood before the king,

5 And said, If it please the king, [h] and if I have found favour in his sight, and the thing *seem* right before the king, and [i] I *be* pleasing in his eyes, let it be written to reverse the † letters devised by Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, ‡ which he wrote to destroy the Jews, which *are* in all the king's provinces.

6 For [k] how can I § endure to see [l] the evil that shall come unto my people? or how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?

7 ¶ Then the king Ahasuerus said unto Esther the queen, and to Mordecai the Jew, [m] Behold, I have given Esther the house of Haman, and [n] him they have hanged upon the gallows, because he laid his hand upon the Jews.

8 Write ye also for the Jews, as it liketh you, [o] in the king's name, and seal *it* with the king's ring: for the writing which is written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, [p] may no man reverse.

9 Then were [q] the king's scribes called at that time in the third month, (that *is* the month Sivan,) on the three and twentieth *day* thereof; and it was written, (according to all that Mordecai commanded,) unto [r] the Jews, and to the lieutenants, and the deputies and rulers of the provinces, which *are* from India unto Ethiopia, an hundred twenty and seven provinces, unto every province according to the writing thereof, and unto

c iii. 10 Gen. xli. 42. Luke xv. 22.
d 2 Sam. ix 7–10.
e 1 Sam. xxv. 24. 2 Kings iv. 27
* Heb. *she wept and besought him.* Is xxxviii 3. Hos. xii. 4. Heb v. 7.
f iii. 8–15. vii. 4.
g iv. 11. v. 2.
h vii. 3. Ex. xxxiii 13. 16. 1 Sam xx. 29.
i iii. 4. 17.
† Heb *device.* iii. 12, 13.
‡ Or, *who wrote.*
k Gen. xliv. 34 Jer. iv 19. ix. 1. Luke xix. 41, 42. Rom. ix. 2, 3. x. 1.
§ Heb. *be able that I may see.*
l vii. 4. Neh. ii. 3.
m 1. Pro. xiii. 22
n vii. 10. Gal. iii 13.
o iii. 12.
p 5 i. 19. Dan vi. 8. 12–15 2 Tim. ii. 19. Heb vi. 17, 18.
q iii. 12.
r i. 1. 22. iii. 12.

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and that suddenly: he is taken in his own net, and entangled in his own devices; and when he perishes there is shouting."—At the day of final retribution, when the whole wickedness of the ungodly shall be discovered, and the justice of God displayed in their everlasting punishment; all the righteous shall joyfully exclaim, "So let all thine enemies perish, O LORD:" but "they who love him shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1, 2. Some of Esther's attendants seem to have been acquainted with Mordecai's relation to her, (iv.) and probably the king knew that she was of Jewish extraction: but he did not know that Mordecai was her own cousin, and had been as a father to her, till on this occasion she disclosed it to him. In consequence he was introduced to Ahasuerus, and preferred by him: and as he had been so good a friend to the queen, and had preserved the king's life, none could have fairer pretensions. The ring with the royal signet seems to have continued with Haman, as denoting the high offices he bore under the king, till he was deposed and condemned; when being taken from him, it was given to Mordecai as his successor. Haman's large estate also, being confiscated for his crimes, was given to Esther, and managed for her by Mordecai; and if that haughty man could have foreseen these events, the prospect would have embittered his life, and even augmented the anguish of his death.

V. 3—6. Haman was dead, Mordecai was advanced, and the queen's person protected: but the edict against the Jews remained in force, and their numerous enemies in every province would endeavour to carry it into execution; and Esther therefore had not obtained the deliverance of her people, which lay nearest her heart. Probably she was sometimes called for by the king: but to show that she was interested in the affair, even more than in her own safety, she again ventured uncalled into his presence to plead for her people. She seems to have been peculiarly earnest and pathetic on this occasion: for she fell at his feet, and besought him with tears to grant her request. It may be supposed, that Ahasuerus hesitated in this perplexing case; as not knowing how to extricate himself with credit from so great a difficulty, and as reluctant to proclaim to all the world the folly into which he had been seduced. But Esther, with great discretion, avoided every intimation that the king himself had issued the decree, and expressed herself as if it had been Haman's forgery. Indeed it had originated in his pride and revenge; his artful insinuations had decoyed the king to give an inconsiderate assent to it: and he had framed it in his own words and to answer his own purposes.

V. 8. The decree against the Jews was irrevocable: but another edict might counteract its operation, and that would also become irreversible; and Esther and Mordecai were allowed to frame one for the purpose as explicit as they pleased. Thus, that most absurd law or constitution made it necessary to authorize a civil war throughout this vast empire; both parties acting *by*, and *against*, the king's authority at the same time! The maxim in our government, that no act can be so framed, but that the same authority which enacted it may repeal it, is immensely more suited to the state of human nature: for no human wisdom can foresee all the effects of any regulation, till experience has evinced them.

every people after their language, and to the Jews according to their writing, and according to their language.

s 1 Kings xxi. 8. Ec. viii 4. Dan. v. 19.

10 And he wrote [s] in the king Ahasuerus' name, and sealed *it* with the king's ring; and sent letters by posts on horseback, *and* riders on mules, camels, *and* [t] young dromedaries:

t Is. lx. 6. lxvi. 20. Jer. ii. 23.

11 Wherein the king granted the Jews which *were* in every city [u] to gather themselves together, and to stand for their life, to destroy, to slay, and to cause to perish, all the power of the people and province, that would assault them, *both* little ones and women, [x] and *to take* the spoil of them for a prey;

u ix. 2—16.

x iii. 13. ix. 10 15, 16. Is. x. 6

12 [y] Upon one day, in all the provinces of king Ahasuerus, *namely*, [z] upon the thirteenth *day* of the twelfth month, which *is* the month Adar.

y ix. 1. Ex. xv 9, 10. Judg. i. 6, 7. z iii. 13—15.

13 The copy of the writing, for a commandment to be given in every province, *was* * published unto all people, and that the Jews should be ready against that day to [a] avenge themselves on their enemies.

* Heb. *revealed*.

a Judg. xvi. 28. Ps. xxxvii. 14, 15. lxviii 22. xcii. 10, 11. cxlix. 6—9. Luke xviii. 7. Rev. vi. 10. xix. 2

14 *So* the posts that rode upon mules, *and* camels went out, [b] being hastened and pressed on by the king's commandment. And the decree was given at [c] Shushan the palace.

b 1 Sam xxi. 8. Ec. ix. 10.

c i. 2.

15 ¶ And Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in [d] royal apparel of † blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a garment of fine linen and purple: and [e] the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad.

d v. 1. Gen. xli. 42. 1 Kings xxii. 30 Mat. vi 29. xi. 8. Luke xvi. 19.

† Or, *violet*.

e iii. 15. Prov. xxix. 2.

16 [f] The Jews had [g] light, and gladness, and joy, and honour.

f Ps xxx. 5—11. g Ps. xviii. 28. xcvii. 11. Prov. iv. 18, 19.

17 And in every province, and in every city, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, [h] a feast and a good day. And [i] many of the people of the land became Jews; [k] for the fear of the Jews fell upon them.

h ix. 17. 19. 22. 1 Sam. xxv 8. Neh. viii. 10

i Ps. xviii 43. Zech. viii. 23.

k Gen. xxxv. 5. Ex. xv. 16. Deut. ii 25. xi. 52.

V. 10. Some of the words used in this verse, to denote the different animals on which the messengers rode, are very uncommon, and perplex critics exceedingly; but it is enough to observe, that speed was by all means consulted.

V. 11, 12. This last decree evidently showed the king's intentions, though the former edict remained in force: so that they who assaulted the Jews, were, *in reality*, though not *formally*, rebelling against his authority. The Jews were not allowed to assault their enemies: but they might *legally* assemble and combine in defending themselves, and slay any number of those who attacked them. As the children, and the women, and spoil, were included in Haman's decree, they were also mentioned in this: but the Jews did not avail themselves of the clause. If this edict had not been granted, the Jews would have been punishable for taking previous measures in order to defend themselves: so that they could not have engaged with concert or prospect of success, in any measure for that purpose: and they who escaped the massacre, would have been exposed as criminals to the sword of the magistrate, for resisting the execution of the law. They might, and doubtless would, when rendered desperate, have sold their lives as dear as they could; but they could have had little hopes of escaping, when overwhelmed by numbers that were countenanced by the governors in every province, But now the advantage was entirely on their side: as all who valued the king's favour, would be sure not to injure them, and they might prepare with union and concert to repel the assault.

V. 14. Though this decree was ratified above eight months before the appointed day; yet there would be time little enough to publish it throughout all the provinces of this immense empire, and to give the Jews opportunity to take proper measures for their own preservation. And the king himself hastened away the messengers, as dreading the consequences of the former edict.

V. 15. Mordecai, being now publicly recognized as the prime minister and chief favourite of the king, went from the palace arrayed according to his rank, in conformity to the customs of the country. It seems that the people of Shushan in general, having a better opinion of his integrity and capacity than of those of Haman, were pleased with the change: though the sequel shows, that there was a considerable party of rancorous enemies to the Jews, residing there.

V. 16. *Had light*, &c. That is, *prosperity and hope.* The dark cloud that had long hung over them was dispelled, and the returning favour of the king, in answer to their prayers, was a token of the Lord's care of them. So that their hopes revived, and they began as it were to walk in the sunshine, and were filled with gladness, and treated with respect by those who had despised them; being evidently in favour both with God and man.

V. 17. When the people saw the interpositions of Providence in behalf of the Jews, they were convinced that God was with them, and that they would certainly prevail in the contest: being therefore afraid of perishing amongst their enemies, and desirous of sharing the rising prosperity of his people, they embraced their religion, and united interests with them. We may suppose that some were true converts, and others only formal professors, as it commonly happens in such cases. However, Haman's plot to destroy the Jews was over-ruled to increase their numbers.

CHAP. IX.

On the day appointed, the Jews, aided by the rulers, slay their enemies; and among the rest five hundred men in Shushan, and Haman's ten sons, 1—10. *The king hearing this, at Esther's request, allows the Jews in Shushan to stand against their enemies on the day following, when three hundred more are slain; and causes Haman's sons to be hanged,* 11—15. *The Jews throughout the provinces slay seventy-five thousand men,* 16. *They rejoice with feasting, on the two following days,* 17—19. *These days are appointed as an annual festival, in commemoration of this deliverance by Esther and Mordecai, and called the feast of Purim,* 20—32.

NOW [a] in the twelfth month, that is the month Adar, on the thirteenth day of the same, when the king's commandment and his decree drew near to be put in execution, in the day that the enemies of the Jews [b] hoped to have power over them, ([c] though it was turned to the contrary, that the Jews had rule over them that hated them;)

2 The Jews [d] gathered themselves together in their cities throughout all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, to lay hand on such [e] as sought their hurt: and no man could withstand them; for [f] the fear of them fell upon all people.

[a] iii. 7. 13. viii. 12.
[b] Acts xii. 11.
[c] Deut xxxii 36. 2 Sam. xxii. 41. Ps. xxx 11. Is. xiv. 1, 2. lx. 14—16. Rev. xi. 18.
[d] 10. viii. 11.
[e] Deut. ii. 30. Josh xi. 20. Is. viii. 9.
[f] viii. 17. Ex. xxiii. 27. Josh. ii. 9.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

Many of those who most prosper in the world, would have little alacrity in their pursuits, or joy in their possessions, if they could foresee to whom their riches would devolve, and what use would be made of them. It is however very well when, consistently with justice, that wealth, which has pampered pride and luxury, and increased insolence and oppression, is transferred to those who will improve it to the glory of God and the benefit of mankind. No advancement should render us forgetful of our indigent relatives, or indifferent about the public good and the peace and prosperity of the church. These especially should be dearer to us than life itself: and when we have obtained our requests for ourselves, we should be the more fervent in prayer for our brethren, and in using our influence and venturing all consequences for their good. If we would affect others, we should study to get our own hearts suitably impressed; and in many cases, we may be more importunate in asking favour for others, than we ought to be for ourselves. It is, however, a good plea, when we are praying for the conversion of our children or relatives, to say, 'How can I endure to see the evil that shall come upon 'them?' 'How can I endure to see the destruction of my 'kindred?' And it forms an argument equally forcible, to induce us to use every means for their good, with assiduity and perseverance. Bad examples, unjust laws, rash projects, and wicked books, often prove an extensive and durable curse to the world, when the authors of them are removed; and no wisdom suffices to prevent the fatal tendency. And as we must all be answerable for the consequences of our misconduct, this should render us very circumspect, lest guilt should accumulate even after our death.

V. 7—17.

Every regulation in society, however apparently reasonable and beneficial, which does not advert to the fallen nature of man, will, on trial, be found, unsuitable to his real condition, and inconsistent with his best interests: and all provisions made to humour the ambition and passions of princes, will eventually embarrass and ensnare them. We are, however, indispensably bound to adopt every method of preventing the fatal effects of our past mistakes or crimes; even though we should be constrained to proclaim our own folly to the world: and much expedition should be used, when men's lives are in danger, or their minds distracted with terrors. If it was proper that the decree of Ahasuerus should be communicated to every nation in its own language; how reasonable and necessary is it, that the holy law and gracious Gospel of our God should be put into every one's hands in his own tongue! They who sow in tears and prayers, may expect speedily to reap with joy. External decorations are insignificant in the judgment of wise and pious men: yet they may properly distinguish those in authority; and whilst they procure them respect from the multitudes who look no further, they should remind them of the duties to which their dignities call them. The preferment of wise and pious men ought to be matter of rejoicing to all: but the people of God have the most cause for gladness. They may expect to be delivered from the darkness of oppression, to enjoy the light of peace and prosperity; and to meet with honour in some measure proportioned to their former contempt. And when believers "have rest, and walk in "the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy "Ghost, they will be multiplied." Nay, the attempts of Satan and his agents to destroy the church by cruel persecutions, have uniformly tended to the increase of true Christians. May the Lord speedily "destroy every enemy "who hath done evil in his sanctuary:" may the princes of the earth become nursing fathers to his church: may his people have light, and joy, and honour, a feast and a good day upon earth, anticipating the joy and gladness of heaven: and may Jesus himself reign, by the power of his grace, wherever the sun diffuses his beams, and fill the earth with truth and righteousness! Amen.

g iii. 12. viii. 9. Dan iii. 2. vi. 1, 2.

3 And all [g] the rulers of the provinces, and the lieutenants, and the deputies, and * officers of the king, helped the Jews; because [h] the fear of Mordecai fell upon them.

* Heb. *those which did the business that* belonged *to the king.*

h iii 2-6.

i Josh vi. 27. 1 Sam. ii. 30. 1 Chr. xiv. 17. Matt. iv. 24.

k 2 Sam. iii. 1. 1 Chr. xi. 9. Ps. i 3. Prov. iv. 18. Is. ix. 7.

l Ps. xviii 34-40. 47, 48. xx. 8 9. cxlix. 6 — 9. 2 Thes i 6.

m Jer. xviii. 21.

4 For Mordecai *was* great in the king's house, and [i] his fame went out throughout all the provinces: for this man Mordecai, [k] waxed greater and greater.

5 Thus the Jews [l] smote all their enemies with [m] the stroke of the sword, and slaughter, and destruction, and did † what they would unto those that hated them.

† Heb. *according to their will.*

n iii. 15.

6 And in [n] Shushan the palace the Jews slew and destroyed five hundred men.

7 And Parshandatha, and Dalphon, and Aspatha,

8 And Poratha, and Adalia, and Aridatha,

9 And Parmashta, and Arisai, and Aridai, and Vajezatha,

o v. 11. Ex. xx 5. Job xviii. 18, 19. xxvii. 13 — 15. Ps. xxi. 10. cix. 12, 13.

p iii. 1. Ex. xvii. 16.

q 15, 16. viii. 11. Gen. xiv. 23. Rom. xii. 17. Phil. iv. 8.

10 The ten sons of [o] Haman the son of Hammedatha, the [p] enemy of the Jews, slew they; but [q] on the spoil laid they not their hand.

11 ¶ On that day the number of those that were slain in Shushan the palace ‡ was brought before the king.

‡ Heb. *came.*

12 And the king said unto Esther the queen, The Jews have slain and destroyed five hundred men in Shushan the palace, and the ten sons of Haman; what have they done in the rest of the king's provinces? now [r] what *is* thy petition? and it shall be granted thee: or what *is* thy request further? and it shall be done.

r v. 6. vii. 2

13 Then said Esther, If it please the king, let it be granted to the Jews which *are* in Shushan to do to-morrow also [s] according unto this day's decree, and ∮ let Haman's ten sons be hanged upon the gallows.

s viii. 11.

∮ Heb. *let me hang Haman's ten sons* 2 Sam. xxi. 6. 9. Gal. iii. 13.

14 And the king commanded it so to be done; and the decree was given at Shushan; and they hanged Haman's ten sons.

15 For the Jews that *were* in Shushan [t] gathered themselves together, on the fourteenth day also of the month Adar, and slew three hundred men at Shushan; [u] but on the prey they laid not their hand.

t 2 viii. 11. Ps. cxviii. 7—12.

u 10. 16. 1 Thes. v. 22. Heb. xiii. 5.

16 But the other Jews that *were* in the king's provinces gathered themselves together, and [x] stood for their lives, and had rest from their enemies, and slew of their foes seventy and five thousand, but they laid not their hands on the prey.

x viii. 11. Lev. xxvi. 7, 8.

NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 2. As the Jews were not charged with exceeding the limits assigned them in the king's edict, it may be concluded that they assaulted none, except such as appeared in arms against them; but when they were attacked, they vigorously pursued their advantage. Neither the fear of God nor that of the king, could overcome the desperate enmity of numbers against the people of God, whom they had hoped to extirpate: so that, perhaps urged on by the enraged friends of Haman, they attacked them on the day appointed, in every part of the empire: yet they were every where speedily intimidated, and yielded the Jews an easy and decisive victory.

V. 3, 4. The late decree, and the report which accompanied it of Mordecai's increasing greatness, rendered all the governors afraid of offending him, lest they should fall under the king's displeasure: so that they generally assisted the Jews, which gave them a vast advantage in the bloody contest.

V. 6—10. The sons of Haman seem to have combined against the Jews, by way of revenging their father's death; as the king and Mordecai were out of their reach. At the head of their retainers, they led on the attack in the royal city of Shushan, but they were all slain, with five hundred of their party. As the Jews professed only to defend their own lives, they would not take the spoil of their enemies; and there is no intimation that they injured their families or any individaul, who was not found in arms against them.

V. 13. *To-morrow*, &c. As it cannot be supposed that Esther was actuated by revenge in this request; it is probable she had learned from Mordecai, that Haman's retainers still formed a faction, not only dangerous to the Jews, but to the state; and were prepared to renew the attack on the next day. She therefore desired, that the Jews might defend themselves and pursue their assailants, that the party might be crushed or finally intimidated: and also, that the bodies of Haman's sons might be suspended on the gallows, prepared by their father; to show all concerned, that by assaulting the Jews, they would expose themselves to the indignation of the king.

V. 15. Some think, that many of those slain in Shushan, and in other parts of the empire, were Amalekites, and that thus the prediction, concerning the utter destruction of Amalek, was exactly accomplished.

V. 16. *Seventy-five thousand*, &c. All this vast number lost their lives *through* the pride and revenge of one wicked man, but by their own malice and enmity to the worshippers of JEHOVAH. Thus the power and spirits of

17 On the thirteenth day of the month Adar, and on the fourteenth day ‡ of the same rested they, and made it a day of feasting and gladness.

‡ Heb. *in it.*

18 But the Jews that *were* at Shushan assembled together [y] on the thirteenth *day* thereof, and on the fourteenth thereof; and on the fifteenth *day* of the same they rested, and made it a day of feasting and gladness.

y i. 11. 15.

19 Therefore the Jews of the villages, that dwelt in the unwalled towns, made the fourteenth day of the month Adar *a day of* [z] gladness and feasting, and a good day, and of sending portions one to another.

z 22. viii. 17. Deu. xvi. 11. 14. Neh viii. 10—12. Ps. cxviii. 11—16. Rev. xi. 10.

20 And Mordecai [a] wrote these things, and sent letters unto all the Jews that *were* in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, *both* nigh and far;

a Ex. xvii. 14. Deu. xxxi. 19. 22. 1 Chr. xvi. 12. Ps. cxxiv. 1—3. cxlv. 4—12. 2 Cor. i. 10, 11.

21 To stablish *this* among them, that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar, and the fifteenth day of the same, yearly;

22 [b] As the days wherein the Jews rested from their enemies, and the month which was turned unto them [c] from sorrow to joy, and from mourning into a good day: that they should make them days of feasting and joy, and of [d] sending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor.

b iii. 12, 13. Ex. xiii. 3. 8. Ps. cxiii 2. Is. xii. 1, 2. xiv. 3.
c Ps. xxx. 11. John xvi. 20—22.
d 19. Neh viii. 10. 12. Luke xi 41. Acts ii 44—46. Gal. ii. 10.

23 And the Jews undertook to do as they had begun, and as Mordecai had written unto them;

24 Because Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, [e] the enemy of all the Jews, had devised against the Jews to destroy them, and had cast [f] Pur, that *is*, the lot, to * consume them, and to destroy them:

e iii. 5—13.
f iii. 7.
* Heb. *crush.*

25 But † when *Esther* came before the king, he commanded by letters that his wicked device, which he devised against the Jews, should [g] return upon his own head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows.

† Heb. *when she came.* 13, 14 viii. 5—10. viii. 1—14.
g Ps. vii. 16. cix 17, 18. cxl. 9. cxli. 10. Matt. xxi. 42.

26 Wherefore [h] they called these days Purim, after the name of ‡ Pur. Therefore for all the words of this [i] letter, and *of that* which they had seen concerning this matter, and which had come unto them,

h Num xvi. 40. Ez. xxxix. 14.
‡ That is, *Lot.*
i 20.

27 The Jews ordained, and took upon them, [k] and upon their seed, and upon [l] all such as joined themselves unto them, so as it should not ◊ fail, that they would keep these two days according to their writing, and according to their *appointed* time every year;

k Deu. v. 3. xxix. 14, 15. Josh. ix 15. 1 Sam. xxx. 25. 2 Sam. xxi 1, 2.
l viii. 17. Is lvi 3. 6. Zech. ii 11. viii. 23.
◊ Heb. *pass.*

28 And *that* these days *should be* [m] remembered and kept throughout every generation, every family, every province, and every city; and *that* these days of Purim should not ‖ fail from among the Jews, nor [n] the memorial of them * perish from their seed.

m Ex. xii. 17. Ps. lxxviii. 5—7. ciii. 2.
‖ Heb. *pass.*
n Ex. xiii. 8, 9. Josh. iv. 7. Zech. vi. 14.
* Heb. *be ended.*

29 Then Esther the queen, [o] the daughter of Abihail, and Mordecai the Jew, wrote with all † authority, to confirm this [p] second letter of Purim.

o ii. 15.
† Heb. *strength.*
p 20. viii. 10.

30 And he sent the letters unto all the Jews, to [q] the hundred twenty and seven provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus, *with* [r] words of peace and truth.

q i. 1. viii. 9.
r Is. xxxix. Zech. viii. 19.

31 To confirm these days of Purim in

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the enemies of the Jews were broken, and peace and rest were prepared for them. We are not informed whether any Jews were slain on this occasion; but probably their preservation was as remarkable, as the destruction of their assailants. They were indeed placed in the most extraordinary circumstances: but as they were sanctioned in what they did by the king's authority, and stood in defence of their own lives; as they slew none but those who attacked them, and universally declined availing themselves of the king's permission to enrich themselves with the spoil, they must be allowed to have acted in an unexceptionable manner; and were no more chargeable for the blood shed by them, than if they had been engaged in the most necessary defensive war.

V. 20. "Mordecai wrote these things," or the history contained in this book; (as the words most obviously imply,) and not merely the letters afterwards mentioned, as many understand it. It is most probable, that he wrote an account of these interesting transactions, and sent it with his letters into all the provinces of the empire. The contrast betwixt his style, and that of Nehemiah, is very remarkable. The latter is interspersed with ejaculations and pious reflections; the former treats of divine things without any explicit mention of God and religion. The different situation in which the two writers were placed, and the objects that they aimed at in writing, might have as much influence in causing this difference, as their different dispositions. Nehemiah's manner seems in general most worthy imitation; yet in some circumstances men are not to be censured, if they deem it expedient to imitate Mordecai.

their times *appointed*, according as Mordecai the Jew, and Esther the queen had enjoined them, and as they had decreed for * themselves, [s] and for their seed, the matters of [t] the fastings and their cry. [t] iv. 3. 16. Job ii 2—9.

32 And the decree of Esther confirmed these matters of Purim; and it was written in the book.

* Heb. their souls 27.

V. 21—32. These verses contain the institution of the feast of Purim, which the Jews observe unto this day. When the second decree of Ahasuerus was published, they had in every place "joy, and gladness, a feast, and "a good day." And when they prevailed in the contest, in all parts of the empire, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, they with one common impulse observed the fourteenth as a festival, with joy and gladness. But the Jews at Shushan were on that day likewise engaged in conflict, and the fifteenth of the month was their day of joy and festivity. Mordecai therefore wrote to his people in every place, proposing the observance of both these days annually, in commemoration of their deliverance, by both Jews and proselytes, throughout their dispersions, and to all future generations. And upon the receipt of these letters, the Jews every where consented to the proposal. Yet it seems, that they afterwards grew negligent: and therefore *a second letter* was written with all authority by Esther and Mordecai, enjoining the observance, which was accompanied "with words of peace and truth;" (30;) that is, with affectionate good wishes, prayers, and congratulations; and with wholesome counsels and instructions. The festival therefore was appointed by authority and by royal proclamation, yet under the direction and according to the mind of the Spirit of God. It is evidently proper to perpetuate the memory of so extraordinary a deliverance: and no doubt Esther and Mordecai did right in requiring the Jews on this great occasion, thus to keep it in remembrance, and transmit the memorial of it to their posterity. It was thus appointed that these days should be spent in feasting and joy, in hospitality and liberality to the poor. But as the prayers, which without doubt attended the fasting of the Jews in Shushan, are not mentioned: so we may be sure that praises and thanksgivings to God at first attended their feasting and rejoicing, though not recorded. And even to this day, the Jews are used to assemble at the time appointed in their synagogues, to read over this book of Esther, and to perform some acts of religious worship: but the feast has long since degenerated into a season of riot and excess. The word *Purim* signifies *the lots*, being the plural of the word *Pur*, in remembrance of the lots cast by Haman, by which the day was deferred till time was allowed for defeating the whole design, and all his tokens were frustrated. The fastings, lamentations, and prayers, which preceded the deliverance, were to be remembered with peculiar joy and gratitude; and some think it was intended, that the thirteenth day should be observed as a day of fasting and prayer, as an introduction to the festival; and the Jews at present profess to observe it as such: but the decree does not admit of this construction. Finally, the decree was added to this book of Esther, in which the history of these transactions was recorded; that the institution might never be forgotten.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—16.

The obstinate enemies and persecutors of the church are often left to act in the most infatuated manner; being urged on by malice, in opposition to the most evident dictates of prudence. For the records of history show, that when the enemies of God's people "have hoped to have power over "them," it has generally been "turned to the contrary," and they have gained the advantage "over them that hated "them." Yet, neither observation, nor experience, nor demonstration can subdue the enmity of the carnal mind, which seizes every opportunity of exerting itself: and even the protection of the ruling powers, if not very decisive, has generally been found insufficient to repress the spirit of persecution; though men commonly more fear the displeasure of a king, or of powerful courtiers, than the wrath of almighty God. The aggressor is answerable for all the blood shed in unjust war; provided the advantages gained by those who stand in their own defence in a good cause, be not pushed on with revenge and cruelty: and when *whole nations* are attacked on account of their religion, they have as good a right to defend themselves, as when the assault is made upon any other unrighteous pretext. But in every case the servants of God should manifest a disposition to humanity and disinterestedness; and frequently they ought to refuse advantages that might *legally* be obtained—Prosperous sinners often bequeath their vices and enmities to their posterity; the effects of which remain, when their ill-gotten or abused affluence is dissipated: but children will never be ruined by the crimes of their parents, unless they imitate them. The pertinacity of some offenders renders it necessary for the most merciful rulers to use severity: and the enmity and obstinacy of wicked men, will display the justice of God in their final and eternal destruction, when the whole world will know all their crimes. But what dire effects to thousands may result from one malicious, or even incautious, action!

V. 17—32.

When the sense of recent mercies is lively in our hearts, we should hasten to pour out our praises to the Lord. Gratitude to him, when united with liberal kindness to the poor, will sanctify our rejoicing, and render a day of feasting a good day to our own souls, and to our brethren. In reviewing our mercies, we should advert to our previous fears and distresses: we should consider how our sorrow hath been turned into joy; what imminent danger of death or destruction we have escaped; what cries, prayers, confessions, and vows we have made; and with what remarkable circumstances our deliverances were attended, our enemies disappointed, and our comforts renewed. When our mercies are personal, we should be careful that we do not by forgetfulness lose the comfort of them, and withhold from our God the glory due unto his name. When they are very public and remarkable, rulers in church or state should unite authority with admonitions and words of peace and truth, to prevent the memorial of them from perishing, and that all, who shall eventually share the advantages, may join in rendering praise unto the Lord. But,

CHAP. X.

The greatness of Ahasuerus, and the advancement and usefulness of Mordecai, 1—3.

a i. 1. viii. 9. Luke ii. 1
b Gen x 5 Ps lxxii 10. Is. xxiv. 15. Dan xi 18.
c 1 Kings xi. 41. xxii. 39.

AND the king Ahasuerus [a] laid a tribute upon the land, and *upon* [b] the isles of the sea.

2 And [c] all the acts of his power, and of his might, and the declaration of the greatness of Mordecai, whereunto the king * advanced him, *are* they not written [d] in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia?

* Heb. *made him great.* viii 15. ix. 4. Ps. xviii. 35.
d ii. 23. vi. 1.

3 For Mordecai the Jew *was* [e] next unto king Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and [f] accepted of the multitude of his brethren, [g] seeking the wealth of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed.

e Gen xli 40. 1 Sam xxiii. 17. 2 Chr. xxviii. 7.
f iii 2. Rom xiv. 18.
g Neh. ii. 10 Ps. cxxii. 8, 9. Rom. ix. 2, 3. x. 1.

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alas! the best institutions are liable to be perverted by human depravity; and to degenerate, not only into a form but into an occasion of sin. Holy joy in God is supplanted by sensual indulgence and carnal mirth: under pretence of celebrating great deliverances, or even of commemorating the mysteries of redemption, professed Christians often behave as if they were the devotees of Bacchus or Momus; and instead of a good day and a feast unto the Lord, they imitate the worshippers of the golden calf, and "sit down to eat and drink, and rise up to play." Nothing more disgraces religion, or stupefies the conscience, than such abuses. May the Lord then teach us to rejoice with that holy joy, which anticipates and prepares for the felicity of heaven.

NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1—3. These verses close the narrative, as it stands in the original Hebrew; and are very improperly detached from the preceding chapter. As, however, they here stand, they begin another chapter, which is continued in the apocryphal supplement to this book. The nature of Ahasuerus's tribute, and the acts of his power, are not declared in the sacred Scripture; but the preferment of Mordecai proved no diminution of the king's greatness, or detriment to his subjects at large; and it was peculiarly advantageous to the Jews. (*Marg. Ref.*) Mordecai neither concealed his religion, nor grew shy of his brethren, though they were generally poor and despised. His authority seems to have been durable; and he was greatly honoured by all his brethren: for he used his power to protect them and promote their welfare; and he behaved towards them with all condescension and affection. The history of the Jews, as recorded in the Old Testament, concludes with this book; and for at least four hundred and forty years, that is, till the coming of the Messiah, the scriptural narrative of that favoured nation is suspended. A compendious view of the most material events which are transmitted to us by other writers, may perhaps hereafter be introduced, in order to connect the Old Testament with the New. It has been observed, that no pagan writer mentions any of the events recorded in the book of Esther: but in fact, little comparatively is known concerning the Persian kings, except as connected with the history of Greece, and as recorded by Grecian historians: and it cannot be supposed, that the concerns of the Jews, as dispersed through the vast empire of Persia, would at all attract the attention of that proud nation, who considered all nations, except themselves, as Barbarians; and who seem to have peculiarly despised the Jews as a bigoted and narrow minded people; because they would not conform to any of their varied idolatries, or embrace any of their systems of skeptical philosophy.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The concerns of the despised worshippers of God are deemed more important by the Spirit of inspiration, than the greatest exploits of the most illustrious monarch upon earth. They who enjoy the benefits of civil government, are reasonably required to contribute to the expense of it: but it is happy when taxes are imposed with justice and equality; and the advancement of wise and good men forms the most honourable part of the conduct of powerful princes. Rulers should consult the advantage of all their peaceable subjects: but they are peculiarly required to seek the welfare of the church by protecting it from oppression, and encouraging the worship and ordinances of God. That greatness is truly honourable which is usefully employed: and when exalted stations are filled by those who behave with humility and condescension, and who manifest a due regard to religion, and affection for their inferiors, they will be most likely to escape envy, and to be honoured and accepted by the multitude of their brethren. Contentment, diligence, and fidelity in lower employments, form a hopeful presage of good conduct in more important and exalted situations: and though men of superior talents and excellency may for a season appear to be buried in obscurity: yet, if the Lord hath work for them to do, he will bring them forth to more extensive usefulness. We should be thankful for equitable and peaceful rulers and temporal privileges: but all earthly grandeur is passing away; may we seek those riches and that glory, which endure for ever!

THE BOOK OF

J O B.

THAT division of the holy Scriptures upon which we now enter, comprising the Book of Job, the Psalms, and the Writings of Solomon, is called by the Jews Hagiographa, *or* holy writings; *though they include several other books, without reason or propriety. In these parts of the sacred oracles there is greater depth and apparent difficulty, than in those that precede: but the instruction is in general more immediately prepared for use; and the real benefit of perusing the scriptural history much depends upon the degree of our previous acquaintance with the books before us. In like manner we shall read the records of our Saviour's miracles and discourses to edification, in proportion as we have understood the epistolary part of the New Testament; which, though more difficult in many respects, conveys instruction in more direct and explicit terms. We begin with the book of Job, which some learned men have employed much pains ingeniously, but very unwarrantably, to interpret as an allegory. The prophet Ezekiel, however, mentions Job, Noah, and Daniel, as three persons of eminent piety:* (xiv. 14. 20:) *and the apostle James illustrates the advantages of patience, by the example of Job, as he had before done his doctrine of faith and works by the examples of Abraham and of Rahab,* (Jam. ii. 21—25. v. 11.) *No reasonable doubt therefore can remain, but that the narrative of this book is historical truth: though we may safely allow that as the discourses of Job and his friends are recorded in poetical language, their sentiments and arguments alone are transmitted to us, and not the exact words which they used in conversation. But there is no sufficient ground for questioning, whether the transactions relating to the world of spirits, good and evil, actually for substance occurred. It is indeed evident, that this could not be known, except by revelation: but as the book itself records several supernatural visions, and a glorious appearance of God himself speaking from the whirlwind; this creates no difficulty to those who consider it as true, and as a part of the sacred canon. As such, the Jews have always regarded it, though not favourable to Job, because he was a Gentile, and not an Israelite: and St. Paul's manner of quoting it, with "It is written," shows that he considered it as a part of the oracles of God.* (Job v. 13. 1 Cor. iii. 19.) *A very high antiquity is generally ascribed to this book; nay, some think it is the most ancient work now extant in the world. The long life to which Job attained; the great remains of patriarchal religion in the land of Uz, the worship of the sun and moon being the only idolatry mentioned in it; and no express allusion being made to the Mosaic law, or the wonderful works of God towards Israel; with several peculiarities in the style and composition of the work, give sanction to this opinion. Some learned men indeed perceiving a similarity of sentiment between some parts of this book, and passages in the Psalms and Proverbs, would assign it a much later origin; but wise and pious men will often, without copying from each other, give the same instructions, and coincide in opinion; and it is at least as probable, that David and Solomon alluded to the book of Job, as that the writer of that book alluded to their works, if any intended reference be supposed. Indeed the date of the events it records cannot be exactly ascertained: but it is very likely, that Job was in his first prosperity, between the time when Joseph died, and the appearance of Moses in Pharaoh's court as Israel's deliverer; and the language used by God himself, that "there was none like him in all the earth," seems to give probability to that opinion; for there is no other eminent character mentioned in Scripture as flourishing during that period.—It is not agreed, who wrote this book. Some ascribe all of it to Job himself but the conclusion. Some to Elihu, who in one place seems to address the reader concerning his auditory.* (xxxii. 15—17.) *But others think that Moses was the author of it. The style has likewise induced an opinion, that it was written in the Arabic language: and perhaps Elihu wrote it in Arabic, and Moses rendered it into Hebrew. The first two chapters are in prose; the style of them is very plain; and they form an introduction to the poetical part, which is in many places peculiarly figurative and sublime, and consequently more difficult to be interpreted. The latter part of the last chapter is an historical conclusion of the whole. It cannot be clearly shown, that this book contains any prophecies properly so called; because the passages which might be adduced as prophetical may also be*

considered as a profession of faith in the promised Redeemer, and concerning a future resurrection: but few parts of the Old Testament declare more explicitly the grand outlines of revealed truth, nay, even of evangelical doctrine; so that, they who speak of it, as consisting chiefly of natural religion, *seem to have entirely mistaken the scope of it.—It opens with an account of Job's piety and prosperity, the charge of hypocrisy and selfishness which Satan lodged against him, and the permission which he obtained from God, to reduce him to the deepest distress as a trial of his integrity. It proceeds to relate how his former friends, witnessing his unprecedented misery, were led to condemn him as a wicked man. This gave rise to a warm controversy, whether heavy afflictions prove one apparently pious to be a hypocrite? In disputing this point, the principles of true religion were argued from by all parties as undoubted truths, and many excellent things were spoken; but the whole had in it a sad mixture of human infirmity. When they could by no means come to an agreement upon the subject, Elihu, who had heard the debate, with great modesty and solemnity interfered; and having first censured the other disputants for groundlessly condemning Job, he proceeded to reprove him for his improper eagerness in justifying himself, by which he had reflected upon the justice of God. Whilst he was discoursing, the Lord himself spake out of a whirlwind, and by a discovery of his incomprehensible majesty and glory, made Job sensible of his presumption, and brought him to humble himself before him as a vile and polluted sinner. This being effected, the Lord justified Job from the charge of hypocrisy, and condemned the conduct and language of his friends: and having decided the controversy in favour of Job, he appointed him to sacrifice and intercede in their behalf, that they might be forgiven. The whole closes with an account of Job's deliverance, and redoubled prosperity, honour, and comfort.—It is a book full of caution and encouragement to the tempted and afflicted; and of warning to those who hastily judge their brethren. It throws great light upon the doctrine of Providence, and upon the agency and influence of evil spirits under the control of God. We see in Job an eminent type of the suffering and glorified Saviour; and a pattern of the believer's "passing through much tribulation into the kingdom of God." In short, the whole is replete with most important instruction: and among the rest we are reminded of the ill effects of acrimonious religious dispute. These four pious men argued together, till, becoming angry, they censured and condemned each other, and uttered many things irreverent about the divine character and government: and having lost their temper, would have also lost their labour, and have been more at variance than ever, if another method had not been taken of deciding the controversy.*

B. C. 1550.

CHAPTER I.

The uprightness, piety, prosperity, and numerous family of Job, and his religious concern for his children, 1—5 *Satan, appearing before God, accuses Job, and obtains leave to try him,* 6—12. *Job, receiving successive accounts of calamities which deprived him of all his substance and his children, mourns with humble resignation, and worships God,* 13—22.

B. C. 1550.

THERE was a man in the land of [a] Uz, whose name was [b] Job; and that man was [c] perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.

2 And there were born unto him [e] seven sons and three daughters.

a Gen. x. 23. xxii. 21. Hus. xxxvi. 28. 1 Chr. i. 17. 42. Jer. xxv. 20. Lam. iv. 21.
b Ez. xiv. 14. 20. Jam. v. 11.
c 8. ii. 3. xxiii. 11, 12. xxxi. 1. &c. Gen. vi. 9. xvii. 1. 2 Kings xx. 3. 2 Chr. xxxi. 20, 21. Luke i. 6.
d Gen. xxii. 12. Prov. viii. 13. xvi. 6. 1 Pet. iii. 11.
e xlii. 13. Esth. v. 11. Ps. cvii. 38. cxxvii. 3—5. cxxviii. 3.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1. The land of Uz seems to have been a district of Arabia, to the south east of Canaan: though some suppose, that it was situated in Idumea, and that Job was descended from Esau. (*Marg. Ref.*) Others think that he descended from Abraham by Keturah: yet it seems more probable that he was of the posterity of Uz the son of Nahor. He is supposed to have lived before any part of the scriptures were written: but he was acquainted with the truths and will of God, by tradition and immediate revelation. His religion and that of his friends was evidently the same with that of the patriarchs. He was, however, a man of most eminent piety, upright, fervent, and steadfast in religion, and exemplary in his whole conduct; one who regarded the authority of God, reverenced his Majesty, and habitually worshipped and obeyed him. So that he carefully avoided sin and temptation, and "exercised himself to have a conscience void of offence towards God and man." His subsequent trials tended to his greater humiliation: but he was previously an eminent believer and an excellent character.

3 His * substance also was [f] seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great † household; so that this man was [g] the greatest of all the ‡ men [h] of the east.

4 And his sons went and feasted in *their* houses, every one his day; and [i] sent and called for their three sisters, to eat and to drink with them.

5 And it was so, when the days of *their* feasting were gone about, that Job sent and [k] sanctified them, and [l] rose up early in the morning, and [m] offered burnt-offerings [n] *according* to the number of them all: for Job said, [o] It may be that my sons have sinned, and [p] cursed God [q] in their hearts. [r] Thus did Job ∮ continually.

6 ¶ Now [s] there was a day when [t] the sons of God [u] came to present themselves before the LORD, and ‖ Satan [x] came also * among them.

* Or, *cattle*. Gen. xii. 5. xiii. 6. xxxiv. 23. 2 Chr. xxxii. 29.
f xlii. 12. Gen. xii. 16. Num. xxxi. 32—34. Judg. vi. 5. 1 Sam. xxv. 2. 2 Kings iii. 4. Prov. x. 22.
† Or, *husbandry*. 2 Chr. xxvi. 10.
g xxix. 9, 10. 25.
‡ Heb. *sons of the east*. Judg. vi. 3. vii. 12. viii. 10. 1 Kings iv. 30.
h Gen. xxv. 6. xxix. 1. Num. xxiii. 7.
i Ps. cxxxiii. 1. Heb. xiii. 1.
k xli. 25. Gen. xxxv. 2, 3. Ex. xix. 10, 14. 1 Sam. xvi. 5. Neh. xii. 30. John xi. 55.
l Gen. xxii. 3. Ps. v. 3. Eccl. ix. 10.
m xlii. 8. Gen. viii. 20. Ex. xviii. 12. xxiv. 5. Lev. i. 3—6.
n 1 Kings xviii. 31. Acts xxi. 26.
o 2 Cor. xi. 2.
p 11. ii. 9. Lev. xxiv. 10—16. 1 Kings xxi. 10, 13.
q Gen. vi. 5. Jer. iv. 14. xvii. 9, 10. Mark vii. 21—23. Acts viii. 22. 1 Cor. iv. 5.
r xxvii. 10.
∮ Heb. *all the days*. Luke i. 75. xviii. 7. Eph. vi. 18.
s ii. 1.
t xxxviii. 7. Dan. iii. 25. Luke iii. 38.
u Ps. ciii. 20. Matt. xviii. 10.
‖ Heb. *the adversary*. 1 Kings xxii. 19—23. 1 Chr. xxi. 1. Zech. iii. 1. Rev. xii. 9, 10.
x John vi. 70.
* Heb. *in the midst of them*.

V. 3. When the earth was but thinly inhabited, it was easier to acquire land than cattle to feed on it, or to cultivate it: (as the case still is in several parts of America, and in newly discovered countries:) so that Job's wealth is reckoned by the number of his cattle, not by the extent of his lands. He was the principal person in that country, had abundance of every thing which constituted riches among them, and acted as a magistrate or ruler in some respects; though it does not appear that he was properly speaking a king, as many suppose him to have been.

V. 4. The sons of Job, now grown up and settled in houses of their own, cheerfully enjoyed their abundance: and as they lived in brotherly love, they were accustomed at certain seasons to entertain each other alternately. We do not find that Job made one at these feasts: but wherever his sons met, they invited their sisters to join their company, which both showed a proper affection for them, and evinced that no indecency or riot attended their feasting.

V. 5. As Job had, no doubt, piously educated his children, and set them an excellent example, and offered many prayers for and with them; we may suppose that they were well affected to religion. Indeed nothing is intimated to the disadvantage of their characters, and no feasting could be more inoffensive than their's seems to have been. But whilst their pious father could not but behold their harmony and comfort with satisfaction; his knowledge of the human heart suggested a jealous fear, lest their cheerfulness should betray them into some levity or excess, some vain conversation, or some injurious thoughts of God, either tending to infidelity, to dislike of his holy worship and service, or to idolatrous love of worldly enjoyments. When therefore their feastings were ended, as the priest of his family, "he "sent and sanctified them," reminding them to examine themselves, to confess their sins, to seek forgiveness, and to prepare their hearts to attend the ordinances of God with seriousness and humble devotion; and he offered a burnt-offering for each of them. Thus he taught them, that even the secret unbelief, ingratitude, and rebellion of the heart merited condemnation, and could only be expiated by the shedding of blood, and the offering of sacrifices, in repentance and humble faith. As he did this continually, we may thence understand his unremitting care of his family, the tenderness of his conscience, his knowledge of the fallen state of man, and the depravity of human nature; his entire dependence on God's mercy in the way which he had appointed, and his believing regard to the promised Redeemer. The word rendered *curse God*, in this and several subsequent passages, in its usual meaning signifies *to bless:* yet it must be understood in a bad sense in this place, and when employed by Satan concerning Job: and it is the same word which is used when Naboth was accused of "*cursing* God and the king;" and consequently stoned as a blasphemer and traitor. Some think it was substituted instead of the word which more generally signifies *to curse* from reverence to God, when he is spoken of. Others suppose it signifies to *salute*, as men do when they meet or part with others, and thus is used to denote, *departing from* God or *renouncing* him. But the learned Mr. Leigh brings a quotation from Mr. Selden, which seems more satisfactory, and which I shall therefore translate. 'It is most certain that the verb *Barac* signifies to '*execrate* or to *curse*, as well as to *bless;* and this, as I 'think, not by antiphrasis as some will have it; but al- 'most from the very idiom of the sacred language, it may 'signify either way, according to the connexion in which 'it is used, as among the Latins *sacrare* and *imprecari*. 'For as the first signifies at some times to devote any one 'by curses to destruction, and at others to consecrate 'any thing to God; and as we call for either good or evil 'upon others; so *Barac* denotes what a man wishes or 'calls for, with an ardent mind, whether it be salvation 'or perdition. And when applied to the Diety, it either 'signifies addressing him by praises and thanksgivings, '(which is more common,) or with revilings and re- 'proaches; and the difference is to be collected from the 'nature of the case and from the context.'

V. 6. (*Note*, 1 *Kings* xxii. 19—23.) The holy angels no doubt are here meant by the sons of God; because they love and are beloved by him as his children. They are here introduced to our notice, as on some special occasion presenting themselves before the Lord, to give an account of their late services, and to receive further commands, in delightful obedience to which their happiness greatly consists: and Satan, the adversary of God and his whole creation, is represented as intruding himself among them. Without determining any thing about the place or way, in which this evil spirit appeared before God, or associated with his angels; or whether the transactions of the invisible world be not described in language adapted rather to our conceptions, than to their real nature; we hence learn, that Job's extraordinary afflictions originated from the malice and agency of Satan, by divine permission for wise and

7 And the LORD said unto Satan, [y] Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, [z] From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

8 And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou * considered [a] my servant Job, that *there is* [b] none like him in the earth, [c] a perfect and an [d] upright man, [e] one that feareth God and [f] escheweth evil?

9 Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, [g] Doth Job fear God for nought?

10 Hast not thou made [h] an hedge about him, and about his house, and [i] about all that he hath on every side? [k] Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his † substance is increased in the land:

11 But [l] put forth thine hand now, and [m] touch all that he hath, ‡ and he will [n] curse thee to thy face.

12 And the LORD said unto Satan, [o] Behold, all that he hath *is* in thy § power; [p] only upon himself put not forth thine hand. [q] So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

13 ¶ And there was a day, [r] when his sons and his daughters *were* eating

y ii. 2. 2 Kings v. 25
z Zech. i. 10, 11. vi. 7 Matt. xii. 43. 1 Pet. v. 8. Rev xii. 9. 12—17. xx 8.
* Heb. *set thy heart on.* ii. 3. xxxiv. 14. Ez xviii 28
a Num. xii. 7, 8. Ps. lxxxix. 20. Is. xlii. 1.
b Num. xii. 3 1 Kings iv 30, 31. 2 Kings xxiii 25.
c 1. viii. 20. ix. 22, 23 Ps. xviii. 23. John. i. 47.
d xii 4. xvii 8, 9. xxiii 11, 12 Ps. lxxxiv. 11
e Neh. v 15. Ps. xxxvi 1. Prov. viii 13 Luke xxiii. 39, 40.
f Ps xxxiv. 14. xxxvii. 27. Is. i. 16.——g 21. ii. 10 xxi 14, 15. Mal. i. 10 Matt. xvi. 26. 1 Tim. iv 8. vi 6.
h Gen. xv. 1. Deut. xxxiii. 27—29. 1 Sam. xxv. 16. Ps. v. 12 lxxx. 12. Is. v. 2 5 Zech ii. 5. 8 1 Pet i. 5.

i Gen. xxxix. 5 Deut. xxviii. 2—6 Ps. lxxvi. 21. cxxviii. 1—4.
k xlii. 12. Gen. xxvi. 12. xxx. 30. xlix. 25. Deu vii. 13, 14. xxxiii. 11. Ps. xc. 17. cvii. 38. Prov x. 22
† Or, *cattle.* Gen. xxx. 43.
l ii 5 Is. v. 25.
m iv. 5 xix. 21. Gen. xxvi. 11. Ps cv. 15 Zech. ii 8.
‡ Heb. *if he curse thee not* 21
n 5 ii 9 Is viii. 21. Mal. iii. 13, 14 Rev. xvi. 9. 11. 21
o 1 Kings xxii 32. Luke viii. 22. xxii. 31, 32. John. xix. 11.
2 Cor. xii. 7.——§ Heb. *hand* Gen xvi 6. Jer. xxxviii. 5. John iii. 35, 36.——p ii 6—6. Ps. lxxvi. 10. Is xxvii. 8. 1 Cor. x. 13——q ii 7 Luke viii 33.——r 4. Prov. xxvii 1. Ec. ix. 12. Luke xxi. 34.

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holy purposes: and many truths, respecting the character and influence of the devil and his angels, are thus emphatically proposed to our attentive consideration. These apostate spirits are continually intruding into the company of the children of God on earth, especially when they meet in his ordinances, or approach his mercy seat. And they would dare to intrude even into heaven, the habitation of God's holiness, if access were allowed them to join the company of his holy angels: yet this would not in the least change their evil nature; for wherever they go, they are instigated by malice, and are seeking to do mischief. But, as God is every where present, (though in heaven his glory is especially displayed,) all that is spoken upon these subjects may be *literally* understood, without supposing that they are ever admitted into that holy place.

V. 7. When the holy angels had given an account of their services; Satan is represented as interrogated whence *he* came, and what he had been doing? And his answer seems to have implied an arrogant claim to be the god and prince of this world; and in the spirit of pride and self-vindication, he avowed that he had been traversing his dominions without exceeding the bounds assigned him. It also denoted his restless malice and unwearied endeavours to do mischief: he had vigilantly and diligently been looking on every side, to retain his subjects in obedience, to urge them on to more wickedness, and to seek for opportunities of tempting, deceiving, or distressing those who professed to serve God.

V. 8. Satan seemed to advance a claim to the earth as if it had been all his own; but the Lord gave him to understand, that he had a remnant of servants there: and as this accuser had always something to urge against every believer, he was asked whether he had fully considered Job's character and conduct?—The express attestation of God to Job's integrity and piety, as the most faithful servant he had at that time on earth, is sufficient to demonstrate that he was not a self-righteous Pharisee before his afflictions; as some persons from undue regard to systems have ventured to speak of him.

V. 9—11. Satan could not deny the excellency of Job's conduct; but he subtly insinuated, that he was mercenary in his religion, and served God, not from love to him or his ways, but for what he could get; or at least, that in his present circumstances the contrary could not be demonstrated. It was worth his while to keep up a regard to religion; for he grew rich, prosperous, and honourable by it. He had no temptation to fraud or oppression; for he had all he could wish, in a more safe and creditable manner. He had nothing to ruffle his temper, or to render him distrustful or discontented; therefore the reality of his faith, meekness, and acquiescence in the will of God, might fairly be questioned. In short, if duly tried, he would be found a different man: and if the Lord would himself "put forth his hand, and *touch*," (that is, to take from him or embitter to him,) "all that he had;" he would not only murmur and fret, which a true believer might be tempted to do: not only indulge hard thoughts of God, as Job suspected that his sons might have cursed God in their hearts; but he would *openly* blaspheme God and renounce religion. (*Note* 5.) The last clause is literally, "If he "curse thee not to thy face;" which implies that more was meant than expressed: 'If it be not so, I am greatly 'misiaken, or I will consent to be punished as a false 'witness.'—God had declared Job to be the most eminent saint upon earth; and if Satan could have succeeded in this attempt, he would really have made out his claim to the dominion over the whole human race: and though he failed, he yet had an opportunity of gratifying his malice in his sufferings. But with inward anguish he was constrained to confess, that he was not able to break through the hedge of continual protection, which God had placed round the person, substance, and family of his servant; or to give the least disturbance to the peace and blessings that he enjoyed in his favour, and under the watchful care of his over-ruling providence.

V. 12. Thus the Lord gave Satan permission to deprive Job of all those comforts and possessions for the sake of which he was supposed to serve him. But he would not allow him to wound or to kill his body; or even to assail his soul with those horrid temptations, which evidently formed a principal part of his subsequent trial. This permission was granted, not because Job had any special need of chastisement; but that his integrity and the power of divine grace in him might be manifested to Satan's confusion, the real benefit of Job, the edification of the church in future ages, and the glory of God in all these respects.

and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house:

s 1 Sam. iv. 17. 2 Sam. xv. 13.

14 And there came [s] a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them;

t Gen. x. 7. 28. xxv. 3 Ps lxxii. 10. Is. xlv. 14. Ez xxiii. 42. Joel iii. 8.

15 And the [t] Sabeans fell *upon them*, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; [u] and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

u 16, 17. 19.

* Or, a great fire Gen. xix. 24. Lev. ix. 24. 1 Kings xviii 38. 2 Kings i. 10 12 14. Amos vii. 4. Rev. xiii. 13.

16 While he *was* yet speaking, there came also another, and said, * The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burnt up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

Gen. xi. 28. Is xxiii. 13. Hab. i. 6.

† Heb. *rushed.*

17 While he *was* yet speaking, there came also another, and said, [x] The Chaldeans made out three bands, and † fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and [y] I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

y 15. 2 Sam. i. 3

z vi. 2. xvi 14. xix. 9, 19. xxiii. 2. Is. xxviii. 19. Jer. li. 31. Amos iv. 6—11

a viii 4. xxvii. 14. Ps. xxxiv. 19 Ec ix 2

b 2 Sam. xiii. 28

18 While he *was* yet speaking, [z] there came also another, and said, [a] Thy sons and thy daughters *were* [b] eating, and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house:

c Jer. iv 11, 12. Epn. ii. 2.

‡ Heb. *from aside, &c*

d Judg. xvi. 30. 1 Kings xx. 30 Matt vii. 27. Luke xiii. 1—5. Acts xxviii. 4.

e Gen. xlii 36 2 Sam. xviii. 33

19 And, behold, there came [c] a great wind ‡ from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and [d] it fell upon the young men, and [e] they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

f Gen. xxxvii. 29 34. Ezra ix. 3.

§ Or, *robe.*

g Deut. ix. 18. 2 Chr. vii. 3. Matt. xxvi. 39. 1 Pet v. 6.

20 Then Job arose, and [f] rent his § mantle, and shaved his head, and [g] fell down upon the ground, and worshipped,

h Gen iii. 19. Ps xlix. 17. Ec. v. 15 xii. 7. 1 Tim. vi. 7.

i Gen. xxx 2. Ec v. 19. Jam i. 17.

21 And said, [h] Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD [i] gave, and

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V. 13. Satan knew how fearful Job was that his sons should sin amidst their festivity; and he seems to have chosen this day for his purpose, that the calamities might be construed into divine judgments. Some think, that this was the birth-day of Job's eldest son; but it is a mere conjecture.

V. 14, 15. One messenger was spared, to carry the tidings of each calamity, that the sudden and certain information which Job received might overwhelm his mind at once; and that he might not have time to recover himself from his consternation, or to seek support from God, of which a more gradual information would have admitted. —The servants were at their work, and lost their lives in defending their master's property. The Sabeans were a tribe of the Arabians or freebooters, who infested those regions; but whether descended from Abraham either by Ishmael or Keturah, is uncertain. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 16. This servant naturally called the extraordinary lightning, which consumed all the flocks of sheep, the fire of God: and the expression aided Satan's temptation, as it seemed to imply that God fought against Job, and was become his enemy. If this fire had destroyed the Sabeans with their ill gotten booty, the divine justice would have been manifest: but that they should escape, whilst pious Job's servants were slain, and those flocks destroyed from which so many burnt-offerings had been sacrificed to the Lord, seemed very mysterious and perplexing. We cannot determine in what manner this and other effects were produced by Satan; who is "the prince of the power of "the air," and is no doubt able, when permitted, to cause any such *phenomena*. It is generally agreed that the tremendous appearances on Mount Sinai were produced by the ministration of holy angels: and though fallen angels have lost their holy dispositions and moral powers, they retain their natural capacities; and doubtless could, if they were allowed, produce similar effects: at least it is impossible to prove the contrary, seeing we cannot explain the manner, or ascertain the boundaries, of their operations. But they are absolutely in the Lord's hands, and can only exercise their powers by his permission: and this is the only security of our bodies, minds, connexions, or possessions.

V. 17. The Chaldeans seem at this time to have been an inconsiderable roving tribe; but they afterwards became a powerful nation.

V. 18, 19. This greatest affliction was reserved for the last, that it might drive Job desperate, when the hand of God seemed to be thus gone forth against him. The loss of one child hath often been more than an affectionate parent could support with decent resignation: but for a whole flourishing family, educated with pious care, and for years insinuating into the affections of his heart; who were all now grown up, living in harmony, affluence, and credit, and likely to perpetuate his name and prosperity; to be all cut off at once, suddenly, and, as it appeared, by the immediate hand of God, when they were feasting, and not at their sacrifices! this, added to all the preceding unprecedented misfortunes, was sufficient to have driven most men distracted, or to have urged them to bitter complaints, or even desperate imprecations. When we have endeavoured to conceive aright of Job's circumstances, comforts, and prospects on the morning of that eventful day; and of the dreadful change which took place before evening: and when we realize, from experience and observation, the feelings of the human heart under trials comparatively trivial; we shall be able to form some faint idea of the immense load which was at once laid upon this eminent servant of God; and the strength of his faith and grace appear in the manner in which he supported it. And though afterwards, the still accumulating weight pressed from him some impatient expressions, which many have *inconsiderately* objected to the scriptural commendation of his patience; yet probably no mere man ever suffered so much and so long, with equal resignation and constancy.

k Gen. xlv. 5. 2 Sam. xvi. 10. 1 Kings xii. 15. Is. xlii.24.xlv. 7. the LORD hath k taken away; l blessed be the name of the LORD.
Amos iii. 6. Matt. xx. 15. Acts iv. 28.——l 11. 1 Sam. iii. 18. 2 Kings xx. 19. Ps xxxiv. 1. Is. xxiv. 15. Eph. v. 20. 1 Thes. v. 18.

22 m In all this Job sinned not, nor * charged God foolishly.
m ii.10. Jam. i. 4. 12. 1 Pet. i. 7.
* Or, *attribute folly to God*
xxxiv. 10, 18, 19 xl. 4–8. Rom. ix. 20.

V. 20—22. Job acted as one who felt the weight of his afflictions, but did not sink under them, or lose possession of his soul. He expressed his inward anguish in the customary manner; and behaved, not like one furious or distracted, but with silent and reflecting sorrow. Having rent his mantle and shaved his head, he prostrated himself and worshipped the Lord. He acknowledged that he came into the world naked and indigent, and was no poorer after all his losses than when he was born. He recollected that he should soon leave the world, and restore his body to the earth from which it was taken as the common parent of us all; and that he could carry nothing away with him. He had received all from the unmerited bounty of God, who had seen good to remand his substance and his children, a little before the time when otherwise he must have left them: and his body and soul, his faith and hope, his inheritance, and his God still remained to him. Whoever were the instruments, the Lord was the author of his calamities: he had no heart to revile the Sabeans and Chaldeans, and others concerned in his losses. He was assured in his judgment, whatever his feelings were, that God had a sovereign right to dispose of him and his as he pleased, and that he had done nothing inconsistent with his infinite wisdom, justice, truth, and goodness. Instead therefore of blaspheming, as Satan had predicted, he praised, blessed, and thanked the Lord, in faith, love, and humble resignation. Thus far he stood the trial most honourably, and did not even utter a single expression, which in any measure reflected upon the divine conduct.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—5.

"In every nation he that feareth God, and worketh "righteousness, is accepted of him:" and he will have some even of the wealthy and prosperous of the world to serve him; "for with him nothing shall be impossible." —When the heart is upright and devoted to God, the general conduct will be holy, and he will be served with the whole man: for the genuine fear of his name will produce habitual hatred of sin, and watchfulness against it. We receive our children as well as every other comfort from the Lord; we ought therefore carefully to train them up for him, and to keep them from the contagion of this evil world: and we cannot but rejoice to see them grow up, and living in amity and comfort. But we should be careful not to set our hearts too much on them; as we know not how soon they may be torn from us, or made the occasions of our deepest distress: we should then commit them to God by constant prayer, and seek his grace to enable us to be submissive, however he may dispose of them. It cannot be expected, but that young people will take liberties in things not sinful, for which their pious parents may have no relish: it is not evil in itself to rejoice in the bounty of Providence, and to use hospitality towards our friends and relatives: and it is a pleasant sight to behold the several branches of a family love each other's company, and entertain one another. Yet every indulgence disposes us to unwatchfulness and forgetfulness of God: and we seldom feast together in the most friendly and decent manner, without having cause to repent of some part of our conduct and conversation; or at least of the thoughts and temper of our hearts. All this must be washed away in the atoning blood of Christ, or it will rise up against us in judgment at the last day. We have therefore cause for continual self-examination; and after every social interview, we must bestow pains to bring our hearts into due frame for the ordinances of God. Parents should also watch over their children, and exhort, instruct, and assist them, in thus seeking an interest in the great Redeemer, and in preparing to commemorate his death at the Lord's table. The higher men are advanced in rank or authority, the more important is it that they pay regard to these duties, for an example to their inferiors: but, alas! how few of our nobles and rulers, in this Christian land, imitate Job, in this open profession of godliness, and this strict attention to religion in his family! Yet the consistent believer will attend on these things continually.

V. 6—12.

No man is proved to be a true Christian by being found in company with the children of God, even when they appear before him in his house or at his table. Could Satan even enter heaven, and associate with angels, he would still remain a liar and a murderer, ambitious, subtle, envious, and malignant: and whilst holy spirits delighted in the service of their God, he would be plotting mischief against his cause and people. We should therefore inquire not only, Whither we go, and what company we keep? but also, What our intentions and dispositions are? We ought likewise to expect temptations, and that offences will continue in the church; and should chiefly look to ourselves: for we must every one give an account of himself to God. May we imitate those holy and loving angels, who are "all worshipping spirits, sent forth to "minister unto them who shall be heirs of salvation!" Satan claims this earth as his domain; and, alas! he hath hitherto had too much ground for his arrogant pretensions: and as he continually "goeth about seeking whom he may "devour," we ought to be always sober and vigilant. But there is a remnant who are rescued from his tyranny, and are the servants of God, in whom he is glorified, and over whom he rejoices. They who are disposed to represent the most blameless professors of godliness as hypocrites or mercenary; to put a bad construction upon harmless or even good actions; and to insinuate some suspicion or objection, in order to detract from the commendations bestowed upon pious and useful men, may easily know whose children they are, whose example they follow, and whose work they do. For they resemble, in every feature, Satan, the envenomed slanderer and accuser of the brethren. It is indeed true, that God will not suffer his people to serve him for nought. Their best interests are secured; no good

CHAP. II.

Satan again appears before God, and obtains permission still further to try Job, 1—6. *He smites him with sore boils from head to foot,* 7, 8. *His wife moves him to curse God and die: but he rebukes her,* 9, 10. *Three of his friends visit him; and, overwhelmed with surprise and grief, they keep silence seven days,* 11—13.

a i. 6. Is. vi. 1, 2. Luke i. 19. Heb. i. 14.

AGAIN [a] there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them, to present himself before the LORD.

2 And the LORD said unto Satan, [b] From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the LORD, and said, [c] From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

b Gen. xvi. 8.

c i. 7. John xiv. 30. 1 Pet. v. 8

3 And the LORD said unto Satan, [d] Hast thou considered my servant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he [e] holdeth fast his integrity, although [f] thou movedst me against

d i. 1. 8.

e i. 21, 22. xiii. 15. xxvii 5, 6. Jam. i. 12. 1 Pet. i. 7.

f i. 11.

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thing they do shall lose its reward; and he will give them as many worldly comforts as he sees good for them. Yet every believer serves God from love, gratitude, and zeal, and delights in his holy commandments. When called to it, he will part with every temporal possession for his sake: and it is impossible that he, who loves God above all things, should fail of being eternally happy in the fruition of him. But *untried* faith is not much to be depended on: if ease, wealth, and pleasure uniformly attended piety; if there were no cross, self-denial, or temptation, to serve as a touch-stone, or a furnace, it would be very difficult to distinguish the believer from the hypocrite; and therefore Satan is often allowed to sift and prove the people of God, that he may be the more confounded. He means to destroy, defile, or distress them: but the Lord intends to demonstrate the reality and power of his grace in them, for his own glory and their important good. Little do we know what plots are forming against us in the invisible world; nor are we sufficiently sensible of the number, power, malice, and subtlety of our unseen adversaries. We bolt and bar to keep out a few ruffians of our own species, who might come to plunder or murder us whilst we sleep: but there are legions of infernal spirits, whom we can by no means exclude, and who are able in a moment to distract, torment, or destroy us. Blessed be the Lord, his power limits the operations of these malicious foes: and the protection which he affords to ungodly men against their destructive rage, is a most wonderful instance of his patience and loving-kindness. Yet, as they generally disbelieve or disregard the being and agency of evil spirits, they are led captive by them at their will, and hurried on in rebellion against God. But they who love the Lord, are assured of protection. Their enemies can never break through the hedge which the Almighty God hath made around them: and even when he permits them to be tempted, neither the devil nor his emissaries can transcend the limits assigned them.

V. 13—22.

The delight of Satan and of all his servants is to do mischief: they will go to the full length of their chain: and we do not know how far they may be permitted to practise and prosper against us. We see in the example before us the extent of their success; and though they are seldom allowed to proceed so far, we should be thankful that they can go no further, and prepare for the worst. One calamity may succeed another, and every one be heavier than the preceding: they may come on us from every quarter with every circumstantial aggravation: we may be entirely impoverished and bereaved; indeed no man can declare all that we may suffer, even when our grand interest is safe, and all things are working together for our good. But if in all our troubles we look to our gracious God, he will repress our murmurs and support us under our afflictions. However unjust the instruments of our correction may be, he is righteous in all that is laid upon us. Our all is from his gift, we have forfeited it by sin, and ought not to complain if he take any part of it from us. We have received all our possessions since we came naked into this world; and we must leave every earthly comfort and advantage when we go out of it: for they were only imparted to bear the expenses of our journey, and to assist our fellow-travellers. Soon will our bodies be conveyed to the earth from whence they were taken, and our souls into the eternal world: and should we be spoiled of all, and bereaved of our beloved children or friends before we depart; we shall not live long to feel our loss, and the hopes and earnests of heaven will support us under it. May we then be enabled to "choose the good part which shall never be "taken from us:" may we set our affections on things above, and possess our souls in patience; may we, *under our lighter trials*, after the example of Job, learn to repress every rebellious passion; to humble ourselves before God; to adore his wise and righteous sovereignty, and to praise him for remaining mercies and prospects: and may we learn by all our troubles, to get nearer to his mercy-seat, in communion with him. Then Satan will lose his aim, and not be able by affliction to prevail with us to sin, or charge God foolishly. And may the malice and power of these our enemies render more precious to us that gracious and condescending Saviour, "who came to destroy "the works of the devil," and who, in order to effect our salvation, was willing *to suffer* from that enemy, far more than Job suffered, or than we can possibly conceive!

him, to * destroy him [g] without cause.

4 And Satan answered the LORD, and said, [h] Skin for skin; yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life;

5 But [i] put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and [k] he will curse thee to thy face.

6 And the LORD said unto Satan, [l] Behold, he *is* in thine hand; † but [m] save his life.

7 So [n] went Satan forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with [o] sore boils, [p] from the sole of his foot unto his crown.

8 And he [q] took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and [r] he sat down among the ashes.

9 ¶ Then said [s] his wife unto him, Dost thou still [t] retain thine integrity? [u] curse God, and die.

10 But he said unto her, [x] Thou speakest [y] as one of the foolish women speaketh. What! [z] shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? [a] in all this did not Job sin with his lips.

* Heb. *swallow him up*
g ix. 17 John ix 2.
h Gen. xxxii. 20. Esth. vii 3, 4. Is ii. 20, 21. Jer. xlii. 8. Matt. xvi. 26. Acts xxvii. 18, 19 Phil. iii. 8—10
i i. 11. xix. 20, 21. 1 Cor. xxi 17 Ps xxxii. 3, 4 xxxviii. 2—7 xxxix. 10.
k 9. i. 5. 11 Lev. xxiv. 15. Is. viii. 21.
l i. 12
† Or, *only*.
m xxxviii 10, 11. Ps. lxv 7 Luke viii 29—33 xxii 31, 32 1 Cor x 13. Rev. ii. 10 xx. 1, 2. 7.
n 1 Kings xxii 22.
o xxx. 17—19. 30. Ex ix. 9—11. Deut. xxviii. 27. 35. Lev. xvi. 11.—p Is. i. 6. liii. 17.
q xix. 14—17. Ps. xxxviii. 5. 7. Luke xvi 20, 21.
r xlii. 6. 2 Sam. xiii. 19. Is. lxi. 3. Ez. xxvii. 30. Jon. iii. 6 Matt. xi. 21.
s Gen. iii. 6. 12.
t 3. xxi. 14, 15. 2 Kings vi. 33. Mal. iii. 14.
u 5. i. 11.
x Gen. iii. 17. 2 Sam. xix. 22. Matt xvi. 23.
y 2 Sam. vi. 21. xiii. 13. xxiv. 10. 2 Chr. xvi. 9. Prov ix 6. 13. Matt. xxv. 2.
z i. 1—3. 10. 21. 2 Sam. xix. 28. Lam. iii. 38—41. John xviii. 11. Rom. xii. 12. Heb. xii. 9—11.
Jam. v. 10, 11.—a i. 22. Ps. xxxix. 1. lix. 12. Matt. xii. 34—37. Jam. iii. 2.

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 3. *Still he*, &c. Satan had been permitted to prove Job's sincerity, by the most overwhelming and sudden loss of his whole substance, and of all his children. But instead of *cursing*, he blessed and worshipped God. Thus he held fast his integrity, and showed the simplicity and piety of his heart. Satan had "without "cause," moved the Lord thus to afflict his servant: for there was not the least ground for the charge of selfishness which he had lodged against him; and nothing in Job's character rendered such severe afflictions necessary, either to preserve him from ruin, or to vindicate the honour of the divine government: yet doubtless the Lord had wise and good reasons for his conduct; and Job, as a sinner, deserved worse than any temporal afflictions. The word rendered *destroy*, signifies to *swallow up:* and many refer to Job's substance and family; but Satan aimed to destroy his soul also.

V. 4. Satan construed Job's gracious resignation into an evidence of his insensibility; as if he had been destitute of affection for his children and regard for his servants. His life and health were preserved, and he would give any one's skin to preserve his own: he was willing therefore to compound, and part with all to save his life; so that he still kept up his religion, expecting that his other losses would be made up. Nothing could be more unreasonable and spiteful than such an insinuation: yet it illustrates the subtleness of that enemy, who was able plausibly to put a bad construction on Job's most unexceptionable conduct, and to impute to the basest principles, what sprang from the noblest of which the human heart is susceptible.

V. 6. To prove the falsehood and malice of Satan's insinuation, God granted him permission to afflict Job in his body in any way he chose; only he was *to save his life*. Some think the expression also means, that he was to preserve to him the possession of his understanding; for if he were driven distracted, and in his frenzy blasphemed, it would not be a fair trial.

V. 7, 8. We cannot decide what was the disease which Satan inflicted on Job, but may be sure it was as painful and loathsome as it could be made. Sore boils or ulcers (one of which is often found sufficient to exercise all our patience,) covered Job from head to foot: so that his excessive torture must have been incapable of relief from change of posture: and he would be so offensive that few would like to come near him. So that, being deprived of other relief, he took a potsherd to cleanse his sores: or perhaps when any of his boils began to die away, the itching became as intolerable, as the pain before had been; "so that he took a potsherd to *scrape himself* "*withal:*" and by this rude and improper treatment, it is likely his disease was increased and prolonged, and one kind of misery alternately exchanged for another. "He "also sat down among the ashes:" the Septuagint renders it 'upon a dunghill,' and he is generally represented in that situation: the original, however, means that he assumed the posture of a mourner, and a penitent, and a supplicant before God, according to the custom of those times.

V. 9. When Satan deprived Job of his children, he reserved his wife to be his tempter; perhaps knowing her to be a woman of an impatient spirit, who had great influence with her husband. She had shared the former afflictions with him, but we do not find that she manifested the same pious resignation: on the contrary, it is probable that she was full of hard and rebellious thoughts, though she did not openly give vent to them. But when this additional calamity oppressed Job, she was driven to despair of help, and to upbraid him as preposterous in adhering to his religion, seeing God rewarded his fidelity and resignation with nothing but one dire calamity after another.—The meaning of her advice has been much disputed, as the Hebrew word signifies both *to bless* and *to curse*, (as the Latin word *sacer* means either *sacred*, or *accursed*.) But her counsel was evidently suggested by Satan, who spake by her, as by the serpent to Eve, and by Eve to Adam; and it was therefore coincident with his temptation: and both her preface and Job's answer prove, that it was desperate, and not pious advice which she gave him: (*Note*, i. 5.) It may therefore be presumed that our translation gives the true sense; and that, being herself driven to desperate rage and rebellion against God, she instigated Job to despair and blasphemy, to "curse God," as the author of his miseries, though he died for so doing; or even in order to provoke him thus to terminate his sufferings; or as an introduction to suicide, to which Satan no doubt would tempt him.—It is well known, that the Gentiles, under great calamities, would frequently vent their rage, by curses against the gods whom at other times they worshipped.

11 ¶ Now when Job's three [b] friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place; Eliphaz the [c] Temanite, and Bildad the [d] Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for they had made an appointment together to come [e] to mourn with him, and to [f] comfort him.

12 And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and [g] knew him not, [h] they lifted up their voice and wept; and [i] they rent every one his mantle, and [k] sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven.

13 So [l] they sat down with him upon the ground [m] seven days and seven nights, and [n] none spake a word unto him: for they saw that *his* grief was very great.

b vi. 14. Prov. xvii. 17. xviii. 24. xxvii. 10.
c vi. 19. Gen. xxxvi. 11. Jer. xlix. 7.
d Gen. xxv. 2. 1 Chr. i. 32.
e xli. 11. Gen. xxxvii. 35. Is. li. 19. John xi. 19. Rom. xii. 15. 1 Cor. xii. 26. Heb. xiii. 3.
f xvi. 2.
g xix. 14. Ruth i. 19—21. Lam. iv. 7, 8.
h Gen. xxvii. 34. Judg. ii. 4. 1 Sam. xi. 4. xxx. 4. 2 Sam. xiii. 36. Esth. iv. 1.
i i. 20.
k Neh. ix. 1 Lam. ii. 10. Ez. xxvii. 30.
l Neh. i. 4. Is. xlvii. 1.
m Gen. l. 10, 11. 1 Sam. xxxi. 13. Ez. iii. 15
n Ps. lxxvii. 4.

V. 10. Considering Job's situation, nothing can be more admirable than this reply. He reproved his wife with firmness, yet with temper: and neither the anguish of his mind, nor the baseness of her suggestion, dictated any opprobrious language. He did not even address her, *as a foolish or wicked woman;* for he would not for one crime, however great, condemn her as a hypocrite. She spake indeed "as one of the foolish women;" but he would hope it was the effect of violent temptation, and the exceeding distress of her heart; and that she would repent of this her heinous sin. "What," says he, in astonishment at her desperate language, "shall we receive good at the "hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" 'Shall *we*, 'guilty, polluted, worthless creatures, receive so many 'unmerited blessings from a just and holy God; and shall 'we refuse to accept of the punishment of our sins, when 'we suffer so much less than we deserve, and are yet allowed to hope for a happy event? Rather let us re-'ceive the evil also, with patient submission, and even as 'a pledge of his love, and a means of our good.' Thus far he most honourably stood the trial, and appeared the brightest in the furnace of affliction: and the testimony here borne to his conduct, shows that he did not speak the language of passion, as many seem to think; but that of soberness and piety. We are not informed what reception his reply met with; but the temptation was repulsed, and the tempter baffled; and we read no more of his wife.

V. 11. The friends of Job seem to have been persons eminent for their rank in life, as well as for their wisdom and piety. The Septuagint calls them kings, but without proof. Eliphaz is supposed to have descended from Teman the grandson of Esau: Bildad from Shuah, Abraham's son by Keturah; (*Marg. Ref.*) Zophar also sprang from some of the families, descended from Abraham. For true religion seems to have continued a considerable time in the different branches of that favoured family, even among those who were excluded from the covenant made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. These persons, having heard of Job's great affliction, made an appointment to go to visit and sympathize with him. Their intentions were humane, friendly, and pious; and they had doubtless been the associates of his religion in more prosperous days: yet by their mistake of his case, they not only greatly increased his anguish; but unintentionally concurred with Satan in tempting him to despair, and blasphemy as its never failing effect.

V. 12, 13. Job seems to have been at this time in the open air; when his friends, astonished at what they saw, and perceiving him so altered that they could not know him, expressed their grief by every emphatical token, and burst out into loud lamentations: we need not, however, conclude from the language here used, that he and his friends remained together in the same place all the time preceding their debate, and during its continuance. At proper seasons they came to Job, and sat by him as mourners; but they were so affected by a view of his misery, that they remained silent before him. It is probable, they suspected that his unprecedented calamities were judgments upon him for some enormous crimes, which he had veiled under an hypocritical profession of religion: but they did not choose to augment his grief, by abruptly bringing this charge against him, yet could not use the ordinary topics of consolation. Perhaps they conferred together upon the subject, and agreed to wait and observe his conduct, and to take an opportunity of speaking, as circumstances might appear to them. And perhaps Job suspected the cause of their silence; and his anguish on that account might give Satan an occasion of tempting him to use the passionate language recorded in the ensuing chapter, which confirmed his friends in their harsh suspicions, and gave rise to the subsequent debate.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

Holy angels are not more unwearied in serving God and in doing good, than evil spirits are in rebellion and mischief: and when baffled in their attempts, they are pushed on, by pride and enmity, to still further disappointment and disgrace. As Satan persists in accusing God's people, notwithstanding the evidences they give of piety and integrity: so will his servants upon earth persist in slandering them, in defiance of demonstration itself. From their father they learn to put an ill construction upon the best actions, and to ascribe them to base motives. The piety of believers is called hypocrisy, their self-denial affectation, their liberality ostentation, their resignation want of natural affection, their meekness want of spirit; and their contempt of worldly pleasure, and dislike to trifling and profane company, are ascribed to want of taste, and a morose unsociable disposition. But the Lord will vindicate the character of his servants: he delights in their constancy and submission amidst trials and temptations, because they glorify the power of his grace. He will therefore, at some times, without any other peculiar cause, give their enemies permission to prove them in various ways. They mean to destroy them; but He intends to purify their hearts, exalt their graces, and enhance their glorious recompense: (*Marg. Ref.*) And though the trial may be severe get, it is the post of honour, and the event will be unspeakably happy. The insinuations of Satan

CHAP. III.

Job vehemently curses the day of his birth, 1—10. He complains, because he died not from the womb, and expatiates on the quietness of the grave, 11—19. He longs for present death, and bemoans his misery, 20—26.

[a] AFTER this [b] opened Job his mouth, and [c] cursed his day.

a i. 22. ii. 10.
b Ps. xxxix. 2, c cvi. 33.
c S. Jer. xx. 14, 15.

and his factors are most dangerous when most plausible, and when they are sophistical inferences from undoubted truths. Men are indeed naturally selfish, and prone to disregard all others in comparison of themselves, and their own ease, interest, or indulgence. Hence it is evident we all need an inward and gracious change, that we may learn to love God and our neighbour: and as men will give all they have to save their lives; we should argue, that it is true wisdom to part with our property, nay, with our very lives, to secure the salvation of our immortal souls. But to infer, that all men are alike mercenary, and that the most excellent actions of godly men spring from the same carnal and selfish principles as the most atrocious crimes of the profane, manifests the malice of Satan himself, tends to render the vilest of men contented in their wickedness, subserves the cause of infidelity, and insinuates that all religion is grimace and imposture. Yet who does not often hear such suggestions from those who would not be thought to stand forth the avowed advocates of impiety or atheism? To confute such accusations by stubborn facts, the Lord is pleased to give leave to malice to exert her utmost power, in putting the matter to the trial: in the midst of afflictions and persecutions, he enables the believer to retain his integrity: and whilst the men of the world give even honour, conscience, and their souls, to save their lives; the servant of God renounces all, and even lays down his life, rather than disobey and dishonour his Lord. Thus in innumerable instances have the patient and constant sufferings of godly men confounded, rather than gratified, the malice of their slanderous persecutors; and proved to a demonstration an essential difference betwixt those who are *only* born of the flesh, and those who are born again of the Spirit. We cannot know how far the Lord, in his unsearchable counsels, may see fit to suffer our enemies to prevail. They may be permitted not only to tear from us all earthly comforts, and to fill our bodies and souls with most exquisite agony; but even to seduce our beloved friends to become our tempters or accusers: we should therefore stand prepared for trials, and rejoice with trembling in every external advantage.—In humbling circumstances a humble deportment should be observed: when we are in great pain and sickness, deserted, insulted, destitute of necessaries or convenient attendance, or labouring under a complication of every distress; we should meditate on the sufferings of Job, on his patience, on the love of God to him, and on his happy deliverance; and we should also look unto the suffering Saviour, and compare our light afflictions with his *unknown* sufferings, "lest we be wearied and faint in our minds."

V. 9—13.

The temporal comforts reserved to us, whilst others are removed, often prove the sources of our severest anguish. The enemy knows how to suit his temptations to our circumstances, and to send them by those persons that possess most influence over us: we should then consider, not *who* proposes, but *what* is proposed to us. No temptation is so dangerous to the afflicted as that to despair: when a man is induced to regard God as an irreconcileable enemy, his heart naturally conceives enmity, and vents it in blasphemy; every means of grace is neglected, any crime ventured on with eagerness, and suicide may probably close the horrid career. We should then "watch and pray, that we enter "not into temptation." We ought not to judge of the Lord's love to us, by outward events, or present feelings, but should rest our hopes upon his holy word; and we should consider every hard thought of God as a fiery dart of the enemy, which must be quenched without a moment's delay, by whatever means it has been excited. It is also desirable to possess our souls in meekness, and to answer even our tempters with calmness and reason, as well as with decided abhorrence of sin. None but the foolish will *habitually* say, that there is no hope in God, nor any benefit in serving him: none but the ungodly can deliberately persuade us to despair, blasphemy, or self-murder. But if any one who has appeared to be a pious Christian, should *once*, under urgent distresses, drop a hint which tends to such conclusions; we should remind him, whose work he is doing, and whose language he speaks. Did we duly remember our sins against God, we should not wonder, that amidst our many blessings, we had also heavy afflictions: we should rather say, "it is of the LORD's mercies that "we are not consumed;" and receive the severest of them with thankfulness as well as patience: and thus they would become our richest gain. Those friends, who crush the afflicted believer with hard censures and suspicions, are as *real tempters* as those who persuade them to blasphemy and apostacy. It is an indispensable duty of the Christian to visit and comfort his afflicted brethren, as he hath opportunity; for it is equally useful *to him* as *to them*: and the greatest as well as the meanest should attend unto it, without shrinking from inconveniences or disagreeables. But, alas! we often prove miserable comforters of each other, augmenting instead of alleviating grief. When we are most healthy and vigorous, we should remember to what loathsome diseases our bodies are liable, and that they may shortly become a mass of putrefaction, which could scarcely be known or endured by our most endeared friends. Instead then of being vain of them, or bestowing pains in decorating or pampering them; let us seek for the incorruptible ornaments and unfading beauties of holiness. Let us be thankful for our present measure of health, or the attendance we receive in sickness: and let us look through the grave, to the risen and glorified Jesus, and expect his second coming, when "He shall change our vile bodies, "that they may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, "according to the working, whereby he is able even to "subdue all things unto himself."

2 And Job * spake, and said,

3 [d] Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night *in which* it was said, There is a man child conceived.

4 Let that day be [e] darkness, let not [f] God regard it from above, neither let the light shine upon it.

5 Let darkness and [g] the shadow of death † stain it; [h] let a cloud dwell upon it; ‡ let the blackness of the day terrify it.

6 *As for* that night, let darkness seize upon it: § let it not be joined unto the days of the year; let it not come into the number of the months.

7 Lo, let that night be [i] solitary; let no joyful voice come therein.

8 Let them curse it that curse the day, [k] who are ready to raise up ‖ their mourning.

9 Let the stars of the twilight thereof be dark; let it [l] look for light, but *have* none; neither let it see * the dawning of the day;

10 Because, [m] it shut not up the doors of my *mother's* womb, nor [n] hid sorrow from mine eyes.

* Heb. *answered.*
d x. 18, 19 Jer. xv. 10. xx. 14, 15.
e Ex. x. 22, 23. Joel ii. 2 Am. v. 18. Matt. xxvii. 45 Acts xxvii. 20 Rev. xvi. 10.
f Deut. xi. 12.
g x. 21, 22 xvi. 16. xxiv. 17 xxviii. 3. xxxviii. 17. Ps. xxiii. 4 xliv. 19. cvii. 10 14. Is. ix. 2. Jer. xiii. 16. Am. v. 8. Luke i. 79
† Or, *challenge*
h Deut. iv. 11 Ez. xxx. 3. xxxiv. 12. Joel ii. 2. Heb. xii. 18.
‡ Or, *let them terrify it, as those* who have *a bitter day.* Jer. iv. 28. Am. viii. 10.
§ Or, *let it not rejoice among the days.*
i Is. xiii. 20—22. xxiv. 5. Jer. vii. 34 Rev. xviii. 22, 23.
k 2 Chr. xxxv. 25. Jer. ix. 17, 18. Am. v. 16 Matt. xi. 17 Mark v. 38
‖ Or, *a leviathan.* xli. 10
l xxx. 26 Jer. viii. 15 xiii. 16.
* Heb. *the eye-lids of the morning.* xli. 18.
m x. 18, 19 Gen. xx. 18 xxix. 31 32. 1 Sam. i. 5. Ec. vi. 3—5. Jer. xx. 17, 18.
n vi. 2, 3. x. 1. xxiii. 2. Ec. xi. 10.

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1. Here the style of the book is changed to poetry, which is adorned by bold figures, according to the genius of the East. For seven days Job's friends had come and sat with him, without speaking either consolation to him, or mentioning their suspicions; but doubtless their distant and reserved behaviour increased his uneasiness. At the same time, we may suppose, that Satan assaulted his mind with all his temptations, to fill him with hard thoughts of God, as if he were severe, unjust, and his enemy; to shake his confidence and hope; and by filling him with horror and dismay, to urge him to "curse God to his face!" His permission seems to have extended to this, as well as to the torturing of his body; provided he did not kill him, or drive him distracted. In this Job was an especial type of Christ, whose inward sufferings, both in the garden and on the cross, are generally allowed to have been far the most dreadful, and in a great degree occasioned by the assaults of the devil in that hour of darkness; and when Job's trial was come to his extremity, we may conclude, that he was deprived of all comfortable sense of God's favour, and filled with dread of his wrath. Without we bring these inward trials into the account, we shall not readily comprehend the change that took place in his conduct, from the entire resignation of the preceding chapters, to the impatience which appears here, and in the subsequent part of the book. But this consideration solves the difficulty: his inward conflict and anguish, added to all his outward sufferings, caused in-dwelling sin to work powerfully, and at length it burst forth in many improper expressions. He long repressed the thoughts of his heart; but at last "He opened his "mouth;" not to utter wise instructions, deliberately and gravely, (according to the general import of that expression,) but bitter execrations upon the day of his birth. For he vainly hoped to ease his mind by giving vent to the fire which burned within. The experienced believer, however, who knows that a few drops of this bitter cup are more dreadful than the sharpest afflictions when preserved from inward temptation, and favoured with the sweet sense of the love and presence of God, will not be much surprised, to find that Job proved himself a man of like passions with others, and prone to folly and impatience: but he will rejoice to find that Satan was disappointed, and could not prove him a hypocrite; for though he cursed the day of his birth, he did not curse his God.

V. 2—10. Here we find Job venting his anguish by a variety of curses on the day of his birth, (which is generally celebrated with joy:) because he would thus declare a vain wish that he had never been born. He would have the day and night on which he was born to the joy of his parents, expunged from the year; or at least to be one continued and dreary night. He would have it marked with tokens of God's abhorrence, and by every terrifying appearance; that men might dread its approach, spend it in solitude, and rejoice when it was over: even such a season as the Egyptians experienced during the plague of darkness. He would have it cursed by those who superstitiously marked certain days as ominous; and employed in wailings by those who were engaged to mourn at funerals; or, as some interpret it, spent in horrid incantations, by those who dealt with Satan, and brought him up by their witchcrafts: for the original is literally, "those who are ready to raise up Leviathan." (*Is.* xxvii. 1.) And all this, because *the day* did not prevent his being born, and by making his mother's womb his grave, preserve him from his present misery; (*Note, Jer.* xx. 14—18.) The wildness, absurdity, and impossibility of these wishes denote the tempest of his soul: the cruelty to his mother, whose miserable death should, as he thought, have prevented his wretched life; and the ill-will to mankind, to whom he would bequeath such a dreadful day, may properly be noticed; but such exclamations, being the language of passion, cannot be measured by the standard of reason. They however imply an ungrateful contempt of God's gifts, and rebellion against his will: and they are utterly unbecoming a sinner under a dispensation of mercy, or a believer in a state of grace. But during inward darkness and temptation, Satan so stirs up the corruption of the heart, that the plainest truths and promises are forgotten, former and present mercies are disregarded, future prospects are clouded, and the soul verges to despondency and blasphemy: yet is held back by the counteracting efficacy of divine grace, which subsists and operates, though it does not decidedly prevail; thus the more dreadful effects are prevented, and in time the soul recovers its composure. Doubtless Job was afterwards heartily ashamed of this language: but what may we suppose his judgment of it is at present, in the full enjoyment of unchangeable feli-

11 ¶ Why [o] died I not from the
p Ps. xxii. 9, 10. lxxi 6. cxxxix. 13—16. Is xlvi. 3.
p when I came out of the belly?
12 Why did [q] the knees prevent me?
q Gen. xxx. 3. 1. 23. Is. lxvi 12. Ez. xvi. 4, 5.
or why the breasts that I should suck?
13 For now should I have lain still,
r Ec. vi. 3—5. ix. 10.
and been quiet. I should have slept;
r then had I been at rest,
s xxx. 23. 1 Kings ii. 10 xi. 43. Ps. xlix 6—10. 14. lxxxix 48 Ec. viii 8. Is xiv. 10 16 Ez. xxvii 18—32
14 [s] With kings and counsellors of
t xv. 28 Is. v. 8. Ez xxvi 20.
the earth, which [t] built desolate places
for themselves;
15 Or with princes that had gold,
u xxii. 25 Num. xxii 18. 1 Kings x. 27 Is ii. 7. Zeph. i 18.
who [u] filled their houses with silver:
16 Or as [x] an hidden untimely birth
x Ps lviii. 8. 1 Cor. xv 8.
I had not been; as infants *which* never
saw light.
17 There [y] the wicked cease *from*
y xiv 13. Ps lv 5—8. John xv. 20 xvi 22 2 Thes i 6, 7
troubling; and there * the weary be
* Heb. *wearied in strength*
z Is lvii 1, 2 Heb iv 9 11. Rev xiv 13
z at rest.
a Ex v 6—8. 15. —19 Judg iv. 3. Is xiv. 13.
18 *There* the prisoners rest together;
a they hear not the voice of the oppressor.

19 [b] The small and great are there;
c and the servant *is* free from his master.
20 [d] Wherefore is [e] light given to him
that is in misery, and life unto [f] the bitter *in* soul?
21 [g] Which † long for death, but it
cometh not; and [h] dig for it more than
for hid treasures;
22 Which rejoice exceedingly, *and*
are glad when they can find the grave?
23 *Why is light given* to a man [i] whose
way is hid, and whom God hath [k] hedged in?
24 For [l] my sighing cometh ‡ before
I eat, and [m] my roarings are poured out
like the waters.
25 For [ϕ] the thing which I greatly
feared is come upon me, and [n] that
which I was afraid of is come unto me.
26 I was not in safety, [o] neither had I
rest, neither was I quiet; yet trouble came.

b xxx. 23. Ps. xlix. 2. 6—10. Ec viii. 8 xii. 5. 7 Luke xvi. 22, 23. Heb. ix. 28.
c Ps. xlix 14—20.
d vi 9. vii 15, 16.
e 16. xxxiii 28. 30.
f vii. 15, 16. 1 Sam. i. 10. 2 Kings iv. 27. Prov. xxxi. 6.
g Num. xi 15. 1 Kings xix. 4. Jon iv 3. 8 Rev. ix. 6, Heb. *wait.*
h Prov ii. 4.
i Is. xl. 27.
k xii 14 xix 8. Lam. iii 7. 9. Hos ii. 6.
l vii 19 Ps. lxxx 5. cii. 9.
‡ Heb. *before my meat.*
m Ps xxii 1, 2. xxxviii. 8 Lam. iii. 8.
ϕ Heb *I feared a fear, and it came upon me*
n i. 5. xxxi. 24, 25.
o xxx. 23.

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city? Does he now curse the day of his birth? Does he wish that he had never been born? His own reproof of his wife belonged also to himself, though not in the same degree: for on this occasion he spake as one of the foolish men speak, and thus confirmed his friends in their unfavourable opinion of him.

V. 11—19. When Job had exhausted his rhetoric in cursing the day of his birth, he next inquired why he did not die as soon as he was born? And thus he not only murmured against God for sparing his life; but expostulated with those that were present at his birth, as if now before him, for their tender attention to him in that helpless state! for had not they nursed and suckled him when a new-born infant, he should not have lived to endure his present sufferings. The event of his afflictions to himself and to the church, through successive ages, fully resolve his questions, and show for what important purposes he was preserved. But under this temptation he thought of little but relief from present suffering: he knew that in the grave no pain was felt, and for the moment he scarcely looked any further; though in more lucid intervals, he expressed a faith and hope concerning the eternal world. His present misery made him at the moment think insensibility most desirable: and he amused himself with imagining, that if he had died from the womb, he should have lain as quiet in the grave, as the most mighty monarchs, conquerors, or politicians; or as the most wealthy princes, who retained nothing of their acquisitions but a desolate tomb, and were not a whit superior to a still-born infant; there he considered labourers, prisoners, and slaves, as rescued from their oppressors, free as their masters, and at rest from their labour and pain. His words indeed contain important truths: but if exemption from present suffering were all to be expected, there would be little reason to look forward to death with comfort, or to want to be rid of our present life.

V. 20—23. Finding the vanity of his impossible wishes, Job next complained that he was still forced to live, though weary of life: and he inquired the reason, why *light*, that is, *life*, was given to the miserable? He did not mention the name of God, perhaps out of reverence to him, for his better judgment checked the madness of his passion; but he evidently reflected upon him as unkind, in not at once terminating his sufferings by death. He dared not rush uncalled into the presence of his Judge, by an act of desperate rebellion and murder: but he would exceedingly rejoice, if the Lord would dispatch him, and be more glad of a grave than of hid treasures; and he supposed that many others were of the same judgment. He could not suppose that any good end could be answered by the continuance of his life: for every thing in Providence and in the frame of his mind, was so dark and dismal, that he was like a man who had lost his way, or who was so enclosed by powerful enemies on every side that he had no prospect of escape. The tempter seems to have kept the thought of the eternal world from his mind: but the event fully showed, why the Lord continued his life, both for his own good and for that of millions.

V. 24—26. By way of apology for his vehement complaints, Job at length mentioned the excess of his sufferings. Nothing but sighs and groans occupied his time: his very food, which prolonged his miserable life, was mingled with them, and they flowed forth incessantly like waters from a fountain. He was, however, conscious, that in prosperity he had not indulged carnal security: he had feared a change, and watched against those sins, in himself and his family, which might provoke the divine displeasure: yet his solicitude had not prevented his calamities, which equalled the worst of his fears. His former expectation of trials, and preparation for them, should have been a comfort to him under his sufferings: but through the power of Satan and the prevalence of corruption, it appeared an aggravation of his misery.

CHAP. IV.

Eliphaz reproves Job for impatience, and want of confidence in God, 1—6. *He states that divine judgments come not on the righteous, but on the wicked,* 7—11. *He relates his vision, confirming this doctrine,* 12—21.

THEN Eliphaz the Temanite [a] answered and said, [a iii. 1, 2. vi. 1. viii. 1.]

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—10.

There is an essential difference between the true believer and the hypocrite; and the former will never finally apostatize or despair: yet under urgent troubles and temptations, the evil of the heart frequently bursts forth in very culpable words and actions. None but the Saviour ever endured the extremity of anguish and temptation, without any abatement of his love, any mixture of sin, or indications of impatience. The pious reader will doubtless recollect seasons when, under afflictions comparatively light, his heart hath risen into the same kind of peevishness, ingratitude, rebellion, and despondency, that Job discovered. Many will with shame recollect, that they have conceived and uttered similar rash and foolish wishes; some will be conscious that half Job's burden would have extorted from them still more desperate complaints; and these reflections should lay us low in humiliation before God. We should also take shame to ourselves, when we consider the folly and impossibility of those things for which we have often wished: and in our sober moments we should meditate on the consequences which would have resulted, had they been granted, to ourselves, our relatives, and our neighbours: and we shall often find that they were unnatural and cruel, as well as impious, and destructive to our own happiness. Indeed the habit of *wishing* is altogether foolish and sinful. Those wishes, which respect the past, can only express our impatience: and if the object of our desires at the present, or for the future, be lawful, we should make it the subject of our *prayers;* if not, we should silence ourselves and the tempter, by saying, "It "is written, Thou shalt not covet." When our passions overpower reason, the soul becomes as a ship in a violent storm, without compass, rudder, or pilot; and, if it be possible, we ought to cast anchor till the storm subsides. Profound silence, interrupted only by ejaculations, should be observed: we can in such a case do no good, but must get harm by either speaking or acting, though we shall naturally be most earnest in both. Indeed man is born in sin, and to sorrow; and if left to ourselves and the tendency of our own corruptions, without remedy or mercy; it would have been better for us never to have been born; yet even in that case it would have been diabolical rage and enmity, to have charged our guilt and misery upon God, from whom every good and perfect gift, and nothing else, can proceed. But blessed be his name! even the earth is full of his goodness. This present life may be made very tolerable, if we accommodate ourselves to our circumstances, and attend to our duty: and we are under a dispensation of mercy; and may hope for the favour of God and eternal felicity, whatever our former lives have been, if *now* willing to accept of Jesus Christ, as our Saviour from wrath and from sin. By "giving diligence to make our "calling and election sure," we may obtain good evidence that we are born of God; and his children are heirs of everlasting glory: in that case we certainly can have no cause to curse the day of our birth, and if a thought of that kind come in, we should treat it as a temptation of the enemy, and reject it immediately. But what *a day*, or rather what an *eternal night*, will that be which awaits impenitent sinners! Condemned to outer darkness, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth; banished for ever from the favour and presence of God; surrounded with horror and despair; employed in curses and imprecations; wearied of existence, and in vain longing for annihilation; and associated with the devil and his angels! That day God will not regard from above, no light will shine upon it for ever. Who then can help feeling the propriety, yea, necessity of praying, "From this destruction good Lord deliver us!" May then all, who read these remarks, take warning "to "flee from the wrath to come, and lay hold for refuge on "the hope set before us" in the Gospel.

V. 11—26.

If in this accepted time and day of salvation, we in good earnest seek and serve God, we may regard the formation of our bodies, the gift of our immortal souls, the care taken of us in infancy and childhood, and all the Lord's protection of us and long suffering toward us ever since, as intended that we may be for ever happy. Then indeed we may well cease to envy kings or princes, and all the wise and wealthy of the world; who will soon be levelled in the grave with the infant that died from the womb, but who will have an awful account to render of their stewardship before the tribunal of God. We should indeed habituate ourselves to view the grave without terror: for we shall there feel no pain or uneasiness, and be out of the reach of every oppressor and persecutor. But there remaineth a better rest for the people of God; a rest from sin, temptation, and conflict, and from sorrows and labours, in the immediate presence and ineffable enjoyment of God. Thence both wicked men and evil spirits will be excluded, and cease from troubling us for ever; there the weary will indeed be at rest, and the poor slave and prisoner enjoy the glorious liberty of the children of God. Nay, as far as we trust and obey the Lord Jesus, we here find rest to our souls; though in the world we have tribulation. It is indeed far better to depart, and be with him: but we must not undervalue life, though spent in sufferings; seeing it will work for our good at last, and some way or other subserve his glory and the good of our brethren. Let us then learn to keep the eternal world more constantly in view; that we may not be much disconcerted about temporal things.—And should any take up these pages, who are longing for

2 *If* we essay * to commune with thee, wilt thou [b] be grieved? but who can † withhold himself from speaking?

3 Behold, [c] thou hast instructed many, and [d] thou hast strengthened the weak hands.

4 Thy words have [e] upholden him that was falling, and thou hast strengthened the ‡ feeble knees.

5 But now [f] it is come upon thee, and [g] thou faintest; [h] it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled.

6 *Is* not *this* [i] thy fear, [k] thy confidence, [l] thy hope, and [m] the uprightness of thy ways?

7 Remember, I pray thee, [n] who *ever* perished, being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off?

8 Even as I have seen [o] they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same.

9 By [p] the blast of God they perish, and by * the breath of his nostrils are they consumed.

10 The roaring of the lion, and the voice of the fierce lion, and [q] the teeth of the young lions are broken.

11 [r] The old lion [s] perisheth for lack of prey, and [t] the stout lion's whelps are scattered abroad.

* Heb. *a word.*
b 2 Cor. ii. 4—6. vii. 8—10.
† Heb. *refrain from words.* xxxii 18—20. Jer vi. 11. xx 9. Acts iv. 20
c Gen. xviii. 19. 1 Sam xii 22. Prov. x. 2 xv. 7. xvi 21. Eph iv 29 Col. iv. 6.
d xvi. 5. Deu. iii. 28 Ezra vi 22. Ez xiii. 22 Luke xxii. 32 43
e Ps cxlv. 14. Pro xii. 18 xvi 23, 24. 2 Cor. ii 7. vii. 6. 1 Thes. v. 14.
‡ Heb. *bowing knees.* Is xxxv 3, 4. Dan. v. 6. Heb. xii. 12.
f iii. 25. 26. Heb. xiii. 1.
g Prov. xxiv. 10. 2 Cor. iv. 1. 16. Heb. xii 3. 5.
h i. 11. ii. 5 xix. 21.——i i. 1. 9, 10 2 Kings xx. 3.——k xiii. 15. Prov. iii 26. xiv. 26. l xvii. 15 1 Pet i. 13. 17.——m i. 8. xvi. 17. xxiii. 11, 12. xxvii. 5, 6. xxix 12—17. xxxi. 1, &c.
n ix. 22, 23. Ps. xxxvii. 25. Ec vii. 15. ix. 1, 2. Acts xxviii. 4. 2 Pet ii. 9
o Ps. vii. 14—16. Prov xxii. 8. Jer iv 18 Hos. viii 7 x. 12, 13. 2 Cor. ix 6. Gal. vi 7, 8.
p Ex. xv. 8 10. 2 Kings xix. 7. Ps xviii 15.
* That is, *by his anger* xv. 30. Is xi. 4 xxx. 33. 2 Thes. ii. 8.
q xxix. 17. Ps. iii. 7. lvii. 4 lviii. 6. Prov. xxx. 14. Rev. ix. 8
r xxxviii. 39. Gen. xlix. 9 Num. xxiii. 24. xxiv. 9. Ps. vii. 2. Jer. iv. 7 Hos. xi. 10. 2 Tim. iv 17.
s Ps. xxxiv 10.
t i. 10. viii. 3, 4. xxvii. 14, 15.

death and tempted to suicide; let them compare their present sufferings, *not with the quiet of the grave*, but with the scriptural declarations of the state of the damned; which must be the lot of all who die in rebellion and despair, and by an act of deliberate murder. Let them remember that this desperation is the suggestion of the old liar, and murderer from the beginning: let them stop their ears to his temptations, and hearken to the Saviour's inviting voice, and come to him with their burdens and sorrows: and they shall find rest to their souls, and learn to bless God for temporal life as the means of eternal salvation. Finally, in prosperity let us all watch against carnal security; and under trials let us pray for patience: and let us look to him, "who suffered being tempted that he might be able to "succour them, that are tempted." Then, though our way seem stopt, and our hope lost for a season; we shall ere long be enabled to declare from our own experience, that they who wait for the Lord shall never be ashamed.

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1. It is probable, that Job's friends had previously conferred upon his case; and suspected from his extraordinary sufferings and impatient wishes that he was a wicked man; they therefore thought it incumbent upon them to charge this home on his conscience, in order to induce him to repentance: and Eliphaz, who seems to have been the senior or superior of them, undertook to open the matter to him. Thus, when Satan failed of proving his charge against Job, he suggested to his friends this suspicion of his hypocrisy, that they might grieve and tempt him by it! For the argument betwixt Job and his friends was precisely on the same point, which at Satan's instigation was to be decided by his behaviour under affliction; namely, whether he was a godly man or a hypocrite. Satan undertook to prove him a hypocrite by afflicting him; and his friends concluded him one, because he was afflicted, and showed impatience under his extreme sufferings. This we must keep continually in mind, if we would understand the ensuing debate.

V. 2. Eliphaz introduced his discourse with apparent modesty: yet the abrupt manner in which he addressed Job, showed that he was about to censure and reprove him. He would attempt to converse with Job on the subject of his extraordinary sufferings, and his despondency under them: but he was afraid he would be grieved at his words. The case, however, was urgent: for who in such circumstances, "could refrain from speaking?" This intimated, that he thought Job either extremely culpable, or in great danger of final destruction.

V. 3—6. It seems that Job had possessed a singular talent of giving seasonable counsel and encouragement, as circumstances required. He knew how, by animating exhortations, to strengthen and comfort the desponding, that with renewed alacrity they might resume their work. He was also capable of giving suitable cautions to those who were ready to fall into sin or under temptation, and to excite them to resistance. And he had assiduously improved his talent; thus becoming a blessing to many. This Eliphaz allowed; and, along with due commendation, he might very properly have given Job a plain but gentle reproof, for his present impatience and for seeming to abandon all hope. But his application was too harsh, and more suited to dishearten, and even exasperate, one in Job's situation, than to convince and humble him. He certainly made much too light of Job's afflictions, as if not much greater than those under which he had comforted others. "It is come upon thee." "It toucheth thee." He seems to have also spoken too strongly of Job's impatience. He indeed bitterly complained, and uttered many vain and rebellious wishes: but he did not *faint;* for then he would have yielded to Satan's temptation, and followed the counsel of his wife. And in the question Eliphaz proposes: "Is this thy fear, &c?" he appears to have expressed himself in a manner suited to give Job the idea, that he considered his former reputation for piety, confidence in God, and integrity of life, as undeserved: seeing he had now cast off all reverence of God and hope in his mercy; and had broken out into the language of despair and rebellion. Some, however, think that he only meant to expostulate with him on the inconsistency of his conduct; and to exhort him to reduce to practice the counsel he had given others; and in this emergency to support the character he had before acquired, but was in danger of forfeiting.

V. 7—11. Most expositors suppose, that Eliphaz intended, in this passage, to bring a direct charge of hypo-

12 ¶ Now [u] a thing was * secretly brought to me, and mine ear received [x] a little thereof.

13 In [y] thoughts from the visions of the night, when [z] deep sleep falleth on men,

14 [a] Fear † came upon me, and trembling, which made ‡ all my bones to shake.

15 Then [b] a spirit passed before my face; [c] the hair of my flesh stood up:

16 It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof: an image *was* before mine eyes; § *there was* silence, and I heard a voice, *saying*,

17 [d] Shall mortal man be more just than God? [e] shall a man be more pure than his Maker?

18 Behold, [f] he put no trust in his servants; ‖ and his angels he charged with folly:

19 How muc less *in* them that [g] dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation *is* in the dust, *which* are [h] crushed before the moth?

20 They are * destroyed [i] from morning to evening: [k] they perish for ever [l] without any regarding *it*.

21 Doth not their [m] excellency, *which is* in them go away? they [n] die even without wisdom.

u Ps. lxii. 11.
* Heb. *by stealth.*
x 1 Cor. xiii. 12.
y xxxiii. 15, 16. Gen. xx. 3. xxviii.12. xxxi. 24 xlvi. 2 Num. xii. 6. xxii. 19, 20. Dan. ii. 19. 28, 29. iv. 5.
z Gen. ii. 21. xv 12. Ps. cxix. 120. Dan viii.18.x 9.
a vii 14. Is. vi. 5. Dan. x. 11. Hab. iii. 16. Luke i. 12. 29. Rev i.17.
† Heb *met me*
‡ Heb. *the multitude of.* xxxiii. 19.
b Ps. civ. 4. Mat. xiv. 26. Heb. i. 7. 14.
c Is. xiii. 8. xxi. 3, 4. Dan. v. 6.
§ Or, *I heard a still voice.*
‖ Kings xix. 12.
d viii 3. ix. 2. xxxv. 2. xl. 8. Gen. xviii. 25. Ps cxliii 2.cxlv. 17. Ec. vii. 20. Jer. xii. 1. Rom ii. 5. iii. 4—7. 19. ix. 20 xi. 33.

e ix. 30. 31 xiv.4. xv. 14—16. xxv 4. Jer. xvii. 9. Mark vii. 20—23. Rev. iv. 8.
f xv. 15, 16. xxv, 5, 6. Ps ciii. 20, xl. civ. 4 Is. vi. 2, 3.
‖ Or, *nor in his angels*, in whom *he put light.* 2 Pet. ii. 4. Jude 6.
g x. 9. xiii. 12. xxxiii. 6. Gen. ii. 7. iii. 19 xviii.27. Ec.xii 7. 2 Cor v. 1.
h xiii. 28. xiv. 2. Ps xxxix. 11. xc. 5—7. ciii. 15. 16. cxlvi. 4. 1 Pet. i. 24.
* Heb. *beaten to pieces.* 2 Chr.xv. 6.
i Is. xxxviii. 12, 13.
k xiv. 14. xvi 22 Ps. xxxix. 13.
xcii. 7 ——— l xviii. 17. xx. 7. 2 Chr. xxi. 20. Ps. xxxvii. 36. Prov. x. 7. ——— m Ps. xxxix. 5 11. xlix. 14. Is. xiv. 16. Luke xvi. 22, 23. James i. 11. ——— n xxxvi 12. Ps. xlix. 20. Luke xii. 20.

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crisy and iniquity against Job; which he had only insinuated in the preceding verses. 'Eliphaz, incensed at the complaint of Job, instead of condoling with him, and pitying the miseries which had put him into this agony, and applying fit lenitives to his anguish, bluntly rebukes him for not following the good advice he had given to others in their adversity; and tells him he had reason to suspect his piety, because the innocent were not wont to suffer such things, but only wicked oppressors, whom, though never so mighty, God had always humbled.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)—'Is not this thy storming and fretting at the hand of God a plain argument, that all thy religion, or pretended fear of God, was only upon a confidence that he would still bless and prosper thee?—I have seen and observed that men speed according to their actions, and reap the fruit of their evil doings in evil sufferings.' (*Bp. Hall.*) Some, however, think that he did not mean to decide on his character, though his language was harsh, and implied strong suspicions; but to show him, that if he was not a wicked man, he had no occasion to despond, as the innocent and righteous were never left to perish; and indeed the counsel he afterwards gives favours this interpretation. (v. 8. 17, 18.)—By *innocent* and *righteous*, Eliphaz meant believers, godly men, in opposition to the profane or hypocritical. But his questions seem to imply, that no such persons ever were cut off by sudden judgments, so as to perish as to this world: and thus the restoration of Job to health and prosperity, was made the test of his sincerity or hypocrisy. Doubtless the righteous never finally and eternally perish: but righteous Abel had been slain by wicked Cain, and many godly men had been greatly afflicted in this world; so that his general rule admitted of many exceptions. It is also *often* seen, that "they who plow iniquity and sow wickedness;" that is, who labour to be rich and great by fraud, oppression, and iniquity, meet with a recompense in this world; the breath or anger of the Lord blasting all their prosperity, and consuming all their substance. And though they have been strong, courageous, and fierce as lions: yet they have been strangely defeated of their aim, and brought to ruin with their posterity whom they sought to exalt by cruelty and rapine. But it is not *always* so; nor are they the only persons, who meet with grievous calamities in this life: and therefore it was uncandid to insinuate, without evidence, as Eliphaz evidently did, that Job got his wealth by wickedness; and was spoiled of it and bereaved of his children, by the just judgment of God upon him.

V. 12—16. Before there was any written word of God, believers received their knowledge in divine things, either by tradition or immediate revelation: and there is reason to conclude, that when necessary, they were generally directed in the latter way, either personally, or by their brethren. Accordingly Eliphaz, perhaps while meditating on the case of Job, had a remarkable vision, which he supposed to be a divine confirmation of his doctrine: as the instruction was brought to him unexpectedly, and seemed so opposite to the present case as far as he was enabled to receive it. While musing in retirement on various subjects, or on former visions with which he had been favoured, at a time when others were asleep; he was suddenly seized with excessive consternation and amazement, at what he saw and heard: for a spirit or angel passing before him, stood still in his presence. He could not indeed describe what he had seen; but he remembered the words, which were distinctly uttered, amidst the silence of the night. It is observable that the very idea of appearances from the world of spirits is terrifying to the heart of fallen man: sin hath broken off our original communication with it, and we instinctively dread evil from that quarter.

V. 17—21. These verses seem to contain the precise words of the spirit who appeared to Eliphaz. If God should punish those who did not deserve it; the innocent sufferer would be more just than his judge, and man would be more pure or free from blame than his Maker. And as this supposition would be blasphemy; it must be allowed, even when we cannot perceive it, that every one deserves all that he doth or shall suffer on earth or in hell. It is therefore evidently wrong to complain under afflictions, as if we were unjustly dealt with; or to justify our whole conduct before God, who hath condemned us as sinners: and on this ground Eliphaz might have fairly

CHAP. V.

Eliphaz proceeds to show the close connexion between wickedness and misery, and that man is born to trouble, 1—7. He recommends seeking to God in affliction, by declaring his power and wonderful works, 8—16. He speaks of the benefit of correction; and the privileges of those who daily improve it, 17—27.

CALL now, if there be any that will answer thee; [a] and to which of [b] the saints wilt thou * turn?

[a] xv. 8—10. Is xli. 1. 21—23. Heb. xii. 1.
[b] iv. 18. xv. 15. Deut xxxiii. 2. 3. Ps. cvi. 16.
* Or, *look.*

reproved Job's impatience; and exhorted him to submit to the justice, and hope in the mercy, of God under his sufferings. Again he was shown, that God put no trust in any of his servants, but even charged his angels with folly, or inconstancy, as the original signifies. Though glorious and holy creatures, they are fallible and mutable, except as confirmed by the Lord: they execute his wise and righteous counsels: but would soon show their want of wisdom, if trusted to manage any part of the government of the world according to their own mind. Nay, compared with the infinite knowledge and wisdom of God, they are chargeable with ignorance, being utterly unable to comprehend the vast designs of the great Creator and Lord of the universe; except as he pleases to unfold them. How much less then may man be trusted! How much more may he be charged with ignorance and folly! He dwells imprisoned in a body of clay, chained to the earth from whence it was taken, and to which it must soon return; as a poor cottage which is mouldering to the mean materials of which it is built, and about to mingle with the dust on which it has its foundation. The feebleness of mankind should also be considered: they may be crushed as easy as a moth, or destroyed by the meanest insect; the destruction of the species is perpetual; men perish from the earth for ever, without any one greatly noticing so common an event. Then all their excellency vanisheth: and they die without having had time to make much observation, or acquire extensive knowledge, compared with that of other intelligent beings: and very commonly without being made wise unto salvation. And shall such creatures pretend to fathom the mysteries of Providence, to arraign the appointments of God, to charge him with injustice, or to venture an opinion on subjects of which they can know little or nothing! The vision was full of instruction: but the use Eliphaz seemed disposed to make of it, was contrary to its leading design. Instead of condemning Job because of his sufferings; he should have inferred, that he and his friends were incompetent to decide upon the case, or to understand the deep designs of God in this mysterious dispensation.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—11.

We ought not needlessly to grieve the afflicted: yet, if we wisely love them, we cannot refrain from speaking those things, which we deem conducive to the good of their souls. In attempting this, however, we should aim to unite tenderness with faithfulness. Just commendations excellently introduce needful reproofs, by preparing the mind to receive them as the result of love, and as forming a striking contrast betwixt different parts of a man's behaviour. But if the application be overcharged; if that be imputed to impiety, which springs from infirmity, it will lose its effect. It requires therefore much heavenly wisdom, to instruct, encourage, and reprove those, who are tempted and perplexed, who have fallen into sins or sufferings, and who are ready to faint, or turn aside, or yield to despondency, through disappointments and discouraging trials. They who possess gifts suited to this work, should be diligent in it, as they have opportunity, whatever be their circumstances or avocations: and the communication from the treasure of wisdom and knowledge, which God hath committed to some, for the instruction and consolation of many, is at least as useful and acceptable as the wealth that is bestowed in providing for the destitute. Yet it is more easy to counsel than to practise: and we all find, that our own arguments, encouragements, and exhortations to others, are insufficient to calm and support our own souls in seasons of darkness and distress. It behooves us therefore to watch and pray, that we may not by our conduct defeat the effect of our instructions, and expose ourselves and the truths of God to reproach and contempt. For, men will expect from us in proportion to our profession; and make fewer allowances for those that have instructed many, than for others. Even pious friends will not always enter into our feelings under distresses and temptations; but will count that *a touch*, which we feel as a *mortal wound*. Our infirmities may even give occasion to those of our brethren whom we most love, to suspect and censure us as hypocrites. And this is one of the sharpest trials that can befal a true believer; but we should prepare to meet it. The best are fallible, and often defective in judgment and tenderness; Satan can easily poison their minds with suspicions, and the Lord may permit it for our humiliation. When this is the case, all apparent good in a man's conduct will be ascribed to corrupt motives; and all that is evil aggravated: an irreverent expression, dictated by sudden passion, will be deemed a deliberate casting off the fear of God; an angry word will be termed revenge or hatred; a desponding wish will be construed into rebellion and despair; and the apparent uprightness, and professed hope in God, maintained for years, will be at once considered as presumption, selfishness, or hypocrisy. We should surely be very cautious not to concur with Satan, in thus accusing our brethren, and urging them to renounce their confidence in God. But if it be our trial to be thus suspected and condemned, we need not wonder: better men than we have been so treated; and if we are conscious of sincerity in the midst of our infirmities, the Lord will at length plead our cause, and make our righteousness as the noon-day. Our worst mistakes are occasioned by our deducing false inferences from undeniable truth. It is certain that none ever perished

2 For [c] wrath killeth [d] the foolish man,
and * envy slayeth the [f] silly one.
3 I have seen the foolish [g] taking root:
but suddenly I [h] cursed his habitation.
4 His children are [i] far from safety, and
[k] they are crushed in the gate, [l] neither
is there any to deliver *them*.
5 Whose [m] harvest the hungry eateth
up, and taketh it even out of [n] the thorns,
and [o] the robber [p] swalloweth up their
substance.

c xviii 4. Job iv 9. d Ps. xiv 1 lxxv. 4. xcii 6. xciv. 8. cvii. 17 Prov. i. 22, 23. viii. 5. Ec vii 9. e Gen xxxi. 1 1 Sam. xviii. 8, 9. * Or, *indignation*. Rom. ii. 8. f Hos. vii. 11. 2 Tim iii. 6. —— g xxvii 8 Ps xxxvii. 35, 36. lxxviii. 3—9. 16—20 xcii. 7 Jer. xii. 1—3. —— h Deut. xxvii. 15, &c. Ps lxix. 25. Acts i. 20 —— i iv. 10, 11. viii 4 xviii 16—19 Ex xx 5 Ps cix. 9—15. cxix 155.

k i. 19. Luke xiii 4, 5. l x. 7. Ps. vii. 2. 1 22. m Deu xxviii. 33. b) Judg. vi 3—6 n Judg vi 11 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11. o i 15 17 xii. 6. xviii 9. Hos. viii. 7. p ii 3. xx. 15 Jer li. 34. 44. Lam. ii. 5. 16.

being innocent: that no godly man was ever finally miserable, no impenitent sinner finally happy: that according as a man sows, so shall he reap: and that many tyrants and oppressors, and their posterity, have been wonderfully destroyed. But it is equally true that many righteous men are sorely afflicted through life, and are suddenly cut off, and taken to heaven: whilst numbers of the wicked live long and prosper, die in outward peace, and leave their riches to their children; being "themselves reserved to "the day of judgment to be punished." It is therefore as absurd to judge of a man's character by his outward circumstances, as to decide upon it from one single action, which is contrary to the general tenour of his life.

V. 12—21.

The written word of God speaks to us without those terrifying circumstances, which would attend an immediate communication with the world of spirits, and which even faith and communion with God would not enable us entirely to overcome. And we can review it from day to day, that we may fully receive the instruction contained in it. We may therefore be thankful for this method of knowing the will of God; nor should we regret, that we may not expect immediate revelation, and do not witness those wonders which holy men of old did. Yet the knowledge of divine truth is of such vast importance, that no terror could counterbalance the advantage of it: and they who lay aside their Bibles, or forsake the preaching of the Gospel, because they make them tremble at the prospect of their guilt and danger, seem to think it better to *feel*, than to *fear*, the wrath of God. Retirement is favourable to our intercourse with heaven: and though we must now judge of every thing by the written word; yet if a dream suggest a profitable hint, we should receive it with gratitude. Assuredly, were our hearts more holy, both our waking and sleeping thoughts would be more pure and heavenly. Revelation from God is not intended to satisfy our curiosity, but to excite our attention to those truths and duties which before we knew not or neglected. Among other important lessons, we are peculiarly concerned to understand the scriptural declarations of the infinite majesty, wisdom, justice, and goodness of God; of the comparative ignorance, meanness, and weakness of the most exalted creatures; and of the guilt, pollution, folly, and frailty of fallen man; the shortness of his continuance on earth, and the future consequences of his conduct here. These truths, if well digested, will cause us to adore with profound reverence the glorious Lord of all, and to abase ourselves in the dust before him: we shall then learn to cease from all dependence on our own wisdom, strength, and righteousness, and become calm and resigned under afflictions: our objections and excuses will be silenced, and we shall be teachable and simple as little children; disposed gladly to trust the Lord's mercy, to accept of his salvation, to yield ourselves to his will, to take the place and do the work assigned us, to prepare for death and judgment; and not to meddle with those deep matters, which are out of our reach and beyond our scanty comprehension. But for want of this knowledge, how daringly do men impeach the wisdom, justice and goodness of God! How do they object, murmur, justify themselves, quarrel with Providence, and reject or explain away, the truths and precepts of revelation; as if they were more wise, righteous, and holy than their Maker! Yet it would be presumption in an arch-angel, to deem himself competent to decide on the propriety of God's unfathomable counsels, or to comprehend his vast designs; much more to find fault with his dispensations, and to dictate what it was right for the Lord to do. He putteth no trust in his angels, and instead of making them his counsellors or submitting his conduct to their judgment, he charges them with folly. How awful then is the pride and presumption of man! How great the patience of God! But let us leave the infidel and the proud reasoner to dispute against their Maker; and the men of the world to heap up their treasures, and obtain those supposed excellencies, or to climb those eminences, from which death will soon hurry them, and they perish for ever, and die without wisdom, whilst scarcely any duly regard it. And let *us* consider, what we are, where we are, and whither we are going; and act accordingly: that when our clay houses fall into the dust, our souls, having obtained true wisdom in the knowledge and experience of God's salvation, and the excellency of holiness, may mount up to the world of angels and the spirits of just men made perfect: and there at the fountain-head, satisfy without danger our appetite for knowledge, by contemplating the works and perfections of God with unceasing delight, and with further and further discoveries of his glory, through the countless ages of eternity.

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1. *Call now*, &c. Eliphaz here challenges Job to refute his arguments or the doctrine of his vision, by the example or opinion of any of the saints and servants of God. Let him call forth his evidence who might answer for him in this cause; but to what saint who ever lived on earth would he appeal? Had any of them been so visited by divine judgments, or behaved so rebelliously under afflictions? 'Nay, if an angel should appear 'to thee (says Eliphaz,) as one did to me, thou wouldst 'have no other information but this.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 2. The wrath and jealousy, or indignation, of God bring destruction on foolish and wicked men, and not on the righteous. Or perhaps Eliphaz perceiving Job to be greatly agitated by his discourse, intimated that his *wrath*, *envy*, and fretfulness, would only increase his torment and shorten his days; as they often produced these effects on foolish and wicked men. (*Marg. Ref.*)

6 Although * affliction [q] cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble [r] spring out of the ground.

7 Yet [s] man is born unto † trouble, as ‡ the sparks fly upward.

8 I would [t] seek unto God, and [u] unto God would I commit my cause;

9 Which [x] doeth great things and § unsearchable; [y] marvellous things ‖ without number:

10 Who [z] giveth rain upon the earth and sendeth waters upon the * fields:

11 [a] To set up on high those that be low; that [b] those which mourn may be exalted [c] to safety.

12 [d] He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that [e] their hands cannot perform † *their* enterprise.

13 He [f] taketh the wise in their own craftiness; and the counsel of [g] the froward is carried headlong.

14 They ‡ meet [h] with darkness in the day-time, and grope in the noon-day as in the night.

15 But [i] he saveth the poor from the sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty.

16 So [k] the poor hath hope, and [l] iniquity stoppeth her mouth.

17 Behold, [m] happy *is* the man whom God correcteth; therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty:

* Or, *iniquity.*
q xxxiv. 22. Deu. xxxii 27. 1 Sam. vi. 9. Ps xc 7, 8. Is xlv. 7. Lam. iii. 38, 39. Am. iii. 6
r Hos x. 4. Heb. xii. 15.
s xiv. 1 Gen iii. 17—19. Ps xc. 8, 9. 1 Cor x. 13.
† Or, *labour.* Ec. i. 8. ii. 22. v. 15—17.
‡ Heb. *the sons of the burning coal lift up to fly.*
t viii. 5 xxii. 21. 27. Gen. xxxii 7—12. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 12, 13. Ps. l. 15. lxxvii. 1, 2. cxvi 3, 4. Jon. ii. 1—7.
u Ps. xxxvii. 5. 2 Tim. i 12. 1 Pet. ii. 23. iv. 19.
x ix. 10 xi. 7—9. xxxvii. 5. Ps. lxxii. 18. lxxxvi. 10. cxlv 3 Rom xi 33.——§ Heb. *and* there is *no search.* Is. xl 28. Eph iii. 8——y xxvi. 5—14——‖ Heb. *till* there be *no number.* Ps. xl. 5. cxxxix 18
z xxviii. 26. Ps lxv. 9—11 cxlvii. 8. Jer. v. 24. x 13. xiv 22. li. 16. Am. iv. 7. Acts xiv. 17.——* Heb. *out places* xxxviii. 26—28.——a 1 Sam. ii 7, 8 Ps cvii 41. cxiii. 7, 8. Luke i. 52, 53.——b Luke vi 21. Jam. i. 9. iv. 6—10 1 Pet. v. 10——c Deut xxxiii. 27—29. 1 Pet. i. 3—5.

d xii. 16, 17. Neh. iv. 15. Ps. xxxiii. 10, 11. Prov. xxi. 30 Is. viii. 10. xix. 3. 11—14.
e Ps. xxi 11. lxxvi. 5. Is. xxxvii 36 Acts xii 11. xxiii 12, &c.
† Or, *any thing.*
f 2 Sam. xv. 34. xvii. 23. Estn. vi. 4—11. vii. 10. Ps. vii. 15, 16. ix. 15, 16. xxxv. 7, 8. cxli. 10. Luke i. 51. 1 Cor. i. 19, 20. 27 iii. 19, 20.
g Ps. xviii. 26. Prov. iii. 32. viii. 13.
‡ Or, *run into*
h xii. 25 Deut. xxviii. 29 Is. lix. 10 Am viii. 9.
i Ps. x. 17, 18. xxxv. 10. lxxii. 4. 12, 13. cvii. 41. cix. 31.
k 1 Sam. ii. 8. Ps. ix. 18 x. 14. Is. xiv 32. Zech i. 2. 12. Luke iv. 18.——l Ps. lxiii. 11. cvii. 42 Rom. iii. 19.——m Ps. xciv. 12. Prov. iii. 11, 12. Jer. xxxi. 18—20. Heb. xii. 5—11. Jam. i. 12. v. 11. Rev iii. 19.

V. 3—5. In these verses Eliphaz declared the result of his former observations. He had seen wicked men, who foolishly despised the favour and defied the wrath of God, very prosperous for a time: but "suddenly he cursed," (or predicted the ruin of,) "their habitation:" and accordingly he had witnessed the destruction of their families, and the spoiling of their substance by hungry free-booters, notwithstanding all their care to fence it around and preserve it. An allusion was evidently made to Job's former prosperity, to the death of his children by the house falling upon them, and the ruin of his fortune by the Sabeans and Chaldeans. Indeed the most notorious wickedness does not prove, that temporal calamities will befal the perpetrator: and the application certainly was unfair and severe.

V. 6, 7. These verses may be rendered, "*For* affliction cometh not forth of the dust." "*Although* man be born to trouble." Man is born to labour and sorrow, as certainly, and from as natural a cause, as the sparks of fire mount upward into the air: yet the measure and duration of them result neither from chance, nor necessity, nor second causes; but from the wise and righteous appointment of God. This is a great truth: but it does not follow, that great afflictions are a proof of great wickedness: for the future world is the state of retributions; and afflictions in this world in general are merciful corrections, and not the effects of vindictive wrath. (17.)

V. 8—16. Whatever Eliphaz suspected concerning Job's previous character, it is evident that he did not mean that his case was hopeless: and the advice here given was salutary and seasonable; though the manner of introducing it implies a censure, and savours of self-preference. Instead of complaints and vain wishes, Eliphaz, if in Job's case, would seek unto God, and commit his cause to him. This, on any supposition, was Job's duty and wisdom: and the subsequent discourse on the works of God was suited to remind him, that the great Lord of all could easily restore him to peace and prosperity. From the unsearchable and wonderful operations of God in the natural world, which are without number, Eliphaz selected his giving rain unto the earth. This is so common that it is scarcely noticed: and yet the manner, in which the water is conveyed, *originally* from the briny ocean, and distilled in small drops fit for use all over the earth: and the effects which are thus produced; (the earth rendered fruitful, the springs fed, the rivers supplied, and all nature refreshed and purified,) are worthy of our highest admiration, and most ardent gratitude. By this, the barren earth being made to yield a large increase, the poor, and they who are mourning through the dread of starving, are supplied, placed in safety, and even exalted. Eliphaz next noticed especially the surprising method in which the politic counsels of worldly wise men are disappointed by divine providence; and their crafty devices, instead of accomplishing the end proposed, are turned against them; and being carried headlong by some unexpected incident, involve them in utter ruin: so that they are taken in a net, and plunged into darkness or despair, just when they think success is sure: nay, they hesitate, and are bewildered, or fall into fatal errors in the plainest matters, as if they had lost their senses. (*Marg. Ref.*) By thus infatuating or ruining proud oppressors, God preserves the poor who were about to be devoured, and gives them hope of better days; whilst their oppressors are silenced, confounded, and dismayed, at beholding his work. As therefore such interpositions accorded to the ordinary method of Providence, Job might with confidence expect deliverance, if he ceased from his rebellious murmurs, and humbled himself before God.

V. 17. To *take vengeance on a criminal, for a warning to others*, and *to correct an offender for his own good*, are very distinct things, which Eliphaz had not before expressly distinguished. Job's extraordinary calamities had led him to speak as if he had been visited in judgment: but here he indulged a hope, that he was corrected of God for his good; and if so he was a happy man, and ought not to despond under his afflictions. He exhorted him, therefore, "not to despise the chastening of the Almighty." (*Note, Gen.* xvii. 1—3.) He who appointed his sorrows, was able to destroy and to deliver, as he pleased: he ought therefore to consider the hand of God in them, and thankfully receive them as a token of love, and seek to profit by them. (*Marg. Ref.*)

18 For [n] he maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole.

19 He shall [o] deliver thee in six troubles; yea, in seven there shall [p] no evil touch thee.

20 In [q] famine he shall [r] redeem thee from death; and [s] in war from the *power of the sword.

21 Thou shalt [t] be hid † from the scourge of the tongue: [u] neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh.

22 At destruction and famine thou shalt [x] laugh: neither shalt thou be [y] afraid of the beasts of the earth.

23 For [z] thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field; and [a] the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee.

24 And [b] thou shalt know that ‡ thy tabernacle *shall be* in peace; and [c] thou shalt visit thy habitation, and shalt not ∮ sin.

25 Thou shalt know also that [d] thy seed *shall be* ‖ great, and thine offspring [e] as the grass of the earth.

26 Thou shalt come to *thy* grave [f] in a full age, like as a shock of corn * cometh in his season.

27 Lo this, [g] we have searched it, so it *is;* hear it, and know thou *it* † for thy good.

n Deut. xxxii. 39. 1 Sam. ii. 6, 7. Ps. cxlvii. 3. Is. xxx. 26. Hos. vi. 1.
o Ps. xxxiv. 19. xci. 3—7. Prov. xxiv. 16. 1 Cor. x. 13. 2 Pet. ii. 9.
p Ps. xci. 7, 10.
q Ps. xxxiii. 19. xxxiv. 9, 10. xxxvii. 19. Prov. x. 3. Is. xxxiii. 16. Hab. iii. 17, 13.
r Ps. xlix. 7, 15. ciii. 4. Hos. xiii. 14.
s Ps. xxvii. 3. xci. 5. Matt. xxiv. 6.
* Heb. *hands.*
t Ps. xxxi. 20. lv. 21. lvii. 4. Prov. xiv. 3. Is. liv. 17. Jam. iii. 5—8.
† Or, *when the tongue scourgeth.*
u Ps. xci. 6, 7.
x 2 Kings xix. 21.
y Is. xxxv. 9. lxv. 25. Ez. xxxiv. 25.
z Ps. xci. 12, 13. Hos. ii. 18. Rom. viii. 38, 39.
a Lev. xxvi. 6. Ez. xiv. 15, 16.
b xviii. 6. 15, 21. xxi. 7—9. 1 Sam. xxx. 3. Is. iv. 5, 6.
‡ Or, *peace is in thy tabernacle.*
c Deut. xxviii. 6. Ps. xci. 10. cxxii. 7, 8.
∮ Or, *err.* Ps. cvii. 4, 40.
d xlii. 13, 16. Gen. xv. 5. Lev. xxvi. 9. Deut. xxviii. 4. Ps. cxii. 2. cxxvii. 3—5. cxxviii. 3—6.
‖ Or, *much.*
e Ps. lxxii. 16.
f xlii. 16, 17. Gen. xv. 15. xxv. 8. Ps. xci. 16. Prov. ix. 11. x. 27.
* Heb. *ascendeth.*
g viii. 8—10. xii. 2, 3. xii. 2. xv. 9, 10. 17. xxxii. 11, 12. Ps. cxi. 2.——† Heb. *for thyself.* xxii. 2. Deut. x. 13. Prov. ix. 12.

V. 18, 19. Eliphaz next showed the benefits that would result from a proper behaviour under afflictions, and mentioned the happiness of God's people, in language similar to that used in other parts of the old Testament; (*Notes, Lev.* xxvi. 3, 4. *Psalm* xci.) He observed that every wound was from the hand of God, and he alone could effectually heal it: as the skilful and tender surgeon cuts and probes in order to heal, and then binds up the wound with emollient ointments. When God smites his servants with afflictions, he heals them with consolations, or by returning ease and prosperity; and when he wounds sinners with deep convictions, he binds up the wounds by a sweet sense of forgiveness, after he hath prepared them for such a mercy. If then Job humbly sought to God under his troubles, he would certainly be delivered: and though he might be tried repeatedly, yet he would still find relief; so that no evil would eventually come upon him. *Six* troubles, and *seven*, denote many, one succeeding another. (*Prov.* vi. 16. *Ec.* xi. 2.)

V. 20—23. In famine, war, or perils from false witnesses and malicious slanders against his life or reputation, or the ravages of wild beasts, Job might be assured of support and protection, and might smile in the midst of the most terrifying appearances: for God would so order every dispensation that it would be, as if the whole animate and inanimate creation were in league with him.

V. 24. 'Wheresoever thou pitchest thy tent, thou 'shalt find it in safety: and when thou takest an account 'of thy estate, all things shall answer beyond thy expecta-'tion.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The word rendered "sin," may mean *wander* or *be disappointed:* and perhaps the verse may mean that when the believer goes from home, he may commit himself and family to the care of God, assured that no tempests, fires, or robbers shall come near his habitation: and that he shall be brought back in peace, without losing his way, or being disappointed at his return by finding his family ruined or murdered, or fallen into calamity.

V. 25—27. In case Job committed his cause to God, he might also be confident that his posterity would be prosperous, that he would live long, and die in peace, when full ripe for heaven. These principles Eliphaz recommended, as the result of his own experience and observation and those of his friends, and concluded with admonishing Job to regard them for his good, or to make them his own by a practical use of them. They are indeed good general rules, but they admit of many exceptions: for though the believer is under a peculiar divine protection in his person, character, family, and all relating to him, and should commit all to the Lord's keeping; yet He often sees good to withhold the temporal comfort, in order to confer a spiritual blessing of greater value. Indeed Job's sufferings, so far from being proofs of hypocrisy, were not so much as corrections for any particular offence, but trials of his singular faith, piety, and constancy: so greatly did his friends mistake his case! They spoke general truths according to the light of that dispensation; but they erred in their application of them. The Holy Spirit hath recorded their debate, as infallibly true in point of matter of fact: but we must decide from the general tenour of the Scripture whether they maintained right principles; and whether their arguments were conclusive or not. (xlii. 7.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—7.

It is generally dangerous to deviate from the sentiments and practices of the saints of God: and it is very discouraging to be constrained to act contrary to their judgment. But it is common for men to boast as if believers in all ages and nations were of their mind, when they are far from having even a majority in their favour. And at last, the word of God is our all-sufficient rule, and not the sentiments of any number of fallible men: so that in fact they have sometimes been found right, who have seemed not only to have all the world, but almost all the church, against them. We should watch ourselves, and caution others, against the tormenting and malignant passions of envy and anger; which rule in the hearts of weak and foolish men with most fatal energy, and not only expose them to the wrath of God, but to the temptations of Satan, and to various species of guilt and misery. But we must

CHAP. VI.

Job shows that his sufferings were very great, and his complaint natural, 1—7. *He prays for death, as the only comfort he could hope for,* 8—13. *He reproves his friends as unkind and unfaithful,* 14—30.

BUT Job [a] answered and said,
2 Oh that my grief were [b] thoroughly weighed, and my calamity * laid in the balances together!
3 For now it would be [c] heavier than the sand of the sea: therefore †my words [d] are swallowed up.
4 For [e] the arrows of the Almighty *are*

a iv. 1.
b iv. 5. xxiii. 2.
* Heb. *lifted-up*.
c Prov. xxvii. 3. Matt. xi. 28
† That is, *I want words to express my grief.* Ps. lxxvii. 4.
d xxxvii. 19, 20. Ps. xl 5.
e xiii 12—14. Deut xxxii. 23. 42. Ps. vii 13. xviii. 14. xxi 12. xxxviii 2. cxliv. 6 Lam. iii 12, 13.

not rashly represent every gust of passion or agitation of spirit under trials, reproaches, and temptations, as an evidence of a malevolent disposition: for we should not choose to have our own infirmities treated with such severity. We may predict the final ruin of wicked men, as exposed to the awful curse of God, even in the zenith of their prosperity, when all around are congratulating and envying them. Their temporal success will soon vanish: and what is got by fraud, oppression, or cruelty, commonly entails a curse on their families and estates. Yet a man's wickedness must be very notorious, to authorize us to interpret his afflictions, or those of his posterity, into divine judgments upon him. As we are born in sin, and soon run into actual transgression, we are naturally exposed to almost innumerable troubles: but they are all directed by the unerring hand of God, for some wise and righteous purpose; and we should regulate our conduct accordingly.

V. 8—14.

It is easy to say what we would do in trying circumstances; but perhaps we should find it more difficult to observe our own rules than we now imagine. We ought, however, to give proper advice, and to leave the event to God: and it becomes us under all our trials to seek unto him, and to commit our cause into his hands. Whatever difficulties may be in our case, the Lord knows how to extricate us by a thousand ways that we never thought of. All his works are wonderful and unsearchable: we see *what* is wrought, and can discover his wisdom, power, and goodness in the concatenation of causes and effects in nature; but we cannot comprehend *how* he works. And too often the great Author of all our comforts, and the manner in which they are conveyed to us, are alike unnoticed, because they are received as things of course. He exalts, or depresses, afflicts, or comforts, as he pleases, with irresistible power, but in perfect justice, wisdom, and goodness. They who are perverse and ungodly, and proud of their abilities and sagacity, are generally made to feel, or to expose, their own folly and impotency. "Professing "themselves wise they became fools;" they are often bewildered by their own fancies, and rendered the dupes of their own false reasonings or refined politics; they run into the grossest absurdities, commit the most egregious mistakes, are bewildered in uncertainty in the plainest matters, and grope at noon day as if it were midnight; for "God takes them in their own craftiness, and makes foolish "the wisdom of this world." Idolaters and atheistical philosophers of old; and skeptics, infidels, and materialists of modern days, are awful proofs of these truths: and so are politic persecutors and oppressors of God's church, in every age. In vain have learning, wisdom, authority, cruelty, and every device of men and devils united, to subvert the church of God, and extirpate his poor despised people. Their schemes have been frustrated, "their hands "have not been able to perform their enterprise;" their "counsels have been carried headlong," and they have been taken in their own snare: they have been infatuated and driven to destruction; and all their successors may expect the same fate. For the poor and despised people of God, though deemed weak, foolish, and defenceless, can neither be overcome nor assaulted with impunity. The church still subsists; the poor in spirit have hope, and expect to triumph in the destruction of their enemies, when the boastings and blasphemies of the wicked will be for ever silenced, or turned into shame and anguish.

V. 15—27.

"Happy is the man whom God correcteth." We should therefore consider our afflictions as so many kind warnings to examine ourselves, confess our sins, seek mercy from God, and walk more diligently in his ways: we should humble ourselves before him, and neither despise his rod, nor seek help or relief from any other quarter. He alone can effectually remove temporal afflictions, and give peace to the wounded conscience, or relief to the troubled spirit. And when we have found pardon of sin, peace with God, and deliverance from the power of sin, we may without reserve venture our all in his hands. He will provide for our real wants, and protect us in the way of duty, so that no evil can hurt us: and deliver us from all the troubles with which he may please to prove us. Our reputations may be torn by the scourge of the slanderer's tongue; but he will hide us from the effects of such accusers, and clear up our characters in due time. Our habitations, families, and the time and circumstances of our death, may be safely trusted to him: all creatures shall be instruments of good to us, perhaps contrary to their nature or intention; all events will benefit us; and we may smile when others tremble. We may go out and come in, lie down and rise up, without distrustful fear, assured of the special care of heaven, till the Lord see good to call us home. We are not authorized to expect great wealth, long life, flourishing families, or exemption from tribulations: but we are assured that all will be ordered in the best manner possible, and that we shall not be summoned by death till we are ripe for glory, and have lived as long as it is good for us in this world. This has been the confidence, observation, and experience of godly men, in all ages; may we hear it and know it for our good.

within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit; [g] the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me.

5 Doth the wild ass bray * when he hath grass? or [h] loweth the ox over his fodder?

6 Can [i] that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt? or is there *any* [k] taste in the white of an egg?

7 The things *that* my soul refused to touch *are* as [l] my sorrowful meat.

8 O that I might have my request; and that God would grant *me* † the thing that I long for!

9 Even [m] that it would please God to destroy me: [n] that he would let loose his hand, and cut me off!

10 Then [o] should I yet have comfort; yea, [p] I would harden myself in sorrow: [q] let him not spare; for I [r] have not concealed the words of [s] the Holy One.

11 [t] What *is* my strength, that I should hope? and what *is* mine end, that I should prolong my life?

12 *Is* my strength the strength of stones? or *is* my flesh ‡ of brass?

13 [u] *Is* not my help in me? [x] and is wisdom driven quite from me?

14 To [y] him that § is afflicted pity *should be shewed* from his friend: but [z] he forsaketh the fear of the Almighty:

f vii. 11. Ps. cxliii. 7. Prov. xviii. 14. Mark xiv. 33, 34, xv. 34.
g ix. 17. xxx. 15. xxxi. 23. Ps. lxxxviii. 15, 16. 2 Cor. v. 11.
* Heb. *at grass*. Ps. civ. 14.
h Ps. xlii. 1. Jer. xiv. 6. Joel i. 18—20.
i xv. 2. Lev. ii. 13. Luke xiv. 34. Col. iv. 6.
k 30. xii. 11. xxxiv. 3. Ps. cxix. 103. Prov. xxiv. 13, 14.
Heb. vi. 4, 5.
l 1 Kings xxii. 27. Ps. cii. 9. Lam. iv. 4, 5. Dan. x. 3. Hos. ix. 4.
Heb. *my expectation*. 11—13. xvii. 14—16. Ps. lxxxiv. 2. cxix. 81.
m iii. 20—22. vii. 15, 16. xiv. 13. Num. xi. 14, 15. 1 Kings xix. 4. Jon. iv. 3. Matt. xx. 29. Rev. ix. 6.
n iv. 7. xix. 21. Ps. xxxii. 4. Is. xxxviii. 10—13.
o iii. 22. xxi. 33.
p ii. 10. ix. 4.
q Deut. xxix. 20. Rom. viii. 32. 2 Pet. ii. 4, 5.
r xxiii. 12. Ps. xxxvii. 30. xl. 9, 10. lxxi. 17, 18. cxix. 13. Acts xx. 20, 27.
s Lev. xix. 2. 1 Sam. ii. 2. Is. xxx. 11, 12. lvii. 15. Hos. xi. 9. Hab. i. 12. iii. 3. Rev. iii. 7. iv. 8.
t vii. 5, 6. 17. x. 20. xiii. 25. 28. xvii. 1. 14—16. Ps. xxxix. 5. xc. 5—10. cii. 23. ciii. 14—16.
‡ Heb. *brazen*. xl. 18. xli. 24.
u xix. 28. 2 Cor. i. 12. Gal. vi. 4.
x xii. 2, 3. xiii. 2.
y iv. 3, 4. xvi. 5. xix. 21. Prov. xvii. 17. Rom. xii. 15. 1 Cor. xii. 26. 2 Cor. xi. 29. Gal. vi. 2. Heb. xiii. 3.
§ Heb. *melteth*.
z Gen. xx. 11. Ps. xxxvi. 1. 3. Luke xxiii. 40.

NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1—4. Job, conscious of integrity, and displeased rather than convinced by Eliphaz's reasonings, replied, by wishing that his miseries might be impartially balanced against his complaints; assured that he should not have been so harshly censured, if his sorrows had not been made too light of: for in fact they were so numerous and weighty, that he could find nothing adequate with which to compare them; and all his words greatly fell short of fully describing them. In addition to his external troubles, the inward sense of God's wrath and the dread of his almighty vengeance, like poisoned arrows, infested his soul, and exhausted his courage and resolution; or like a powerful army placed in array against him, they cut off his hope of escape, and almost drove him to distraction. Doubtless this was the effect of Satan's temptations, who endeavoured, by every horrible impression on his imagination, to drive him to utter blasphemies, as he had declared that he would: whilst the Lord was pleased to favour the trial, by withholding from him all sensible comfort, and leaving him in darkness and dismay. In this he was a type of Christ, when agonizing in the garden; and when upon the cross he exclaimed "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?"

V. 5—7. In these verses Job intimated, that his friends, being free from trouble and temptation, did no more in being contented, than the wild ass or the ox do, when at ease and plentifully fed. But he must be allowed to vent his anguish by groans and complaints, which were no more to be censured, than the braying of the wild ass, or the lowing of the ox, when destitute of provender. And indeed the discourse of Eliphaz was so destitute of the savour of wisdom and grace, and so unsuitable for the occasion, that it was impossible he should relish it: yet was it all he had to feed his soul upon under his affliction and depression; though at any time he should have entirely disregarded it. Some think he meant, that it was as natural to expect encouraging words under heavy trials, as it is to ask for salt to eat with the white of an egg; whereas the discourse of Eliphaz tended to render his trials more burdensome than they were before. It is, however, plain that he rejected and undervalued the good advice which had been given; because of the injurious reflections on his character with which it had been introduced.

V. 8—13. The passionate earnestness with which Job here requested to die, and the vehement language he used, were very unbecoming. It seemed as if God could bestow on him no greater favour than instantaneous death, in whatever manner it came. This was his chief desire and request, and almost his only one: and it was very rash for him to speak of God's *destroying* or *crushing*, or *letting loose his hand*, and *cutting him off*, and *not sparing him*; and of *his hardening himself in sorrow*, and being *comforted* in the prospect of immediate dissolution. Alas! he knew not what he said; for who, during a single hour, could endure the wrath of the Almighty, if he spared not, but let loose his hand against him?—Relief from lingering misery was Job's great object: yet he evidently thought of a future world, when he declared that "he had not concealed the "words of the Holy One." He meant, that he was no hypocrite; but as he had professed the words of the holy God, so he had believed and obeyed them, as the avowed and real rule of his conduct. But he seems to have spoken too much in a way of self-justification and despondency; and not simply, as stating the ground of his desire to leave this world and go to a better. He added that he had no strength left which could inspire a hope of a termination to his afflictions, except in death; and if he had the strength of stones or brass, his sufferings would soon wear it out: yet his understanding, and the testimony of a good conscience, were continued to him; he knew what he was discoursing of, and his wisdom was not quite driven from him, though his friends despised his words. Though Job thus longed and prayed for death, he did not think himself at liberty to kill himself: a heathen philosopher, or a modern unbeliever, would not have been so scrupulous.

V. 14. *But he*, &c. He, who does not compassionate his afflicted friend, but reproaches him, casts off his regard to God's authority, as well as love to his brother.—Some, however, understand the verse, as Job's representation of the behaviour of his friends to him; in which sense it may be rendered, "They say of him that is afflicted more "than his neighbour, he hath forsaken mercy, and the fear "of the Almighty."

15 ¶ [a] My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook, *and* [b] as the stream of brooks they pass away;

16 Which are blackish by reason of the ice, *and* wherein the snow is hid:

17 What time they wax warm they * vanish; † when it is hot they are consumed out of their place.

18 The paths of their way are turned aside; they go to nothing, and perish.

19 The troops of [c] Tema looked, the companies of [d] Sheba waited for them.

20 They [e] were confounded, because they had hoped: they came thither, and were ashamed.

21 For now ‡ ye [f] are ∮ nothing; [g] ye see *my* casting down, and are afraid.

22 Did I say, [h] Bring unto me? or, Give a reward for me of your substance?

23 Or, Deliver me from the enemies' hand? or, [i] Redeem me from the hand of the mighty?

24 [k] Teach me, and [l] I will hold my tongue: and [m] cause me to understand wherein I have erred.

25 [n] How forcible are right words! but [o] what doth your arguing reprove?

26 Do you imagine to [p] reprove words and the speeches of [q] one that is desperate, which *are* [r] as wind?

27 Yea, ye * overwhelm [s] the fatherless, and [t] ye dig *a pit* for your friend.

28 Now therefore, be content; look upon me: for *it is* † evident unto you, [u] if I lie.

29 [x] Return, I pray you, let it not be iniquity; yea, return again, [y] my righteousness *is* ‡ in it.

30 [z] Is there iniquity in my tongue? [a] cannot my ∮ taste discern perverse things?

a xix. 10. Ps. xxxviii. 11. xli. 9. lv. 12—17. lxxxviii. 18. Jer. ix. 4, 5. xxx. 14. Mic vii. 5, 6.
b Jer. xv. 18. Jude 12.
* Heb. *are cut off.*
† Heb. *in the heat thereof they are extinguished.*
1 Kings xvii. 7.
c Gen. xxv. 15. Is xxi. 14. Jer xxv. 23.
d Gen. x. 7. xxv. 3. 1 Kings x 1. Ps lxxii 10. Ez. xxvii. 22, 23.
e Jer xiv. 3, 4. xvii. 13. Rom v. 5. ix. 33.
‡ Or, *are* like *to them.* Heb. *to it.*
15 xiii 4.
f Ps. lxii. 9. Is. ii. 22. Jer. xvii 5,6
∮ Heb. *not.*
g ii. 11—13. Ps. xxxviii. 11. Matt. xxvi. 31. 56. 2 Tim iv. 16. Rev. xviii 9, 10. 17, 18.
h xlii. 11. 1 Sam. xii. 3. Acts xx. 33.
i v. 20. Lev. xxv. 48. Neh. v. 8. Ps. xlix. 7, 8. 15. cvii. 2 Jer. xv 21.
k xxxii. 11 15, 16. xxxiii. 1. 31—33. xxxiv. 32. Ps. xxxii. 8. Prov. ix 9. xxv. 12. Jam. i. 19.
l Ps. xxxix. 1, 2. Jam iii 2.
m x. 2. Ps. xix, 12.
n iv. 4. xvi. 5. Prov. xii. 18. xvi. 21—24. xviii. 21. xxv. 11. Ec. xii. 10, 11.
o xiii. 5. xvi. 3,4. xxi. 34. xxiv 25.
p vi. 3. ii. 10 iii. 3, &c. viii. 2. xxxiv. 3 — 9. xxxviii. 2. xl. 5. 8. xlii. 3. 7. Matt xii. 37.
q 4. 9 x 1.
r Hos. xii 1. Eph. iv. 14.
* Heb. *cause to fall upon*
s xvii. 9. xxiv. 3. 9 xxix 12. xxxi. 17 21 Ex xxii. 22 — 24. Ps. lxxxii 3 Prov. xxiii 10, 11. Ez. xxii 7. Mal. iii. 5. Jam. i. 27.
t Ps. vii. 15. lvii. 6. Jer xviii. 20 22.
† Heb *before your face.*
u xi. 3. xiii. 4.——x xvii. 10 Mal. iii 18.——y xxvii. 4—6.——‡ That is, *in this matter.*
z xxxiii. 8—12. xlii. 3—6.——a 6. xii. 11 xxxiv. 3 Heb. v. 14.——∮ Heb. *palate.*

V. 15—23. The friends of Job had appeared very affectionate to him when prosperous; so that in his calamity he had hoped for some support and consolation from their visits: but he had been miserably disappointed. This he represented by an elegant simile. In those countries, the ice and snow, melting upon the mountains, at certain seasons filled the brooks with water, so that they appeared like rivers, swelled and discoloured with the inundation: and the Arabian companies or caravans, travelling through the deserts, marked the course of these brooks, which were full of water when it was not wanted: but when in the heat of summer, they were parched with thirst, and resorted thither in hopes of a supply, they found that they were entirely dried up, which filled them with distress and confusion. Thus Job's expectations from his friends came to nothing, and he was ashamed of his former confidence. For when they looked on his miseries, they seemed afraid lest he should become a burden or a disgrace to them; and therefore they treated him with unkindness. But he had not requested them to make up his losses by presents, to rescue or ransom his substance from the Sabeans and Chaldeans, or even to protect him from further violence: for he chiefly wanted consolation to his soul.

V. 24, 25. Job would not have his friends suppose that he was unwilling to receive instruction or reproof. If therefore they would mildly teach him any useful lesson, or point out his mistakes, he would silently hearken. For *right words* or salutary truths, proposed with conclusive proofs and fair application, are powerfully convincing; but their unfounded suspicions and uncandid censures could not be received as just reproof.

V. 26. Eliphaz had nothing explicit for which to reprove Job, except some passionate words, which excess of anguish had extorted from him, when almost driven to desperation. These ought therefore to have been no more regarded than a sudden gust of wind, which is soon followed by a calm: or, as some understand the passage, the rest of his discourse should not on that account have been treated with contempt, as empty sound. Had Eliphaz calmly showed Job that his passionate language was unbecoming his character for piety, (in the manner that Job had reproved his wife,) he might have submitted to the rebuke; but his intimations that Job had been a hypocrite, entirely defeated his end, and made him think himself excusable.

V. 27—30. In Job's opinion his friends acted as cruelly as if they had oppressed a fatherless child, who had none to defend him; and as ungratefully and unfaithfully, as if they had digged a pit for their friend to fall into and perish. He therefore besought them to be content with his sufferings, which they might perceive to be very great, and not to aggravate them by reproaches; and to favour him by reconsidering his cause, examining it more accurately, and deciding upon it more candidly. If he had spoken any falsehood, they might easily confute him: if he were a wicked man they might detect him. If they could not, let them retract their sentence, and not impute his sufferings to his iniquity; for he was conscious that he was upright in the sight of God, which would be made evident by fuller investigation. He thought he could savour what was true and good, and distinguish what was perverse and profane: and though he allowed he had spoken rash words, he was not conscious, that there had been such *iniquity* in his tongue as they supposed.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14.

In deciding on the conduct of those who seem impatient, we should carefully ponder the number and aggravations of their distresses, which often appear to the sufferer even

CHAP. VII.

Job excuses his desire of death, by representing the vanity, misery, and uselessness of his life, 1—6. *He expostulates with God, in a mixture of complaints and petitions; and concludes with confessing that he had sinned, and asking forgiveness before his death,* 7—21.

IS [a] *there* not * an appointed time to man upon earth? *are not* his days also [b] like the days of an hireling?

a xiv. 5. 13, 14. Ps. xxxix. 4. Is xxxviii. 5.
* Or, *a warfare.* Ec. viii. 8.
b xiv. 6. Is. xxi. 16.

greater than his heaviest complaints, and beyond the power of words to express. A heart wounded with the fear or sense of the wrath of God, assaulted with sore temptations, filled with horror, and verging to despair, is far more dreadful and intolerable than any external afflictions: yet these pains of hell have often taken hold of the most beloved servants of God. Mere spectators cannot estimate trials of this kind: and but few pious men have wisdom, experience, and tenderness to deal properly with such as are thus deserted, oppressed, and overwhelmed. What then did the Saviour endure in the garden and on the cross, when he bare our sins, and his soul was made a sacrifice to divine justice for us! and what will sinners, who neglect so great salvation, for ever endure in the regions of darkness and despair! "There indeed the arrows of the Al-"mighty are within them, the poison whereof drinketh "up their spirit. The terrors of God set themselves in "array against them," and they can neither escape nor endure them. They who know no want and feel no pain, may easily be composed, and critically comment on the words and actions of such as are in overwhelming trouble: but their discourses are generally insipid, and often distressing; and they appear worse than they really are: for in anguish a man loses his relish for general truths which before were palatable; he is disposed to be fretful and fastidious; and a little that galls him sets him against all that might comfort him. This should be well considered by those who discourse with persons in great distress: and, except they can command evident affection, sympathy, and caution, it is better to let the storm subside before they speak at all, lest they cause it to rage with still greater impetuosity. Furious passions are peculiarly culpable when they dictate prayers: for men seldom wish or pray for death, except when they are in a rebellious frame of spirit. We should indeed be habitually ready and willing to depart; and indifferent about earthly objects, which may so soon render life itself a burden. But surely we may find something more excellent to request of God, than to be delivered from present suffering. And it ill suits our state and character, to speak of hardening our hearts under the strokes of the Almighty, if he should not spare, but let loose his hand to cut us off. Rather we should humble ourselves under his mighty hand, bow down in submission to his will, hope in his mercy, and entreat him to lighten the weight of his chastisements, and to consider how frail we are. In his favour we may yet have comfort, let our condition be ever so bad: whether he please to take us to heaven, to be with us in the furnace of affliction, or to restore us to peace and prosperity; for "the things that "are impossible with man, are possible with God." We may easily see that we *ought* to act thus under every possible trial: but if we were tempted as Job was, we know not how we should behave. The testimony of conscience to our integrity in our past conduct, as professed Christians, may properly be our rejoicing: yet it may be so pleaded as to savour of pride, rebellion, and despondency. It is also a mercy under severe diseases to retain the exercise of our reasoning faculties: yet sometimes men use them with perverse ingenuity, to argue against their own comfort, and to vindicate their unbelief and impatience! Persons, however, of this description, are entitled to our peculiar compassion: their wounds require healing balm, not sharp corrosives; and if we do not behave with tenderness to the afflicted, we despise the authority of God, and fail of our duty to him.

V. 15—30.

It is our duty and wisdom to *cease from men:* the nearest friends and relatives, yea, they who are wise and pious, through mistake and prejudice, often disappoint our expectations. They may be exceedingly kind and attentive, while we are at ease and in affluence: yet in adversity we shall find most of them, like the brook which by the land-flood became a torrent, but in the drought of summer proves a dry channel, and frustrates the hopes of the fainting traveller. But they that trust in God shall never be ashamed of their confidence: for he will be peculiarly helpful to them when all other helpers and comforts fail; yea, though flesh and heart fail, he will "be the strength of "their heart, and their portion for ever." When men see their friends cast down, they too commonly fear being involved with them, and exposed to danger, expense, and trouble; and so they appear shy of them, and perhaps unjustly criminate their conduct to excuse their own. Yet sometimes the afflicted suspect their friends without cause. —It is our duty to help others to the utmost of our ability; but it is generally our wisdom to bear our own losses and straits as well as we can, and to avoid becoming a burden to our friends. Prudence therefore requires us, when prosperous, to avoid needless indulgences, and to inure ourselves to some degree of hardship; that if a change should take place, (and we know not what a day may bring forth,) we may not have to say, "the things, that my "soul refused to touch, are become as my sorrowful meat." —A wise man will at all times be glad to be counselled, and convinced of his errors, by right words that forcibly rectify his judgment and impress his heart. But most of us are apt to be too impatient, when we hear men argue inconclusively, especially when their discourse bears hard upon our sentiments and conduct. Indeed rash expressions, dictated by anguish of spirit, should not be severely criticised; but though they do not prove men hypocrites, they evince that they are far from humbly acquiescing in the

2 As a servant † earnestly desireth
[c] the shadow, and as [d] an hireling looketh for *the reward of* his work;
3 So am I made to possess [e] months of vanity, and wearisome nights are appointed to me.
4 When I lie down, I say, [f] When shall I rise, and ‡ the night be gone? and I am full of [g] tossings to and fro, unto the dawning of the day.
5 My [h] flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dust; my skin is broken, and become [i] loathsome.
6 My days are [k] swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent [l] without hope.
7 O [m] remember that [n] my life *is* wind: mine eye shall § no more see good.
8 [o] The eye of him that hath seen me shall see me no *more*: [p] thine eyes *are* upon me, and ‖ I *am* not.
9 *As* [q] the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away; so [r] he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no *more*.
10 [s] He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more.
11 Therefore [t] I will not refrain my mouth; I will speak in [u] the anguish of my spirit; I will complain in [x] the bitterness of my soul.
12 *Am* [y] I a sea, or [z] a whale, that thou settest a watch over me?
13 When I say, [a] My bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint;
14 Then [b] thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through visions:
15 So that my soul chooseth [c] strangling, *and* death rather than my * life.
16 [d] I loathe *it;* I would not live always: [e] let me alone; for [f] my days *are* vanity.

† Heb *gapeth after* Ps. cxix. 131 cxliii 6.
c Jer vi 4.
d Lev. xix. 13. Deut xxiv. 15. James v. 4.
e xxix. 2. Ps. xxxix. 5. Ec. i. 14.
f 13. 14. xxx. 17. Deut. xxviii 67. Ps vi 6 lxxvi. 4. cxxx. 6
‡ Heb *the evening be measured.*
g Ps. cix. 23. Is. liv. 11.
h ii. 7, 8 xvii. 14 xix 26 xxiv.20 xxx 18, 19. Ps xxxviii 5—7. Is. i 6 xiv 11. Acts xii. 23.
i ix. 31. Is. lxvi 24. Ez. xx. 43.
k ix. 25. xvi. 22. xvii. 11. Ps. xc. 5, 6. cii. 11. ciii. 15, 16. cxliv. 4 Is.xxxviii.12,13. xl. 6, 7. Jam. i. 11. iv. 14 1 Pet. i. 24.
l vi. 11. xvii. 15. Prov. xiv. 32. Jer. ii. 25. Eph. ii. 12 1 Pet. i.13.
m x. 9. Neh. i. 8. Ps lxxiv. 18 22. lxxxix. 47. 50. Jer xv. 15. Lam. v. 1.
n Ps. lxxviii. 39. Jam.iv. 14 —§ Heb. *not return to see*, that is *to enjoy*.x.21, 22 —o xx. 9. Ps xxxvii 36 —p xiii. 27 xiv.3. Ps.xxxix.11.xc.8,9 —‖ That is. *I can live no longer*.21 —q xxxvii.11.
r x 21 xiv 10 14. xvi. 22. 2 Sam. xii. 23. xiv. 14. Ps xxxix 13. Is. xxxviii. 11.
s vii 18. xx. 8. Ps. ciii. 16.
t vi 26. x. 1. xvi 6. xxi 3. Ps. xxxix. 3. xl. 9.
u Gen xlii. 21. 2 Kings iv. 27, 28. Matt. xxvi. 37, 38. Luke xxii. 44. 2 Cor. ii. 4.
x xxi. 25. 1 Sam. i.10 Is xxxviii. 15 17
y 17. xxviii. 8—11. Lam iii. 7.
z xli 1, &c
a 3 ix. 27. 28. Ps. vi. 6. lxxvii. 4.
b Gen. xl. 2—7. xli 8 Judg vii. 13, 14. Dan ii. 1. Matt xxvii 19.
c 2 Sam xvii 23. Matt. xxvii. 5.
* Heb. *bones.*
d iii. 20—22,vi. 9. x.1. 1 Kings xix. 4.
e x 20 xiv. 6. Ps. xxxix.10.13. Ps. lxii. 9.

divine will. But it is still more unbecoming to retaliate on reprovers, and to charge them with malice, when perhaps they spoke from genuine love. If, however, we have rashly condemned any one, we ought to review the evidence with impartiality and candour, and to retract our censure if found unmerited. We do not love to be treated as hypocrites contrary to evidence, or the testimony of our consciences: therefore we should not thus condemn others. But it is best to commit our characters to Him who keeps our souls; and to appeal to that day, when he will "bring "to light the hidden things of darkness, and make mani-"fest the counsels of all hearts, and then shall every up-"right believer have praise of God."

NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 1—6. Job here represented the life of man on earth, to be like the *appointed time of warfare to the soldier*, (for so the expression may be interpreted;) or the labourer's day for his work. The one earnestly wished for his discharge, that he might be exempted from further labours and perils; the latter looked with desire for the shadows of the evening, when he should receive his wages and go to rest: and why might not he wish for death to terminate his sorrows, and bring him to that happier state for which he yet hoped? This was the more allowable, as his life was now both joyless and useless, and full of tedious sufferings, without any remission even by night; for that season of rest to others, was spent by him in agony, and in longing for the dawning of the day: nay, his disease was so noisome, that it made him like a putrified corpse even before his death. All this had come upon him so suddenly, that his happier days were gone instantaneously; and his remnant of life, which in itself is exceedingly short and transient, was vanishing without hope of returning health and comfort.

V. 7—11. In the midst of this discourse with his friends, Job lifted up his thoughts to God, and mingled some actings of faith and hope with his fretfulness and despondency. He desired the Lord to remember how fleeting his life was at best; and either to abate his anguish, or release him from it, as he had no hope of seeing any more comfort here. A single look from God would end his days: and as the clouds vanish, and others are formed in their places, so men die and never return to occupy their former stations, but others succeed them from age to age. This does not imply a denial of a future state, or the resurrection of the dead; but merely describes the condition of mankind respecting this present life. As therefore Job could get no relief from his sufferings, he resolved to relieve his mind by venting his complaints. Indeed if he had poured out his soul before God, that would have abated the anguish of his spirit: but this expostulation only increased his vexation, and seemed to reflect on the divine justice and goodness.

V. 12. Again addressing God, as the author of his sufferings, Job inquired, whether he were like a tempestuous ocean, or some vast whale or unruly monster, that it was needful he should be restrained from doing mischief by such heavy afflictions; which confined him like chains, a prison, and a guard, that he could not move?

V. 13, 14. It may be supposed that Satan was the author of these terrifying dreams and visions. Job indeed supposed that they were sent from God to enhance his distress; but he only permitted them for the trial of his faith.

V. 15, 16. Job was so weary of life, that he would have preferred any violent death to its continuance, while wasted to bones or a skeleton, and filled with pain. Nay, he so loathed life, that he besought God to withdraw his supporting hand, and then he should expire of course: for this seems to have been his meaning.

17 [g] What *is* man, that thou shouldest [h] magnify him? and that thou shouldest [i] set thine heart upon him?

18 And *that* thou shouldest [k] visit him every morning, *and* [l] try him every moment?

19 [m] How long wilt thou not depart from me, nor let me alone, till I swallow down my spittle?

20 [n] I have sinned; what shall I do unto thee, [o] O thou Preserver of men? [p] why hast thou set me as a mark against thee, so that [q] I am a burden to myself?

21 And [r] why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity? for now shall I [t] sleep in the dust; and thou shalt seek me [u] in the morning, [x] but I *shall* not *be.*

g Ps. viii. 4. cxliv. 3. Heb. ii. 6.
h vii. 12. 1 Sam. xxiv. 14.
i xxxiv. 14, 15.
k Ex. xx. 5. xxxii. 34. Is. xxxviii. 12, 13.
l Gen. xxii. 1. Deut. viii. 16. Jer. ix. 7. Dan. xii. 10. Zech. xiii. 9. 1 Pet. i. 7.
m ix. 18. Ps. vi. 3. xiii. 1—3.
n ix. 29—31. xiii. 26. xiv. 16, 17. xxii. 5. xxxi. 33. xxxiii. 9. 27. xlii. 8. 2 Sam. xxiv. 10. Jer. lii. 13.
o Ps. xxxvi. 6.
p 12. vi. 4. xvi. 12—14. Ps. xxi. 12. Lam. iii. 12.
q 11. iii. 24.
r x. 14. xiii. 23, 24. Is. lxiv. 9. Lam. iii. 42—44. v. 20—22. Zech. i. 12.
s Hos. xiv. 2. John i. 29. Tit. ii. 14.
t ii. 13. xvii. 14. xxi. 32, 33. Ec. xii. 7. Is. xxvi. 19. Dan. xii. 2.
u 8. 13.
x xvii. 14.

V. 17—19. Why should the almighty God magnify such a poor worm as man, in thus contending with him, and setting his heart upon subduing him; watching his opportunities of afflicting him; or making continual trial how much he could support, without allowing him a moment's respite? But it is difficult to expound the language of one who spake the dictates of passion rather than of reason, and whose soul was engaged in a continued conflict betwixt temptation and divine grace; which alternately prevailed, and reciprocally defeated the effects of each other.

V. 20, 21. Job would not allow that he was *a wicked man* and *a hypocrite:* but he confessed before God, that he was a sinner, and acknowledged that he could do nothing to recover his favour: and he inquired for what cause the Lord marked him out from among his fellow-sinners, as the object of his particular displeasure, by such unprecedented calamities as rendered him a burden to himself? He called God "the *Preserver* of men." He is the Preserver of our lives, and the Saviour of the souls of all that believe: but probably Job meant "the *Observer* of men," whose eyes are upon the ways and upon the hearts of all men, to render to every one of them according to their deeds. He was assured also, that God was merciful, and that he could, consistently with his glory, pardon his transgressions and take away his iniquity: and he was very desirous of some token that this inestimable favour was granted him. Indeed he could not understand why God did not forgive him: and he apprehended that this mercy, if not granted soon, would come too late: for that he should, as it were during the night, be laid in the dust, and when the Lord in the morning sought for him to show him favour, he should not be found. These concluding verses contain a very singular intermixture of faith and unbelief, which renders it the more difficult to explain them.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The appointed term of our lives is known to God, but to us it is *uncertain:* while it continues, we have a warfare to accomplish and a work to do: and our eternal state will be decided according as we acquit ourselves. The believer, by the grace of God, fights the good fight of faith, performs his appointed service, then rests from his labours and receives the conqueror's crown, as a gracious recompense from the hand of his merciful Saviour. When conflicting with sore temptations and burdened with weighty afflictions, we may properly long after the promised rest, and welcome the shadows of the evening, the assaults of sickness, the inroads of old age, and the prospects of dissolution: yet, like valiant soldiers or patient labourers, we should be willing to endure fatigue and hardship a little longer, and not impatiently desire release from suffering. "Wearisome months and years indeed may be appointed for us:" and some eminent servants of God have had such complicated sufferings by day and by night, as to deprive them of all ease and respite: Nay, Satan has been permitted so to harass them with temptations, when asleep as well as when awake, that the horror and anguish of their dreams have given them an idea of hell itself. In such circumstances, it cannot be expected that the tempest-tost sufferer should avoid all improper expressions; and as if this were our own case, so we should need tenderness and forbearance from our brethren; we should learn to make allowances for them, and behave towards them when in distress with candour and compassion. We should also pray earnestly not to be led into temptation; and we may well loathe such an evil world as this, and be unwilling to remain in it for ever: yet life with all its sorrows is valuable, if improved to glorify our God, to serve our generation, and to secure our own salvation. But though the Lord will prove his people, and Satan may tempt them, and they may passionately "choose strangling rather than life;" yet grace will bound the actings of indwelling sin, and preserve them from presumptuous and desperate wickedness; and divine consolations will in general counterbalance outward sufferings. But how wretched is sinful man without the knowledge of a Saviour! Accumulated miseries may render life intolerable, and fears of future vengeance make the thought of death unspeakably tremendous: or being hardened in infidelity or despair, he may be tempted, as "choosing strangling and death rather than life," to plunge himself from temporal into eternal misery. How loathsome may disease render our sinful bodies, even whilst we live! and death will surely return them by putrefaction to the dust whence they were taken. To that state we hasten; our days pass away swifter than a weaver's shuttle; our lives are vanishing like the unstable cloud, and our earthly possessions will soon be in other hands. Let us then despair of seeing good on earth, except in the hope of heaven: let us without delay seek those things which are above, and instead of rebelliously murmuring at the appointments of God, and speaking in the bitterness of our souls; let us pour out our hearts in humble confessions of our sins, and in fervent prayers for forgiveness, and to be spared till fitted for a better world. Whatever may be thought in the hour of temptation, the Lord is kind to his people; and he is doing them important good, when per-

CHAP. VIII.

Bildad blames Job for reflecting on the justice of God, 1—3. *He intimates that his children had been cast off for their sins; yet encourages Job to seek unto God,* 4—7. *He appeals to the ancients, to prove the certain doom of hypocrites,* 8—19. *He applies the argument to the case of Job,* 20—22.

THEN answered [a] Bildad the Shuhite, and said,

2 [b] How long wilt thou speak these *things?* and *how long shall* [c] the words of thy mouth *be like* a strong wind?

3 [d] Doth God pervert judgment? or doth [e] the Almighty pervert justice?

4 If thy children have sinned against him, and [f] he have cast them away * for their transgressions;

5 [g] If thou wouldest seek unto God betimes, and make thy supplication to the Almighty;

6 [h] If thou *wert* pure and upright; surely now [i] he would awake for thee, and [k] make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.

7 [l] Though thy beginning was small, yet [m] thy latter end should greatly increase.

8 ¶ For [n] inquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thyself to the search of their fathers:

9 (For [o] we *are but of* yesterday, and know † nothing, because our days upon earth *are* a shadow:)

10 [p] Shall not they teach thee, *and* tell thee, and [q] utter out words of their heart?

11 Can the rush grow up without mire? [r] can the flag grow without water?

12 Whilst it *is* [s] yet in his greenness, *and* not cut down, it withereth before any *other* herb.

13 So *are* the paths of all [t] that forget God; and [u] the hypocrite's hope shall perish:

14 Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust *shall be* a spider's ‡ web.

a ii. 11.
b xi. 2, 3. xvi. 3. xviii. 2. xix. 2, 3. Ex. x. 3. 7. Prov. i. 22.
c vi. 9. 26. vii. 11. xv. 2. 1 Kings xix. 11.
d iv. 17. ix 2. x. 3. xix. 7. xxxiv. 5. 10—12. 17. xl. 8. Gen. xviii. 25. Deut. xxxii. 4. 2 Chr. xix. 7. Ez. xviii. 25. Dan. ix. 14 Rom. ii. 5. iii. 4—6
e Ps. xcix. 4.
f i. 5. 18, 19 v. 4. xviii. 16. 19. Gen. xiii. 13. xix 13
* Heb *in the hand of.*
g v. 8. xi. 13. xxii. 21—23 2 Chr. xxxiii. 12. 13. Is. lv 6, 7. Matt. vii. 7, 8. Jam. iv. 7—10.
h i. 8. iv 6, 7 xi. 14, 15. xvi. 17. Ps. xxvi. 5, 6. Prov. xv. 8. Is i. 15—19. 1 Tim. ii. 8 1 John iii 19—22.
i Ps. xliv. 23. lix. 4, 5. Is. li 9.
k xxii. 23—30. Is iii. 10.
l xlii. 12, 13. Pro. iv. 18. Zech. iv. 10 Matt xiii. 12 31, 32.
m Deut. viii. 16. Zech. xiv. 7. 2 Pet. ii. 20.
n xii. 12. xv. 10. 18. xxxii. 6, 7. Deut. iv. 32. xxxii. 7. Ps. xliv. 1. lxxviii. 3, 4. Is xxxviii. 19. Rom. xv. 4. 1 Cor. x 11
o vii 6. Gen. xlvii. 9. 1 Chr. xxix. 15. Ps. xxxix. 5. cii. 11. cxliv. 4. Jam. iv. 14.
† Heb. *not.*
p xii 7, 8 xxxii. 7. Deut vi. 7. xi. 19. Ps. cxlv. 4. Heb xi 4 xii. 1.
q Prov. xvi. 23. xviii 15. Matt. xii 35.
r Is. xix. 5—7.
s Ps cxxix. 6, 7. Jer. xvii. 6. Jam. i 10, 11. 1 Pet. i 24
t Deut. vi. 12. viii 11. 14. 19 Ps ix 17 x. 4. 1 22 Is li. 13. Jer. ii 32
u xi 20. xiii. 16. xv. 34 xx 5. xxvii. 8—10. xxxvi. 13. Is. xxxiii 14. Matt. xxiv. 51. Luke xii 1, 2.
‡ Heb. *house* Is. lix. 5, 6.

haps they are ready to conclude, that he is waiting an occasion to destroy them. His condescension and compassion to such worthless worms are infinite: he could crush them in a moment, and they all deserve it; but he visits, and chastens them for their good, to exercise and prove their graces, to subdue their iniquities, and to restrain them from sin: and his mercies are far more numerous than the stripes of his correcting rod. The Lord is our constant *Observer;* but he is also the gracious Saviour of all who trust in him: as we can conceal nothing from him; let us plead guilty before his throne of grace, that we may not be condemned at his judgment-seat. And we should do this earnestly; because in the grave it will be too late to repent and seek his face. But if we wait upon him in the appointed way, the tokens of his love will in due time be vouchsafed, and we may then look forward to the hour of death with patient submission and joyful hope.

NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1—3. As the messengers had come one after another to inform Job of his calamities; so his friends followed each other in their censures of him: and thus they inadvertently aided Satan in tempting him to blasphemy and despair. It seems that they were agreed in their judgment concerning the case and character of Job: so that it next devolved on Bildad to answer him, and confirm the doctrine of Eliphaz. Job had spoken important truths, though intermingled with many sallies of passion: but Bildad abruptly and harshly condemned the whole, as boisterous, unreasonable, and pernicious, like a tempestuous wind: and charged him with stating that God perverted justice and judgment, which Job certainly did not mean to do.

V. 4—7. Perhaps Bildad intended to distinguish between the case of Job, and that of his children, in order to show that there was yet hope for him, though not for them: but many think he designed to warn him by the example of sudden vengeance thus set before him. It was however very unfeeling thus to introduce so distressing a subject; and still more to intimate that his children had been cut off for their sins, and perished in them. The language also, in which Bildad conveys his good counsel, seems to imply, that Job's integrity and piety must at least remain dubious, unless proved by his returning prosperity: whereas, had he died of his disease, or worn out many years in penury and pain, it would have been no just impeachment of his character; especially if he had recovered the composure of his mind in submission to the will of God. It was, however, right to exhort Job without delay, to seek and pray unto God; and to encourage him to hope for the recovery of his health and comforts, from the goodness of the Almighty; who was able to raise him from very small beginnings to a great increase of wealth, honour, and happiness.

V. 8—10. Job had slighted Eliphaz's discourse as insipid, and his arguments as inconclusive. Bildad therefore allowed that, by reason of the comparative shortness of their lives, they did not know so much as their fathers, who had had longer time for making observations, and could speak more decidedly from their own *heart,* or experience. To their testimony therefore he appealed, and desired Job to bestow pains to examine the traditions or records, which they had of their sentiments. Some think that Bildad, being descended from Abraham by Keturah, had especial reference to the eminent piety and prosperity of that patriarch.

15 He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand: he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure.

16 He *is* [y] green before the sun, and [z] his branch shooteth forth in his garden.

17 [a] His roots are wrapped about the heap, *and* seeth the place of stones.

18 [b] If he destroy him from his place, then *it* shall deny him, *saying*, I have not seen thee.

19 Behold, [c] this *is* the joy of his way, and [d] out of the earth shall others grow.

20 Behold, [e] God will not cast away a perfect *man*, neither will he * help the evil doers:

21 Till [f] he fill thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with † rejoicing.

22 They that hate thee shall be [g] clothed with shame; and the dwelling place of the wicked shall ‡ come to nought.

x xviii. 14. xxvii. 18. Ps. lii. 5—7. cxii. 10. Prov. x. 28. Matt. vii. 24—27.
y xxi. 7—15. Ps. xxxviii. 35, 36. lxxiii. 3. 12.
z v. 3.
a xvii. 16. xxix. 19. Is. v. 24. xl. 24. Jer. xii. 1, 2. Mark xi. 20. Jude 12.
b vii. 10. xx. 9. Ps. xxxvii. 10. 36. lxxiii. 18, 19. xcii. 7.
c xx. 5. Matt. xiii. 20, 21.
d 1 Sam. ii. 8. Ps. lxxv. 7. cxiii. 7. Ez. xvii. 24.
e iv. 7. ix. 22. Ps. xxxvii. 24. 37.
* Heb. *take the ungodly by the hand.*
f Gen. xxi. 6. Ps. cxxvi. 2. Luke vi. 21.
† Heb. *shouting for joy.* Ezra iii. 11—13. Neh. xii. 43. Ps. xxxii. 11. xcviii. 4. c. 1. Is. lxv. 13, 14.
g Ps. xxxv. 26. cix. 29. cxxxii. 18. 1 Pet. v. 5.
‡ Heb. *not be.* 18. vii. 21.

V. 11—19. It seems to have been Bildad's design in this passage, to represent by various similitudes the apparent piety and the fading prosperity of the hypocrite; and to insinuate that this was applicable to the case of Job.—A rush or flag, growing by the river's side, or in a fenny soil, flourishes while well watered; but when the mire and water fail through drought, it needs not be cut down, but speedily withers of itself. Thus the hypocrite's professed religion and confidence in God are maintained, while worldly interests nourish them; but come to nothing when these supports fail. Having no root of faith and grace, his piety dies away in persecution or tribulation: and in like manner, God may often expose his hypocrisy by taking away his prosperity. This, indeed, is the proper emblem of all those who forget God; but especially of the hypocrite. His vain confidence may likewise be compared to the spider's web, spun by the insect from its own resources with great ingenuity, and suited to answer its present purposes: but easily swept away at once, as though it had never been. Thus suitable temptations destroy the hypocrite's religion; sudden judgments tear from him all his transient prosperity; and all his endeavours to maintain either his character for piety, or his worldly consequence, by means of powerful friends and relations, prove unsuccessful. Indeed he may be compared to a tree growing in the garden, and striking root even into the rock: yet after a time cut down and thrown aside, while another is planted in its place. Thus wicked men, when they seem most firmly established, are suddenly thrown down, treated with neglect, and sink into oblivion and contempt: whilst others from the lowest stations and of the same disposition come in their place, whose joy in their wicked ways is equally transient and unstable. In general, the hypocrite's religion and the ungodly man's prosperity, having no firm support, are precarious and of short duration: yet, in respect of this present world, every general rule respecting them admits of many exceptions; and the illustrations adduced were wholly inapplicable to the case of Job.

V. 20—22. If Job were indeed a true believer, Bildad was assured that his prosperity and comfort would return, and his enemies would be put to shame: but if he were a wicked man, he would never be raised above his calamities, but would sink under them. Bildad seems to have formed in his mind a fixed rule of Providence in these respects. Yet there was a fallacy in his reasoning and that of his friends, arising from their not distinguishing between *the present state of trial* and discipline, and *the future state of retributions.* Hence they concluded that Job denied the justice of God and the advantages of piety; because he maintained that in this world wicked men often prospered, and godly men were afflicted.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Even in *religious* controversies it is common for men to treat each other with acrimony and their arguments with contempt, to overlook what is evidently good, to make the worst of what is apparently faulty, and to charge horrible consequences upon very inoffensive tenets. There is a way which some have of bringing odium on an opponent's sentiments, by attempting to show that they impute injustice, cruelty, or tyranny to the Almighty, which is calculated to shock every pious mind. Truth needs not, and error ought not, to be thus defended. We are not competent to judge in many cases what becomes the universal and everlasting Sovereign. We should believe assuredly that he is just, wise, and good, in those dispensations which exceed our comprehension; and wait for the day of the revelation of his righteous judgment to the assembled world. Nay, even when doctrines may evidently be proved inconsistent with the divine perfections as well as with Scripture, it becomes us to treat such subjects with great reverence, modesty, and caution. We are sure God will not pervert judgment: he can have no inducement, and it is impossible in itself. But we must not judge of characters by providential dispensations, or concur with those who condemn the afflicted. When we mention the remarkable death of others, we should not consider them as divine judgments, or decide on the state of their souls, except upon the most undeniable evidence of their presumptuous impenitent wickedness: and it is cruel needlessly to mention a case of this kind, however striking, in the presence of a sorrowing parent or relation. On every occasion, however, waving all topics foreign to the subject, we should exhort the afflicted without delay to seek the Lord by earnest prayer; and we should encourage them with the prospect of returning comfort from his power and mercy. He will awake for those who sincerely repent and believe: and though their beginning be small, their latter end will greatly increase. We should indeed prepare diligently to inquire into the sentiments of wise men in other ages on these important subjects: especially that we may become acquainted with the experience and observations of those "elders who "through faith obtained a good report," and which are recorded for our instruction and warning. And notwithstanding the shortness of our lives, we may thus obtain

CHAP. IX.

Job acknowledges and celebrates God's justice, wisdom, power, and wonderful works, 1—13. *He disclaims all attempts to justify himself,* 14—21. *But insists, that a man's innocency should not be judged of by what befals him in this world,* 22—24. *And alleges his sufferings; but will not presume to dispute with the author of them,* 25—35.

THEN Job answered and said,
2 I know *it is* so of a truth: but
[a] how should man be just * with God?
3 If [b] he will contend with him, [c] he
cannot answer him one of a thousand.
4 *He is* [d] wise in heart, and mighty in
strength: [e] who hath hardened *himself*
against him, and hath prospered?
5 Which [f] removeth the mountains,
and they know not; [g] which overturneth
them in his anger;

a iv. 17. xiv. 3, 4. xxv 4. xxxii. 2. xxxiii. 9. xxxiv. 5. Ps. cxxx. 4. cxliii. 2. Rom. iii. 20
* Or, *before.*
b 32, 33. x. 2. xxiii. 3—7. xxxi. 35—37. xxxiii. 13 xxxiv. 14, 15. xl. 2 Is. lvii. 15, 16. Rom. ix. 20.
c Ps xl. 12. 1 John i 8 iii. 20
d 19. xxxvi 5. Ps. civ. 24 cxxxvi. 5. Dan. ii 20. iv. 34—37. Rom. xi. 33 Eph. i. 8. 19 iii. 10. 20. Jude 24, 25. vi. 10. xv. 23—27. xl 9. Ex. ix. 14—17. xiv 17, 18. Prov. xxix. 1. Dan. v 20—22. 1 Cor. x. 22.
f xxviii. 9. Ps. xlvi 2. lxviii 8. cxiv. 6 Is. xl. 12. Hab iii. 6 10. Zech iv. 7. Matt. xxi 21. 1 Cor. xiii. 2. Rev. vi. 14.
g Nah i. 5, 6. Zech. xiv 4, 5 Matt xxvii 51 Luke xxi. 11. Rev. xvi. 18, 19.

6 Which [h] shaketh the earth out of
her place, and [i] the pillars thereof
tremble;
7 Which [k] commandeth the sun, and
it riseth not, and [l] sealeth up the stars;
8 Which [m] alone spreadeth out the
heavens, and [n] treadeth upon the † waves
of the sea.
9 Which [o] maketh ‡ Arcturus, Orion,
and Pleiades, and [p] the chambers of the
south;
10 Which doeth [q] great things past
finding out; yea, and [r] wonders without
number.
11 Lo, [s] he goeth by me, and I see
him not: he passeth on also, but I per-
ceive him not.
12 Behold, [t] he taketh away, who can
§ hinder him? who will say unto him,
[u] What doest thou?
13 *If* God will not withdraw his
anger, [x] the ‖ proud helpers do stoop
under him.

h Is. ii. 19. 21. xiii 13, 14. xxiv 1. 19, 20. Hag. ii 6. 21. Heb. xii. 26.
i xxvi. 11. xxxviii. 4—7. 1 Sam. ii. 8. Ps. lxxv. 3. cxiv. 7. Jer iv. 24. Joel ii. 10.
k Ex. x. 21, 22. Dan iv. 35. Am. iv. 13. viii. 9. Matt. xxiv. 29. xxvii. 45.
l xxxvii 7 xxxviii. 12—15. 19, 20. Is. xiii 10 Ez. xxxiii. 7 Luke xxi. 25, 26 Acts xxvii. 20.
m xxxvii. 18 Gen. i. 6, 7. Ps. xxxiii 6. civ. 3, 3. Is xl. 22. Jer. x. 11.
n xxxviii. 11. Ps xciii. 3, 4. Hab. iii. 15. Matt. xiv. 25—30. John vi. 19.
† Heb *heights.*
o xxxviii 31, 32. Gen. i. 16 Ps. cxlvii. 4. Am. v. 8.
‡ Heb *Ash, Cesil, and Cimah*
p Ps. civ 3 13.
q v. 9 xxvi. 12—14. xxxvii 23. Ps. lxxi 15. lxxii 18 Ec. iii. 11 Is. xl 26—28. Rom xi. 33. Eph. iii. 20
r Ex. xv 11. Ps. cxxxvi 4 Dan.
iv 2, 3.——s xxiii. 8, 9. xxxv. 14. Ps. lxxvii. 9. 1 Tim. vi. 16 ——t xxiii 13 xxxiv. 29 Dan iv. 35 Eph. i. 11.——§ Heb *turn him away?* xi. 10.——u xxxiii. 13 Is xlv. 9. Jer xviii. 6 Matt. xi. 26 xx 15. Rom. ix. 18—20. xi. 35.——x xxvi. 12. xl 9—11. Is. xxx. 7 xxxi. 2, 3. Jam. iv. 6, Heb 7.——‖ *helpers of pride or strength*

true wisdom for our present and eternal good. But all human authority, whether of ancient fathers or modern reasoners, must be submitted to that of the sacred oracles. —Forgetfulness of God, and false apprehensions of him, his truth, and his will, render men either hypocrites or openly ungodly. These principles and practices can only spring from a corrupt and carnal mind: and persons of this character will find that their joys and hopes soon wither like the worthless rush, are swept away as the spider's web, and they themselves cut down like the barren fig-tree for the fire. To these earthly joys and false confidences one generation succeeds after another; whilst millions perish without any regarding it! Thus men deceive themselves and each other, and are deceived by Satan: yet every object in nature, when duly attended to, warns them not to lean on such failing supports, to adopt such self-devised expedients, or to rejoice in such perishing comforts. But though the upright soul may be severely tried, God will never cast him away; and at length he shall be filled with satisfying and unfailing joy, to the confusion of his enemies who shall perish for ever. May we choose the portion, possess the confidence, bear the cross, and die the death of the righteous: and in the mean time be careful neither to wound others by rash judgments, nor to distress ourselves about the opinion of our fellow-creatures.

NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 1—3. In this answer Job paid no regard to Bildad's severe reflections, but confined himself more to the point in hand than before. He declared, (referring to Bildad's assertion that God did not pervert justice;) that he did not entertain a doubt concerning the righteousness of God in all his dispensations; nor did he mean so, when he denied himself to be a hypocrite: "for "how should man be just before God?" Before him he pleaded guilty of numerous transgressions; and should God contend with him in judgment, he could not justify one out of a thousand of all the thoughts, words, and actions of his life: so that he deserved worse than all his present sufferings. But then this was common to him with the best of men, and did not prove him remarkably wicked: though his afflictions were great beyond example.

V. 4—13. Instead of cursing God to his face, as Satan falsely asserted he would, Job set himself to celebrate his perfections and wonderful works. He was as fully assured of God's wisdom and power, as of his justice: he knew that none could finally prosper or be happy, who hardened themselves in rebellion against him. Indeed opposition must be as foolish as impious against him, who, without *any previous notice,* is able to overturn the deep-rooted mountains, to shake the nations with earthquakes, and to remove or destroy the earth in a moment; who can forbid the sun or stars to shine, or at once extinguish their fires; who spreadeth out the heavens as his canopy, and walketh upon the stormy waves of the sea as subjected to his authority; who arrangeth the constellations of the heavens, and the seasons of the year as he pleaseth; and in short, whose works are innumerable, and incomprehensibly great.—In all these things he acts invisibly, and on every side: he is ever present though unperceived, and can crush his opponent ere he is aware. He can also take away children, wealth, health, or life, and none can hinder him, or call him to account: and if his anger be not pacified, the stoutest and proudest helpers must sink under his powerful

14 [y] How much less [z] shall I answer him, *and* [a] choose out my words *to reason* with him?

15 Whom, [b] though I were righteous, *yet* would I not answer, *but* [c] I would make supplication to [d] my Judge.

16 ¶ If [e] I had called, and he had answered me; *yet* [f] would I not believe that he had hearkened unto my voice.

17 For [g] he breaketh me with a tempest, and [h] multiplieth my wounds [i] without cause.

18 [k] He will not suffer me to take my breath, but [l] filleth me with bitterness.

19 If *I speak* of strength, lo, [m] *he is* strong: and if of judgment, [n] who shall set me a time *to plead?*

y iv. 19 xxv. 6. 1 Kings viii. 27.
z xl. 4, 5.
a xxiii 4.7 xxxiii. 5.
b x. 15. 1 Cor. iv. 4.
c v. 8 viii. 5 x. 2. xxii. 27. xxxiv. 31, 32 1 Kings viii. 38, 39. 2 Chr. xxxiii 13. Jer. xxxi. 9. Dan. ix. 3. 18
d xxiii. 7. 1 Pet. ii. 23
e Ps xviii 6.lxvi. 18—20. cxvi. 1, 2.
xx ix.24. Ex.vi. 9. Judg. vi. 13. Ps. cxxvi. 1. Luke xxiv. 41. Acts xii. 14—16
g xvi 14 Ps xxix. 5.xlii 7 lxxxiii. 15 Is xxviii.17. Jer xxiii.19 Ez. xiii.13.Matt.vii. 27. xii 20.
h i. 14—19. ii. 7. 10. 13.
i ii 3. xvi. 17. xxxiv. 6. Ps. xxv. 3. John ix. 3. xv. 25.
k vii. 19 xvi. 14. Ps. xxxix. 13. lxxxviii. 7. 15—18. Lam. iii 3. 8 ——l iii. 20. Lam. iii. 15. 19 Heb xii. 11.——m 4. xxxvi. 17—19. xl. 9, 10. Ps. lxii. 11. Matt. vi. 13. 1 Cor. i. 25. x, 22.
n 32, 33. xxxi. 35 xxxiii 5—7.

20 If I [o] justify myself, [p] mine own mouth shall condemn me: if *I say,* [q] I *am* perfect, [r] it shall also prove me perverse.

21 *Though* I *were* perfect, *yet* [s] would I not know my soul: [t] I would despise my life.

22 This *is* one *thing,* therefore I said *it,* [u] He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked.

23 If [x] the scourge slay suddenly, [y] he will laugh at the trial of the innocent.

24 [z] The earth is given into the hand of the wicked: [a] he covereth the faces of the judges thereof; [b] if not, where *and* who *is* he?

25 ¶ Now my days are [c] swifter

o 2. iv. 17. xxxii. 1, 2. Ps cxxx. 3. cxliii. 2. Luke x. 29. xvi 15.
p xv. 5,6. xxxiv. 35. xxxv. 16. Prov. x. 19 Is vi. 5. Matt xii. 36, 37. Jam. iii. 2.
q i. 1. Phil. iii. 12—15.
r xxxiii. 3—13. Prov. xvii. 20. 1 Tim. vi 5.
s Ps. cxxxix. 23, 24 Prov.xxviii. 26. Jer. xvii. 9, 10 1 Cor. iv. 4. 1 John iii. 20.
t vii 15, 16. 21.
u Ec ix. 1, 2.Ez. xxi. 3, 4. Luke xiii. 2 4.
x i. 13—19. ii. 7. iv. 7. viii. 20.
y 1 Sam.xxiv.15. 17. Ps. xliv. 22. Ez xiv. 19—21. xxi.13. Heb. xi. 36, 37.
x xii 6. xxi. 7—15. Ps. xvii. 14. lxxiii. 3—7. Jer. xii 1, 2. Dan. iv. 17 v. 18—21. vii. 7, &c. Hab. i. 14—17.——a 2 Sam. xv. 30. xix. 4. Esth. vi. 12. vii. 8. Jer. xiv. 4. xxxii. 3.——c vii. 6, 7. Esth. viii. 14.

vengeance. It is madness therefore for a worm to resist his will. There seems to be no allusion in this passage to any of the miraculous displays of the divine power recorded in Scripture, except it be to the convulsions of the deluge.—The names of the constellations, *Arcturus*, *Orion*, and *Pleiades*, are taken from the Greek version, and are supposed to correspond with the original words, *Hash* or *Ash*, *Chesil* and *Kima*: and "the chambers of the south," may mean those stars, which are seen in the southern hemisphere, or those which only appear in the south at certain seasons of the year.

V. 14—21. Indeed, if none could justify himself before God, or withstand his power; Job, in his present abject condition, thought himself peculiarly unfit for such a bold attempt: for his mind was so confused, that he could not select apt words to express his meaning in what he desired to say. Even if he were completely righteous, he would rather supplicate the favour, than claim deliverance from the justice, of his Judge. Indeed he was so entirely disheartened, that an immediate answer to his prayer could not embolden him to hope that God would return to him in mercy. For though he was conscious he had not given cause for it by any gross wickedness or hypocrisy; yet God had so overwhelmed him with the tempest of his wrath; had so wounded him in body and soul, with reiterated strokes, without giving him the least breathing time; and had so filled him with bitterness, that he could not but regard him as an enemy. At the same time, he knew that it was impossible to resist his almighty power, or to escape his omnipresence: and it would be equally absurd to think of deciding the controversy by a judicial trial: for who had authority to act as judge, and to appoint the time and place of hearing? Nay, were that possible, it would be in vain: for, if there was no other guilt chargeable upon him, his attempt to justify himself before God, and every argument that he should use in such a cause, would condemn him as a perverse and rebellious creature. And if he knew no ill of himself, yet he would not think himself free from criminality: for he did not *know his own soul*, as his heart-searching Judge did: and therefore he would despise his own life; and submit to any sentence, rather than contend against the Majesty of heaven.—There is in this passage a great deal of truth, as well as sound reasoning and honourable thoughts of God: yet there is also a considerable tincture of unbelief and despondency. Some hope in the divine mercy seems implied: but that attribute is not mentioned, and Job was only just supported from sinking into despair.—They that know something of Satan's dark temptations, when his suggestions fill the soul with horrible thoughts of God, and tend to subvert the foundations of hope, will, from their own distressing experience, better understand Job's meaning, than from any unexperienced commentator. Had they at such times been urged to speak, their discourse would have contained a similar conflict betwixt hard and honourable thoughts of God; betwixt gloomy despondency and feeble hope; and betwixt rebellious murmurs, and a consciousness that they ought to submit, and a desire so to do.

V. 22—24. Here Job lays down the precise subject, upon which he was at issue with his friends, and on which the Lord at length decided in his favour. He maintained against them, that in the dispensations of Providence in this world, there is no exact discrimination betwixt the righteous and the wicked; that when God scourges guilty nations, by war, famine, or pestilence, they who are comparatively innocent and truly pious, are often involved in the common calamity; and that in such sudden desolations the Lord does not wait, so to speak, to try their causes: or the *scourge* is figuratively spoken of as *laughing* at distinctions in the characters of the sufferers. Indeed the earth is mainly possessed and governed by wicked men: and the judges of it are commonly *blinded* by their lusts or *hood-winked* by bribery, so that they frequently oppress and persecute the righteous. Yet God gives them their power, and allows them to prosper in their crimes, by which they are still further blinded and hardened. And who is he, that can deny these facts, which prove that this is not a state of exact retribution?

than a post: [d] they flee away, they see no good.

26 They are passed away as the * swift ships: [e] as the eagle *that* hasteth to the prey.

27 If I say, [f] I will forget my complaint, I will leave off my heaviness, and comfort *myself;*

28 [g] I am afraid of all my sorrows, [h] I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent.

29 [i] *If* I be wicked, why then labour I in vain?

30 [k] If I wash myself with snow-water, and make my hands never so clean;

31 [l] Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and [m] mine own clothes shall † abhor me.

32 [n] For *He is* not a man, as I *am, that* I should answer him, *and* [o] we should come together in judgment.

33 [p] Neither is there any ‡ day's-man betwixt us, *that* [q] might lay his hand upon us both.

34 Let him take his rod away from me, and [r] let not his fear terrify me:

35 *Then* would I speak, and not fear him; § but *it is* not so with me.

d Ps xxxix. 5 11. lxxxix. 49. xc. 9. 10. Jam. iv. 14.
* Heb. *ships of desire*, or ships of *Ebeth*.
e xxxix. 27—30 2 Sam. i 23. Prov. xxiii. 5. Jer. iv 13 Lam. iv. 19 Hab. i 8.
f vii 13 Ps 1 xvii. 2, 3 Jer viii. 18.
g xxi, 6. Ps. lxxxviii. 15, 16. cxix 120.
h 2. 20. 21. xiv. 16, 17. Ex. xx. 7. Ps. cxxx 3 i 22 x. 7 14—17. xx 5 xxi. 16, 17. 27 xxii. 5, &c Ps lxxviii. 13 Jer ii 35.
k Ps xxvi. 6. Prov. xxviii. 13 Is. i. 16—18. Jer. iii. 22. iv. 14. Rom. x. 3. 1 John i. 8.
l 20. xv. 6.
m Is. lix. 6. lxiv. 6. Phil. iii. 8, 9.
† Or, *make me to be abhorred.*
n xxxiii. 12 xxxv. 5—7. Num. xxiii. 19. 1 Sam xvi 7. Ec vi 10. Is. xlv 9 Jer xlix 19. Rom. ix 20 1 John iii 20.
o xiii 18—23. xxiii 3—7 Ps. cxliii. 2.
p 19 1 Sam ii 25. 1 John ii. 2.
‡ Heb *one that should argue*, or *umpire*
q 1 Kings iii. 16, &c.
r xiii 11. 20—22. xxiii 15 xxxi. 20. 23. xxxiii. 7. xxxvii. 1. Ps. xxxix. 10. xc. 11.
§ Heb *but I am not so with myself.* xxix. 2, &c.

V. 25—35. Here Job again renewed his complaints, with the same incoherency and conflict of contending principles as before. He regarded his life as having suddenly come to a wretched end; and with speed that surpassed that of the fleetest horse on which the messenger of important tidings travels express, that of the swiftest ships, and even that of the eagle hasting to the prey. All his efforts to rise superior to the tumult of his passions were unavailing; he could not but fear even worse than he felt; and as he was indeed a sinner, and his friends condemned him, he was alarmed lest God should finally reject him. If indeed he were a *wicked* man, it would be labour in vain to vindicate his character: for when he had done all in his power for that purpose; God would detect his secret iniquities, and thus thrust him as it were into the mire, till his very garments rendered him abhorred. Nay, though he were not a wicked man, yet the discovery of all his former sins, and of the defects of his present obedience, would show him to be, "as an unclean thing, and his righteous-"ness as filthy rags." Indeed his loathsome disease, and his other afflictions, were interpreted by his friends as proof of his guilt, and as God's plunging him in a ditch and rendering him abominable; notwithstanding all the proofs he could give of his integrity. So that there was nothing to be attempted in so unequal a contest: there was no *day's-man* or *umpire*, to decide upon the merits of the cause, whose authority might induce both parties to abide by his sentence: and he was so confused and terrified that he could not make the best of his cause. If his afflictions and terrors were removed, he could then speak without fear: but as the case now stood, he might as well hold his peace.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—15.

The justice, wisdom, truth, and goodness of God must be taken for granted, whatever sentiments we defend or oppose; for "shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" But "how should man be just before God?" If he enter into judgment with us according to his holy law, not one action in a thousand can stand the test. The wisdom, power, and sovereignty of God are displayed in the works of creation and providence: we may collect what he can do from what he has done: and when these subjects are duly considered, they who harden themselves against him in presumptuous wickedness, appear to be perfectly infatuated. How can they, who despise the favour and defy the vengeance of the Almighty, expect to prosper, or to escape final misery? But they are no less so, who proudly attempt to justify themselves before that God, who possesses infinite purity and justice, and knows us better than we know ourselves. He will prove every indictment which he hath brought, and vindicate every sentence which he hath denounced against any of his creatures. It is therefore our only wisdom to supplicate mercy, and not to demand justice, from our Judge. Every attempt to establish our own righteousness forms an additional demonstration of our pride, perverseness, and rebellion. The Lord can produce against us innumerable transgressions which have escaped our notice or recollection: he views us with an impartial eye, whilst we flatter ourselves in our own sight: he sees our iniquity to be hateful, when we are attempting to palliate it. If then we know nothing by ourselves, we are "not thereby justified:" and it is far better to submit to his righteousness, than to argue either against the sentence of his law or the appointments of his providence, which unitedly testify against us. In like manner, labour to vindicate our character, if indeed we are hypocrites, must be in vain: we shall soon appear as if newly plunged in the mire, and be exposed to shame and condemnation, without being able to plead any thing in our own behalf. But if consciously sincere, we may humbly maintain our integrity before men; yet it is often lost labour, except as "by "well doing we put to silence the ignorance of foolish men." And it is commonly best to leave our cause with God, and patiently to bear the unjust suspicions of our brethren, till he sees good to remove the painful trial.

V. 16—35.

We should be very careful not to be offended either by the tribulations we meet with, or the prosperity of the wicked: they have their short-lived pleasures, we our transient sorrows. Our lives are speeding away with unobserved swiftness, and soon their joys and our tears will be for ever done away. Yet under severe trials and sharp temptations, it is very difficult to repress murmurs, to keep out

CHAP. X.

Job entreats God to show wherefore he contended with him; and pleads for compassion as from his Creator, 1—13. *He states, that his sins were strictly marked and rigorously punished,* 14—17. *He repines, that he had been born, or had not died immediately after: and craves respite from pain to prepare for death,* 18—22.

MY [a] soul is * weary of my life; [b] I will leave my complaint upon myself; [c] I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.

2 I will say unto God, [d] Do not condemn me; [e] shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.

3 *Is it* [f] good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress, that thou shouldest [g] despise [h] the † work of thine hands, and [i] shine upon the counsel of the wicked?

4 Hast thou eyes of flesh? or [k] seest thou as man seeth?

5 *Are* [l] thy days as the days of man? *are* thy years as man's days,

6 That [m] thou inquirest after mine iniquity, and searchest after my sin?

7 ‡ Thou [n] knowest that I am not wicked; [o] and *there is* none that can deliver out of thine hand.

a iii. 20—23. vi. 8, 9. vii. 15, 16. 20. ix. 21 xiv. 13. Num. xi. 15. 1 Kings xix. 4. Jon. iv. 3 8.
* Or, *cut off while I live.*
b vii 11. xix. 4. xxi. 2—4.
c 15, 16. vi. 2—4. 26. vii. 11. xvi. 6—16 Ps. xxxii. 3—5 Is xxxviii. 15. 17.
d Ps vi. 1—4 xxv. 7 xxxviii. 1—8 cix 21. cxliii. 2
e viii 5 xxxiv. 31. 32. Ps cxxxix. 23, 24 Lam. iii. 40—42. 1 Cor. xi. 31, 32.
f xxxiv 5—7. 19. 19 xxxvi. 7—9 17, 18. xl. 2. 8 Lam. iii. 2—13.
g xxxiv 15. Ps lxix. 33
h xiv. 15 xxxiv 19 Ps cxxxvii. 8. Is. lxiv. 8. 1 Pet. iv. 19.
† Heb. *labour.*
i viii 20. Jer xii. 1—3
k ix 32. 1 Sam. xvi 7. Luke xvi. 15 Rev. i. 14.
l Ps xc. 2. 4. ciii. 12. 24—27. Heb i 12 2 Pet iii 8.
m 14 x. 16. 17. Ps. xliv. 21. Jer. ii 34 Zeph. i. 12. 1 Cor. iv. 5
‡ Heb It is *upon thy knowledge.*
n xxiii. 10. xxxi. 6. 14. 35. xlii. 7. Ps. i. 6. vii. 3. 8, 9! xvii 3. xxvi. 1—5 cxxxix. 1, 2. 21—24. John xxi. 17. 2 Cor. i. 12 1 Thes. ii. 10.——o xxviii. 13, 14. Deut. xxxii. 39. Ps. l. 22. Dan. iii. 15. Hos. ii. 10. John x. 28—30.

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hard thoughts of God, or to hold fast our confidence in him. When, through Satan's influence on the mind, the Lord appears as an enemy; when his power and justice are more distinguishable than his mercy, and when a sense of his displeasure, and slavish fears of condemnation preponderate, the soul even of a believer is filled with inexpressible confusion, and verges to melancholy and despair. It is easy to counsel those who are in such a case: but who can then practise as he ought? Every object enhances terror; every topic suggests new disquietude; the trembling and tempted soul forgets, or dares not appropriate, the promises; every precept, threatening, warning, or example, seems to be pointed against him; and he scarcely ventures to approach, or knows not how to speak, before the mercy-seat, where once he communed with his God in the spirit of adoption, with confidence and comfort. "This is in-"deed the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be delivered "out of it." We may be thankful, if we have not known these waves and billows of dire temptations; yet we shall scarcely know how to sympathize with those that are conflicting with them, or to make proper allowances for them. But, poor tempest-tossed soul, consider Job, and notice that others have passed this dreadful gulph before thee; and though they could not believe that God would hear or deliver them any more; yet he rebuked the storm, and brought them to the desired haven. And look to Jesus, who though free from sin, once "suffered being tempted, that he "might be able to succour such as are tempted." Resist then the devil, "steadfast in the faith;" give not place to hard thoughts of God or desperate conclusions about thyself; repress as much as possible every rising passionate wish or expression. Come to him who invites the weary and heavy laden; and hath both promised in no wise to cast out those who come, but to give rest to their souls: plead guilty; cast thyself upon unmerited mercy, as if this were thy first approach to a forgiving God, without deciding any thing about thy former experience or character: acknowledge that thy sufferings are less than thy sins have deserved: cry for repentance, for faith, for patience, for inward support; and wait thus at mercy's gate. There can indeed be no superior, who as umpire, can lay his hand on both parties: yet remember that there is an appointed Mediator, "an Advocate with the Father," who "is able "to save to the uttermost all them who come to God by "him; seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for "them," according to the will of God. And that those who believe on him, are washed and justified from all their sins: and will soon be saved from all their troubles. In this way, thou shalt ere long find, the tempter is rebuked, the storm is over, thy sun break forth; yea, thou shalt yet sing, "O LORD I will praise thee; though thou wast "angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou "comfortest me." O how happy is a believer even in such trying circumstances, compared with those prosperous sinners, to whom it will shortly be said, "Remember that "thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things, and "Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and thou "art tormented."

NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1, 2. The vehemence of Job's passions, excited by his exquisite sufferings, here again brake through his better purposes: and he was urged to seek relief by complaining "in the bitterness of his soul," whatever the consequence might be. For, being weary of life, he seems to have wished to bring some sudden judgment on himself, which might at once end his days. Yet he would still beg of God not finally to deal with him as a wicked man; but to show him on what account he dealt with such extreme rigour with one of his upright worshippers.

V. 3. Job did not think that God would oppress his creatures, by punishing them without cause; as if he despised the work of his own hands, and took pleasure in destroying or disgracing it: yet he could not perceive how his dispensations towards him could consist with his goodness and mercy; and he supposed that his remarkable afflictions would tend to encourage the counsels and practices of wicked men, who often argue that there is no advantage in religion, and therefore seek happiness in the world by an ungodly life.

8 [p] Thine hands * have made me and fashioned me together round about; [q] yet thou dost destroy me.

9 [r] Remember, I beseech thee, that [s] thou hast made me as the clay; and wilt thou bring me [t] into dust again?

10 Hast thou not [u] poured me out as milk, and curdled me like cheese?

11 Thou hast [x] clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast † fenced me with bones and sinews.

12 Thou hast granted me [y] life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.

13 And these *things* hast thou [z] hid in thine heart: [a] I know that this *is* with thee.

14 If I sin, [b] then thou markest me, and [c] thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.

15 [d] If I be wicked, woe unto me; and [e] *if* I be righteous, *yet* will I not lift up my head. [f] *I am* full of confusion; therefore [g] see thou mine affliction;

16 For it increaseth: [h] thou huntest me as a fierce lion: and again thou shewest thyself [i] marvellous upon me

17 Thou renewest thy * witnesses against me, and increasest thine indignation upon me; [k] changes and [l] war *are* against me.

18 [m] Wherefore then hast thou brought me forth out of the womb? O that I had [n] given up the ghost, and no eye had seen me!

19 [o] I should have been as though I had not been; I should have been carried from the womb to the grave.

20 [p] *Are* not my days few? [q] cease *then, and* let me alone, that I may take comfort a little,

21 Before [r] I go *whence* I shall not return, *even* to [s] the land of darkness and [t] the shadow of death;

22 A land of darkness, as darkness *itself; and* of the shadow of death, without any order, and *where* the light *is* as darkness.

p Ps. cxix 73 Is. xliii. 7.
* Heb *took pains about me.*
q 3. Gen. vi 7, 8 Jer xviii 3–10.
r vii. 7. Ps. xxv. 6, 7. 18. lxxxix. 47. cvi 4
s Gen. ii 7. iii. 19. Is. xlv. 9 lxiv. 8
t xvii 14. Ps. xxii. 15. xc. 3. Ec. xii. 7.
u Ps. cxxxix. 14—16.
x 2 Cor v. 2, 3.
† Heb *hedged.* xl. 17, 18. Ez. xxxvii. 4—8. Eph. iv. 16.
y Gen. xix. 19. Matt. vi. 25. Acts xvii. 25 28.
z xxiii. 9. Ec. viii. 6, 7. Is xlv. 15. Rom. xi. 33.
a xxiii 13. Deut. xxxii 39. Is. xlv. 7 xlvi. 9, 10. Lam iii 37. Eph. iii. 11.
b xiii. 26. 27. xiv. 16, 17. Ps. cxxx. 3. cxxxix. 1
c vii 21 Ex. xxxiv. 7. Nah. i. 3.
d 7. ix. 29. xxvii. 7 Ps. ix 17. Is iii. 11. Mal. iii 18. Rom. ii. 8, 9.
e ix. 12. 15. 20, 21. Is. lxiv. 5, 6. Luke xvii 10.
f xxi 6. xxiii. 15.
g Ex. iii. 7. Ps. xxv. 18 cxix. 153. Lam. i. 20. v. 1, &c.
h Is. xxxviii. 13 Lam iii. 10 Am iii. 8.
i Num. xvi 29, 30. Deut xxviii. 59.
* That is, *plagues.* xvi. 8. Ruth i. 21.
k Ps. lv. 19. Jer. xlviii. 11. Zeph. i. 12.
l xvi. 11—16. xix. 6—11
m iii. 10, 11. Jer. xv. 10 xx 14—18. Matt xxvi. 24.
n xi. 20. xiv. 10.
o Ps lviii. 8.
p vii. 6, 7. 16. viii. 9 ix 25 26. xiv. 1 Ps. xxxix. 5. ciii 16.
q vii. 17—21. xiii. 25. Ps. xxxix 13
r vii. 8—10 xiv. 10—14 2 Sam. xii 23 xiv. 14. Is. xxxviii 11.
s iii 5 Ps lxxxviii. 6. 11, 12.
t Ps xxiii. 4. Jer. ii. 6.

V. 4—7. Man's eyes see partially, superficially, and gradually; and his days are transient, so that he must make haste, or he may not find time to effect his purposes: but the case is entirely different with the everlasting, omniscient, and holy God. He could have detected Job's iniquity if he were guilty, without putting him to the torture to extort a confession: and had space to bring him to the trial and to convict him, before he proceeded to punish. Job could not therefore understand what God meant by thus afflicting him; as he could appeal to him that he had not been wicked, that is, *an impenitent unconverted sinner;* as the word translated *wicked*, generally, if not always, signifies. If, however, God, in sovereignty, was pleased to punish him, he knew it was in vain to contend with him; for none could deliver him out of his hands.

V. 8—13. In these verses Job expostulates with God, as if he had created him only for misery. The very hands which had fashioned him, (as the potter moulds the clay on all sides, till he has formed the vessel he intended,) now *heavily afflicted him;* and were about to destroy him, and reduce him to his original dust. He then gave an accurate account of his wonderful formation in the womb: when from his original liquid form he was gradually coagulated, as milk is curdled into cheese; and when the skin and the flesh covered him, till at length he was supported and braced by bones and sinews. To this material substance God had given life and a rational soul; and thus he had been born into the world, and had ever since been protected, and favoured with a variety of comforts: and could the Lord have created, preserved, and prospered him, only to render his downfal the more dreadful and his miseries more extreme? Yet all his sufferings must have been the result of a secret purpose thus to overwhelm him, and the event in like manner was known to God alone.

V. 14—17. Job did not deny, that as a sinner he *deserved* his sufferings: but he thought that justice was executed upon him with peculiar rigour, that every sin was noticed, and that God would not mercifully acquit him from his iniquity. If indeed he were a wicked man, a notorious sinner, and hypocritical in his religion, his case must be dreadful: nay, if righteous, or an upright worshipper of God, he was so crushed and dismayed that he should not dare to look up for mercy. Indeed he was full of confusion, and knew not what to think of his extraordinary case: yet he begged of God to notice his increasing affliction; and no longer to pursue him with his judgments and terrors, as the fierce lion hunts the trembling fugitive; nor to deal with him in so *astonishing a manner.* For every affliction was a witness of God's indignation against him, and nothing but changes of one misery for another awaited *him*, against whom God himself, and the whole creation, seemed to be at war. The gloom, unbelief, and hard thoughts of God that are here discernible, ought to be ascribed as much to Satan's temptations and Job's inward anguish of soul, as to his outward trials and remaining depravity.—The words rendered, "I am full of "confusion," (15) may be rendered, 'O be satisfied with 'my confusion,' or disgrace.

V. 18—22. Job here more directly than before (*Notes*, iii.) expostulated with God for giving him his being, and for not cutting him off by death in the womb, or as soon as born. He considered death as at hand; and he begged a little respite from his anguish, that he might prepare for that closing scene; and for removing to the country, whence

CHAP. XI.

Zophar sharply rebukes Job for justifying himself; and earnestly desires that God would answer him, 1—6. *He shows that God is unsearchable, and man ignorant and presumptuous,* 7—12. *He reminds Job that repentance is the only way of recovering comfort and prosperity,* 13—20.

THEN answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said,
2 Should not [a] the multitude of words

a Ps. cxl 11 Prov. x 19. Acts xvii. 18 Jam. i. 19.

he should not return. The description that follows, seems to be only intended for the grave, and not to relate to the invisible world. Coherency or exactness, in the discourse of one who spake in the bitterness of his spirit, was not to be expected; yet Job certainly believed that there would be a future state, and had some hope of happiness in it, though now much clouded and discouraged. But he here described the state of dead bodies in the grave as darkness and disorder: and he used many repetitions; meaning in general that they know nothing of the vicissitudes of day and night, or of the orders established among the living; and that men are cited thither, and arranged there, without respect to age, rank, or character.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

As afflictions may speedily render us weary of life, how needful is it to have our treasure in heaven, and to be prepared for death! Yet we should not indulge a wish to quit our post before the appointed time. We are apt to think that we have a right to complain when we are greatly afflicted, and to fancy that it will be a relief to us. But, when we speak in the bitterness of our souls, we generally increase guilt and vexation, and our complaints rebound upon ourselves. In every affliction we should examine, "Wherefore God contendeth with us?" assured that he hath good and wise reasons for his conduct: and when we do not readily perceive his meaning, we ought most earnestly to entreat him to show us it; that we may repent of our sins, fall in with the designs of his corrections, reap the benefit of them, and escape final condemnation.—We may not be able, in some cases, to understand the reason of his appointments: but we must not for a moment suppose that he punishes without cause; or that his sovereignty resembles the arbitrary will of selfish and wicked men. Such thoughts originate from Satan brooding upon the enmity of our carnal hearts; and they commonly mingle with our discontent and impatience. Indeed the sovereign authority and irresistible power of God should be terrible to all the impenitent workers of iniquity, and to them alone: but if we are conscious that we truly repent, accept of proffered mercy, and desire to serve him, he will in due time end our trials and give us comfort.

V. 8—22.

The wisdom, power, and goodness of God, displayed in the wonderful formation of our bodies, and in giving us reasonable and immortal souls, and in all the mercies of our infancy, childhood, and riper years, demand our admiring grateful praise: but in a gloomy hour, when corruption prevails, Satan can induce even a believer to admit the dishonourable apprehension, that God created and preserved him only to make him miserable! Yet all man's miseries are from his own voluntary wickedness; and whatever may be hid in the decrees and counsels of God, none shall finally perish, but the finally impenitent: and our Creator, (being in Christ become our Redeemer also,) will "not destroy the work of his own hands" in any humble believer; but will renew him unto holiness, that he may enjoy eternal life. But Satan plunges the tempted soul into one abyss after another: and if one blasphemous suggestion be rejected, another will be darted into the mind. When any one engaged in this conflict, is made sensible of the Lord's righteousness in present sufferings, or even in the sentence of eternal misery denounced against sinners: he will be tempted to question the divine goodness, or to despair of mercy; to conclude that he is an exception to ordinary rules, precluded from the forgiveness reserved for others, and marked out to be treated with exact and rigorous justice. But the terror and confusion of those that are thus buffetted by Satan, is inexplicable, even by such as have had painful experience of it. Every thing then wears a gloomy aspect; and all seems to testify that God is become their enemy, and is pursuing them to destruction. In such a case one vain and foolish wish succeeds to another: men relapse into those sallies of passion which they have seen to be rebellious and vain; and want to be any thing or any where, but what and where they are. Yet if true grace possess the heart, it will glimmer forth a little in their darkest hours; some feeble actings of faith and hope will be discernible; and they will be restrained from the desperate language and behaviour of an ungodly man in similar circumstances. But if anguish of mind on earth may render the gloomy grave a desirable refuge; what will be the condition of those who shall be condemned to the blackness of darkness for ever! There unrestrained enmity, unmingled wrath, and absolute despair, reign eternally: light only serves to show their misery; and knowledge to augment their anguish. Let every sinner then seek deliverance from this dreadful state, and every believer be thankful to "Jesus, who delivereth "us from the wrath to come." Let all our troubles warn us of the shortness of life, remind us to pray to be spared till ready, and excite us to prepare for death, and to welcome its approach. Having obtained the earnest and hope of heaven, we need not look with horror upon the dark and silent grave; it is but *the shadow* of death, and cannot hurt us: and "if the Spirit of him, who raised up Jesus from "the dead dwell in us, he will also quicken our mortal "bodies," and raise them up immortal and glorious.

be answered? and should a man * full of talk be justified?

3 Should thy † lies make men hold their peace? and, when thou [b] mockest, shall no man [c] make thee ashamed?

4 For thou hast said, [d] My doctrine *is* pure, and [e] I am clean in thine eyes.

5 But, [f] Oh, that God would speak, and open his lips against thee;

6 And that he would shew thee [g] the secrets of wisdom, that *they are* double to that which is! Know therefore that [h] God exacteth of thee *less* than thine iniquity *deserveth.*

7 [i] Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?

8 *It is* ‡ as high as heaven; what canst thou do? [k] deeper than hell; what canst thou know?

9 The measure thereof *is* [l] longer than the earth, and broader than the sea.

10 [m] If he § cut off, and [n] shut up, or gather together, then who can ‖ hinder him?

11 For [o] he knoweth vain men: [p] he seeth wickedness also; will he not then consider *it?*

12 [q] For * vain man [r] would be wise, though [s] man be born *like* [t] a wild ass's colt.

13 [u] If thou prepare thine heart, and [x] stretch out thine hands towards him;

14 If [y] iniquity *be* in thine hand, [z] put it far away, and [a] let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles.

15 For then shalt thou [b] lift up thy face without spot; yea, [c] thou shalt be steadfast, and shalt not fear:

16 Because [d] thou shalt forget *thy* misery, *and* remember *it* [e] as waters *that* pass away:

* Heb. *of lips.*
† Or, *devices* xiii. 4. xv 2, 3. xxiv. 25.
b xii 4 xiii. 9. xvii 2 Ps.xxxv. 16. Jer xv. 17. Jude 18.
c Ps lxxxiii. 16 2 Thes. iii. 14 1 Pet. iii. 16.
d vi. 10. 30.
e vii. 20. ix. 2, 3 x. 7 xiv. 4. xxxiv. 5, 6. xxxv 2.
f xxiii 3--7.xxxi. 35. xxxiii.6—13.
‖ xxxviii. 1,2. xl. 1—5. 8 xlii 7.
g xv. 8.11 Deut. xxix. 29 Ps xxv. 14 Dan.ii 28. 47. Matt. xiii 35. Rom. xvi 25,26 1 Cor. ii. 9—11. Eph. iii. 5.
h Ezra ix 13. Ps. ciii. 10 cvi 43—46. Lam. iii. 22.
i v 9 xxvi 14 xxxvii. 23. Ps. lxxvii. 19. cxlv. 3. Ec. iii. 11. Is. xl 28 Matt. xi. 27 Rom xi. 33. 1 Cor. ii 10. 16 Eph. iii. 8.
‡ Heb *the heights of heaven.* xxii 12. xxxv. 5. 2 Chr. vi. 18. Ps. ciii. 11. cxlviii. 13 Prov. xxv. 2, 3. Is. lv. 9 ——k xxvi 6 Ps. cxxxix. 8. Am. ix. 2. Eph. iii. 18, 19.——l xxviii. 24, 25. Ps. lxv. 5—8. cxxxix. 9, 10.

m v. 18. ix. 4. 12, 13 xii 14.xxxiv. 29. Is. xiv. 27. Dan. iv. 35.
§ Or, *make a change.*
n xxxviii.8 Deu. xxxii. 30. Ps. xxxi. 8. Rev. iii 7.
‖ Heb. *turn him away?*
o Ps.xciv.11.Jer. xvii. 9, 10. Jam. ii. 20.
p xxii.13, 14. Ps. x. 11. 14. xxxv. 22. Ec. v. 8 Hos vii. 2. Hab i.13 Heb.iv. 13.
q Ps lxii 9, 10. lxxiii 22. xcii. 6. Ec. iii. 18. Rom. i. 22.
* Heb. *empty.*
r v. 13. xii. 2, 3 xxviii 28. Prov. xxx 2—4. Rom xii. 16. 1 Cor. iii. 18—20. Jam. iii 13—17.
s xv. 14. Ps. li. 5. Eph. ii. 3
t vi.5 xxxix 5—8. Jer. ii. 24.
u v. 8. viii. 5, 6. xxii. 21, 22. 1 Sam. vii. 3. 2 Chr xii. 14. xix.3 Ps.lxxviii. 8.
x Ps. lxviii. 31. lxxxviii. 9. cxliii. 6.——y iv. 7, 8 xxii. 5. Is. i. 15——z xxii. 23 xxxiv 32 Ez. xviii 30, 31. Jam iv 8——a Ps. ci. 2, 3. Zech. v. 3, 4.
b x. 15 xxii. 26. Gen. iv 5, 6. Ps xxvi. 6, 7. 2 Cor i. 12 1 Tim. ii 8. 1 John ii. 28.
c Ps. xxvii 1, 2. xlvi. 1, 2 cxii. 6. 8. Prov. xiv 26 xxviii. 1.——d Gen. xli. 51. Prov xxxi. 7 Ec v. 20 Is. liv. 4 lxv 16 John xvi 22. Rev. vii. 14—17.——e vi 15. Gen ix 11 Is. xii 1. 2 liv 9.

NOTES.

CHAP. XI. V. 1—4. Zophar, probably the youngest of Job's three friends, instead of being softened by his pathetic complaints, took up the argument against him with greater vehemence than Eliphaz and Bildad had done. He represented him as a man who loved to hear himself speak; and who, by affected eloquence, aimed to run down the most evident truth in his own vindication: and as one who maintained palpable falsehoods, and treated the most sacred subjects and most solid reasonings with contempt and mockery. It was therefore highly proper that he should be answered, rebuked, and put to shame. But what ground was there for these high charges? Job had said that "his "doctrine was pure," which his friends could not disprove: and he was accused of saying, "I am clean in the eyes of "God." He had indeed said that God knew he was not *wicked*, or one who concealed gross iniquities under the mask of hypocrisy: but he had also confessed himself a sinner, and craved forgiveness. And though he was tempted to question, whether God would be *merciful* to him, and had unadvisedly asserted that justice was rigorously exercised towards him: yet he had never supposed that God dealt *unjustly* with him.

V. 5, 6. Zophar despaired of convincing Job, and therefore wished that God would interpose to vindicate his truth and the justice of his providence: for if God should show him the secret, wise, and righteous reasons of his dispensations; or the extensive and spiritual nature of true holiness, and consequently the number and heinousness of his own sins, all of which were vastly more than he had any conception of; he would acknowledge that God exacted less punishment of him than he deserved. This, Job would not have denied: and when God afterwards did speak, it was in behalf of Job, and not against him.

V. 7—12. These animated interrogations were intended to convince Job, that the nature of God is incomprehensible, and his judgments unsearchable: there being an infinity in his perfections and in his counsels, which no images can represent to our imaginations, and no reasonings or researches fully explain to our understandings. But this important truth, instead of militating against Job's doctrine, condemned the rashness of his friends, who inferred his guilt from his calamities, as if *they* had found out the secrets of the divine wisdom to perfection! whereas they had not the least conception of the real reason of his unprecedented sufferings! Zophar added, that if God was pleased to cut off a man's family, (or rather to *alter the course of things*,) to shut him in prison, or to gather armies against him, none could hinder him: that he knew the vanity and folly of men, and saw and considered the most secret wickedness of their lives or hearts; and had good reasons for punishing even those who appeared to men to be righteous: that man, ignorant and short-sighted as he is, has an ambition of being wise and knowing, is curious and presumptuous, and proud of his understanding, and the depth of his penetration. Though in fact he is born as uninformed as the wild ass; and like that animal, he fiercely scorns subjection and confinement, aims at independence and liberty in indulging his appetites; and is therefore very incompetent to the acquisition of divine wisdom and knowledge. Or, being obstinate, and headstrong like the wild ass's colt; nothing can make him wise to know his place and duty, but severe discipline and painful experience. The closing verse, however, is variously interpreted, and does not necessarily imply all that is suggested by our version of it; but may literally be rendered, 'That empty man may become considerate: though man 'be born as the colt of a wild ass.'

17 And *thine* [f] age shall † be clearer than the noonday; [g] thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning,

18 And thou shalt be secure, [h] because there is hope; yea, thou shalt dig *about thee, and* [i] thou shalt take thy rest in safety.

19 Also thou shalt lie down, and none shall make *thee* afraid; yea, [k] many shall ‡ make suit unto thee.

20 But [l] the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and ◊ they shall not escape, and [m] their hope *shall be* as ‖ the giving up of the ghost.

f xlii. 11—17. Ps. xxxvii. 6. xcii. 14 cxii 4 Prov. iv. 18 Is. lviii. 8—10 Mic. vii. 8, 9. Zech. xiv. 6, 7 Mal. iv. 2.
† Heb *arise above the noon-day.*
g 1 Chr. xxix. 10, &c.
h vi. 11 vii. 6. xvii 15. xix. 27, 23 xxii 27—29. xxiii 10. Ps. xlii. 11. Prov. xiv 32.
i Lev. xxvi. 5. Ps. iii. 5 iv. 8. Prov iii. 24—26. Ez. xxxiv. 25.
k xlii. 8, 9. Gen xxvi 26—31 Ps. xlv. 12. Prov. xix. 6. Rev. iii 9.
‡ Heb. *entreat thy face.*
l xxxi. 16. Lev. xxvi. 16. Deut. xxviii. 65. Ps. lxix. 3 Lam. iv. 17.
◊ Heb. *flight shall perish from them.* Am ii. 14. v. 19, 20. ix. 1—3.
m viii. 13, 14 xxvii. 8.
‖ Or, *a puff of breath.*

CHAP. XII.

Job retorts on his friends, censures their pretensions to superior knowledge, and complains of their unkindness, 1—5. *He shows that God often permits the wicked to prosper in this world,* 6—11. *He discourses on the perfections and works of God,* 12—25.

V. 13—20. Here Zophar, after the example of Eliphaz and Bildad, exhorted Job to repentance, and gave him great encouragement, yet mixed with irritating insinuations. If, instead of vindicating himself, he would with due preparation of heart, humble himself before God, and stretch out his hands in fervent prayer to him; if he repented of his wickedness, and did works meet for repentance, he might obtain forgiveness, and stand with confidence before God, who would clear his character, recover his health, and establish him in prosperity: so that his misery would be forgotten, or only remembered as a cause of gratitude. Then his old age would shine with a brighter light of divine favour and felicity, than either his youth or more mature years: secure of the protection of God, and rejoicing in hope of future blessedness, he might order all his affairs with comfort and confidence, and close his life in reputation and usefulness. But disappointment, vexation, and ruin, inevitably awaited all wicked men: and their very hope would soon expire, as a dying man gives up the ghost. There was, however, no certain ground on which to conclude, that Job's deepest repentance and the Lord's most gracious forgiveness, must be followed by outward prosperity; nor any reason to conclude him a hypocrite, if he died in his present calamitous condition.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Nothing is more unbecoming or more common, than acrimony and abuse in religious controversy. Opposition stirs up pride and resentment in the hearts even of godly men; the credit of the victory insensibly becomes the object, and an opponent must be represented as a dangerous and wicked man, that he may without censure be exposed to ridicule or hatred. But, in fact, a multitude of empty words neither require nor deserve an answer; and *specious reasonings* are best opposed by *conclusive arguments:* they that accuse others of falsehood and deceit, are commonly the first to transgress: and men often shame themselves by their invectives and misrepresentations, in attempting to put others to shame; or they manifest their own pride, when they would represent the sentiments of others as mockery of the truth. Such as are maintaining error are often most ready to appeal to God, and to express a high confidence that they are pleading his cause; and in the eagerness of dispute, the most important truths will be adduced in support of those very principles of which they are subversive. Yet we ought to endeavour to profit by truth, though we disapprove of the spirit with which it is maintained. We should often meditate on the incomprehensible perfections and works of God, that we may be made sensible of our own meanness, ignorance, and vileness. Some little of his wisdom, justice, and goodness in the government of the universe, we may discover by faith, from revelation; enough indeed to show us sinners that our sharpest temporal sufferings are less than our iniquities deserve, and so to render us patient and thankful under them: but the secrets of his wisdom, which we can never search out to perfection, infinitely exceed our narrow capacities. In this abyss our thoughts and reasonings are swallowed up: the height, and depth, and length, and breadth, of all his attributes pass knowledge; and our province is to believe, adore, and love. It is vain for us to dispute against his omnipotent sovereignty; nor can we escape his omnipresent and infinite knowledge. It behooves us to consider who and what we are, and to remember that we are born of a depraved nature, like the untractable wild ass. We should then give up our proud desire of comprehending the deep things of God; and of measuring his truths, judgments, and decrees, by the rule of our short-sighted reason. Our wisdom consists in preparing our hearts to seek his mercy and favour; to repent of our sins; to accept of his mercy and salvation; and to pray earnestly for his sanctifying grace, that we may cast away all our transgressions, and devote to him our bodies, and souls, and substance, and rule our families in his faith and fear. Thus being justified by faith, we shall have peace with God and confidence before him: and a quiet conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, an affiance in a wise and kind providence ordering all for our good, with the lively hope of eternal felicity, will give comfort and steadfastness to our souls. Thus we shall forget our misery, as waters that pass away: the light of God's countenance will render our declining years more pleasant than those early days that were spent in youthful gayety: we may then rest in safety, and the work of our hands shall be established unto us. Trials may interrupt, but cannot destroy our happiness; nay, they will tend to increase it: we shall become truly honourable and useful; and may at length lie down in the grave without fear, and bid eternal farewell to pain and sorrow, at that period when the expectation and enjoyment of the ungodly shall eternally expire. For "the wicked is driven away in "his wickedness; but the righteous hath hope in his "death."

AND Job answered and said,
2 No doubt but [a] ye *are* the people, and wisdom shall die with you.
3 But [b] I have * understanding as well as you: † I *am* not inferior to you: yea, ‡ who knoweth not such things as these?
4 I am *as* [c] one mocked of his neighbour, [d] who calleth upon God, and he answereth him: [e] the just upright *man* is laughed to scorn.
5 He that is [f] ready to slip with *his* feet, *is as* [g] a lamp despised in the thought [h] of him that is at ease.
6 ¶ [i] The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure; into whose hand God bringeth *abundantly*.
7 But [k] ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee:
8 Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee: and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee.
9 [l] Who knoweth not in all these, that [m] the hand of the LORD hath wrought this?
10 [n] In whose hand *is* the § soul of every living thing, and [o] the breath of all ‖ mankind.
11 [p] Doth not the ear try words, and the * mouth taste his meat?
12 [q] With the ancient *is* wisdom; and in length of days understanding.
13 [r] With † him *is* wisdom and strength, he hath [s] counsel and understanding.
14 Behold, [t] he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again: [u] he shutteth ‡ up a man, and there can be no opening.
15 Behold, [x] he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up: also [y] he sendeth them out, and they overturn the earth.
16 [z] With him *is* strength and wisdom: [a] the deceived and the deceiver *are* his.
17 He [b] leadeth counsellors away spoiled, and maketh the judges fools.
18 [c] He looseth the bond of kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle.
19 [d] He leadeth princes away spoiled, and overthroweth the mighty.
20 He removeth away § the speech of

a vi 24, 25. viii. 8—10. xi. 2, 3. 6. 12. xv 2 10. xvii 4. xx. 3. xxxi. 7—13. Prov. xxviii. 11. Is. v. 21. 1 Cor. iv. 10. vi. 5.
b xiii 2—5. Prov. xxvi. 4. 2 Cor. xi. 5. 21—23
* Heb *an heart.*
† Heb. *I fall not lower than you.*
‡ Heb *with whom* are *not such as these.* vi. 6, 7.
c xi 3. xvi. 10 xvii. 2 6 xxi 3 xxx. 1. Ps. xxii. 7, 8. xxxv. 16. Matt xxvii 29, 30. 41, 42. Heb. xi. 36
d xvi. 20. Ps. xci. 15 Jer. xxxiii. 3.
e Prov. xiv. 2. Mark v. 40. Acts xvii. 32.
f Deut. xxxii. 35. Ps. xvii. 5. xxxviii. 16, 17. xciv. 18. Jer. xiii. 16.
g xviii. 5. Prov. xiii. 9 xx. 20. Matt. xxv. 8.
h vi 5. xvi 4. Ps. cxxiii. 3, 4. Luke xii. 19. xvi. 19. 20.
i ix. 24. xxi. 7—15. Ps xvii. 14. xxxvii. 1. 35. lxxiii 11, 12. xcii. 7 Jer. v. 27, 28. xii. 1, 2. Mal. iii. 15. Jam. v. 1—6.
k xxi. 29, 30. Prov. vi. 6. Is i. 3. Jer. viii 7. Rom. viii. 20—22.
l 3.
m xxii 8. Deut. viii. 17, 18 1 Sam. ii. 7 Jer. xxvii. 5, 6. Dan. iv. 17. Rom xi. 36. Jam. ii. 5—7.
n Num. xvi 22. Dan. v. 23. Acts xvii. 25. 28.——§ Or, *life.*
o xxvii 3 xxxiv. 14, 15 Gen. ii 7. vi. 17. Ps. cxlvi. 3 4.
‖ Heb. *flesh of man* John iii. 6.
p xxxiv. 3 1 Cor. x 15. Phil. i. 9. *Marg.* Heb. v. 14.
* Heb. *palate.* vi. 30
q viii. 8. xv. 10. xxxii 6—9.
r 16. ix 4 xxxvi. 5. xxxvii. 23 Ps. cxlvii. 5. Prov. ii. 6, 7. Jer x. 12. Dan. ii 20. 1 Cor i. 24. Eph. i. 17—20.
† That is, *God.*
s Prov. viii 14. Is. xl. 13, 14 xlvi. 10. Rom xi. 34. Eph. i. 8. 11.
t ix 12, 13. xi. 10. Is. xiv. 23. Jer. li. 58. 64. Mal. i. 4. Luke xxi. 6. 24. Rev. xviii 21.
u xvi. 11. 1 Sam. xvii. 46. xxiv. 18. xxvi 8. *Marg.* Ps xxxi. 8. Is. xxii 22. Rom. xi. 32. *Marg.* Rev iii. 7 xx. 3.
‡ Heb. *upon*
x 10 Gen viii. 1, 2. 1 Kings viii. 35, 36 xvii. 1. Nah i. 4.
y Gen vi. 13. 17. vii. 23 Ps. civ. 7—9. Am. v. 8.
z 13
a 1 Kings xxii 22. 23 Ez xiv. 9. 2 Thes. ii. 11. Rev. xx. 7, 8.
b 2 Sam xv 31.
xvii. 14. 23 Is xix. 12—14. 1 Cor. i. 19, 20.——c 2 Chr xxxiii. 11—14 Jer. lii. 31—34. Dan. ii. 21. Rev. xix. 16.——d Josh. x. 24. 42. 1 Sam xvii. 45, 46. Is. xxxvii. 36—38.——§ Heb. *the lip of the faithful.* Prov. x. 21. xii. 19. 22.

NOTES.

CHAP. XII. V. 2, 3. Zophar had treated Job's discourse as futile and erroneous; and his other friends were of the same judgment: Job therefore ironically retorted upon them. 'Doubtless,' says he, 'you three are the only men 'of understanding in the world, and when you die, no wis-'dom will remain on earth; but men will sustain an irrepa-'rable loss, being bereaved of such oracles of divine know-'ledge!' Yet he thought that *he* had some understanding of these matters, and did not fall below them: and indeed any body might know such things as they had advanced, as far as there was truth in them.

V. 4. Here again Job retorted upon Zophar, who had spoken of him as a *mocker:* but indeed his friends treated his sufferings, character, and discourse with contempt, and reviled an upright man, who had long been an accepted worshipper of God, as if he were a hypocrite. 'You 'deride your friend, when you bid him call upon God, 'that he may answer him: but this is no new thing, for 'the best of men have been mocked on this fashion.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 5. Though a man have shone as a light in the world by wisdom, piety, or usefulness while in affluence: yet, as soon as he begins to sink into poverty or distress, he will generally be despised by the rich and prosperous; and they will mark every one of his mistakes or faults with severity, to justify their neglect of him. 'He that is near to his 'ruin, (as I now am,) is (to those that prosper and are at 'ease) like unto a lamp that is near burning out unto the 'snuff; and therefore despised by them for the present, 'however it have formerly shined.' (*Bp. Hall.*)

V. 6—10. Job here opposes *facts* to *hypothesis.* It cannot be denied, that audacious robbers and oppressors, and the most impious wretches, are often prospered in providence, and have riches abundantly in possession. The matter is so plain, that the whole creation testifies it. The animal tribes generally subserve the pride, luxury, and indulgence of ungodly men: the earth, and its richest produce is their property, and all nature drudges as it were to pamper their lusts. (*Note, Rom.* viii. 18—22.) Yet this is not to be ascribed to fortune or chance: but the Lord worketh these things as he pleases; seeing the life and breath of man, and of every creature, are entirely at his disposal.

V. 11, 12. The ear of man, attending to what is spoken, (that is, the understanding to which the report of the senses is made,) was formed to distinguish truth from falsehood, and right from wrong, as the palate distinguishes tastes. But Job thought that the distinguishing faculty of his friends must be obtuse, or vitiated by prejudice, otherwise they could never reject such obvious truths as he had stated to them. Indeed aged men, who have had long opportunity of making observations, are supposed to be wiser than others: but he intimated, that they had lived long to little purpose, as they were egregiously mistaken in so plain a matter.

the trusty, and [e] taketh away the understanding of the aged.

21 He [f] poureth contempt upon princes, and * weakeneth the strength of the mighty.

22 He [g] discovereth deep things out of darkness, and [h] bringeth out to light the shadow of death.

23 He [i] increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them: he enlargeth the nations, and † straiteneth them *again*.

24 He [k] taketh away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, [l] and causeth them to wander in a wilderness *where there is* no way.

25 They [m] grope in the dark without light, and he maketh them to ‡ stagger like *a* drunken *man*.

e xvii. 4. xxxii. 3.
f Ex. viii. 2. 16. 24. Ps. cvii 40. Is. xxiii. 9. xxiv. 21, 22. Dan. iv. 32, 33. Matt. ii 12, 13. Acts xii 23.
* Or, *looseth the girdle of the strong* Is v. 27. xi 5. xxii. 21. Eph vi. 10. 14.
g xi. 6. xxviii. 20—23. 2 Kings vi. 12. Ps xliv. 21. cxxxix. 12. xxxiv. 22. Am. v. 8. Dan. ii. 22. Matt. x. 26. 1 Cor. ii. 10. iv. 5.——h iii. 5. xxiv. 17. Luke i. 79.

i Ex. i. 7. 20. 2 Sam xxiv. 3. Ps cvii. 38, 39. Is. ix 3 xxvi 15.
† Heb. *leadeth in.*
k xvii. 4. Is. vi. 9, 10. xix. 1. Hos. vii. 11. Rom. i. 21—24
l Ps cvii. 4. 40. Is, lxiii. 17.
m v. 14. Gen. xix. 11. Deut xxviii. 29. 2 Kings vi. 18. Is. lix 10 Acts xiii 11
‡ Heb. *wander.* Ps cvii. 27. Is. xix. 14 xxiv. 20.

V. 13—25. The transition from the former verse to the subsequent discourse seems this. The consideration, that length of days among men was supposed to increase wisdom and understanding, led Job to think of the *everlasting God*, whose wisdom and knowledge are infinite: and thus, without mentioning him, he proceeded to expatiate on his perfections and dispensations: showing that he believed the same general truths as his friends did, and could discourse upon them with cogency and fluency. He declared God to be the fountain of knowledge, wisdom, and power: and that his providence rules the world with irresistible authority. He destroys cities and imprisons the inhabitants: he afflicts the land with drought, or destroys them with a deluge, as he did the earth in the days of Noah. The crafty deceivers, and they that are deluded by them, fall in with his universal plan for his own glory; and even Satan, the great deceiver, accomplishes the purposes of God by his malignant endeavours to defeat them! Kings, legislators, conquerors, orators, are spoiled, disgraced, enslaved, overthrown, infatuated, beyond all expectation, as the Lord pleases; and they are sure to be at length rendered contemptible when they oppose his cause. He detects the most secret conspiracies, and the deepest intrigues of princes: he disposes of nations with absolute authority; and when any stand in his way, he throws them into such confusion, that they are perfectly bewildered, as if lost in a desert, or groping in the dark, or staggering for drunkenness: and thus they become incapable of the least effectual exertion. These important truths were suited to convince the over-confident disputants that they were out of their depth in attempting to assign the Lord's reason for afflicting Job: "when his ways are unsearchable, "and his judgments past finding out."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

Reviling, raillery, and boasting, commonly prove infectious: and when we over-rate ourselves and court admiration, others will be disposed to under-value us, and treat us with contempt. Whatever some men fancy, there was good sense, sound reasoning, true knowledge, and heavenly wisdom in the world, before they were born; and the world will not be left in the dark, when these luminaries are set, and their labours also consigned to oblivion. Nay, when *wise and good men* die, blessed be God, wisdom does not die with them, but others are raised up in their places. We have all a right to judge for ourselves, being endued with understanding as well as others: and we should neither claim superiority over them, nor yield it to them *in this respect;* for we are cautioned by our Lord on both sides, when he says, "Call no man father upon earth; neither be "ye called masters:" but in other matters our rule is, in honour to prefer others, and to sit down in the lowest place; and it is seldom wise or becoming to deviate from it. The most pious and conscientious men have commonly been treated with contempt by the worldly; and sometimes by their brethren, who ought to have sympathized in their sorrows, borne with their infirmities, and helped them with their prayers. However, though men despise them, let them but call upon God and he will answer them. Adversity and poverty in this evil world eclipse the light of wisdom and piety; and they who had once been honourable and useful, have sunk into contempt when they have fallen under misfortunes and become indigent. But worldly prosperity is of small value in the sight of God. He hath superior blessings for his children; and commonly he gives carnal things abundantly into the hands of those whose pride, luxury, and impiety are increased by them. The whole creation groans, as in unnatural bondage to the lusts of men. Every creature preaches the goodness of God and the ungrateful abuse of man, and testifies that this is a state of probation, not of retribution.

V. 11—25.

The faculties of our souls were originally formed as capable of discerning truth and falsehood, as our bodily senses are of discriminating their objects. Observation and experience should teach us wisdom. But through our depravity and the influence of our passions, we draw wrong conclusions, and make a perverse choice, and wander further from God and true wisdom with increasing years. Yet when renewed by the Holy Spirit, we begin to use our faculties aright; we receive wisdom from the fountain-head by faith and prayer; we learn useful lessons from all we see and experience; and acquire a spiritual taste, which savours truth and holiness, and is of use every hour of our lives. May we seek more and more to have "the eyes of "our understanding thus enlightened," and "our senses "exercised, by reason of use, to discern both good and evil." It is a main point of wisdom to set God always before us, to observe his working in every thing, and to feel our own absolute dependence on him. "He doeth what he "will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants "of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto "him, What doest thou?" He creates or destroys, he exalts or depresses kings or nations as he pleases. All the power and policy of earth and hell cannot conceal any thing from him, or carry one point against him. All creatures

CHAP. XIII.

Job, as confident of his knowledge, appeals to God; disdainfully and peevishly reproves his friends for pleading against him with false reasonings and partiality; and warns them to fear the judgment of God, 1—13. *In extreme suffering, and expecting death, he professes confidence that God would justify him,* 14—19. *He craves respite, and desires to know his sins, and why God dealt so rigorously with him,* 20—28.

LO, [a] mine eye hath seen all *this*, [b] mine ear hath heard and understood it.

2 [c] What ye know, *the same* do I know also: I *am* not inferior unto you.

3 Surely [d] I would speak to the Almighty, and [e] I desire to reason with God.

4 But [f] ye *are* forgers of lies, ye *are* all [g] physicians of no value.

5 O [h] that ye would altogether hold your peace; [i] and it should be your wisdom.

6 [k] Hear now my reasoning, and hearken to the pleadings of my lips.

7 [l] Will ye speak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him?

8 Will ye [m] accept his person? will ye contend for God?

9 Is it good that he should [n] search you out? [o] or as one man mocketh another, do ye *so* mock him?

10 He will surely [p] reprove you, if ye do secretly accept persons.

11 Shall not [q] his excellency make you afraid? and [r] his dread fall upon you?

12 Your [s] remembrances *are* like unto [t] ashes, your bodies [u] to bodies of clay.

13 * Hold your peace, [x] let me alone that I may speak, [y] and let come on me what *will*.

14 Wherefore do [z] I take my flesh in my teeth, [a] and put my life in mine hand?

a v. 9—16. xii 9, &c. xlii 3—6.
b iv. 12. v. 27. viii. 8—10. xv 17, 18. Ps. lxxviii. 2, 4. 1 John i. 3.
c xii. 3. xv. 8 9. xxxiv 35. xxxv. 16. xxxviii 2. xlii 7 1 Cor. viii. 1, 2. 2 Cor. xi. 4, 5. 16—18. xii. 11.
d 22. ix. 34, 35. xi. 5. xxiii. 3—7. xxxi. 35.
e ix. 3. 14, 15. Is. i. 18—20.
f xxi. 27—34. xxii. 6, &c Ex. xx. 16.
g xvi 2. Mark ii. 17. v. 26.
h 13. xi 3. xvi. 3. xviii. 2 xix. 2. xxi. 2, 3. xxxii. 1.
i Prov. xvii. 28. Ec. v. 3. Am. v. 13. Jam. i. 19.
k xxxiii. 1—3. xxxiv. 2. Judg. ix. 7. Prov. viii. 6, 7.
l iv. 7 xi. 2—8 xvii 5. xxxvi. 4. John xvi. 2. Rom iii. 8.
m xxxii. 21. xxxiv. 19 Ex. xxiii. 2 Prov. xxiv. 23. Mal ii 9 *Marg.* Luke xx. 21. Gal ii. 6. Jam. iii. 17.
n xxxiv. 36. Ps. xliv. 21 cxxxix 23 Jer xvii. 10.
o Is xxviii. 22. Gal vi 6, 7.
p xlii. 7, 8 Ps. li. 21, 22. Jam. ii. 9.
q xxvi 14. xxxi. 23 xxxvii 23, 24. xl. 9 Jer. x. 10. Matt x 28.
r 21. Ex. xv. 16. Is viii 13
s xviii. 17. Ex. xvii. 14. Ps. xxxiv. 16. cii 12. cix. 15 Prov. x 7. Is. xxvi. 14.
t Gen. xviii. 27.
u iv. 19. 2 Cor. v. 1.
* Heb *Be silent from me.* Ps. xxviii. 1.
x vii. 11. x. 1. xxi. 3.
y vi. 9, 10 vii. 15, 16.
z xviii. 4. Ec iv. 5. Is. ix. 20 xlix. 26.——a Judg xii. 3. 1 Sam. xix. 5 xxviii. 21. Ps cxix 109.

subserve his purposes and assist in accomplishing his vast designs. But they who break his commandments, and, depending on their power, wisdom, or dignity, exalt themselves against his cause, and rebel against his authority, after having been constrained against their intention to subserve his plan, shall he cast off with indignation, and rendered contemptible and miserable: while such as submit to his authority and trust in his mercy, as obey his precepts and aim to promote his cause and honour in the world; as fall in with his designs according to his revealed will, and yield themselves to his disposal; shall be taken care of by the way, and at the end shall be graciously received with "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into "the joy of thy Lord." May this be our choice, our conduct, and our felicity!

NOTES.

CHAP. XIII. V. 1, 2. With manifest self-preference, Job here declared, that the discoveries of God's providential dealings with men which he had stated, were the result of his own exact and careful observation; and that he understood these matters better than his friends did, and therefore did not want their instructions.

V. 3—6. An improper boldness is discernible in the discourses of Job, for which Elihu afterwards reproved him: yet he did not mean to justify himself before God; but only to obtain a verdict in his favour from him against his friends, who treated him as a hypocrite; accusing him of crimes which he had never committed, and arguing from false principles respecting the divine government of the world. They visited him indeed as physicians, in his distress: but by their improper treatment they irritated his disease. They would therefore do him the greatest favour in their power, and most show their own wisdom, if they would hold their peace; and attend to his reasonings, from which they might learn to correct their own errors.

V. 7—12. The disputants meant to vindicate the Lord's dealings with Job, and to plead his cause: but they bore false witness against their friend, and used deceitful reasonings in the argument. Now if such practices were admitted, in pleading for a king against one of his subjects; it would be called *accepting his person*, and be a reproach to his character and a disgrace to the cause. But God needed not such advocates, nor did his conduct need vindicating by such means. Job therefore reminded his friends, that when their conduct should be searched out, it would appear very wicked and dishonourable to God: and that he would certainly rebuke them for condemning the innocent. If indeed they duly considered the majesty and excellency of God, they would be afraid of his indignation, whilst under pretence of pleading his cause they acted so contrary to his example: and it would better become them to consider themselves, as sinful dying creatures, whose bodies would speedily return to the earth, and whose remembrance would be buried in obscurity or oblivion. Bishop Patrick thus paraphrases the concluding verse, perhaps according to the true meaning of the original: 'Whose 'remonstrances on his behalf are no better than dust; 'and the arguments you accumulate, but like so many 'heaps of dirt.'

V. 13, 14. Perhaps Job's friends seemed about to interrupt him; or showed apprehensions, that divine judgments would come upon him for so pertinaciously attesting his innocence. 'Well,' says he, 'keep silence, let me 'speak, and I will venture all consequences; for my an- 'guish is so excessive that I could even gnaw my own 'flesh; and as I am not conscious of any great crime for 'which I am thus punished, I would even venture my life 'to have this matter cleared up.'

15 [b] Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: [c] but I will * maintain mine own ways before him.

16 He also *shall be* [d] my salvation: [e] for an hypocrite shall not come before him.

17 [f] Hear diligently my speech and my declaration with your ears.

18 Behold now, [g] I have ordered *my* cause; [h] I know that I shall be justified.

19 [i] Who *is* he *that* will plead with me; for now, [k] if I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost.

20 [l] Only do not two *things* unto me: then will I not [m] hide myself from thee.

21 [n] Withdraw thine hand far from me: and [o] let not thy dread make me afraid.

22 Then [p] call thou, and I will answer: or let me speak, and answer thou me.

23 [q] How many *are* mine iniquities and sins? [r] make me to know my transgression and my sin.

24 Wherefore [s] hidest thou thy face, and [t] holdest me for thine enemy?

25 [u] Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro? and wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?

26 For thou [x] writest bitter things against me, and [y] makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth.

27 Thou [z] puttest my feet also in the stocks, and † lookest narrowly unto all my paths: thou settest a print upon the ‡ heels of my feet.

28 And [a] he, as a rotten thing, consumeth, [b] as a garment that is moth-eaten.

b 18. xix. 25—28. xxiii. 10. Ps. xxiii. 4. Prov. xiv. 32. Rom. viii. 38, 39.
c x. 7. xvi. 17. 21. xxiii. 4—7. xxvii. 2—6. xxxi. 35—37. xl. 8. 1 John iii 20.
* Heb. *prove* or, *argue.*
d Ex. xv. 2 Ps. cxviii. 14.21. Is. xii. 2. Acts xiii. 47.
e xxvii. 8—10. Is. xxxiii. 14. Matt. xxiv. 51.
f 6 xxxiii. 1.
g xvi. 21 xxiii 4. xxxvii 19. xl.7.
h ix. 2, 3 26. xl. 7. 8 Rom viii. 33, 34. 2 Cor. i. 12.
i xxxiii. 5—7. 32. Is 1. 8.
k 13. vii. 11. xxxii. 19, 20. Jer. xx. 9.
l ix. 34, 35 xxxiii. 7.
m Gen iii. 8—10. Ps cxxxix. 12 Rev vi 15, 16.
n x. 20 xxiii 15—17. Ps. xxxix 10.——o 11. Ps. cxix. 120.——p xxxviii. 3. xl. 4, 5. xlii. 3—6.
q xxii. 5. Ps.xix. 12, 13.
r xxxvi 8, 9. Ps. cxxxix. 23.
s x. 2. xxix. 2, 3. Deut. xxxiii.20 Ps x. 1. xiii 1. xliv.24.lxxvii.6.—9 lxxxviii. 14.
t xvi. 9. xix. 11. xxx. 21 xxxi. 35 xxxiii. 10. 1 Sam. xxviii. 16 Lam. ii. 5. 2 Thes. iii 15.
u xiv. 3. 1 Sam. xxiv. 14. Is. xlii. 4. Matt. xii. 20.
x iii. 20 Ruth i. 20 Ps lxxxviii. 3, &c.
y xx. 11 Ps xxv. 7. Prov. v. 11—13. Jer. xxxi. 19.
z xxxiii.11 2Chr. xvi. 10—12. Prov. vii. 22.
† Heb *observest.* x. 6. xiv. 16, 17. xvi. 8. Ps cxxx. 3 cxxxix 3—5.
‡ Heb. *roots.* ii.7.
a xxx 17—19 29, 30. Num xii. 12.
b iv.19. Ps xxxix. 11 Hos. v. 12. Jam. v 2.

V. 15—19. The first clause in this passage may be properly rendered as an interrogation, "Though he slay me, "shall not I trust?" but our version is formed from a change in the text on the authority of the Jewish writers, which in this case seems not at all necessary. Even if left to die of his diseases, or cut off by a sudden stroke, Job determined not to give up his confidence. His friends had intimated that the return of his prosperity would evince his former integrity, and his present repentance; but he, conscious that he had walked uprightly before God, and having an assured belief of his faithfulness and mercy, would confide in him as his salvation, even though he slew him, and would maintain before him, that he had not been a wicked dissembler; though he well knew that no hypocrite could escape detection or condemnation in his sight. He desired his friends to attend to his appeal, and to observe how he ordered his cause: he did not deny that he was a sinner; but he pleaded that he was not a hypocrite: from the charge of hypocrisy he knew that God would justify him; and he challenged them to bring forward the proofs of their allegations. He had lost all, except his character, the testimony of his conscience, and hope in God, which they endeavoured to rend from him; and it would be death to him, not to vindicate himself from their cruel aspersions.

V. 20—23. Job here addressed himself to God, and begged of him to try his cause. Provided his outward pains and his inward horrors were removed, so that the majesty of God did not overwhelm him, he was confident he could plead effectually in his own behalf; and he would either propose or answer questions relative to his case, as the Lord pleased. In the first instance he desired to know, how many his iniquities were? and especially he wished to discover what that transgression was which had brought his present calamities upon him? It is probable that Job intended this, merely as an appeal to God, that it was not hypocrisy or gross oppression: yet the address was querulous and passionate, and when the Lord actually spake, Job found he could not answer him. 'O God, I cannot accuse 'myself of wilful wickedness against thee: but if there 'be any secret iniquity that I am privy to, do thou make 'it known to me, and convince me of it.' (*Bp. Hall.*)

V. 24—28. As the Lord neither removed Job's pains, nor vindicated his character, nor comforted his soul, he considered him as hiding his face in anger, and holding him as an enemy. And he pleaded that this was beneath the infinite majesty of Heaven: seeing he was so mean and frail, and at the point of death, as a withered leaf or dry stubble, the sport of the winds and fuel for the flame. He thought that God framed more severe decrees against him, and inflicted on him more bitter things than upon any one else: and, as he was conscious that, during his maturer years, he had uprightly served the Lord, he supposed that his youthful iniquities, previous to his conversion, were now remembered against him, and that he possessed them in their painful effects. For it was evident that divine judgments confined him as a prisoner in the stocks, till his conduct had been examined, and evidence against him sought after: and that the prints of God's displeasure were marked upon his whole body, even to the soles of his feet, (ii. 7;) insomuch that it was consuming as a putrefying carcass, and wearing away as a moth-eaten garment. In these complaints we discern the effects of strong temptations and remaining depravity: yet in this chapter Job expresses a regard to God in every thing; gives many lively exercises of faith, hope, and confidence in him; and many evidences of a sound judgment and a tender conscience.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

It is very difficult for man to possess superior talents, without some appearance of ostentation and self-preference: yet "being clothed with humility" confers a peculiar gracefulness upon wisdom, knowledge, and every shining quality. In all our troubles of mind and conscience, we generally find men to be physicians of no value. They

CHAP. XIV.

Job pleads with God for relief, because of the shortness and misery of life, and the sinfulness of human nature, 1—6. Viewing death as destructive to all earthly hopes, he desires to be hid in the grave, and determines to wait his appointed change, 7—15. He complains that God dealt severely with him; and shows that all things on earth, and men especially, are subject to corruption, 16—22.

MAN *that is* [a] born of a woman *is* * of few days, and [b] full of trouble.

2 He cometh forth [c] like a flower, and is cut down: he [d] fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.

a xv. 14. xxv. 4. Ps. li. 5. Matt. xi. 11.
* Heb. *short of days.* vii. 1. Gen. xlvii 9. Ps. xxxix 5.lxxxix. 47. xc. 10.
b v. 7. Ec. ii. 17. 23.
c Ps xc.5—7. ciii. 15, 16. Is. xl. 6—8. Jam. i. 10, 11. 1 Pet. i, 24.
d viii. 9. ix. 25, 26. 1 Chr. xxix. 15. Ps cii. 11. cxiv. 4. Ec. viii. 13.

often either mistake our case, or attribute our distress to a wrong cause, or prescribe pernicious remedies, and by one means or other increase our malady. But when the conscience is wounded, and the heart dismayed with the fear of wrath, the prevalence of sin, the force of temptation, or the weight of affliction, we should apply to the Physician of our souls: whose knowledge, power, and love are infinite, who never rejects any sincere application, and who never leaves any case uncured. To him we may speak, and before him we may spread our case at all times; which is a peculiar comfort when we meet with harsh treatment from man: and though we are sinners, and have committed numberless offences; yet if our heart condemn us not of hypocrisy, we may have humble confidence before him. Sometimes the greatest comfort that we can afford the afflicted, consists in patiently attending to their complaints: and when we do not understand the subject in debate, or see that others know more of it than we, or are eager to be heard; it is our wisdom altogether to hold our peace, in hope to get some good when we cannot do any. Deceit and iniquity are doubly base, when employed in the professed cause of truth and piety: because they seem to imply, that religion needs to be supported by such disgraceful means. But the God of truth and love can never approve the conduct of those that slander, deceive, or persecute their brethren, under pretence of doing him service. Such conduct, when searched into, appears an impious mockery of God; and it springs from the basest motives, however secret they are kept. He will therefore surely reprove the offenders: and a due attention to the holy excellency of his character would fill with terror of his vengeance, all those who ignorantly hope for his favour in any unhallowed attempts to serve him.

V. 13—28.

In this evil world, considering how frail we are, and how short our time is, we may find something to do, without abusing and reviling our brethren. Under every affliction we should aim to keep up a confidence in the divine mercy, which will preserve us, under the most exquisite agonies, from doing ourselves any harm. Though outward evils and inward distresses should unite in our case, and continue unabated till death; a strong and active faith, an acquaintance with the scriptural ground of a believer's hope, and conscious integrity, may enable the poor tempted soul to trust in the Lord, and to expect salvation from him. The upright may maintain his cause before him, and be assured that he will be justified: but no hypocrite can come with acceptance before him, or find admission into his kingdom. Yet it is best to repress our vehement passions, and to wait his time of clearing our aspersed characters; though to sit down under some slanders, without attempting our own vindication, be almost as the pangs of death to us: and it is cruel to bereave an afflicted man of his reputation, or to endeavour to discourage his hope in God, without any evidence of his guilt. It is indeed very desirable to have a clear conscience and an assurance of God's favour: yet great humility and reverence become us in appealing unto him. He knows us better than we do ourselves; and we should humbly beseech him to bring us acquainted with our sins, that we may repent and seek forgiveness. But he, who duly considers the number and heinousness of his transgressions, will not wonder that God hides his face and afflicts him; nor would he have cause to complain of injustice, if he treated him as an enemy. And though we are mean as the dry leaf or the stubble: yet, being also guilty and polluted, and fit fuel for the fire of the Lord's indignation, it would not be dishonourable to him, if he were to pursue us to destruction. Sins, long since forgotten by us, stand recorded in his book; no time can obliterate their guilt: and old age often possesses the iniquities of youth by bodily diseases, ruined circumstances, bad habits, a guilty conscience, or rebellious children: and it is a mercy, if final condemnation be escaped. —Should God mark our steps, and narrowly examine our paths, we could in no wise stand before him in judgment: he would indeed write bitter things against us; and both body and soul would eternally be filled with the print of his righteous vengeance. This will be the awful case of unbelievers: but there is salvation, provided and revealed; not from temporal sorrows, for our bodies must still return to the dust, and perish as a garment that is moth-eaten; but from the wrath to come. For when the believer, whose sins are washed away in the blood of Christ, shall drop the body, his soul will find admission into the realms of glory, and his body shall at length also arise incorruptible and immortal. Seeking first this eternal salvation, let us bear our present trials without a murmur; let us often humble ourselves anew for sins long since committed and repented of, and look forward to death as the period of all our sorrows. And let young persons beware of indulging themselves in sin, for even in this world they may so possess the iniquities of their youth, as to have months of sorrow for moments of pleasure. Their wisdom and duty therefore consists in remembering their Creator in their early days, that they may have assured hope and sweet peace of conscience, as the solace of their declining years.

3 And [e] dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one, and [f] bringest me unto judgment with thee?

4 * Who [g] can bring [h] a clean *thing* out of an unclean? not one.

5 Seeing [i] his days *are* determined, [k] the number of his months *are* with thee, [l] thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass;

6 [m] Turn from him, that he may † rest, till he shall accomplish, [n] as an hireling, his day.

7 For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, [o] that it will sprout again, and that the tender branches thereof will not cease.

8 Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof [p] die in the ground;

9 *Yet* through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant.

10 But man dieth, and ‡ wasteth away: yea, man [q] giveth up the ghost, and [r] where *is* he?

11 *As* the waters fail from the sea, and [s] the flood decayeth and drieth up:

12 [t] So man lieth down, and riseth not: [u] till the heavens *be* no more, they shall not [x] awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.

13 O that thou wouldest [y] hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, [z] until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest [a] appoint me a set time, and [b] remember me!

14 If a man die, [c] shall he live *again?* [d] all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till [e] my change come.

15 [f] Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: [g] thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.

16 For now [h] thou numberest my steps; dost thou not watch over my sin?

17 My transgression *is* [i] sealed up in a bag, and thou sewest up mine iniquity.

e vii. 17, 18. xiii. 25. Ps cxliv. 3.
f ix. 19, 20. 32. xiii. 27. Ps. cxliii. 2. Rom. iii. 19.
* Heb. *Who will give, &c?*
g xv. 14—16 xxv. 4—6. Gen. v. 3. Ps. li. 5. John iii. 6. Rom. v. 12. viii. 8, 9. Eph ii. 3.
h Luke i. 35.
i 14. vii. 1. xii. 10. Ps. xxxix. 4 Dan. v. 26. 30. Luke xii. 20. Heb ix 27.
k xxi 21.
l xxiii 13, 14 Ps. civ. 9, 29. Dan. iv. 35. Rev i. 18 iii. 7.
m vii. 16. 19. x. 20 Ps. xxxix. 13.
† Heb. *cease.*
n vii. 1, 2.
o 14. xix. 10. Is. xi. 1. xxvii. 6. Dan. iv. 15. 23—25.
p Is. xxvi. 19. John xii. 24. 1 Cor. xv. 36.
‡ Heb. *is weakened*, or, *cut off.*
q iii. 11 x 18. xi. 20. xvii. 13—16.
r 12. vii. 7—10. xix. 26 Luke xvi 22, 23.
s vi. 15—18. Jer xv. 18.
t x. 21, 22. xxx. 23. Ec. iii. 19—21 xii. 5.
u xix. 25—27 Ps. cii. 26 Is li. 6. lxv. 17 lxvi. 22. Matt. xxiv. 35. Acts iii 21. 2 Pet iii. 7. 10—13. Rev. xx. 11. xxi. 1.
x iii. 13 vii. 21. Is xxvi. 19. Dan. xii. 2. John xi. 11—13. Eph v. 14. 1 Thes. iv. 14, 15.
y iii. 17—19. Is. lvii. 1, 2.
z Is. xxvi. 20, 21.
a Mark xiii. 32. Acts i. 7. xvii. 31
b xiii. 15. Ps. cvi. 4. Luke xxiii. 42.
c xix 25, 26. Ez. xxxvii. 1—14. Matt xxii. 29—32. John v. 28, 29. Acts xxvi. 8. 1 Cor. xv. 42—44. Rev. xx. 13.
d 5. vii. 1 xlii. 16. Ps. xxvii. 14. xl. 1, 2. Lam. iii. 25, 26
e 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52 Phil. iii. 21.
f xiii. 22. Ps 1. 4, 5. 1 Thes. iv. 17. 1 John ii. 28.
g vii. 21. x. 3 8. Ps. cxxxviii. 8. 1 Pet. iv. 19.——h x. 6. 14. xiii. 27. xxxi 4. xxxiii. 11. xxxiv. 21. Ps. lvi. 6. cxxxix. 1—4. Prov. v. 21. Jer. xxxii. 19.——i xxi. 19. Deut. xxxii 34. Hos. xiii. 12.

NOTES.

CHAP. XIV. V. 1—6. Job, perhaps perceiving that his friends disregarded him, continued his discourse, by descanting upon the condition of man, and interspersing addresses unto God. He observed, that every man born of Adam's fallen race is short lived, and exposed to manifold afflictions: all his beauty, felicity, splendour, or gayety, falls before the stroke of sickness or death, as the gaudy flower before the scythe, or passes away like the fleeting shadow. He then expostulated with God, for noticing, or judging with such severity, a poor creature beneath his regard. He was indeed a sinner, being descended from sinful parents, as all other men were: and indeed in the whole course of nature the progeny partook of the propensities and qualities of the creature whence it sprang. Or, how could it be possible for his conduct to be sinless, when his heart was by nature polluted and unclean? In either sense, this forms a decisive testimony, that Job understood and believed the *doctrine of original sin:* and though he did not apply it in so humble and pious a manner as David afterwards did; (*Ps.* li. 5, 6;) yet he seems to have intended it as a plea, why the Lord should not deal with him according to his own works, but according to promised mercy and grace.—He proceeded to observe, that man's days were determined, and he could not exceed his appointed term of life; and therefore he prayed that he might have a little rest from his exquisite anguish, till the wearisome work of his life was over, and death should end his sorrows; which would be as welcome to him as night to the day-labourer.

V. 7—12. Though the tree is cut down, and the stump seems decayed in the earth; yet, if it be in a moist and fruitful situation, it may be expected that tender branches will shoot forth and grow up as a newly planted tree, or as if the old tree again revived. But when a man is cut off by death, he is for ever removed from his place in this world, and no one expects to see him again here: and his body returns to the earth whence it was taken, and mingles with it; even as the waters return to the sea, whence they first came. Thus he lieth down, till the consummation of all things, when he shall awake at the general resurrection. All these expressions imply Job's belief of that great doctrine; though both ancient and modern Sadducees have managed to misunderstand him. Why else should he speak of death as *a sleep*, and mention a *period* to it when he shall *awake;* even when the heavens be no more? (*Marg. Ref.*) Either Job meant by these considerations to comfort himself with the hope of having soon and for ever done with this wretched world: or he used them as a plea, why God should grant him respite from trouble to prepare for death, the consequences of which are irreversible.

V. 13—15. Job here earnestly prayed that God would speedily terminate his sorrows, and hide him in the grave, until his fatherly displeasure were past, or the present storm subsided: that he would appoint a time when he would release him: or at present dismiss him, till the appointed time of the resurrection and the general judgment, and then remember him in mercy. As, however, death would soon remove him hence; he determined to wait in patience and hope all the days of his appointed time, till that change took place: and to look forward in hope to the resurrection, when God would call him forth out of the grave, and he would gladly answer; when he would appear to try his cause and justify him, and no longer seem to despise or disgrace, but to delight in, the work of his hands.

k Is xl. 12 xli. 15, 16. liv. 10 lxiv. 1. Rev. vi. 14 viii. 8.
* Heb. *fadeth.*

18 And surely [k] the mountain falling
* cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place.

19 The waters wear the stones: thou
† washest away the things which grow
out of the dust of the earth; and thou
[l] destroyest the hope of man.

† Heb. *overflowest.* Gen vi. 17. vii. 21—23.
l xxix 18. xxx. 1. Ps. xxx 6, 7. Luke xii. 19, 20.

20 Thou [m] prevailest for ever against
him, and he passeth: thou [n] changest
his countenance and sendest him away.

m Ec viii 8.
n ii 12 xxx. 18, 19. 23. 30. Lam. iv. 8.

21 His sons come to honour, and
[o] he knoweth *it* not; and they are
brought low, but he perceiveth *it* not of
them.

o 1 Sam. iv. 20. Ps xxxix. 6 Ec. ii. 18, 19. ix. 5. Is. lxiii. 16.

22 But [p] his flesh upon him shall
have pain, and [q] his soul within him
shall mourn.

p xix. 20. 22 26 xxxiii. 19—31.
q Prov. xiv. 32. Luke xvi. 21. 24.

V. 16—22. In the preceding verses Job spoke in some degree of faith and hope; but here despondency again prevailed. He represented God as strictly scrutinizing his whole conduct, and collecting evidence against him, which he preserved as a treasure sealed or sewed up in a bag, that he might be punished with the utmost rigour. He would not say that God did him injustice; but he thought he carried matters to extremity against him: and in that case he would certainly bring him to destruction without remedy. For his indignation must ruin the happiness and the hope of the most prosperous and powerful; as an earthquake subverts the strongest mountains, or removes the rocks: or if more gradually yet effectually, as the waters wear away the stones, or wash away the earth and its productions from the high to the low grounds. Indeed He irresistibly prevails against all who contend with him: by sickness or death he changes their countenances, and sends them away into misery: and when the body is full of pain or the soul of terror at the approach of death, the poor sufferer cannot notice either the prosperity or adversity of his family.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—15.

It is very useful seriously to reflect on the shortness and uncertainty of human life; on the vanity and vexation of all human enjoyments; and on the fading nature of all worldly splendour, which hath neither substance nor continuance: that we may cease to expect happiness from earthly objects, and learn to "lay up our treasure in "heaven." But it is still more interesting to advert properly to the *cause* and the *remedy* of these evils. "By "one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; "and so death passed upon all men." We recieve our nature through this corrupted channel, and all the powers of our soul are contaminated by it: for who can produce a holy offspring from an unholy stock? Indeed the almighty power of God once formed the holy human nature of the Saviour in the womb of a sinful woman: but that was above and contrary to the established order of nature, that he might appear *in the likeness of sinful flesh*, and yet be without sin. All else are conceived and shapen in iniquity: and we all early manifest an aversion to God and his holy service, and our actual transgressions soon become numerous. So that unless we are born of the Spirit, no spiritually good thing dwells in us, or can proceed from us: and even the little good of the regenerate is greatly defiled. We should therefore learn to abase ourselves before God as abominable and polluted creatures: we should cease from all dependence on our own works, deprecate the strictness and severity of the divine judgment, and cast ourselves wholly upon the mercy of our God, according to the new covenant of grace through the mediation of our divine Surety: we should daily seek the renewing of the Holy Spirit, and look forward to heaven as the only place of perfect holiness and felicity. As the number of our days and months is appointed, which we cannot exceed; we should both seize the present moment, and pray for the preservation of our faculties and the composure of our minds, that we may prepare for eternity, and finish our measure of trials and services with comfort and acceptance; relying on the tender compassion of our Father, who remembereth that we are but dust. A span of life alone remains unto us; our duties are exceedingly important in their consequences to ourselves and to others: and if the opportunity be slipped, it will be irrecoverable for ever. Whatever then we find to do, let us do it heartily and immediately. If our trials be heavy and many, they will not *here* last long; death will finally terminate all our *earthly* sorrows and comforts: yet that is but a *sleep;* the soul will continue to live and act; and the body will awake and live when the heavens shall be no more. If our sins be forgiven and our hearts renewed unto holiness, heaven will be the rest of our souls, whilst our bodies will be secretly hid in the grave from the malice of our enemies, and we shall feel no more pain from the corrections of our God. At the appointed time, he will again remember us; and then we shall find every cloud dispersed, and every frown removed. Then the Lord will call his sleeping saints, and they will answer him; they will arise incorruptible and glorious; they will be publicly justified, and manifested to be his children and heirs; He will show his love to them, and his delight in them, as the creatures of his power and the subjects of his grace; and death shall be swallowed up in victory. A few more days of conflict and difficulty, and this change shall begin in death; and the soul released from sin and sorrow, and perfected in holiness, will joyfully wait for the re-union of the body, and that last and complete eternal change, when "mortality shall be swallowed up of "life." For this appointed period let us wait with godly fear, with realizing faith and cheerful hope, with diligent preparation and patient continuance in well-doing; neither desirous of living, nor impatient of the troubles of life.

V. 16—22.

We should on no account yield to the suggestions of Satan or the dictates of unbelief, to conclude, that the Lord

CHAP. XV.

Eliphaz sharply reproves Job, as arrogant and impious, 1—13. *He declares God's holiness and man's sinfulness,* 14—16. *He appeals to observation and tradition, in proof that the wicked are miserable in this world,* 17—35.

THEN answered Eliphaz the Temanite, and said,

2 [a] Should a wise man utter * vain knowledge, and [b] fill his belly with the east wind?

3 Should he reason with [c] unprofitable talk? or with speeches wherewith he can do no good?

4 Yea, [d] thou † castest off fear, and [e] restrainest ‡ prayer before God.

5 For thy mouth § uttereth thine iniquity, and [f] thou choosest the tongue of the crafty.

a xii. 3. xiii. 2. Jam. iii. 13.
* Heb. *knowledge of wind.*
b vi. 26. viii. 2. xi. 2, 3. Hos. xii. 1
c Mal. iii. 14—16. Matt. xii 36, 37. Col iv 6. 1 Tim. vi. 4, 5.
d iv. 5, 6. vi 14 Ps xxxvi. 1—3. Zeph. i. 6
† Heb. *makest void.* Ps cxix. 126. Rom iii 31.
e v. 8. xxvii 10. Hos vii 14. Luke xviii 1.
‡ Or, *speech.*
§ Heb. *teacheth.* Ix. 22—24 xii. 6. Jam. i. 26.
f Ps. l. 19, 20. lii. 2. 4 lxiv. 3 cxx. 2, 3. Jer. ix. 3. 5. 8. Jam. iii. 5—8.

6 [g] Thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I: yea, [h] thine own lips testify against thee.

7 *Art* thou [i] the first man *that* was born? [k] or wast thou made before the hills?

8 Hast thou heard [l] the secret of God? and [m] dost thou restrain wisdom to thyself?

9 [n] What knowest thou that we know not? *what* understandest thou, which *is* not in us?

10 With us *are* both [o] the grey-headed and very aged men, much elder than thy father.

11 [p] *Are* the consolations of God small with thee? [q] is there any secret thing with thee?

12 Why doth [r] thine heart carry thee away? and what do [s] thy eyes wink at,

13 That thou [t] turnest thy spirit against God, [u] and lettest *such* words go out of thy mouth?

g ix. 20 Ps lxiv. 8. Matt. xxvi 65. Luke xix. 22.
h xxxiii. 8—12. xxxiv. 5—9. xxxv. 2, 3 xl. 8. xlii 3.
i 10. xii 12
k xxxviii. 4. &c. Ps xc. 2. Prov. viii 25.
l xi. 6. Deut. xxix 29 Ps xxv. 14. Jer xxiii. 18. Matt. xi 25. xiii. 11. 35. Rom. xi. 34 1 Cor ii 9—11. 16.
m xii 2 xiii. 5, 6.
n xiii 2 xxvi 3, 4. 2 Cor x. 7. xi. 5. 21—30.
o viii 8 10 xxxii. 6, 7. Deut xxxii. 7.
p v 8—26. xi. 13 19. 2 Cor. i. 3—5. vii. 6.
q 8. 1 Kings xxii. 24. Prov. vi. 14. 13.
r Ec. xi. 9. Mark vii. 21, 22. Acts v. 3, 4 viii. 22. Jam. i. 14, 15.
s xvii 2. Ps. xxxv. 19. Prov. vi. 13. x. 10.
t 25—27. ix. 4. xxxiii. 13. Ps. lxxiii. 9. Rom. viii. 7, 8.
u x. 3. xii. 6. Ps. xxxiv. 13. Jam. iii. 2.

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can deal severely with *a sinner*, who hath a hope of everlasting life; or that he intends the misery and condemnation of those who trust in his mercy, and desire to know and do his will. We should number our own steps, and watch over our sins, and keep an exact account of our transgressions, that we may humbly seek forgiveness of them, and the more value the salvation of the Gospel: but if we thus judge ourselves, we shall not be condemned of the Lord. He may afflict us with salutary chastisements; disease may fill our flesh with pain, change our countenance, and wear us away: we may lose the comfort of our families and connexions, and every hope of earthly felicity: yet our God will not send the believer away into the regions of darkness and despair; nay, he will receive him into the realms of eternal felicity. But what a change awaits the prosperous unbeliever! When the appointed period arrives, a state of unmixed, unalterable, and eternal misery will succeed! How will he answer, when God shall call him to his tribunal? He indeed will *then* find, though now he will not believe, that God numbered all his steps, and watched over his sins, and kept an exact account of all his iniquities, which are sealed up as evidence to be produced against him at the day of trial. And if the light afflictions which are but for a moment, that God's own children suffer here, be so wearying and distressing, what will the vengeance be that he reserves for his determined enemies! The strength of mountains and rocks cannot stand before his indignation, or shelter sinners from it. Their hope will then be destroyed for ever. Where will then be their possessions, pleasures, and distinctions? All past away and come to nought! Their countenances will then change, when the Judge shall bid them "depart accursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:" and when body and soul are thus filled with anguish, will they be able to deduce comfort from the consideration, that their crimes aggrandized their families, and their estates descended to their posterity? But the Lord is yet upon a mercy-seat, ready to be gracious: "Oh that men were wise, that they understood these things, that they would consider their latter end!"

NOTES.

CHAP. XV. V. 1—13. Instead of being convinced by Job's reasonings or softened by his complaints, Eliphaz with increasing severity led on a second attack upon him. Job had been reputed a wise man: but Eliphaz asked, whether it consisted with that character, to propagate such empty notions, and to satisfy his conscience with them; when they were as unfit for the purpose, as the unwholesome east wind would be to satisfy his hunger? Would any wise man reason with such inconclusive arguments?—Thus contemptuously did he speak concerning Job's discourse. Yet in fact his doctrine was true, his cause was good, and many of his observations very wise and pious. Eliphaz next charged him with casting off the fear of God, and restraining prayer before him; either because he concluded from some hasty expressions, that Job had no reverence for God, and proudly refused to call upon him in his trouble; or he concluded, that his doctrine would embolden others to ungodliness with the hopes of impunity, or discourage them from prayer by representing religion as unprofitable. He further accused him with choosing craftily to cloke his iniquity with the semblance of piety; but that there needed nothing more than his own words to convict and condemn him. He next inquired, whether he was the first of men, and existed before the creation? Whether he was of the secret council of God, or had engrossed all wisdom to himself? If not, why did he pretend to

14 [x] What *is* man, that he should be clean? and *he which is* born of a woman, that he should be righteous?

15 [y] Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints: yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight.

16 How much more [z] abominable and filthy *is* man, which [a] drinketh iniquity like water!

17 I will shew thee, [b] hear me; and that *which* I have seen I will declare;

18 Which wise men have told [c] from their fathers, and have not hid *it:*

19 Unto whom alone the earth was given, and [d] no stranger passed among them.

20 The wicked man [e] travaileth with pain all *his* days, and [f] the number of years is hidden to the oppressor.

21 A * dreadful sound *is* in his ears: [g] in prosperity [h] the destroyer shall come upon him.

22 He [i] believeth not that he shall return out of darkness, [k] and he is waited for of the sword.

23 He [l] wandereth abroad for bread, *saying*, Where *is it?* ke knoweth that [m] the day of darkness is ready at his hand.

24 [n] Trouble and anguish shall make him afraid; they shall prevail against him, [o] as a king ready to the battle.

25 For [p] he stretcheth out his hand against God, and [q] strengtheneth himself against the Almighty.

x ix. 2 xiv. 4 xxv. 4—6. 1 Kings viii 46. 2 Chr. vi. 36. Ps. xiv. 3 li. 5 Prov. xx. 9. Ec vii 20 29. Gal. iii. 22. Eph. ii. 2, 3 1 John i. 8—10.
y iv. 18. xxv. 5 Is vi 2—5
z iv. 19. xlii 6. Ps. xiv. 1—3. Ez. xxxvi. 31. Rom. i. 28—30. iii 9—19. Tit. iii. 3.
a xxxiv. 7. Deu. xxix. 19, 20 Prov. xix. 28.
b iv. 7. v. 27. xxxiii. 1. xxxiv. 2. xxxvi. 2.
c viii 8 Ps. lxxviii. 3, 4. 6 Is. xxxviii. 19.
d Joel iii. 17.
e Ps lxxiii. 19.
f Ps xc. 3, 4. Luke xii. 19—21. 1 Thes. v. 3. Jam. v. 1—6.
* Heb. *sound of fears.* xviii. 11. Gen. iii. 9, 10. Lev. xxvi 36. 2 Kings vii. 6 Prov. i. 26, 27.
g i. 13—19. xx. 5—7. 22—24. Ps. lxxiii 18—20. xcii. 7. Luke xii. 19, 20 1 Thes v. 3.
h 1 Cor. x. 10. Rev. ix 11.
i vi 11. ix. 16 2 Kings vi. 33. Is. viii. 21, 22. Matt xxvii. 5.
k xx 24. 25
l xviii. 11, 12. xx. 20, 21. xxx. 3, 4. Gen iv. 12. Ps. lix 15. cix. 10. Lam. v. 6. 9. Heb. xi. 37, 38.
m xviii. 5, 6. 18 Ec. xi. 8. Joel ii. 2. Am v. 20. Zeph. i. 15. Heb. x. 27.
n vi 2—4. Ps. cxix. 143 Prov i. 27 Is xiii 8 Matt xxvi. 37, 38 Rom ii. 9.
o Prov. vi 11.
p Lev xxvi. 23. Ps. lxxiii 9. 11 Is. xxxvii. 28, 29. Dan v. 23. Mal. iii. 13. Acts ix. 5. xii 1. 23 ——— q ix. 4. xl. 9—11. Ex. v. 2, 3. ix. 17 1 Sam. iv. 7—9. vi 6 Ps lii. 7. Is. viii. 9, 10 x. 12—14. xli. 4—7.

26 He [r] runneth upon him, [s] *even* on *his* neck, upon the thick bosses of his bucklers:

27 Because [t] he covereth his face with his fatness, and maketh collops of fat on *his* flanks.

28 And he dwelleth in [u] desolate cities, *and* in houses which no man inhabiteth, [x] which are ready to become heaps.

29 [y] He shall not be rich, neither shall his substance continue, neither shall he prolong the perfection thereof upon the earth.

30 He shall not [z] depart out of darkness; [a] the flame shall dry up his branches, and [b] by the breath of his mouth shall he go away.

31 [c] Let not him that is deceived [d] trust in vanity: for [e] vanity shall be his recompense.

32 It shall be † accomplished before his time, [f] and his branch shall not be green.

33 He shall [g] shake off his unripe grape as the vine, [h] and shall cast off his flower as the olive.

34 For [i] the congregation of hypocrites *shall be* desolate, and fire shall consume [k] the tabernacles of bribery.

35 They [l] conceive mischief, and bring forth ‡ vanity, and their belly prepareth deceit.

l Ps. vii. 14. Is. lix. 4, 5. Jam. i. 15. ——— ‡ Or, *iniquity.*

r 2 Chr. xxviii. 23. xxxii 13—17.
s xvi. 12 Gen. xlix. 8. Ps. xviii. 40
t Deut xxxii. 15. Ps xvii 10. lxxiii. 1. lxxviii 31 Is. vi. 10. Jer. v. 23.
u iii. 14. xviii. 15. Is. v. 8—10. Mic vii 13
x Jer ix. 11. li. 37. Mic iii. 12.
y xx 22 28 xxii. 15—26 23—25. xxvii. 16, 17. Ps. xlix 16, 17. Luke xii. 19—21. xvi. 11. 22. Jam. v. 1—3
z 22. x. 21, 22. xviii. 5, 6. 18. Matt. viii. 12. xxii 13. 2 Pet. ii. 17 Jude 13.
a xx. 26. Is xxx. 30. 33 Ez xx. 47, 48. Matt. xxv. 41. Mark ix. 43—49. 2 Thes. i. 9, 10.
b iv. 9. Is. xi. 4. Rev xix 15.
c xii. 16. Is. xliv. 20 Gal. vi. 3. 7. Eph. v. 6.
d Ps. lxii 10 Is. lix. 4. Jon. ii 8.
e iv. 8 Prov xxii. 8 Is. xvii. 10, 11 Hos viii. 7. Gal. vi. 8
† Or, *cut off.* xxii. 16. Ps. lv. 23. Ec vii. 17
f viii. 16—19 xiv. 7—9. xviii. 16, 17. Ps. lii. 5—8. Is xxvii. 11 Ez. xvii. 8—10. Hos. ix. 16. xiv. 5—7. John xv. 6.
g Is. xxxiii 9. Rev vi. 13.
h Deu. xxviii. 39, 40
i viii. 12. xx. 5. xxvii 8. xxxvi. 13. Is. xxxiii. 14, 15. Matt. xxiv. 51.
k xi. 14 xii. 6. xxii. 5—9. xxix. 12—17. 1 Sam. viii. 3. xii. 3. Mic vii. 3.

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know more than any of them; when they were, or had on their side, much elder men than he, or even than his father? And he demanded, "Whether the consolations "of God were small with him?" That is, whether the consolations that they proposed to him, if penitent, were so small, that he should contemn them as physicians of no value? Or whether he had any better method of comfort and deliverance, which he kept secret from them! In short, he expostulated with him, for letting his own heart carry him into such arrogant behaviour to them, and into such daring impiety against God, as he had just uttered.—Temptation and anguish indeed had extorted several improper expressions from Job: but Eliphaz was evidently angry, because he did not confess himself a hypocrite; but Job argued against the decision of him and his friends, and treated their discourses with peevish neglect, as either false or inapplicable to the case.

V. 14—16. The holy God puts no trust in his *saints*, his holy ones, or holy angels; nay, he sees defect and mutability in the heavens themselves, as well as in its inhabitants, some of whom kept not their first estate: how abominable then and filthy in his sight is *man*, even every one who is born of woman! For it is evident that he naturally craves sinful indulgences with a greedy appetite, and seeks his satisfaction in them, as a thirsty man craves and drinks down water with greediness and delight: and that he quenches his perverse thirst in the same abominable manner as often as it returns. This text forms a conclusive proof, that these disputants were deeply convinced of the doctrine of original sin and the total depravity of human nature, as far as man is left to his own *innate propensities.* But that doctrine could not fairly be made to bear on the point at issue: because Job did not attempt to justify himself from the charge of sinfulness, but merely from that of hypocrisy or gross wickedness.

V. 17—35. Eliphaz here again laboured to confirm his position, that the righteous prosper and the wicked are miserable in this world. He stated, that this was not merely his own opinion, but a tradition received from their fathers, and which wise men had always approved and

CHAP. XVI.

Job reproves his friends for their conduct towards him; and shows how he would have acted, if they had been so afflicted, 1—6. *He pathetically describes his heavy and varied sorrows,* 7—16. *As a dying man, he appeals to God to attest his integrity,* 17—22.

taught: and they especially, whose exclusive authority and prosperity were the reward of their singular piety. It was their uniform observation, that wicked men passed through life in pain, and in constant dread of death: that if they prospered for a little time, some spoiler or murderer soon came upon them; and when they began to be distressed, they were driven to despair: and that in general they were speedily reduced to want and beggary; and had their trouble and anguish embittered by the dread of impending vengeance, which would prevail against them as a victorious potentate. He did not mean that this was the case of every transgressor; but of the *presumptuous rebel*, who opposed God's authority, arraigned his providence, and hardened his heart in defiance of his wrath; whom prosperity had rendered insolent and secure: and who became outrageous in adversity, as if he would run upon the Almighty like a desperate warrior, who rushes upon certain death, that he may attempt revenge upon his enemy. He meant the man whose impiety was connected with rapine and oppression; by whom whole cities had been desolated, and then occupied. Such ill-gotten wealth would never continue, nor the perfection of such prosperity be prolonged. The wrath of God, like a consuming fire, would destroy him root and branch, or, like a tempestuous wind, would drive him away into darkness and despair. Let not then any one, who had gloried in such false confidences, any longer deceive himself: for disappointment and vexation would be his recompense; and his prosperity and offspring would come to an untimely end. For hypocrites, however numerous, would be exposed and ruined: and unjust judges, who had amassed riches by bribery, would be consumed. They had conceived mischief, and contrived deceit and fraud; and they would find themselves deceived, and cheated with the shadow of happiness and the reality of misery.—Many important truths were contained in this discourse: but, as far as it related *to temporal prosperity or adversity*, it admitted of numerous exceptions: and it implied an *invidious application to the case of Job*. It was evidently intimated that he was the *prosperous sinner*, the *presumptuous offender*, the *desperate rebel against God*, the *oppressor*, the *hypocrite*, the *corrupt judge*: the ruin of his substance and family, his inward terror and anguish, were so many demonstrations of his guilt; and his vindication of himself completed the evidence, and almost constituted him a blasphemer, as if he charged the Lord with injustice, and set himself in array against him. Thus Eliphaz inadvertently took the part of Satan; and brought in a verdict against Job, as if he had actually and openly cursed God.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—16.

It is easier to answer than to convince an opponent: yet when arguments fail, contempt and railing generally most abound; for more men are capable of slander and declamation, than of reasoning with cogency and temper, "The wisdom which is from above," teaches us to consider the tendency and effect of our knowledge, and renders us careful not to satisfy ourselves or amuse others, with unprofitable notions, empty words, or delusive reasonings: every investigation of divine truth should be conducted in the fear of God, and with fervent prayer: and whatever encourages men in sin or discourages their approach to the mercy-seat of God, must be false and pernicious. Yet prejudiced and angry disputers frequently charge consequences upon their opponents, which are not fairly deducible from their tenets; and accuse them of those crimes which they abhor. Men's own mouths often proclaim their iniquity; and even betray the secret hypocrisy of their hearts; yet they, who are forward to make others offenders for a word, are commonly found most guilty, and in judging others condemn themselves; and we should carefully distinguish betwixt the language of infirmity and temptation, and that of deliberate impiety. It is common for men to exclaim against the pride of others, when their own pride most prevails: this is self-evident, when they grow angry on being contradicted, and charge those who dissent from them with arrogance, with pretending to be wiser than all mankind, or engrossing all knowledge to themselves; and when they would decide controversies by authority, and by their own superior age and experience. We should watch and pray against this indecent and self-sufficient spirit; and that we may not misrepresent men's words, nor accuse them without evidence. In the worst estate of man on earth he hath many undeserved comforts from God. No consolations can be had in trouble, but in the way of faith and prayer; no other secret can be found to heal a wounded conscience and a broken heart, than the encouragements of the Gospel; and however proposed, they are worthy of our acceptance. Yet unmerited reproach and unseasonable severity may so embitter a man's spirit, that he cannot receive them from those that have thus discomposed him. But, alas, "what is "man, that he should be clean," or righteous! Indeed pious men, who have differed in other things, have unanimously agreed that our fallen nature is abominable and polluted, delighting in iniquity, and drinking it down with greediness. We may then admire the patience of God in bearing with us; and still more his love to us in the redemption which is in Jesus Christ, and the mercy and grace through him vouchsafed to all who believe.

V. 17—35.

We should not despise the wisdom and the result of the observation of the pious in former ages: but neither authority, reputation, antiquity, or greatness render men infallible. The word of God evinces, that men are, and will be, miserable, in proportion to their crimes, unless they repent and obtain forgiveness of them. Yet the most wicked may sometimes live long in outward pros-

THEN Job answered and said,
2 [a] I have heard many such things:
* miserable comforters *are* ye all.
3 Shall † vain words have an end?
or [b] what emboldeneth thee that thou
answerest?
4 I also could speak as ye *do;* [c] if your
soul were in my soul's stead, I could
[d] heap up words against you, and [e] shake
mine head at you.
5 *But* [f] I would strengthen you with
my mouth, and the moving of my lips
should assuage *your grief.*
6 Though I speak, [g] my grief is not
assuaged: and *though* I forbear, ‡ what
am I eased?
7 ¶ But now he hath made me [h] wea-
ry: thou hast [i] made desolate all my
company.
8 And thou hast filled me with wrin-
kles, *which* [k] is a witness *against me:*
and [l] my leanness rising up in me bear-
eth witness to my face.
9 He [m] teareth *me* in his wrath who
hateth me: [n] he gnasheth upon me with
his teeth; [o] mine enemy sharpeneth his
eyes upon me.
10 [p] They have gaped upon me with
their mouth: [q] they have smitten me upon
the cheek reproachfully: [r] they have ga-
thered themselves together against me.
11 God hath § delivered me [s] to the
ungodly, and [t] turned me over into the
hands of the wicked.
12 I was [u] at ease, but he hath [x] broken
me asunder: he hath also taken *me* [y] by
my neck, and [z] shaken me to pieces,
and [a] set me up for his mark.
13 [b] His archers compass me round
about; [c] he cleaveth my reins asunder,
and [d] doth not spare; he [e] poureth out
my gall upon the ground.
14 He [f] breaketh me with breach
upon breach, he runneth upon me like
a giant.
15 I have [g] sewed sackcloth upon my
skin, and [h] defiled my horn in the dust.
16 [i] My face is foul with weeping, and
[k] on mine eye-lids *is* the shadow of death.

a vi. 6. 25. xi 2, 3. x ii. 5 x.x. 2, 3. Jam i. 19.
* Or *troublesome.* xiii. 4. xv. 11. Phil i 16.
† Heb *word of wind.* vi. 26. xiii. 2. xv. 2.
b xx. 3 xxxii 6
c vi. 2—5. 14. Matt. vii. 12. Rom. xii 15. 1 Cor. xii. 26.
d xi. 2 xxxv. 16. Prov. x. 19. Ec. x. 14.
e 2 Kings xix. 21. Ps. xxii 7 xliv. 14. cix. 25 Jer. xviii 16. Lam. ii. 15. Matt. xxvii. 39, 40.
f iv. 3, 4. xxix. 25 Ps xxvii 14. Prov. xxvii 9. 17. Is. xxxv. 3, 4. Gal. vi. 1.
g Ps lxxvii 1—9 lxxxviii. 15—18.
‡ Heb *What goeth from me?*
h iii 17. vii. 3. 16. x. 1. Ps. vi 6, 7. Is. l 4. Mic. vi. 13.
i i. 15—19. xxix. 5, &c
k x. 17
l Ps. cvi 15. Is. x. 16. xxiv. 16.
m x 16, 17 xviii. 4. xxxiii. 10. Ps. vii. 2. 14. 1. 22. Lam. iii 10. Hos. v, 14.
n Ps xxxv. 16. xxxvii. 12. Lam. ii. 16.
o xiii. 24. 27. xix. 11.
p Ps. xxii 13. 16, 17. xxxv. 21. Luke xxiii. 35.
q 1 Kings xxii 24. Is. l. 6 Lam. iii. 30. Mic. v. 1. Matt xxvi. 67. John xviii. 22. Acts xxiii. 2. 2 Cor xi 20.
r Ps. xxxv. 15. xciv. 21.
§ Heb. *shut me up.* 1 Sam. xxiv. 18. Ps. xxi 9. Rom xi
s i. 13—19. ii. 7. Ps. vii. 13, 14. John xix. 14. 2 Cor. xii. 7.
t Ps xxvii. 12.
u i. 2, 3. iii. 26. xxix 3. 18, 19. Ps xxx 6, 7.
x iv. 10 Ps. xliv. 19 Lam iii. 4 Matt xxi. 44.
y xv. 26 Rom xvi. 4.
z Lam iii. 11. Ez. xxix. 7.
a vii 12. 20. Lam. iii. 12, 13
b vi. 4 Gen. xlix. 23 Deut xxxii. 23. Ps vii. 12. 13 Lam. iii. 12, 13.
c xix. 22
d vi. 10. Deut. xxix. 20. Ez v. 11 Rom. viii. 32. 2 Pet ii 5.
e Lam. ii. 11 Acts viii. 23.
f i 12. 14—19. ii. 7—13. x. 16. 17. Ps xlii 7. lxxxviii. 6, 7 Lam. iii 3—5.——g 1 Kings xxi. 27. Is. xxii. 12——h xxx. 19. 1 Sam. ii. 10 Ps. vii. 5. lxxv. 7 10.——i Ps vi 6, 7. xxxi. 9. xxxii 3 lxix. 3. cii. 3—5. 9. Is. lii 14. Lam i 16——k xvii. 7. Ps cxvi 3. Jon. ii. 2. Mark xiv. 34.

perity, and die without any remarkable catastrophe: but the vexations of the world, and the thoughts of death and judgment, must fill them with pain and terror. Sometimes they are cut off by premature death, reduced to unexpected poverty, or beset with dangers on every side; or their departure is attended with horror and anguish. Commonly a curse corrodes their ill-gotten treasures, and their families speedily decay and sink into obscurity: and at all times the wrath of God, as a consuming fire, is ready to fasten upon the dying sinner, and as a tempestuous wind to hurry him into the regions of darkness and despair. This must be the case of all, who live and die forgetful of God and neglecting his salvation: but what will be the doom of those daring rebels, who strengthen themselves in direct opposition to the known will, to the cause, and the glory of God; and who prosecute their covetous, sensual, ambitious, or revengeful purposes, in contempt of his authority, and in defiance of his vengeance! who grow insolent in prosperity, and desperate in adversity, and whose blasphemous impiety connects with the most cruel oppression! Were it not notorious, it could scarcely have been conceived that men could be so infatuated in their enmity against God! But "can their hands be strong, or their "hearts endure," when God shall call them to his judgment-seat? On the other hand, the righteous may be destitute, afflicted, and tormented, even until death: yet they shall be supported, comforted, and delivered: and the perfection of their felicity shall be prolonged for ever. Let none then deceive themselves and trust in vanity: as a man sows so shall he also reap: and the whole company of the wicked, however distinguished, notwithstanding all their power and sagacity, shall perish for ever. But let us apply these truths to our own heart and consciences, examine our own state and character by them; and cease uncandidly to judge and condemn our brethren.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVI. V. 1—3. Job here reproved Eliphaz for repeating what was in itself uninteresting and inapplicable: and he decided that all his friends had proved themselves miserable comforters; for they had reproached him without ceasing, instead of giving him any encouragement. He was surprised, that they would proceed with such empty discourse: and that Eliphaz should have the *courage* or rather *harshness* to reply, after that he and his associates had been so completely refuted. If we consider the speech of Eliphaz *abstractedly*, Job undervalued it: but as it related to the matter in debate, he must be allowed to have had some reason for what he said.

V. 4, 5. A very pathetic turn was here given to the discourse. Had Job been in health, at ease, and prosperous, and his friends sick, bereaved, destitute and tempted, he could have despised and reviled them very readily: but how would they have borne it? He would, however, have scorned to behave in such a manner: on the contrary he would have suggested topics of consolation to strengthen their faith and patience, and to assuage their grief, with the encouraging hope of a happy event to their afflictions.

V. 6—16. These verses contain most grievous complaints, and many harsh expressions, which may easily be accounted for, but cannot be justified. Job began by observing that he could obtain no relief, either by silence or by speaking, as all he said was misrepresented, and exposed him to further reproach. He declared that *He*, even

17 [l] Not for *any* injustice in mine hands; also [m] my prayer *is* pure.

18 [n] O earth [o] cover not thou my blood, and [p] let my cry have no place.

19 Also now, behold, [q] my witness *is* in heaven, and my record *is* * on high.

20 My friends † scorn me; *but* [r] mine eye poureth out *tears* unto God.

21 O that one might [s] plead for a man with God, as a man *pleadeth* for his ‡ neighbour!

22 When a § few years are come, then I shall go the way [t] *whence* I shall not return.

l xi. 14. xv 20. 34. xxi. 27, 28. xxii.5–9 xxvii. 6, 7. xxix. 12–17. xxxi. 1, &c. Ps. vii. 3–5. xliv. 17–21.
m viii. 5,6. Prov. xv. 8. 1 Tim. ii. 8.
n Jer. xxii 29.
o Gen. iv. 11. Neh. iv. 5. Is. xxvi. 21. Ez. xxiv. 7 ——p xxvii. 9. Ps. lxvi. 18, 19. Is. i. 15 lviii. 9, 10. Jam iv 3, 4 ——q 1Sam. xii. 5 Rom. i 9. ix. 1. 2 Cor i 23. 1 Thes ii. 10 ——* Heb. *in the high places.* Ps cxiii. 5 ——† Heb *are my scorners.* 4 xii. 4, 5. xvii. 2.

r Ps cix. 4 Luke vi. 11, 12
s ix. 34, 35 xiii. 3. 22. xxiii. 3–7 xxxi. 35. xl 1–4 Ec vi 10 Is xlv. 9. Rom. ix 20.
‡ Or, *friend.*
§ Heb. *years of number.* xiv. 5. 14.
t vii. 9, 10 xiv 10. 2 Sam xii. 23. E x xii. 26

God, "had made him weary," even of his life: and then *turning his discourse to him*, he further complained, that he had destroyed his family, dispersed all his companions, and so left his friends to their mistakes, that they became his tormentors. He had likewise disfigured and wasted his body with dire diseases, so that his wrinkles and leanness were witnesses against him. He next spake of *his enemy*, "who hated him, tare him, and gnashed upon him" with insulting rage, and looked upon him as about to devour him. But whether he intended this of the severity with which Eliphaz had treated him; or whether he meant Satan, who assaulted him with every horrid and terrifying temptation to drive him to despair, or whether he thus spoke of God as become his enemy, is not certain. (*Marg. Ref.*) But he doubtless meant his friends, when he spoke of those who "gaped upon him with their mouth, smote him on the "cheek reproachfully, and gathered themselves together "against him;" referring to their unanimous accusations, by which they wounded his spirit, and exposed his character to disgrace. He next complained that God had delivered him into the hands of wicked men: the Sabeans and Chaldeans had seized his substance; and his friends persecuted him, as if they had been ungodly men, nor could he obtain the least redress. Nay, the Lord himself brake him asunder, seizing upon him and shaking him, as a strong man when greatly enraged would seize and shake one that was feeble and helpless; he had set him up as a mark, at which all the executioners of his vengeance were required to shoot their arrows; so that he was wounded in his vitals, and broken with renewed afflictions; and the Almighty seemed to run upon him with irresistible force and fury, as a giant upon one who dared not to oppose him. He had therefore assumed the garb of a mourner and a penitent; and the sackcloth which he had put on stuck to him as if sewed to his skin; his honour and authority were turned into deep disgrace; he was disfigured with incessant weeping; and death seemed ready to close his eyes.

V. 17—22. It should be recollected that Job did not mean to deny he was a *sinner*, but he solemnly protested that he had not been an *unjust oppressor or a hypocrite:* and if he had shed any innocent blood, he called upon the earth no longer to cover it, but to disclose it for his full conviction. In that case he allowed, that he should have no right to compassion from man, or to expect that God would regard his cry for deliverance. But he was assured that He, who dwelleth in the heavens, knew his innocency, and would be a witness in his behalf. His friends indeed *despised him;* or *spake eloquently against him*, but he prayed with weeping before a merciful God: and he ardently wished, that he could have access to him; and have his cause pleaded before him, as one pleadeth for another before the tribunal of earthly princes; that he might have his injured character vindicated, before the appointed years of his life were ended, which had been but few, and were now, as he thought, very soon to be closed.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We are all very incompetent judges of our own performances. We often suppose, that we have spoken things pertinent and excellent: when others deem them trite and inapplicable, and wonder that we should dwell on subjects not worth hearing, or be emboldened to speak at all. In fact, whilst the speaker is partial, the hearer is often prejudiced; and both parties should watch over themselves, if they would amicably settle controversies, profitably conduct conversation, or even preach and hear the word of God in a becoming manner. We are not suitably affected with the sufferings of others, because we "do not love our neigh-"bour as ourselves." It is natural to those who are at ease, to give sage advice, grave reproofs, or solemn warnings to the afflicted: and even to censure and condemn them: but we ought to consider how we should feel, if we were thus treated in similar circumstances. Indeed the prosperous are commonly troublesome comforters of the afflicted: sympathy and tenderness of spirit are seldom learned, except in the school of tribulation: and the experienced believer, who can make allowances for the anguish of disease and the force of temptation, and recollects what topics have proved consolatory to himself, best knows how to speak a word in season to the weary, which may strengthen his faith and hope, and assuage his grief. In great distress, when we can get no relief, we are apt to yield to repining: and as the believer may then be tempted even to think hardly of God's dealings with him; he may well be borne with, if he speak peevishly and harshly of his fellow-creatures. The consideration of the variety of complicated miseries that a godly man may endure from the frown and correction of God, the rage and malice of Satan, and the ingratitude and cruelty of men; in conscience, reputation, connexions, body and soul, should teach us to prepare for trials, and excite our gratitude for our many mercies: and it should warn the sinner to flee from the wrath to come, which will be infinitely worse. How weary and desolate will the wicked there be! How will the rage of Satan, the company of the damned, mutual enmity and contempt, and the irreconcileable wrath of God, unite with the reproaches of conscience, and the horrors of despair, to fill them with inexpressible misery! There they will be the mark of all the arrows of divine vengeance, and employed in incessant weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth!—But should not the same reflection lead the believer to Gethsemane, and Golgotha? The divine Saviour had far more cause than Job to complain, that "he was made weary:" that all his

CHAP. XVII.

Job continues his complaints; and shows that his sufferings would astonish, but not discourage, the righteous, 1—10. *His hope is not in life, but in death,* 11—16.

MY * breath is corrupt, [a] my days are extinct, [b] the graves *are ready* for me.

2 *Are there* not [c] mockers with me? and doth not mine eye † continue in their [d] provocation?

3 Lay down now, [e] put me in a surety with thee; who *is* he *that* will [f] strike hands with me?

4 For [g] thou hast hid their heart from understanding; therefore shalt thou not exalt *them.*

5 He [h] that speaketh flattery to *his* friends, [i] even the eyes of his children shall fail.

5 He hath made me also [k] a by-word of the people, and ‡ aforetime I was [l] as a tabret.

7 Mine [m] eye also is dim by reason of sorrow, and all my ◊ members *are* [n] as a shadow.

8 Upright *men* shall be [o] astonished at this, and the innocent shall [p] stir up himself against the hypocrite.

9 The righteous also shall [q] hold on his way, and he that hath [r] clean hands shall be ‖ stronger and stronger.

10 But as for you all, [s] do ye return, and come now: [t] for I cannot find *one* wise *man* among you.

* Or, *spirit is spent.* xix. 17
a vi. 11 xlii. 16.
b 13, 14. Ps. lxxxviii. 3, 4. Is. xxxviii. 10—14.
c xii. 4. xiii. 9. xvi. 20. xxi. 3. Ps. xxxv. 14—16. Matt. xxvii. 37—44.
† Heb. *lodge.*
d 1 Sam. i. 6, 7.
e ix 33 Gen. xliii. 9. Prov. xi. 15. xx. 16. Heb. vii 22
f Prov vi. 1. xvii. 18. xxii. 26.
g 2 Sam. xv. 31. xvii 14 Is. xix. 14. Matt. xi. 25. xiii. 11. Rom. xi. 8. 1 Cor. i. 20.
h xxxii. 21, 22. Ps. xii. 2, 3. Prov. xxix. 5. 1 Thes. ii. 5.
i Ex. xx. 5. 1 Kings xi. 12.
k xxx. 9. Deut. xxviii. 37. Ps. xliv. 14.
‡ Or, *before* them.
l xxix. 11. 22—24 Gen. xxxi. 27. Is v. 12. Ez. xxxiii. 32.
m xvi. 16. Ps. vi. 7 xxxi. 9, 10.
◊ Or, *thoughts.* 11.
n Ps. cix. 23, 24. Ec. vi. 12.
o Ps. lxxiii. 12—15. Ec v. 8. Hab. i. 13. Rom xi. 33.
p Acts xiii. 46.
q Prov. iv. 18. 1 Pet. i 5.
r Gen. xx. 5. Ps. xxiv 4, xxvi. 6. lxxiii. 13. Is. i. 15, 16. Mark vii. 2. Jam. iv. 8.
‖ Heb. *add strength.* Ps. lxxxiv. 7. Is. xl. 29—31. 2 Cor. xii 9, 10.
s vi. 29. Mal. iii. 13.
t 4. xv. 9. xxxii. 9. xlii. 7. 1 Cor. vi. 5.

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company of followers were desolated; that his enemy that hated him was permitted to assault and tear him; that he was delivered into the hands of the ungodly, who gaped upon him, gathered themselves against him, reproached, insulted, smote and crucified him: yea, that "it pleased "the LORD to bruise him," and inflict upon him agonies unknown: yet "not for any injustice in his hands, also his "prayer was pure." He was wounded for our transgressions, and suffered for our sins, that he might deliver us from the wrath to come, and bestow upon us the gift of eternal life! Should he not then be precious to our souls? and ought we not promptly to obey and to suffer for his sake?—If our conscience be sprinkled with his atoning blood, and testify to our integrity; if our witness be in heaven, and our record on high, that we are not living in iniquity or hypocrisy: though our afflictions abound, our enemies triumph, and our friends despise us; yet God will receive our prayer and regard our tears, and in due time plead our cause, clear our characters, and assign a period to our trials: and when we go the way whence we shall not return, it will be a release from prison, and an entrance into unalloyed glory and felicity.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVII. V. 1, 2. The nature and violence of Job's disease, rendered it painful to him and offensive to others, when he drew his breath: and he concluded that his days were expiring, and that the sepulchres of his ancestors were ready for him. In these doleful circumstances he was surrounded with mockers who pretended friendship, yet insulted over his misery, and despised instead of comforting him; nor could he turn his attention from their reproaches to view more encouraging objects; or think of any thing else during whole nights.

V. 3—6. Again Job entreated the Lord, to give him some assurance that he would soon try his cause, or appoint some impartial person, to whom he could confidently refer the decision: for his friends being *judicially* infatuated, would never be honoured in such a service. He supposed that their former professions of affection for him were mere flattery; or that their doctrine flattered the prosperous, as if they must need be the favourites of Heaven: or he assured them, that though he desired fair treatment from them, he did not wish them to flatter him; being sensible that God abhorred flattery, and that they, who aimed to advance themselves by it, would heap up disappointment and misery for their children. 'I must 'speak the truth of them, (though it displease them,) 'and not soothe them in their errors: for he that flatters 'his friends, when he should reprove them, may look 'long enough before either he or his children find one that 'will deal sincerely with them." (*Bp. Patrick.*)—Indeed God had so reduced and afflicted his servant, that he was become a proverb and an object of derision even to those who before professed greatly to respect and delight in him.

V. 8, 9. Upright believers in different parts and ages of the world, would hear how this conscientious servant of God had been afflicted, and how his friends had treated him, and they would be greatly astonished. But this would excite them to distinguish themselves from hypocrites, and set themselves against them; especially against such as condemned others merely because they were afflicted. And when God should make known Job's real character, and the reason of his extraordinary trials; his example would be an adjudged case, that no adversity could prove a man to be wicked, or an object of divine wrath: and this would be a great encouragement to the righteous, to hold on their way in the midst of difficulties, reproaches, and suspicions, nay, to grow stronger in faith under those very trials which detected and turned aside the hypocrite. Some explain the passage as a wish—"Let the upright, &c:" but in fact these have been the effects of Job's sufferings in innumerable instances; and this was one grand design for which they were permitted. "Ye have heard of the patience of "Job; and have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is "pitiful and of tender mercy." Here a glimpse of divine light, and a lively exercise of faith and hope broke forth in the midst of the despondency of Job's discourse.

11 [u] My days are past, [x] my purposes are broken off, *even* the * thoughts of my heart.

12 They [y] change the night into day; the light *is* † short because of darkness.

13 [z] If I wait, [a] the grave *is* mine house: [b] I have made my bed in the darkness.

14 I have ‡ said to [c] corruption, Thou *art* my father: [d] to the worm, *Thou art* my mother, and my sister.

15 And where *is* now [e] my hope? as for my hope, who shall see it?

16 They shall go down to [f] the bars of the pit, when *our* [g] rest together *is* in the dust.

u vii 6. ix. 25, 26. Is. xxxviii 10
x Ec. ix. 10. Is viii. 10. Lam. iii 37. Rom i 13 2 Cor i. 15—17 Jam. iv. 13—15.
* Heb. *possessions.*
y vii. 3, 4. 13, 14. xxiv. 14—16. Deut. xxviii.67.
† Heb *near*
z xiv. 14. Ps. xxvii 14 Lam. iii 25, 26.
a i x 21, 22. xxx. 23.
b Ps cxxxix. 8. Is. lvii. 2.
‡ Heb. *cried*, or, *called.*
c xxi. 32, 33. Ps. xvi. 10. xlix 9. Acts ii. 27 31. xiii 34-37 1 Cor. xv. 42. 53, 54.
d xix. 26. xxiv. 20 Is. xiv. 11.
e iv 6 vi. 11. xiii. 15. xix 10.
f xviii. 13, 14 Jon. ii 6
g iii. 17—19. Ez. xxxvii. 11 2 Cor. i. 9.

CHAP. XVIII.

Bildad sharply reproves Job for presumption and impatience, 1—4. He enlargeth on the miseries of the wicked, 5—21.

THEN answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,

2 [a] How long *will it be ere* you make an end of words? [b] mark, and afterwards we will speak.

3 Wherefore are [c] we counted as beasts, *and* reputed vile in your sight?

4 He [d] teareth * himself in his anger: [e] shall the earth be forsaken for thee? and shall [f] the rock be removed out of his place?

a viii. 2. xix. 2.
xvi. 2, 3.
b xiii. 5, 6 17. xxi. 2 xxxiii. 1 Prov. xviii. 13. Jam i. 19.
c xii. 7, 8. xvii 4. 10. Ps lxxiii. 22. Ec iii 18.
d v 2 xiii. 14. xvi 9 Jon. iv. 9.
* Heb. *his soul*
e xl 8 Ez. ix. 9
f xiv. 18. Is liv. 10 Matt. xxiv. 35.

V. 10. *Do you*, &c. That is, 'Re-examine my cause, 'and alter your unjust decision: for I cannot find one 'among you who has spoken on the subject as a wise man 'would have done.'

V. 11, 12. The old translation seems here to be both most literal and intelligible. "My days are past, my "enterprises are broken, *and* the thoughts of my heart "have changed the night for the day, and the light that "approached, for darkness." All the purposes Job had formed, however wise, pious, or benevolent, were, as he supposed, finally come to nothing, as his days were past. And now the thoughts which possessed his heart turned the night into day by preventing his rest. Yet when the light approached it was turned into darkness by the gloom of his disquieted mind. 'My thoughts will not let me sleep in 'the night, nor enjoy pleasure in the day.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 13—16. Whenever Job thought of waiting in expectation of his sufferings being terminated, that thought was associated with the idea of lodging in the dark and silent grave. His disease and his daily reflections, familiarized his mind to corruption and the worms: and he was induced to claim kindred with them through the present loathsomeness of his disease; and to expect more relief from them than from his friends and nearest relations.—He had indeed no hopes of temporal good; nor would they who flattered him with these expectations ever witness such a change in his circumstances. All his hopes would soon descend with him into the grave: when he and his friends also would rest together in the dust.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

If we are constrained to dwell with mockers and revilers, we should endeavour to take off our attention from them, by meditating on the blessed society in heaven; that our tempers may not be ruffled by abiding "in their provoca-"tion." Through our divine Surety, the believer shall not only be justified from his sins against God, but from all the false accusations of man. To be so *judicially* blinded, that the Lord hides the heart from understanding, forms a most dreadful case, and forebodes everlasting shame and misery; but this never befals those who humbly trust and serve him; nor should we rashly conclude it to be the case of any, merely because they mistake in some things which appear to us of great importance. The Lord abhors the flattering of the prosperous, and the contemning of the afflicted: we should therefore study godly simplicity and candid compassion. Vain is the praise of men: they will extol one day, and insult the same person the next; they will idolize and then execrate, perhaps without any other cause, than a change in a man's outward circumstances. Let us then "seek the honour which cometh from God." As we, at this distance of time, may derive encouragement and instruction from the sufferings of Job, so may others from our lighter afflictions; and this may serve to reconcile us to them. Indeed the upright believer will extract benefit from every event. The falls of those who once seemed to run well, will teach him humble watchfulness and jealous fear; and stir him up to notice, and protest against hypocrites and hypocrisy: the afflictions of the godly will teach him the nature of his warfare, and warn him to prepare for the conflict: and the heaviest cross which is laid upon him, will *eventually* tend to strengthen his faith, increase his patience, and encourage his hope, whilst he is walking in the ways and doing the work of God. We should always be open to conviction, and ready to retract our erroneous sentiments and unmerited censures: for this is a good proof of a man's wisdom. The purposes and thoughts of our hearts are soon broken off, by sickness or the prospect of death: and they often break our sleep and darken our days with solicitude to no purpose. Let us then learn to renounce carnal hopes and anxieties, to execute immediately every wise and useful design, and "to "cast all our care upon him that careth for us." Let us remember how nearly our bodies are allied to corruption, the worm, and the dust: and let us seek for that lively hope which shall be accomplished, when the hope of the wicked shall be put out in darkness; that when our bodies are confined in the grave, our souls may enjoy "the rest "reserved for the people of God."

5 Yea, [g] the light of the wicked shall be put out, and the [h] spark of his fire shall not shine.

6 The light shall be dark in his tabernacle, and his * candle shall be put out with him.

7 [i] The steps of his strength shall be straitened, and [k] his own counsel shall cast him down.

8 For [l] he is cast into a net by his own feet, and he walketh upon a snare.

9 The [m] gin shall take *him* by the heel, *and* [n] the robber shall prevail against him.

10 [o] The snare *is* † laid for him in the ground, and a trap for him in the way.

11 [p] Terrors shall make him afraid on every side, and shall ‡ drive him [q] to his feet.

12 His strength shall be [r] hunger-bitten, and [s] destruction *shall be* ready at his side.

13 It shall devour the ♦ strength of his skin: *even* [t] the first-born of death shall devour his strength.

g xx. 5. Prov. iv. 19. xiii. 9. xx. 20. xxiv. 20. h Is. l. 11.
* Or, *lamp.* xxi. 17 Ps. xviii. 28. Rev. xviii. 23.
i xx. 22. xxxvi. 16. Ps. xviii. 36. Prov. iv. 12
k v. 12, 13. 2 Sam. xv. 31. xvii 14. Ps. xxxiii 10. Hos. x. 6. 1 Cor. iii. 19.
l xxii. 10. Esth. iii. 9. vi. 13. vii. 5 10. Ps. ix. 15. xxxv. 8. Prov. v. 22 xxix. 6. Ez. xxxii. 3. 1 Tim. ii. 7. vi. 9. 2 Tim. ii. 26.
m Is. viii. 14, 15.
n i. 15. 17. v 5.
o Ps. xi. 6. Ez. xii. 13.
† Heb. *hidden.*
p vi. 4. xv. 21. Ps. lxxiii. 19. Jer. vi. 25 xx. 3, 4. xlvi. 5. xlix. 29. 2 Cor. v. 11. Lev. vi. 15, 16.
‡ Heb. *scatter.*
q Lev xxvi. 36. 2 Kings vii. 6, 7. Ps. liii. 5. Prov. xxviii 1.
r xv. 23, 24 1 Sam. ii. 5. 36. Ps. xxxiv. 10. cix 10.
s Ps. vii 12–14. 1 Thes. v. 3. 2 Pet ii. 3
♦ Heb *bars.* xvii. 16. Jon. ii. 6.
t Gen. xlix. 3. Is. xiv. 30. Rev. vi. 8.

14 His [u] confidence shall be rooted out of his tabernacle, and it shall bring him to [x] the king of terrors.

15 [y] It shall dwell in his tabernacle, [z] because *it is* none of his: [a] brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation.

16 His [b] roots shall be dried up beneath, and above [c] shall his branch be cut off.

17 His [d] remembrance shall perish from the earth, and he shall have no name in the street.

18 ‖ He shall be [e] driven from light into darkness, and [f] chased out of the world.

19 He shall [g] neither have son nor nephew among his people, [h] nor any remaining in his dwellings.

20 They that come after *him* shall be [i] astonished at [k] his day, as they that * went before † were affrighted.

21 Surely [l] such *are* the dwellings of the wicked, and this *is* the place *of him that* [m] knoweth not God.

u viii. 14. xi 20. Ps. cxii. 10. Prov. x 28. Matt vii. 26, 27.
x xxiv. 17 xli. 34. Ps. lv. 4. Prov. xiv. 32. 1 Cor. xv. 55, 56. Heb ii. 15.
y 12, 13 Zech v. 4.
z xx. 18 – 21. xxxi. 38, 39. Jer. xxii. 13. Hab. ii 6–11.
a Gen ix. 24. Deut xxix. 23. Ps. xi. 6. Is. xxxiv. 9, 10. Rev. xix 20. xxi. 8.
b xxix. 19. Is. v. 24. Hos. ix. 16. Am ii. 9. Mal. iv 1
c v. 3, 4. xv. 30.
d xiii 12. Ps. xxxiv 16. lxxxiii 4. Prov. ii. 22. x 7.
‖ Heb. *They shall drive him.* 14
e iii. 20 x. 22. Is. viii. 21, 22. Jude 13.
f xx 8. Prov xiv. 32. Is xvii. 13, 14. Dan. iv. 33 v. 21.
g Ps cix. 13. Is. xiv 21, 22 Jer. xxii 30
h xx. 26–28. Is. v 8, 9
i Deut xxix 23, 24 1 Kings ix. 8 Jer xviii 16.
k Ps xxxvii. 13. cxxxvii 8. Ez. xxi 25 Ob x.

11–15. Luke xix. 42. 44 —— Or, *lived with him.* —— † Heb. *laid hold on horror.* ii. 12, 13 xix. 13–19 —— ‡ 14–16. —— m xxi. 14 Ex. v. 2. Judg ii. 10. 1 Sam. ii. 12. 1 Chr xxviii. 9 Ps. lxxix 6 Jer ix. 3. x. 25. Rom. i. 28. 1 Thes. iv. 5. 2 Thes i. 8. Tit i 16.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVIII. V. 2—4. Bildad had before given Job good advice and encouragement; (viii. 5—7:) but here he used nothing but rebukes, and presages of approaching ruin. He spake as if Job had some associates who took his part, when he said, "How long will it be ere you "make an end of words?" He thought it long before his time came to speak: and he called upon Job and all who were of his sentiments to *mark* with attention what he said. It must be allowed, that Job had spoken contemptuously "concerning the discourses of his friends, declaring that "God had hid their hearts from understanding," and that "he could not find one wise man among them:" for he had been too much moved by their unjust suspicions and erroneous principles. Bildad, however, seems to have been much more angry; as if Job had counted them senseless as beasts: because he had said, that he "*took his* "*flesh in his teeth,*" (xiii. 14;) alluding to his exquisite pain; Bildad ascribed it to his furious anger, which prompted him to do himself a mischief: and as he would not allow himself to be a wicked man; Bildad concluded that he wished to alter the fixed laws of the Lord's righteous government, in order that he might be exempted from punishment.

V. 5—21. The remainder of this chapter is a rhetorical declamation on the miseries of the wicked. There is indeed a great deal of truth and animation in the description: but the application of it to Job was unjust and cruel. It does not contain a single proof of the doctrine maintained in it, or of the wickedness of Job: for the former, Bildad appealed to facts which by no means would bear him out; and the latter he thought undeniable from his remarkable calamities. Yet if we include the state of retribution, as well as that of probation, we may deduce from it much useful instruction. Job had said, that "his light was "short because of darkness," (xvii. 12;) yea, answered Bildad, it is always so with a notoriously wicked man. A glimmering of prosperity and a spark of hope may be given him; but both shall soon go out, and his family will share his misery. His most vigorous efforts to escape destruction will be unavailing, and his craftiest projects will entangle him. He is like a man who ventures on forbidden ground where nets, and snares, and traps are placed, which he cannot escape wherever he sets his feet: or like one in a dangerous road, where robbers meet and plunder him. In short, he lives amidst alarms and terrors, and is always ready to flee as from an enemy: famine, or penury, or other calamities, speedily befal him: afflictions, as it were, greedily devour him: diseases prey upon his strength and comeliness; and some one more dire than the rest, like *the first-born son of death,* fastens upon him, and cannot be removed. Thus all his confidences fail him: and death, as the *king of all the terrors* that have assailed him, stares him in the face, and affrights him with the near prospect of future misery. Nay, destruction takes up his abode in his tabernacles; divine judgments, like the fire and brimstone which destroyed Sodom, desolate his family, and leave neither root nor branch: his memory is either lost or disgraced: he is driven into darkness and chased out of the world, as not fit to live or willing to die; and he leaves no descendant behind him: so that all who witness his doom are terrified; and all that

CHAP. XIX.

Job complains of the persevering cruelty with which his friends distressed him; and shows the greatness and variety of his sufferings, 1—20. *He entreats their pity,* 21, 22. *He professes his faith in a divine Redeemer and a future resurrection,* 23—27. *He warns his friends not to persecute him,* 28, 29.

THEN Job answered and said,
2 [a] How long will ye [b] vex my soul, and [c] break me in pieces with words?
3 These [d] ten times have [e] ye reproached me: ye are not ashamed *that* ye * make yourselves [f] strange to me.
4 And be it indeed that [g] I have erred, [h] mine error remaineth with myself.
5 If indeed ye will [i] magnify *yourselves*

a viii. 2. xviii. 2. Ps. xiii. 1 Rev. vi 10
b xxvii. 2. Judg. xvi. 16. Ps. vi. 2, 3. xlii. 10. 2 Pet. ii 7, 8
c Ps. lv 21. lix. 7. lxiv 3 Prov. xii. 18 xviii 21. Jam iii. 6—8
d Gen xxxi. 7. Lev xxvi 26. Num. xiv. 22. Neh iv. 12. Dan i. 20.
e iv 6—11. vi. 4, 5. viii. 4—6 xi. 3. 14. xv. 4—6 11, 12. xviij. 4, &c.

* Or, *harden yourselves against me.* ——f 17 Gen. xlii. 7. Ps. lxix. 8 ——g xi. 3—6.
h 2 Sam xxiv. 17 Prov. ix 12 Ez. xviii 4. Gal. vi. 5 ——i Ps xxxviii. 16. xli 11. lv. 12. Mac vii. 8 Zech xii. 7.

hear of it will be astonished. Surely, concluded Bildad, this is the doom of those who are uncommonly wicked.—No doubt he meant this application for Job; as the whole description is full of evident references to his varied calamities, and his desponding complaints. (*Marg. Ref.*)—But how different was the event of Job's calamities, and the sentiments of posterity respecting him, from what Bildad supposed they would be!

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The eagerness and asperity even of good men, when heated in controversy, are often very indecent. They are *slow to hear, swift to speak, and swift to wrath;* and ready to give, but unable to bear affronts: nay, sometimes they are led even to boast, and revile, yea, to misunderstand and misinterpret each other; to overlook all the wise and pious sentiments of their opponents; and to make the worst of every apparent error or sally of passion! We all perceive the folly of such violence in others, and many are ashamed of it in themselves *afterwards:* but few are able to avoid it at the time. It is therefore generally our wisdom, especially if our spirits are eager to shun controversy: and it is always our duty to watch and pray against pride; for if we duly considered how mean, guilty, polluted, and ignorant we really are, we should not be so much offended, were we counted stupid as beasts, and reputed vile in the sight of all others. Violent anger torments those who indulge it: and however we may fret and repine, we might far more easily remove the rocks, than disannul the immoveable purposes of God, or alter the measures of his wise and righteous government: so that our wisdom and duty consist in seeking grace from him to enable us to submit, and to deduce profit from all his appointments. It is common for angry disputants to rank their opponents among the enemies of God; to draw perverse conclusions from important truths: and to confound their own opinions, which are often erroneous, with the unerring testimonies of Scripture. In this world there is no exact *external* discrimination betwixt the righteous and the wicked. Yet, even on earth, which is as *the wicked man's heaven,* he meets with continual anxiety, terror, and vexation; with pain and sickness; with bitter disappointments to his pride, avarice, or ambition; and with galling affronts and injuries: he experiences stings of conscience, and the dread of the wrath of God: and death is to him emphatically *the king of terrors,* which threatens to tear him from all he loves, and plunge him into all he fears. These things often extort the doleful groan: or else he smothers it in his breast, conceals it with a smile, or drowns it in hypocritical mirth. He is continually losing his comforts or his relish for them; and he has no calm confidence in God, no joy in the Holy Ghost, no lively hope, no communion with a heavenly Father, to countervail the loss. Yet he cleaves to the world, as *his best, his all;* and is chased out of it sorely against his will: whilst God seems to frown, and conscience forebodes that he is about to be driven from light into eternal darkness and despair. But whether he believe it or not, "surely "such will be the dwellings of the wicked: and this the "place of him that knoweth not God." Thus "his "light shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall "not shine." Nor will it signify to him, whether his memory be honoured and his family flourish; or whether the one be buried in oblivion or covered with infamy, whilst the other is clean rooted out. But they who partake of the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, are happy in the midst of their tribulations: they have hope and comfort; peace of conscience and a submissive will are their privilege; death is no longer to them the *king of terrors;* nor will they be chased out of the world, or driven from light to darkness. Rather, death will remove them to the land of perfect knowledge, purity, and felicity: they "shall be had in everlasting remembrance," and they may depart hence with the hope that their posterity also shall be blessed. Bear up, then, ye suffering believers: ye shall for a little time have sorrow, but your Beloved "will see "you again, and your hearts shall rejoice, and *your* joy no "man taketh from you."

NOTES.

CHAP. XIX. V. 2—4. Bildad had begun both his answers to Job with *How long?* But Job thought that he had more occasion to complain of the incessant accusations of his friends, than they of his persevering self-defence. Their harsh words vexed his soul, and even broke him in pieces, destroying all his courage and confidence. They had reproached him *ten times:* a definite for an indefinite number. They ought to be ashamed thus to treat their friend as a stranger or an enemy: if indeed he were *mistaken,* his error chiefly hurt himself: and if he were guilty, *he* must bear the punishment; nay, indeed he was severely smarting for his sins, and was rather an object of compassion than of severity.

against me, and [k] plead against me my reproach:

6 Know now that [l] God hath overthrown me, and hath [m] compassed me with his net.

7 Behold, [n] I cry out of † wrong, but I am not heard: I cry aloud, but *there is* [o] no judgment.

8 He hath [p] fenced up my way that I cannot pass, and [q] he hath set darkness in my paths.

9 He hath [r] stripped me of my glory, and taken the crown *from* my head.

10 He hath destroyed me [s] on every side, and [t] I am gone: and [u] mine hope hath he removed like a tree.

11 He hath also [x] kindled his wrath against me, and [y] he counteth me unto him as *one of* his enemies.

12 [z] His troops come together, and [a] raise up their way against me, and encamp round about my tabernacle.

13 He hath [b] put my brethren far from me, and mine acquaintance are verily [c] estranged from me.

14 My [d] kinsfolk have failed, and my [e] familiar friends have forgotten me.

15 They that [f] dwell in mine house, and my maids, [g] count me for a stranger: I am an alien in their sight.

k 1Sam. i. 6. Neh i. 3. Is. iv. 1. Luke i. 25 xiii. 2—4 John ix. 2. 34.
l vii 20 xvi. 11—14. Ps. xliv. 9—14 lxvi. 10—12
m Lam. i. 12, 13. Ez. xii. 13. xxxii 3. Hos. vii. 12.
n x. 3.15—17 xvi. 17—19 xxi. 27. Ps. xxii. 2 Jer. xx. 8. Lam. iii. 8. Hab. i. 2, 3.
† Or, *violence*
o ix 32. xiii.15—23 xvi 21. xxiii. 3—7. xxxi. 35. 36. xxxiv. 5. xl 8.
p iii. 23. Ps. lxxxviii 8 Lam. iii.7.9 Hos. ii.6.
q Josh. xxiv. 7 Prov. iv. 19. Is. l 10. Jer. xiii 16. xxiii. 12. John viii. 12.
r xxix 7. 14. 20, 21. xxx. 1. Ps. xlix. 16, 17. lxxxix. 44 Is. lxi 6. Hos. ix 11, 12
s i. 13—19 ii. 7. Ps. lxxxviii.13—18. 2Cor.iv. 8, 9.
t xvi.11 Ps cii 11.
u vi. 11. viii. 16—18. xvii. 15 xxiv 20. Ps. xxxvii 35, 36
x Deu. xxxii. 21. Ps. lxxxix. 46. xc. 7.
y xiii 24. xvi. 9. xxxiii 10. Lam. ii. 5.
z xvi.11. Is. x. 5, 6. li 23.
a xxx. 12.
b Ps. xxxi. 11. xxxviii 11. lxix. 8. 20. lxxxviii. 8. 18 Mat xxvi. 36 2Tim iv. 16.
c vi. 21—23.
d Prov xviii. 24. Mic vii. 5, 6. Matt. x. 21.——e 2 Sam. xvi. 23. Ps. lv. 12—14. Jer. xx. 10. John xiii. 18.——f xxxi. 32.——g Ps. cxxiii. 3, 4.

16 I called [h] my servant, and he gave *me* no answer; I entreated him with my mouth.

17 My breath is [i] strange to my wife, though I entreated for the children's *sake* of mine own ‡ body.

18 [k] Yea, § young children despised me; I arose, and they spake against me.

19 All ‖ my inward friends abhorred me: and they whom I loved are turned against me.

20 [l] My bone cleaveth to my skin * and to my flesh, [m] and I am escaped with the skin of my teeth.

21 Have pity upon me, [n] have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for [o] the hand of God hath touched me!

22 Why do ye [p] persecute me as God, [q] and are not satisfied with my flesh?

23 ¶ † Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were [r] printed in a book!

24 That they were [s] graven with an iron pen and lead, in the rock for ever!

25 For [t] I know *that* my Redeemer liveth, and *that* [u] he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth:

26 ‡ And *though* after my skin *worms* destroy this *body*, yet [x] in my flesh shall I see God:

27 Whom [y] I shall see for myself, and

h i. 15, 16. 18, 19.
i ii. 9, 10. xvii.1.
† Heb. *belly.*
k xxx.1.12 2Kings ii. 23. Is. iii. 5.
§ Or, *the wicked.*
‖ Heb. *the men of my secret.* Ps. xli. 9. lv. 12—14. 20.
l xxx. 30 xxxiii 19—22. Ps xxii. 14—17. xxxii. 3, 4. xxxviii. 3. cii. 3. 5. Lam. iv. 8.
* Or, *as.*
m ii 4—6. vii. 5. Lam. iii. 4. v.10.
n vi 14. Rom xii. 15 1 Cor. xii. 26. Heb. xiii. 3. 1 Pet. iii. 8.
o i.11. ii. 5.10. vi. 4. Ps. xxxviii.2.
p x.16. xvi.13,14. Ps. lxix. 26. Zech. i. 15.
q iii. 3. xxxi. 21. Is. li. 23. Mic. iii. 3.
† Heb. *Who will give,* &c? Is. viii. 1. xxx. 8.
r xiii.27 xxxi.35. Lev. xix. 28.
s Ex.xxviii.11,12. 21. xxxii. 16. Deut. xxvii. 2, 3. 8. Jer. xvii. 1. Hab. ii. 2.
t xxxiii 23. 24. Ps. xix 14. Is. liv 5. lix. 20, 21. Eph. i. 7 Rev. v 9.
u Gen.iii.15. xxii. 18. John v. 22—29. Jude 14, 15. Rev xix. 10
‡ Or, *After I shall awake, though this* body *be destroyed, yet out of my flesh shall I see God.* Ps. xvii. 15.
x Ps xvi 9. 11. Matt. v. 8. 1Cor. xiii 12. xv 22. Phil. iii. 21. 1 John iii. 2.
y Num. xxiv. 17. Is. xxvi 19. 1 Cor. xv. 53.

V. 5—22. In these verses Job very pathetically expostulated with his friends about their unkindness. If they were determined to magnify themselves against him, by assuming the authority of judges, they ought, at least, to consider how great his miseries were, that they might be aware what cause he had to complain, and how little reason they had to add to them; and that God himself was contending with him, and had overthrown him, and so entangled him in inextricable difficulties that he could not escape. He was plundered of his substance, and as injuriously robbed of his good name; and he could not prevail to obtain a hearing of his cause, or any answer to his prayer. His path was obstructed by impassable difficulties, and covered with impenetrable darkness, so that he knew not where he was, or what to do. He had been stripped of his honour and authority: his possessions, family, and every hope of temporal comfort were destroyed, like a tree that is plucked up by the roots: he had such an inward sense of God's indignation, that he was, in his own apprehensions, counted as one of his enemies. In short, the judgments of God, like hosts of invading enemies, seemed on their march to besiege his tabernacle: and his friends, relations, and acquaintance, notwithstanding their attachment and obligations to him in his prosperity, were now estranged from him, and scarcely seemed to remember his name. His remaining servants would neither obey his authority, nor regard his entreaties, nor afford him any assistance; but kept at a distance, as disgusted with his appearance, or as despising his abject condition. Nay, even his wife, forgetful of conjugal affection and duty, would not come near him in his extremity; though he entreated her sympathy and assistance, for the sake of their children, the pledges of their former love, and the occasion of their present common sorrow. Even the children of his neighbours watched his motions, in order to deride him: and his inward friends, to whom he had intrusted his secret thoughts, and whom he loved for their supposed piety, were become his enemies, and abhorred him. In the mean time his disease had reduced him to a mere skeleton: nay, his very skin was consumed, so that nothing was reserved to him entire, but his gums and his teeth. In this wretched case he pathetically implored the compassion of his friends: God had touched him in every tender part: they needed not add their persecuting reproaches to his awful judgments, as if vested with the Lord's prerogative, and acting by his authority; and should be satisfied with his outward sufferings, without wounding his spirit, or bereaving him of his hope in God.

mine eyes shall behold, and not * another; † *though* my reins be consumed ‡ within me.

28 But ye should say, [z] Why persecute we him, § seeing [a] the root of the matter is found in me?

29 [b] Be ye afraid of the sword: for wrath *bringeth* the punishments of the sword, [c] that ye may know *there is* a judgment.

* Heb. *a stranger.* † Or, *my reins within me are consumed with earnest desire* for that day. Ps. cxix. 81. Phil. i. 23 ‡ Heb. *in my bosom.* z 22. Ps. lxix. 26.

§ Or, *and what root of matter is found in me?* a 1 Kings xiv. 13. d xiii. 7—11. Rom. xiv. 1—4. xv. 1. c Ps. lviii. 10, 11. Ec. xi. 9. Matt. vii. 1, 2. Jam. iv. 11, 12.

V. 23—27. The Spirit of God seems, at this time, to have powerfully operated upon the mind of Job. The gloom and tempest of his soul were dispersed, and he afterwards discoursed with more serenity and resignation. At sometimes he had appeared ready to despair: but here he "witnessed a good confession," declared the soundness of his faith and the assurance of his hope, and seemed to emerge from his temptations, in the extremity of his afflictions; even as the expiring Jesus, when the depth of his inward sufferings was over, exclaimed, "It is finished," and "Father into thy hands I commend my spirit." Job began by solemnly wishing that what he was about to utter; (for of that he seems to speak, rather than of the protestations of his integrity;) might be recorded in the most public and indelible manner, *in a book*, or with *an iron pen in lead*, or *upon a rock for ever;* according to the several methods then in use of registering remarkable transactions: and in this God granted and exceeded his desires; for, being written in the sacred Scriptures, his words will continue to the end of time, and be made known and useful to multitudes in all ages and nations. "I know," says he, "that my Redeemer liveth." The word *Redeemer* signifies *a kinsman* or *near relation*, to whom the redemption of captives, or of alienated estates, belonged by custom, before the giving of the law. The promised Seed of the woman, who was to bear the nature, and be the Redeemer of man, was evidently intended. Job was assured that this Redeemer of sinners, who ransoms and restores to them their forfeited inheritance, was *his Redeemer;* he was conscious that he embraced the promise of his coming, and expected salvation through him. He had no doubt but he was even at that time a *living* Redeemer: according to the words of Jesus "before Abraham was, I AM." He believed also that "he would stand at the latter day upon the earth:" that in the fulness of time, he would appear as "the Seed of the woman, to bruise the serpent's head," whilst his "own heel would be crushed:" that after his resurrection he would stand up as the first-fruits of them that sleep in the dust of the earth: and that at the last day, he would appear as the Judge of the world to raise the dead, to destroy this earth, and to complete the redemption of his people. As to Job himself, though after his skin, which was almost destroyed, his body would be consumed by putrefaction: yet he should *see God in human flesh;* (so some translate it:) nay, he should be raised again from the dead, and behold his God and Saviour. Him he should certainly behold *for himself*, as his Portion and Felicity; not only as the object of mental contemplation, but with his own eyes, in his own body raised from the dead, and not in another. All this he firmly believed and assuredly hoped for, though at present his reins or vitals, were consumed within him by disease, and he despaired of recovery in this world. Other interpretations have been given of this extraordinary testimony: but none that will bear comparison with this most obvious explanation of the original. The old translation of two verses is very literal, and worthy of notice. "For I am "sure that my Redeemer liveth, and he shall stand at last "upon the earth: and though after my skin, *worms* shall "destroy this *body;* yet shall I see God in my flesh." The last clause may either refer to the Redeemer's incarnation, or to his own future resurrection, or to both.

V. 28, 29. After this confident declaration of his faith and hope, Job again warned his friends no longer to persecute him: as they had sufficient evidence that the root of divine faith and grace was planted in his heart, whence all true godliness springs: or, that on a careful examination, it would be found that his doctrine sprang from the root of truth; though he had shown infirmity in maintaining it. So that it would be dangerous for them to treat him as a hypocrite or an infidel; for God in anger might visit them with some terrible calamity; and teach them to their cost, that there is a judgment appointed, when he will avenge his servants on their enemies.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—22.

Harsh language from professed friends greatly adds to the weight of outward afflictions, and destroys the inward support and comfort of the soul. They ought therefore to be ashamed, who treat with unkindness, or load with reproach, those who have a right to expect comfort and assistance from them. Yet if our friends magnify themselves against us, and as unjust and unauthorized judges condemn us as hypocrites; it is best neither to lay the matter to heart, nor to keep an account of their slanders or revilings: lest we should be tempted to harbour resentment, or to watch our opportunity of retaliation. Rather let us "look to Him who endured the contradiction of sinners against himself;" and who was treated with far more unmerited and ungrateful insult and cruelty, than even Job was, or we can be. Yet it is very distressing to one who loves God, and hath long sought happiness in the light of his countenance, to be at the same time under his severe rebukes, to experience the hiding of his face, and the sense of his displeasure, and to be tempted to conclude that he is counted as one of his enemies! To be bereaved at once of outward honour, prosperity, and comfort, and of inward consolations! To have every prospect clouded with the appearance of further miseries, and the soul disquieted with grievous temptations and horrors! Yet, if to all this, the character be loaded with infamy, and every friend and relative be estranged and set against the sufferer; if those diseases or afflictions, which should command sympathy and relief, only excite disgust and abhorrence, and encourage the insults of the vilest of mankind; if this and more, should come upon any man at once,

CHAP. XX.

Zophar, with eagerness and warmth, enlarges on the certain ruin and manifold calamities of the wicked, 1—29.

a iv. 2. xiii. 19. xxxii. 18—20. Ps. xxxix. 2, 3. Jer. xx. 9. Rom. x. 2.
* Heb. *my haste is in me.* Ps. xxxi. 22. cxvi. 11. Prov. xiv. 29. xxix. 20. Ec. vii. 9. Mark vi. 25. Jam. i. 19.
b xix. 29.

THEN answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said,

2 Therefore do [a] my thoughts cause me to answer, and for *this* * I make haste.

3 I have heard [b] the check of my reproach, and [c] the spirit of my understanding causeth me to answer.

c xxvii. 11. xxxii. 8. 18. xxxiii. 3. Ps. xlix. 3.
d viii. 8, 9. xv. 10. xxxii. 7. Ps. xliv. 1.
e Gen. i. 28. ix. 1—3. Ps. cxv. 16.
f v. 3. xv. 29—35. xviii. 5, 6. xxvii. 13—23. Ps. xxxvii. 35, 36. lxxiii. 18—20. Dan. iv. 30—32. Acts xii. 22, 23.
† Heb. *from near.*
g viii. 19. xxvii. 8. Matt. xiii. 20, 21. Gal. vi. 4. Jam. iv. 16.
h Gen. xi. 4. Is. xiv. 13, 14. Dan. iv. 11, 22. Am. ix. 2. Ob. 3, 4. Matt. xi. 23.
‡ Heb. *cloud.*
i 1 Kings xiv. 10.
2 Kings ix. 37. Ps. lxxxiii. 16.
k xiv. 10. xxi. 28. Ps. xxxvii. 36. Is. xiv. 16.

4 [d] Knowest thou *not* this of old, since [e] man was placed upon earth,

5 That [f] the triumphing of the wicked *is* † short, and [g] the joy of the hypocrite *but* for a moment?

6 Though [h] his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the ‡ clouds;

7 *Yet* he shall [i] perish for ever like his own dung: they which have seen him [k] shall say, Where *is* he?

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it would only render him more conformable to the Saviour, and not in the least weaken the proof of his being a child of God, and an heir of eternal glory. Nor should we be too confident that this will not be our case. Should it please the Lord to prove us with complicated afflictions, we know not how soon, or how many of our friends and nearest relations might forget every tie of nature, affection, and gratitude; how much our case and character might be mistaken by our most intimate religious companions; how far we might become a reproach to the foolish, and to the meanest of our dependents and inferiors: or how fruitless it might be to call upon any of them to pity or to help us, when the hand of God had touched us, and every one should act as if, dissatisfied with our outward trials, they were intent only on increasing our inward disquietude. We should then be thankful for present exemptions, learn to sympathize with others in distress, and prepare for the worst that can befal us.

V. 23—29.

No true believer will in any possible case be left quite comfortless: "there is a Friend who loveth at all times, "and a Brother who is born for adversity." The long expected Redeemer once stood upon the earth in human nature, as our Surety, to ransom our souls by his precious blood: we are assured, that in heaven he ever liveth to make intercession for us; and at the last day, he will again appear like himself, to raise the dead and to judge the world. At that solemn period all his enemies shall weep and wail because of him; but his people, raised up incorruptible, immortal, and glorious, shall see him as their God and Saviour, *for themselves*, in their own persons, and for their complete felicity, being made like him, and admitted to be for ever with him. Let us then give diligence, that we may be assured He is *our* Redeemer; and that we shall be 'numbered with his saints in glory everlasting.' In the prospect of this happy consummation, let us solace our minds under the pressure of sickness or poverty, under the unkindness of friends and relatives, and in the prospect of death and the grave: for "though after our skin worms "destroy this body; yet in our flesh shall we see God." These faithful sayings are most durably and legibly written in the word of God: may they be engraven by the Holy Spirit upon the tablets of our hearts; that our assured faith and hope may unite with love and gratitude, to produce devoted obedience and patient submission to the Lord. This root of the matter being found in us, no slander or persecution can hurt us: and though for a time we may be discomposed, we shall again recover our calm, and wait for him to plead our cause, and judge betwixt us and our accusers. But, on the other hand, let us be careful not to censure those who profess faith, hope, and love to our common Redeemer, and appear to have "this root of the "matter in them;" though they differ in many things from us, and are not without infirmities. Satan hath peculiarly triumphed in exciting Christians thus to persecute each other: and when believers put their hands to this work, they may as certainly expect severe chastisements in this world, as unbelieving and impenitent persecutors will experience the severity of God's vengeance upon them in the world to come. For our Redeemer liveth, not only to save the souls of his people, but to enter into judgment with all their enemies.

NOTES.

CHAP. XX. V. 1—3. Zophar seems to have interrupted Job's discourse: and not taking any notice of the excellent things contained in it, he hastily answered to the concluding warning. He was full of thoughts upon the subject, which were, in his opinion, so pertinent, that he trusted he should be excused for thus interposing. He considered the check which Job had given to the censures of his friends as a *reproach;* and he thought that his answer was the result of sound reason, of "the spirit of his un-"derstanding:" yet he spoke with great severity and harshness. 'The abrupt beginning of this speech of Zophar 'shows that he was in a passion, which, though he pretends 'to bridle it, would not let him calmly consider the pro-'testation which Job made of his innocence. But he goes 'on in the old common-place way of the certain downfal 'of the wicked, be they never so powerful and well sup-'ported; which he illustrates indeed in an excellent fashion, 'with great variety of figures, and remarks on histories as 'old as the world. All the flaw in his discourse was this, '(which was common to him with the rest,) that he ima-'gined God never varied from his method, and therefore 'Job, without doubt, was a very bad man, though it did not 'appear he was so any other way but by his infelicity.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

8 He shall [1] fly away as a dream, and shall not be found: yea, he shall be chased away, as a vision of the night.

9 [m] The eye also *which* saw him shall *see him* no more; neither shall his place any more behold him.

10 * His children shall [n] seek to please the poor, and [o] his hands shall restore their goods.

11 [p] His bones are full *of the sin* of his youth, [q] which shall lie down with him in the dust.

12 Though wickedness be [r] sweet in his mouth, *though* [s] he hide it under his tongue;

13 *Though* he [t] spare it, and forsake it not, but keep it still † within his mouth:

14 *Yet* [u] his meat in his bowels is turned, *it is* [x] the gall of asps within him.

15 He hath [y] swallowed down riches, and he shall vomit them up again: God shall cast them out of his belly.

16 He shall suck the poison of asps: [z] the viper's tongue shall slay him

17 [a] He shall not see [b] the rivers, the ‡ floods, the brooks [c] of honey and butter.

18 That which he laboured for [d] shall he restore, and shall not [e] swallow *it* down: according to § *his* substance *shall* the restitution *be*, [f] and he shall not rejoice *therein*.

19 Because [g] he hath ‖ oppressed *and* hath forsaken the poor; *because* [h] he hath violently taken away an house which he builded not;

20 Surely [i] he shall not * feel quietness in his belly, he shall not save of that which he desired.

21 There shall † none of his meat be [k] left; therefore shall no man look for his goods.

22 [l] In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits: [m] every hand of the ‡ wicked shall come upon him.

23 *When* [n] he is about to fill his belly, *God* shall cast the fury of his wrath upon him, and shall [o] rain *it* upon him while he is eating.

24 [p] He shall flee from the iron weapon, *and* the bow of steel shall [q] strike him through.

25 It is [r] drawn, and cometh out of the body; yea, the glittering sword cometh out of his gall: [s] terrors *are* upon him.

26 All [t] darkness *shall be* hid in his secret places: [u] a fire not blown shall consume him: [x] it shall go ill with him that is left in his tabernacle.

27 [y] The heaven shall reveal his iniquity; and [z] the earth shall rise up against him.

28 [a] The increase of his house shall depart, [b] *and his goods* shall flow away in the day of his wrath.

29 [c] This *is* the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage § appointed unto him by God.

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1 Ps. lxxiii. 20. xc. 5. Is. xxix. 7, 8.
m vii. 8. 10. viii 18. xxvii. 23. Ps. xxxvii. 10. ciii. 15, 16.
* Or, *The poor shall oppress his children.*
n Ps. cix. 10 Prov. xiv 19. xxviii. 3.
o 18. Ex. xii. 36. xxii. 1. 3. 9. Lev. vi. 4, 5. 2 Sam. xii. 6 Prov. vi. 31. Luke xix 8.
p xlii 26. xix. 20. Ps xxv. 7. Prov. v. 11—13. 22, 23. Ez. xxxii. 27.
q xxi. 26. Prov. xiv. 32. Ez. xxiv. 13. John viii. 21 24. Acts i. 25.
r xv 16 Gen. iii. 6. Prov. ix 17, 18. xx. 17. Ec. xi. 9.
s Ps x 7. cix. 17, 18.
t Matt. v. 29, 30. Mark ix. 43—49. Rom. viii. 13.
† Heb. *in the midst of his palate*
u 2 Sam. xi. 2—5. xii. 10. 11. Ps. xxxii. 3. 4. xxxviii. 1—8 li. 8, 9. Prov. i. 31. xxiii. 20, 21. 29—35. Jer. ii. 19. Mal ii. 2.
x 16. Deut. xxxii. 33. Rom. iii. 13.
y Prov xxiii. 8 Matt. xxvii 3, 4.
z Is xxx 6. Matt. iii 7. Acts xxviii. 3—6.
a 2 Kings vii 2 Luke xvi. 23.
b Ps. xxxvi. 6 8, 9. Is. xli. 17. Jer. xvii. 6—8. Rev. xxii. 1.
‡ Or, *streaming brooks.*
c Deut. xxxii. 13, 14 2 Sam xvii. 29 Ps lxxvi. 16. Is. vii. 15. 22
d 10. 15
e v. 5 Prov. i. 12. Jer. li 34. 44. Lam ii. 16. Hos. viii. 7, 8. Am. viii. 4 Matt. xxiii. 14.
§ Heb. *the substance of his exchange.*——f xxxi. 15. 29. Jer. xl 15, 16 Ez. vii 12 Hos ix 1. Jam iv 8, 9.——g xxi. 27, 28. xxii 6. xxiv. 2—12. xxxi 13—22. 38, 39. xxxv. 9. 1 Sam xii 3, 4. Ps. x 18. xii. 5 Prov xiv 31 xxii 22. 23 Ec. iv. 1 v. 8 Ez xxii. 29 Am. iv. 1—3. Jam. ii. 6. 13.——‖ Heb. *crushed* Deut xxviii. 33. Lam iii 34——h xviii. 15. xxiv. 2 1 Kings xxi. 19. Is v 7, 8 Mic. ii. 2. 9.

i Ec v. 13, 14. Is. lvii. 20, 21.
* Heb *know*
† Or, *be none left for his meat.* xviii. 19.
k Jer. xvii. 11. Luke xvi. 24.
l xv 29. xviii. 7. Ps xxxix 6 Ec. ii. 18—20. Rev xviii. 7.
m i. 15. 17. xvi 11. 2 Kings xxiv. 2. Is. x 6
‡ Or, *troublesome.* iii. 17.
n Num xi 33. Ps lxxviii. 30. 31 Mal. ii. 2. Luke xii. 17—20.
o Gen. xix 24 Ex. ix. 23. Ps xi. 6
p 1 Kings xx 32 Is xxiv. 18. Jer xlviii. 43, 44. Am v 19. ix. 1—3.
q Prov vii. 23.
r xvi 13. Deut. xxxii. 41. Ps. vii 12. 13.
s vi 4. xv. 21. xviii. 11. xxvii. 20. Ps lxxiii 19. lxxxviii 15. Jer. xx 3, 4. 2 Cor. v 11.
t xviii. 5, 6. Is viii. 22. Matt. viii. 12. Jude 13.
u Ps. xxi. 9. Is. xxx. 33. Matt. iii. 12.
x xviii 19. Ps. cix. 9—15. Is. xiv. 20—22.
y Ps. xliv. 20, 21. Jer. xxix 23. Mal. iii. 5. Luke xii 2, 3. Rom. ii. 16. 1 Cor iv. 5.
z xvi. 18. xviii. 18. Is. xxvi. 21.
a 10. 18—22. v. 5. xxvii. 14—19. 2 Kings xx 17. Rev xviii. 17.
b Deut. xxix. 20. Prov. xi 4. Zeph. i. 18. Matt. xvi. 26. Jam. v 1—3.
c xviii 21. xxvii. 13. xxxi 3. Ps. xi. 5, 6. Matt. xxiv 51.
§ Heb. *of his decree from God.* Lam. iii. 38.

V. 4—9. Zophar here asserted the same general truths, and fell into the same mistakes, as his friends before had done. He confounded this state of trial with the future state of retribution: he supposed that the dispensations of providence were conducted by one invariable rule, according to the characters of men: and he misapplied his doctrine to Job, as if it evinced him to be a hypocrite.—He inquired as in astonishment, whether Job did not know, what all reflecting men from the beginning of the world had observed, that the triumphing of the wicked was short, and the joy of the hypocrite momentary? He might attain eminency in authority, wealth, and reputation; he might be so exalted, as to seem out of the reach of enemies and earthly vicissitudes; but he would soon be ruined, with contempt and abhorrence. Men would wonder what was become of him; he would vanish as a dream, and there would be a full end of him and of his prosperity.

V. 10—29. In these verses Zophar expatiated on the variety of miseries which await the wicked man, whether profane or hypocritical. His indigent and distressed children would court the favour of the poor, either for a morsel of bread, or to disarm their revenge for the injuries they had endured. External compulsion or inward remorse would constrain him to restore their property. The licentiousness of his youth would expose him to dreadful diseases in his old age, and bring him down to the grave. The wickedness which he delighted in, concealed, spared, and would not forsake, but reserved as a sweet morsel to eat secretly, would create him such inward horror, such dreadful diseases, and such dire miseries, that it would be like the venom of the asp, or as if he had been bitten by the viper. He would be disappointed of all his expected pleasure and ease: and along with his ill-gotten wealth, he would be deprived of all that he had laboured for, as a punishment of his injustice and oppression. He would have no comfort of his riches, whilst they remained; and he would be stripped of all, (as Job had been,) and have nothing for any one to covet. This would come upon him

CHAP. XXI.

Job entreats a patient hearing, because of his singular calamities, 1—6. *He shows that wicked men sometimes so prosper, as to grow bold in presumption,* 7—15. *Yet, that they at length fall into destruction,* 16—22. *And that the dealings of God with them in life and death are greatly varied, as their judgment is deferred to the day of wrath,* 23—34.

BUT Job answered and said,
2 [a] Hear diligently my speech,
and [b] let this be your consolation.
3 [c] Suffer me that I may speak; and
after that I have spoken, [d] mock on
4 As for me, [e] *is* my complaint to
man? and [f] if *it were so*, why should
not my spirit be * troubled?
5 † Mark me, and [g] be astonished,
and [h] lay *your* hand upon *your* mouth.
6 Even [i] when I remember, I am afraid,
and trembling taketh hold on my flesh.

a xiii. 3, 4. xviif. 2. xxxiii. 1. 31—33. xxxiv. 2. Is. lv. 2. Heb. ii. 1.
b xv. 11. xvi. 2.
c xiii. 13. xxxiii 31. 33.
d xii. 4. 5. xiii. 9 xvi. 10. 20. xvii. 2.
e vii. 11—21. x. 1. 2. 1 Sam. i. 16. Ps. xxii. 1—3 lxxvii. 3—9 cii. *title.* cxlii 2. 3. Mat. xxvi. 38. 39.
f 2 Kings vi. 26, 27. Ps. xlii. 11.
* Heb. *shortened.* Ex. vi. 9. *Marg.*
† Heb. *look unto me.*
g ii. 12. xvii. 8. xix. 20. 21.——h xxix. 9. xl. 4. Judg. xviii. 19. Ps. xxxix. 9. Am. v. 13. Rom. xi. 33.
i Ps. lxxvii. 3. lxxxviii. 15. cxix. 120. Lam. iii. 19, 20. Hab. iii. 16.

suddenly, in the height of his prosperity, by a combination of wicked men, as Job's had done. Nay, just when he would be ready to say, "Soul, take thine ease, eat, drink, "and be merry;" God himself would pour the fury of his wrath upon him. There would none escape from the weapons of divine indignation: his inward terrors would equal his outward calamities; so that every kind of misery would be laid up in store against him: he would be consumed as dried fuel, which burns of its own accord: for the judgments of God, without the intervention of men, would desolate his family. If his wickedness were before masked with hypocrisy, it should thus be brought to light: persons of all descriptions would unite against him. All he had would be totally dissipated. For this was uniformly the portion of a wicked man from God, and his appointed heritage. The reference in all this is manifest, not only to Job's calamities, but also to his complaints. His outward loss and inward anguish, the triumphs of his enemies, and the unkindness of his friends and relatives, are manifestly hinted at. Says Zophar, 'This is the heritage of a 'wicked man: and therefore doubtless thou art one.'

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

They are frequently the most forward to dispute, that are most evidently in the wrong. We are pleased with our own thoughts, as with our own children, and fancy that others will equally admire them. Thus we are led to make indecent haste to speak, lest we should lose the credit and gratification of our penitent observations; and lest others should lose the benefit of them! In this eagerness we consider each *check* as a *reproach;* and every *effusion of passion,* is esteemed a *demonstration!* But others generally judge very differently: nay, we ourselves can seldom reflect afterwards on such warm debates, without shame and remorse. It is very difficult for men of warm passions entirely to repress this unbecoming propensity: but watchfulness and prayer will do great things in a course of time; and we may profit by observing our own and other's errors, and by the rebukes and corrections of our heavenly Father. We must not limit the dispensations of God by our rules; nor censure others out of fondness for our own notions. But though the wicked do often prosper even to the end of life: yet it is a decided matter amongst all wise men from the beginning hitherto, that "the triumphing of the wicked," and "the joy of the hypocrite," are transient and fleeting: and that they shall shortly perish disgracefully and for ever. In general, iniquity ruins men's constitutions; and if they are not cut off before, it entails pain and disease on their old age, which carries them down to the grave: the pleasures and gains of sin, like drinking sweet poison, or like the lulling venom of the asp, terminate in remorse, in anguish, and in ruin. A curse from God often corrodes the oppressor's abundance; he hath no enjoyment of it, and suffers none of those connected with him to have any ease or pleasure; and very often it is torn from him in an awful and sudden manner. "There is no peace, saith my "God, for the wicked." But what are all weapons of iron and steel; yea, what is all darkness and consuming fire, compared with the eternal vengeance of the Almighty, which is the heritage appointed unto the wicked in the world to come? Then the hypocrite shall be detected, and have his portion with the unbelievers; whilst heaven and earth shall rise up against him: for "indignation and "wrath, tribulation and anguish, are reserved for every "soul of man, who," impenitently, "doeth evil: but glory, "honour, and peace to every one," who proveth himself a true believer, by working that which is good in the sight of the Lord.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXI. V. 1—6. In this chapter Job discoursed less upon his own calamities, and more directly answered his opponents. He introduced his subject by entreating their attention, and desiring that they would neither interrupt him as Zophar had done, nor disregard and misunderstand his words, as they all had hitherto: this he would take instead of those consolations which he had vainly expected from them: and if after a fair hearing, his discourse was found impertinent, and his reasonings inconclusive, he would consent that they should renew their mockery. Indeed his complaint and appeal were directed to God, and not to them: otherwise his spirit might well be troubled, when sarcasms and reproaches were all they afforded him under his unprecedented sufferings. Yet if they looked upon him, they might see misery sufficient to demand compassion: and as they knew no evil against him, their bold interpretations of this mysterious providence, should be turned into silent astonishment. For indeed every recollection of the dreadful change, which he had experienced, filled him with trembling and consternation.

7 ¶ [k] Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are [l] mighty in power?

8 Their [m] seed is established in their sight with them, and their offspring before their eyes.

9 Their houses *are* * safe from fear, neither *is* [n] the rod of God upon them.

10 Their bull gendereth, and faileth not: [o] their cow calveth, and casteth not her calf.

11 They [p] send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance.

12 They [q] take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ.

13 They [r] spend their days in † wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave.

14 [s] Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; [t] for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.

15 [u] What *is* the Almighty, that we should serve him? and [x] what profit should we have, [y] if we pray unto him?

16 Lo, [z] their good *is* not in their hand: [a] the counsel of the wicked is far from me.

k xii 6 Ps. xvii. 10. lxxiii. 3—12. Jer. xii. 1—3. Hab. i. 15, 16.
l Ps. xxxvii. 35. Dan. iv 17. Rev. xiii. 2—7. xvii. 2—4.
m v. 3, 4. xviii. 19. xx 10. 28. Prov. xvii. 6.
* Heb *peace from fear*. xv. 21. xviii. 11. Ps. lxxiii 19. Is. lvii. 19—21.
n ix 34. Ps. lxxiii. 5
o Ex. xxiii 26. Deut vii 13, 14 xxviii. 11. Ps. cxliv 13, 14 Ec ix. 1, 2 Luke xii. 16—21. xvi 19.
p Ps. cvii. 41. cxxvii 3—5.
q Gen. iv. 21. xxxi. 27. Is. v. 12. xxii. 13. Am. vi. 4—6.
r xxxvi 11. Ps lxxiii. 4. Matt. xxiv 38, 39 Luke xii 19, 20. xv i. 28, 29.
† Or, *mirth*.
s xxii. 17 Ps. x. 4. 11. Luke viii. 28. 37. John xv. 23. 24. Rom. viii 7.
t Prov. i. 7. 22. 29. Is. xxx. 11. John iii. 20. viii. 45 47. Rom i. 28. 2 Thes. ii. 10 12. 2 Tim. iv. 3. 4
u Ex v. 2. Ps. xii 4. Prov. xxx 9. Hos. xiii 6.
x xxxiv. 9. xxxv 3. Is. xxx 11 Mal. i 13 iii. 13, 14.——y Is xlv 19 Matt. vii. 7. John xvi. 24.——z i. 21. xii. 9, 10. Ps xlix. 6, 7. lii. 5—7. Ec. viii. 8. Luke xvi. 2 25.
a xxii. 18. Gen. xlix. 6. Ps. i. 1. Prov i 10. v. 8.

17 [b] How oft is the ‡ candle of the wicked put out? and *how oft* cometh their destruction upon them? *God* [c] distributeth sorrows in his anger.

18 They are [d] as stubble before the wind, and as chaff that the storm § carrieth away.

19 God [e] layeth up his ‖ iniquity [f] for his children: [g] he rewardeth him, and [h] he shall know *it*.

20 His eyes shall [i] see his destruction, and he shall [k] drink the wrath of the Almighty.

21 For [l] what pleasure *hath* he in his house after him, when [m] the number of his months is cut off in the midst?

22 [n] Shall *any* teach God knowledge? seeing [o] he judgeth those that are high.

23 One dieth in his * full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet.

24 [p] His † breasts are full of milk, and his bones are [q] moistened with marrow.

b xviii. 5, 6. 18 Prov xiii. 9 xx 20 xxiv. 20. Matt xxv. 8.
‡ Or, *lamp*
c Ps. xxii. 10. xc 7—9. Luke xii 46. Rom. ii. 8, 9
d xiii 25. Ex. xv 7. Ps i 4 xxxv. 5. lxxxiii 13 Is v 24. xvii. 13. xxix. 5 xl. 24. xli 15, 16 Jer. xli 24. Hos. xiii. 3. Nah. i. 10 Matt. ii 12
§ Heb. *stealeth*.
e xxii 24 Deut. xxxii 34. Matt. vi. 19, 20. Rom. ii. 5
‖ That is, *the punishment of his iniquity* Gen. iv 7. 2 Cor. v. 20
f Ex xx. 5 Ps. cis 9, &c. Is. xiv 21 Ez. xviii. 19, 20. Matt xxiii. 31—35
g Deut xxxii 41. 2 Sam. iii. 39. Ps. liv. 5. Matt. xvi 27 2 Tim. iv. 14 Rev. xviii 6.
h Mal. iii 18.
i xxvii. 19. Luke xvi 23
k Ps. lxxv 8 Is. li. 17 Jer xxv. 15, 16. li. 7. Rev xiv 10. xix. 15.
l xiv 21. Ec ii. 18, 19. Luke xvi. 27, 28 ——m xiv. 5. Ps lv. 23 cii 24.——n xl. 2. Is. xl. 13, 14 xlv. 9. Rom. xi 34. 1 Cor. ii. 16. ——o xxxiv. 17—19. Ps. cxiii. 5, 6. Ec. v. 8. Is xl. 22, 23. 1 Cor. vi 3. 2 Pet. ii 4 Jude 6 Rev xx. 1—3 12—15.——* Heb *very perfection*. or, *the strength of his perfection* xx. 22, 23 Ps. xlix. 17. lxxiii 4, 5. Luke xii. 19—21.
p xx 17 Ps. xvii 10 ——† Or, *milk-pails* ——q Prov. iii. 8

V. 7—16. If the doctrine maintained by Zophar and Job's other opponents, was true, and Providence discriminated uniformly betwixt the righteous and the wicked; how was it, that so many wicked men lived, grew old, and continued in power and prosperity to their death? Perhaps no instance had occurred of a godly man being so suddenly and dreadfully afflicted, as Job had been: and it was not possible for man to distinguish exactly betwixt the true believer and the hypocrite. But it was undeniable, that numbers of notoriously profane and wicked men were advanced to wealth and authority, continued in prosperity to old age, and witnessed their posterity established in desirable settlements before their death; nay, were often more free from alarm and correction than other men: that their cattle and substance rapidly increased; that their children, whom they trained up in vanity, sensuality, and dissipation, multiplied, and were in health and peace around them: that they lived even to extreme old age, (for so the original word signifies,) in outward ease and indulgence; and died without any remarkable pain or distress. So that, if they were to judge merely by outward prosperity, the wicked might be pronounced the most happy men, and even the favourites of Heaven. Yet they grew more impious and presumptuous, even by their prosperity; they openly cast off all regard to God, and neither knew nor desired to learn any thing about his truths, ordinances, and precepts: they despised his favour, defied his vengeance, and counted his service and worship an irksome and unprofitable business. But it must be allowed, that the Almighty whom they despised and affronted, gave and continued to them these *their* good things, and could take them away when he pleased; nor were they so in their hand that they could retain them for a moment. Job, for his part, was far from approving their counsel or conduct, or desiring their prosperity: though his friends inferred, that he thought the wicked happy, because he argued, that they often prospered while the righteous were afflicted.

V. 17—22. All these verses may be read *interrogatively*. *How often* does it happen, that the prosperity of wicked men is extinguished with sudden and awful judgments? Sometimes indeed it is so, but more frequently they live and die in outward ease and peace. *How often* doth God in his anger distribute to them uncommon calamities, rendering them as stubble or chaff before the tempestuous wind? *How often* do you see that their iniquities are punished upon their children, whilst their eyes behold their destruction, and they know that they drink of the wrath of the Almighty as a recompense for *their* crimes? It had been laid down as a general rule, that God almost uniformly visited wicked men with these and similar judgments: yet, in fact, instances in which they were clearly thus distinguished from others, seldom occurred. And if they prospered till death; whether they lived till old age, or died in the vigour of life, the subsequent condition of their families would not affect them. Indeed, who should presume to teach the Judge of the most exalted creatures in what way he shall administer his government? Or who shall pretend to explain, or decide upon any of his dispensations, as if inconsistent with his justice or wisdom?

25 And another dieth [r] in the bitterness of his soul, and [s] never eateth with pleasure.

26 They shall lie down [t] alike in the dust, and [u] the worms shall cover them.

27 Behold, [x] I know your thoughts, and the devices *which* [y] ye wrongfully imagine against me.

28 For ye say, [z] Where *is* the house of the prince? and where *are* the * dwelling places of the wicked?

29 Have ye not asked them that [a] go by the way? and do ye not know their tokens,

r iii. 20. vii. 11. ix. 18. x. 1. 2 Sam. xvii. 3 marg. Prov. xiv. 10. Is. xxxviii. 15—17.
s Ec. vi. 2.
t iii. 18, 19. xx. 11. Ec. ix. 2.
u xvii. 14. xix. 26. Ps. xlix. 14. Is. xiv. 11.
x iv. 8—11. v. 3—5. viii. 3—6. xv. 20, &c. xx. 5. 29. Luke v. 22.
y xxxii. 3. xlii. 7. Ps. lix. 4. cxix. 86. 1 Pet. ii. 19.
z xx. 7. Ps. xxxvii. 36. lii. 5, 6. Hab. ii. 9—11. Zech. v. 4.
* Heb. *tent of the tabernacles.* Num. xvi. 26—34.
a Ps. cxxix. 8.

30 That [b] the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction? they shall be brought forth to [c] the day of wrath.

31 Who shall [d] declare his way to his face? and who shall [e] repay him *what* he hath done?

32 Yet shall [f] he be brought to the ‡ grave, and shall § remain in the tomb.

33 The clods of the valley shall be [g] sweet unto him, and [h] every man shall draw after him, as *there are* innumerable before him.

34 How then [i] comfort ye me in vain, [k] seeing in your answers there remaineth ‖ falsehood.

b Prov. xvi. 4. Nah. i. 2. 2 Pet. ii. 9. 17. Jude 13.
c xx. 28. Ps. cx. 5. Prov. xi. 4. Zeph. i. 15. Rom. ii. 5. Rev. vi. 17.
† Heb. *wraths.*
d 2 Sam. xii. 7—12. 1 Kings xxi. 19—24. Ps. l. 21. Jer. ii. 33—35. Mark vi. 18. Acts xxiv. 25. Gal. ii. 11.
e 19. xli. 11. Deut. vii. 10. Is. lix. 18. Rom. xii. 19. Jam. ii. 13.
f Ps. xlix. 14. Ez. xxxii. 21—32. Luke xvi. 22.
‡ Heb. *graves.*
§ Heb. *watch in the heap.*
g iii. 17, 18.
h xxx. 23. Gen. iii. 19. Ec. i. 3. viii. 8. xii. 7.

Heb. ix. 27.——i xvi. 2.——k xiii. 4.——‖ Heb. *transgression.*

V. 23—26. Job, from his appeal to facts, justly inferred that there was no exact discrimination observed in this matter. One haughty sinner comes peaceably to his end, having experienced a continual series of health, indulgence, and success, like to cattle that feed in rich pastures. Others, who perhaps were not so wicked, never have known any thing but pain, sickness, poverty, and trouble, and die in anguish and distress. Thus both go down to the dust alike, and become food for the worms. The words translated "his breasts are full of milk," are differently interpreted. The word rendered *breasts* is not elsewhere used in Scripture; and some think it means *milk-pails*. But others, supposing it to coincide with the subsequent clause, thus translate the passage: "His ribs, (or sides, or *viscera*,) are full of fat:" and this seems the true sense of the words.

V. 27—30. Here Job brings the matter to an issue. He knew that his friends wrongfully condemned him, as one who had usurped or abused his authority, and been an unjust oppressive magistrate and a hypocrite; and that they considered his desolated habitation as the proof of his guilt. But any common traveller, to whom they might refer the case, could point out the flourishing habitations and splendid monuments of the ungodly, which they observed in their journeys; from these tokens they would conclude, that wicked men were not punished here, but were frequently exempted from the calamities which overtook others; being reserved to the day of wrath and destruction in another world.

V. 31—33. Oppressors are often so powerful, that none dare call them to account or reprove them: and at last they die in peace, and are buried with magnificence: and they sleep as quietly in the grave as others do. Indeed, death closes their prosperity; but who have been, are, or shall be, exempted from this common doom? So that it is evident, that there is no exact discrimination betwixt the righteous and the wicked, in the outward dispensations of Providence.

V. 34. Job concluded with inquiring, why they comforted him in vain, with the hopes of returning worldly prosperity in case he repented and sought unto the Lord? For there was no truth in their system: nay, there was falsehood interwoven with all their answers, which rendered them inconclusive, and inapplicable to the subject.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—16.

It is not easy to obtain an attentive hearing from eager disputants. Interruption and disregard are commonly reciprocal; hence misapprehension, unfair conclusions, and unmerited contempt and reproach: and when men have been suffered to speak, and have spoken to the purpose, their opponents commonly mock on, and treat the whole as trivial and ridiculous: but this conduct is peculiarly improper when admitted in respect to the afflicted, who should at least have the consolation of being heard with patience and candour. We might well yield to inward disquietude, if we had none to complain to in our distresses but man; or, if the Lord were as severe against us as our brethren sometimes are. But the true believer may speak to God at all times, and he will compassionately regard those complaints, and bear with those infirmities, which men disregard or condemn. The afflictions of the faithful, compared with the prosperity of the wicked, have caused astonishment and discouragement to the servants of God in all ages. But we should adore the depths of those judgments which we cannot fathom: and the clear light of the Gospel, with the discoveries of the eternal world, explains the difficulty, and shows the wise designs of God in all these dispensations. Yet under severe trials and temptations, the most established believer finds it as hard to apply his principles for immediate encouragement, as the mariner in a furious storm does to manage the vessel by the rules of navigation. It is undeniable that wicked men often grow rich and great, establish flourishing families, escape alarms and corrections, succeed in their projects, train up their children in pleasure; and, after a life of splendour and indulgence, go down to the grave in old age, without any remarkable calamity: yea, they are interred with magnificence, and many vain attempts are made to abate the horror of death and the noisomeness of the grave. And it is equally certain, that this has emboldened impiety and infidelity: and led many to infer that there is no God, or that he takes no notice of human affairs, and that religion and morality are needless or useless. Prosperity adds strength to men's pride and fuel to their lusts; and thus they grow hardened in pre-

CHAP. XXII.

Eliphaz shows that man's goodness cannot profit God, 1—4. *He accuses Job of various crimes, which had brought on him his calamities,* 5—14. *He contrasts the doom of sinners visited by divine judgments, with the security of the righteous,* 15—20. *He exhorts Job to repentance, and encourages him to hope for mercy,* 21—30.

THEN Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said,

2 [a] Can a man be profitable unto God, * as [b] he that is wise may be profitable unto himself?

3 *Is it* [c] any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous? or *is it* gain *to him*, that [d] thou makest thy ways perfect?

4 Will he [e] reprove thee [f] for fear of thee? [g] will he enter with thee into judgment?

a xxxv. 6—8. Ps. xvi. 2. Luke xvii. 10.
* Or. *If he may be profitable*, does his *good success* depend *thereon?*
b xxi. 15 Deut. x. 13 Prov. iii. 13-18. iv. 7—9. ix. 12 Ec. vii. 11, 12. Matt. v. 29. Gal. vi. 7, 8
c 1 Chr xxix. 17. Ps. cxlvii. 10, 11. Prov. xi. 1. 20. xii 22. xv. 8. Mal. ii. 17. Phil. iv. 18.
d xxiii. 10-12. Ps. xxxix. 1. cxix. 3 - 6. 59. Acts xxiv. 16. 2 Cor vii. 1.
e Ps. xxxix. 11. lxxvi. 6. lxxx. 16.——f vii. 12.——g ix. 19, 32. xiv. 3. xvi. 21. xxxiii 6, 7. xxxiv. 23. Ps cxliii. 2. Ec. xii. 14. Is. iii 14. 15.

sumptuous wickedness! Alas, what numbers do we see in this land where the light of the Gospel clearly shines, whose actions say unto God, "Depart from us!" Their open and constant violation of his law and contempt of his Gospel; their profanation of his day and desertion of his ordinances; their families left without the least appearance of religion; their incessant course of riot and dissipation; their inordinate pursuit of wealth or power; their discourse devoid of all reverence to the name, truths, or precepts of God, and full of levity and folly, if not of ribaldry and profaneness: these things seem to "say "unto God, Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge "of thy ways." Such persons do not desire to think, hear, speak, or read about him: they treat religion as if it were beneath their rank, fortune, spirit, or genius: they do not deem the Almighty on any account entitled to their obedience or gratitude: and they suppose his service to be a mere drudgery, which can yield neither pleasure nor profit, and in neglecting which there can be no danger! Yet "these prosper in the world, and have riches in pos-"session!" And though the Lord be sometimes "known "by the judgments that he executes:" yet they or their families, are seldom visited by remarkable calamities. Indeed, they as well as others must shortly die. But many of them *outwardly* enjoy more pleasure and suffer less pain, whilst they live, and when they die, than their pious neighbours. And though the pomp of their funerals, and the panegyric of their flatterers, will afford them no real advantage; yet they fare as well as others: and whether their children prosper, or are afflicted, after their death it adds nothing to their joy or sorrow. It is evident, that *their* good things are bestowed upon them by God: yet he distributes sorrows in his anger; and however spared for a time, they are as stubble before the wind, and as chaff for the fire of his indignation. For, indeed, it avails little whether wicked men enjoy on earth all the delights of sense, without pain, sickness, or hardship; or whether they live and die without enjoyment and bitterness: as they are all reserved to the day of wrath and destruction, and the misery which is beyond the grave will swallow up all their former comfort: and as they have said to God, "Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy "ways;" they cannot reasonably expect any other, but that He, the Fountain of felicity and Judge of the world, will at last order them to depart from him into endless and hopeless misery. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 17—34.

We are not competent to declare what God, the universal Judge, ought to do, or to comment on what he doeth: Nor should we deem ourselves the objects of his love, or of his wrath, because of outward dispensations; or condemn any as sinners above other men, because visited with remarkable calamities. In all conclusions and arguments of this kind, there remaineth error, presumption, and self-sufficiency. But we are all speedily drawing towards the grave: and the wicked *may* suffer many dreadful calamities on earth, *must* have many peculiar terrors and vexations; and want that peace of conscience, that confidence in God, and that hope of heaven, which the believer enjoys; as their prosperity increases their guilt, and strengthens their distempered passions; as they have *all their* good things here, and have nothing to look for hereafter but unmixed and eternal misery: as they may expect to be banished from the presence of God hereafter; as the righteous hath *all* his evil here, and unmingled and eternal good in another world: we must certainly conclude, that the most adverse lot of a true believer is infinitely preferable to the greatest prosperity of an unbeliever. Let us then put far from us the counsel of the wicked: let us seek the Lord, and desire the knowledge of his ways: let us count his service our liberty and pleasure; and the privilege of praying to him, our highest honour and richest charter. Let us look forward to the general judgment and the eternal world; and we shall see the prosperity of the wicked and the trials of the righteous perfectly consonant with the eternal wisdom, justice, truth, and goodness of God; and shall cheerfully conclude, even when under his correcting rod, that they, and they only, are blessed, who trust and serve him.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXII. V. 1—4. Eliphaz still supposed that Job maintained that God favoured the wicked; and therefore he addressed him the third time. He intended, in this introduction, to show that God in all his appointments acted out of pure love to justice, and was not influenced by interested or selfish affections. He has nothing to fear or hope from any of his creatures; none can profit or injure him: his essential glory and felicity receive no accession from their obedience, however perfect: he is not excited by the greatness of any one, to institute a legal process against him to bring him down; nor can any

5 ¶ [h] *Is* not thy wickedness great? and [i] thine iniquities infinite?

6 For [k] thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, [l] and * stripped the naked of their clothing

7 [m] Thou hast not given water to the weary to drink, and thou hast withholden bread from the hungry.

8 But [n] *as for* the † mighty man, he had the earth; and the ‡ honourable man dwelt in it.

9 Thou hast sent [o] widows away empty, and the arms of the fatherless [p] have been broken.

10 Therefore [q] snares *are* round about thee, and [r] sudden fear troubleth thee;

11 Or [s] darkness, *that* thou canst not see; and [t] abundance of waters cover thee.

12 [u] *Is* not God in the height of heaven? and, behold the § height of [x] the stars, how high they are!

13 And thou sayest, ‖ How [y] doth God know? can he judge through the dark cloud?

14 [z] Thick clouds *are* a covering to him, that he seeth not; and he walketh in the circuit of heaven.

15 Hast thou marked [a] the old way, which wicked men have trodden?

16 [b] Which were cut down out of time, * whose foundation was overthrown with a flood;

17 Which said unto God, [c] Depart from us: [d] and what can the Almighty do † for them.

18 Yet [e] he filled their houses with good *things:* but [f] the counsel of the wicked is far from me.

19 [g] The righteous see *it*, and are glad: and [h] the innocent laugh them to scorn.

20 [i] Whereas our ‡ substance is not cut down, but § the remnant of them [k] the fire consumeth.

h v. 7—11. xi 14. xv. 5, 6 31—34. xxi 27 xxxii.3. i Ps. xix. 12. xl. 12.
k xxiv 3 9, 10. Ex xxii 26. 27. Deut. xxiv. 10—13. Ez xviii. 7 16 Am. ii 8.
l xxiv 10 xxxi. 19, 20
* Heb *stripped the clothes of the naked*
m xxxi 17, Deu. xv 7—11. Ps cxi. 9 Prov xi 24. 25 xix 17. Is. lviii 7. 10. Ez. xviii. 7 16. Matt xxv. 42 Rom xii 20
n xv. 34 xxix 7—17. xxxi. 34
† Kings xxi 11—15 Ps xii. 8 Mic vii. 3
† Heb. *man of arm*
‡ Heb. *eminent*, or. *accepted for countenance.* xiii 8.
o xxiv. 3. 21. xxix 12, 13. xxxi. 16—18. 21 Ex. xxii. 21—24. Deu xxvii. 19 Ps xciv 6 Is. i. 17—23. x 2. Ez xxii 7. Mal iii 5. Luke xviii. 3—5.
p Ps x 15 xxxvii. 17. Ez xxx 22.——q xviii. 8 10 xix 6.——r vi 4 xxi. 21 Prov i 27 iii 25, 26. ‖ Thes v. 3.——s xviii 6. 18 xix 8 Prov iv 19 Is viii 22 Lam iii 2 Joel ii 2, 3 Matt. viii. 12.—— t Ps. xlii 7. lxix. 1, 2 cxxiv 4 Lam. iii. 54 Jon. ii 3
u Ps. cxv. 3, 16. Ec. v. 2. Is lvii. 15. lxvi 1——§ Heb. *head.*

x Ps viii. 3, 4.
‖ Heb. *What.*
y Ps x.11 lxxiii. 11. xciv. 7—9. Ez viii. 12 ix. 9 Zeph. i. 12.
z xxxiv. 22. Ps. xxxiii.14 xcvii. 2 cxxxix. 1, 2. Jer. xxiii. 24. Luke xii. 3, 4.
a Gen vi 5. 11—13. Luke xvii. 26, 27.
b xv 32 Ps lv. 23. cii 24. Ec. vii 17
* Heb. *a flood was poured upon their foundation.* Gen vii. 17—24 Matt. xxiv. 37—39 1 Pet. iii. 19, 20 2 Pet. ii. 5.
c xxi 14, 15 Is. xxx 11. Matt. viii 29 34. Rom i 28.
d Ps iv. 6 Mal. iii. 14
† Or, *to them.*
e xii. 6. 1 Sam. ii 7 Ps xvii. 14. Jer. xii 2. Acts xiv. 17.
f xxi 16 Ps i. 1.
g Ps xlviii 11. lviii 10. xcviii. 8. cvii 42 Prov. xi. 10 Rev. xviii 20 xix. 1—3.
h ix. 23 Ps. lii 6.
i iv 7 viii. 3, 4. xv. 5, 6. xx. 18, 19. xxi. 27, 28. Luke xiii. 1—5.
‡ Or, *estate.*
§ Or, *their excellency*——k i. 16. xx. 26. Gen. xix. 24. Luke xvii. 29, 30. 2 Pet. ii. 6, 7.

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one make him his debtor. A wise man consults his own advantage by serving God; but he cannot profit him. The Lord indeed approves and delights in holiness, because it is right in itself, and conducive to personal and social happiness; but not because he is any gainer by it. His justice therefore must be invariable and impartial: his rewards are the result of his love of good; and his punishments spring entirely from hatred of evil. These are great truths, and were well understood by the disputants. But Eliphaz and his associates, confounding this state of trial with that of future retribution, misapplied them to the case of Job; as if the justice of God could not be vindicated, unless he were proved to be a wicked man.

V. 5—14. In these verses Eliphaz brought as particular a charge against Job, as if he had had evidences ready to prove every tittle; yet he had no reason for his rash accusation, except that Job was visited, as he supposed God always visited every wicked man, and none else! He demanded whether Job could deny the number and greatness of his crimes? Indeed all have committed innumerable sins, in which is an inconceivable degree of criminality: but Eliphaz did not mean such* transgressions as were common to Job with other believers, or even with men in general; but flagrant iniquities and impieties, which he had cloaked with the mask of hypocrisy. He therefore directly charged him with depriving his poor brethren of their necessary clothing, by taking them in pledge for pretended debts; and of withholding bread and water, or needful relief, from those who were perishing by want; of decreeing, as a judge, in behalf of the rich and powerful, for their favour and bribes; and of sending away the widows and orphans robbed of their property, and bereaved of all power to recover their right. His unexpected calamities, with which he was surrounded and entangled, were the punishment of these oppressions; and it was no wonder that he complained of being involved in darkness, distracted with terrors, and overwhelmed with afflictions like impetuous torrents, when he was guilty of such crimes. Some think, he meant that Job was blinded by his selfish prejudices, or judicially involved in mental darkness: or he would readily have perceived the reason of his calamities. All parties were agreed that God displayed his presence and glory in heaven, and was infinitely exalted above all creatures: but Eliphaz thought that Job thence inferred, that God *could not know*, or *did not notice*, the actions of men, which were concealed by the intervening clouds; or that, satisfied with the enjoyment of his own felicity, he disregarded the affairs of his creatures. So that, if he were not a direct atheist, he impiously denied the divine perfections and providence: and therefore he feared no punishment for cloaking his injustice with the show of piety, and vindicating his character when visited by the just judgments of God.

V. 15—20. Eliphaz here evidently adverted to the *general deluge*. The earth was then filled with violence; men had "said unto God, depart from us;" and they inquired concerning Noah and his few associates, "What "can the Almighty do for them?" But though their houses were for a time filled by a bountiful Providence with good things, what way did they at length tread? They were cut down by an awful judgment, and the foundation of their confidence was overflowed and destroyed with the flood. This was well known; and

21 ¶ [l] Acquaint now thyself with
* him, and [m] be at peace; thereby good
shall come unto thee.

22 [n] Receive, I pray thee, the law
from his mouth, and [o] lay up his words
in thine heart.

23 [p] If thou return to the Almighty,
thou shalt be [q] built up, [r] thou shalt
put away iniquity far from thy taberna-
cles.

24 Then shalt thou [s] lay up gold † as
dust, and the *gold* of [t] Ophir as the
stones of the brooks.

25 Yea, [u] the Almighty shall be thy
‡ defence, and thou shalt have § plenty
of silver.

26 For then [x] shalt thou have thy de-
light in the Almighty, and shalt [y] lift up
thy face unto God.

27 [z] Thou shalt make thy prayer un-
to him, and he shall hear thee, and thou
shalt [a] pay thy vows.

28 Thou shalt also [b] decree a thing,
and it shall be established unto thee:
and [c] the light shall shine upon thy ways.

29 When [d] *men* are cast down, then
thou shalt say, *There is* lifting up; and
[e] he shall save ‖ the humble person.

30 * He shall deliver the island of
the innocent: and it is delivered by the
[f] pureness of thine hands.

l 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. John xvii. 3. 2 Cor. iv. 6.
* That is, *God.*
m Is. xxvii. 5. lvii. 19—21. Matt. v. 25. Acts x 36. 2 Cor. v. 20. Eph. ii 14—17.
n Deut. iv. 1, 2. Prov. ii. 1—9. 1 Thes. iv 1, 2.
o xxiii. 12. Deut. vi. 6—9. Ps. cxix. 11. Prov. iv. 4. 21. Jer xv. 16. Mat. xii 35 xiii. 52. Luke ii. 19. 51
p viii 5, 6. xi 13. Is. lv. 6, 7. Hos. xiv 1, 2. Zech. i. 3. Acts xxvi. 20.
q xii. 14 Jer. xxxi. 4 Col. ii. 7 Jude 20
r xi. 14. xviii 15. Jos vii. 13—17. Is. xxxiii. 15. Zech. v. 3, 4.
s 1 Kings x. 21. 2 Chr. i 15. ix. 10 27.——† Or, *on the dust.*——‡ Ps. xlv 9——u Gen xv. 1. Ps xviii. 2. lxxxix 11 Is. xli. 10. Rom. viii 31——§ Or, *gold.* Ps. xvi. 5. 6. Is. xxxiii. 6. 2 Cor. vi. 10. Jam. ii. 5.——§ Heb. *silver of strength.*

x xxvii. 10. xxxiv. 9. Ps. xxxvii. 4. Cant. ii. 3. Is. lviii. 14. Rom. vii. 22.
y xi. 15. Ps. xxv. 1. lxxxvi. 4. cxliii. 8. 1 John iii 21. 22
z Ps. l 14. 15 lv. 18—20. xci. 15. cxvi. 1 Is lviii. 9. 1 John v. 14, 15
a Ps. lvi 12, 13. lxvi. 13, 14. cxvi. 14. Ec. v. 4. Jon. ii. 9.
b Ps. xx. 4. xc. 17 Lam. iii. 37. Jam. iv. 15.
c xxix. 3 Ps. xcvii. 6. cxii. 4. Prov. iv. 18. Is. xxx 21 Mal. iv. 2 John viii. 12.
d v. 19, &c. Ps. ix. 2, 3. xci 14—16 xcii 9—11.
e Prov. xxix. 23. Is lvii 15 Luke xiv. 11. Jam iv. 6. 1 Pet v 5——‖ Heb. *him that hath low eyes* Ps. cxxxviii 6. Is. lxvi 2 Ez xxi 26. 27 Luke i 52.——* Or, *The innocent shall deliver the island.* xlii 8. Gen. xviii 26—32 Is lviii. 12 Jer v. 1 Acts xxvii. 24.——f Is. i. 15. Mal. i. 9 Matt xvii. 19. 20 Acts xix. 15, 16. 1 Tim ii. 8 Jam v. 15, 16.

therefore Eliphaz maintained that such judgments befel notorious sinners; and thought that he had the best reason to use Job's words, "the counsel of the wicked be "far from me:" (xxi. 16.) And as it was always matter of exultation and triumph to the righteous, when wicked oppressors were thus ruined; Job had no reason to wonder, that they seemed to mock at his calamities and complaints, whom they considered to be such a one. "But," added he, "*our substance*," who are real godly men, "*is not thus* "*cut down*;" whilst the vengeance of God, like fire, consumes every remnant of those who by their crimes are proper fuel for it. Perhaps he alluded to the destruction of Sodom. Eliphaz's arguments and precedents by no means proved, that wicked men were *always* thus visited in this world; and the Sabeans and Chaldeans did no greater injustice to Job, than he did in this rash condemnation of him; whilst, in ascribing his own exemption to his piety, rather than to God's mercy, his discourse savoured of pride and ingratitude.

V. 21—30. The former part of Eliphaz's answer must be condemned; but this conclusion merits great commendation: though it implied that Job had hitherto been a stranger to true religion, and that temporal prosperity would be the sure consequence of his sincere conversion. It contained, however, excellent advice and suitable encouragements. He exhorted Job to get acquainted with the divine perfections, and to seek an experimental knowledge of the God of salvation, whom a sinner may approach by faith and prayer. Thus he might have peace with him and his own conscience; and all possible good would be the consequence. The revelations which God had made to others, or would make to him, of his truth and will, should be received with submission of understanding, and with humble faith, and laid up in his heart as the principles and rule of his future obedience. Thus returning to the Almighty as his God and Portion, he would remove every kind of injustice far from his tabernacles; and might expect to have a prosperity built upon a firm foundation: he would grow rich in gold and silver; nay, the Lord would be his treasure and defence: he should have great delight and confidence in him: his prayers would be readily heard and answered; and he would be continually reminded to perform the vows which accompanied them. His purposes would be established: his path would be comfortable: and when other wicked men were cast down, he would recollect, with joyful exultation, how the Lord had lifted him up from his abject condition; and preserved him from similar calamities, after he had humbled himself before him: or when the righteous were afflicted or cast down, he would be honoured as their helper and comforter; nay, his pious example, and endeavours, and fervent prayers, would render him a blessing to his country, in preserving it from public calamities, and promoting the cause of religion and righteousness.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

True wisdom consists *with* seeking our own interest; yea, *in* seeking it, provided it be our true and everlasting interest, and we seek it in that way which God hath revealed: and godliness is always profitable to the possessor, "having the promise both of the life that now is, and of "that which is to come." But it is absurd to suppose, that we can be profitable to God, or merit any thing at his hands. Even the perfect obedience of angels in these respects is entirely unavailing: how much more then the defective services of polluted sinners? All our comforts therefore flow from the unmerited mercy of our God; and under all our afflictions we should acknowledge that we suffer less than we deserve. He indeed acts as a Sovereign who gives no account of his conduct to the presumptuous objector: but his sovereignty is perfectly wise, righteous, faithful, good, and merciful. He approves of the image of his own holiness, and delights in the fruits of his own Spirit: and he graciously accepts the thankful services of the humble believer, whilst he rejects the proud claim of the self-confident Pharisee. It is, however, grievous to reflect, that numbers, having spoken excellently on the divine perfections; so far from being "imitators of him, as beloved

CHAP. XXIII.

Job longs to plead his cause before God, being assured of a favourable event, 1—7. *He laments that he cannot perceive the presence of God: but is confident that he knows his way, and will bring him forth as gold,* 8—10. *He attests his own integrity,* 11, 12. *But is troubled by the immutable counsel of God,* 13—17.

THEN Job answered and said,
2 Even to day *is* [a] my complaint bitter: my * stroke is [b] heavier than my groaning.
3 [c] Oh that I knew [d] where I might find him! *that* [e] I might come *even* to his seat!
4 I would [f] order *my* cause before him, and [g] fill my mouth with arguments.
5 I would [h] know the words *which* he would answer me, and understand what he would say unto me.
6 [i] Will he plead against me with *his* great power? No; [k] but he would put *strength* in me.
7 There [l] the righteous might dispute with him; [m] so should I be delivered for ever from my Judge.

a vi. 2. x. 1. Lam. iii. 19, 20.
* Heb. *hand.*
b xi. 6.
c xiii. 3. xvi. 21. xl. 1—5.
d Heb. iv. 16.
e xxxi. 35—37 Ps. cxxx. 3, 4.
f xiii. 18. xxxvii. 19. Ps. xxxv. 23. xliii. 1.
g Gen. xviii. 25. xxxii. 12. Ex. xxxii. 12, 13. Num. xiv. 13—19. Josh. vii. 8, 9. Ps. xxv. 11. Dan. ix. 18, 19.
h x. 2. xiii. 22, 23. xlii. 2—6. 1 Cor. iv. 3.
i ix. 19. 33, 34. xiii. 21. Is. xxvii. 4, 8. lvii. 16. Mic. ii. 1.
k Ps. cxxxviii. 3. 2 Cor. xii. 9.
l Is. i. 18. Jer. ii. 5. xii. 1.
m ix. 15. Rom. iii. 19—22. viii. 1. 33, 34.

"children," behave towards others, in direct contrariety to this perfect pattern; nay, cloak their own injustice and severity by expatiating on the mercy and justice of God! Even good men frequently thus transgress, when being eager in disputation, they harshly censure or falsely accuse their brethren. Let us then beware of this common offence. Let us pity and defend such as are suffering under the cruel injury of slanderous tongues. But should it be our lot to be thus afflicted, let us remember how Job was treated, yea, how Jesus was reviled; that we may be patient under the trial, and not render railing for railing. And let us examine ourselves, whether there be not some colour for the reproach; that our minds may feel a deeper abhorrence of the crimes of which we are accused, and that we may more watchfully avoid all appearance of them.

V. 12—30.

The injustice, rapine, cruelty to the poor, and oppression of the widow, the orphan, and the destitute, which too often prevail even in the place of judgment, or in the palaces of the great, evidently prove that numbers are practical atheists or infidels: that they have no proper sense of the perfections and authority of God; no realizing apprehensions of his presence with them, and his knowledge of their secret sins or secret thoughts; or no conviction that for all these things he will bring them into judgment. Indeed the invisible God is generally forgotten by them; "He is not in all their thoughts." But they would do well to mark the old way of the transgressors before the flood; and that of the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. Such and more dreadful will be their doom ere long; however at present they prosper in their crimes, and their houses are filled with good things. Therefore every wise man will agree in saying, "The counsel of the wicked be "far from me." In this world we ought not to be "glad "at the calamities" even of the wicked. Instead of insulting over them when afflicted, we should pity them, and pray for their conversion; and we must by no means ascribe it to our own piety, but the divine mercy, if we are exempted from grievous calamities. Hereafter, when the day of patience and grace shall be ended, and the wicked shall be cast into hell; the redeemed will cry out with exultation, "So let all thine enemies perish, O LORD."—But let us here acquaint ourselves with him, that we may be reconciled to him, and enjoy his peace, which passeth all understanding: thus everlasting good will come unto us. Blessed be his name, we have immense advantages, which these ancient believers had not: we have both his precepts and his promises, his law and his gospel in our hands: may we receive them as the words of his mouth, and treasure them up in our hearts: may we return unto him by living faith, and cleave to him in holy love; and show the reality of our conversion, by casting away all our transgressions, renouncing all our idols, obeying his commandments, and acquiescing in his will. Then, whether we be rich or poor, prosperous or afflicted, the Almighty will be our Shield and our Delight; our prayers will be heard and our thanksgivings will abound; our purposes will be established, and a light will shine upon our paths; we shall be preserved when the wicked perish, be lifted up from every depth of affliction; and having been humbled under his mighty hand, we shall be exalted to the throne of glory. In the mean time our examples, endeavours, prayers, and influence, will be useful in preserving or delivering some from sin and misery: and whatever be our judgment of the character of others, we may safely recommend to them the same course, as the certain way to present peace and future felicity.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIII. V. 2. Job's complaints were *bitter*, and his friends thought them *rebellious;* (so the word properly signifies,) but he maintained, that the calamities with which he had been visited, and the anguish he felt, exceeded all that he could express. The verse may be read as an exclamation: "Oh that to-day my complaint should "be *accounted* rebellion! When my stroke is heavier than "my groaning."

V. 3—7. As Job perceived that his friends were resolved to condemn him, he referred his cause to the judgment of God: and he was earnest to have it decided as by a special commission. Eliphaz had exhorted him to "acquaint himself with God;" and to this Job seems to

8 Behold, [n] I go forward, but he *is* not *there;* and backward, but I cannot perceive him:

9 On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold *him:* [o] he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see *him:*

10 But he knoweth the way * that I take: *when* [q] he hath tried me, [r] I shall come forth as gold.

11 [s] My foot hath held his steps, [t] his way have I kept, and not declined.

12 Neither have I [u] gone back from the commandment of his lips; [x] I have † esteemed the words of his mouth more than my ‡ necessary *food.*

13 But he *is* in one *mind,* and [y] who can turn him? [z] and *what* his soul desireth, even *that* he doeth.

14 For he performeth *the thing that is* [a] appointed for me: and [b] many such *things are* with him.

15 Therefore [c] am I troubled at his presence: when I consider, I am afraid of him.

16 For God [d] maketh my heart soft, and [e] the Almighty troubleth me:

17 Because I was not [f] cut off before the darkness, *neither* hath he covered [g] the darkness from my face.

n ix 11 Ps. x 1 xiii 1—3. Is xlv. 15 1 Tim. vi 16
o Ps lxxxix. 46. Is viii 17
p Gen xviii 19. 2 Kings xx 3. Ps i 6 cxxxix. 1—3. John xxi. 17
* Heb. that is, *with me*
q i 11, 12 ii 5, 6. Deut viii 2 Ps xvii. 3 lxvi. 10. Prov. xvii. 3. Zech. xiii 9. Mal iii 2, 3. Heb. xi 17. Jam i. 2—4. 12. 1 Pet i. 7.
r xlii. 5—8.
s 1 Sam. xii 2—5. Ps. xviii. 20—24. xliv. 18 Acts xx. 18, 19. 33, 34 2 Cor. i. 12. 1 Thes. ii. 10.
t xvii. 9. Ps. xxxvi. 3. cxxv. 5. Zeph i. 6. Luke viii. 13-15 Rom. ii. 7. 2 Pet ii. 20—22.——u John vi. 60—69. viii. 31. Acts xiv. 22 Heb x. 38, 39.——x xxii 22. Ps. xix. 10. cxix. 103. 127. Jer. xv. 16. John iv. 34. 1 Pet ii. 2.

† Heb *hid.* or *laid up* xxii 22 Ps. cxix. 11
‡ Or. *appointed portion.* Luke xii 42, 46.
y ix 12, 13. xi 10. xii. 14. xxxiv. 29 Num. xxiii. 19 20. Ec i 15. iii. 14 Rom ix. 19. Jam. i. 17.
z Ps. cxv. 3 cxxxv. 6. Prov. xix. 21. Is xiv. 24—27. xlvi 10. Dan. iv. 35 Eph. i. 9—11.
a vii 3 Mic. vi. 9 1 Thes iii 3. v 9 1 Pet ii 8.
b Ps lxxvii 19. xcvii. 2 Is xl. 27. 28 Rom xi. 33
c x 15. xxxi 23. Ps. lxxvii 3. cxix 120 Hab. iii 16.
d Ps xxii. 14. Is. vi 4. lvii. 16.
e xxvii. 2 Ruth i. 20. Ps lxxxviii. 16. Joel i. 15.——f vi. 9. 1 Kings xxii 20 Is. lvii. 1.——g xv. 22. xviii. 6. 18. xix 8. xx. 3 xxii 11.

have referred, when he vehemently expressed his desire of knowing where he might find him. He longed to know where, and how, he might carry his appeal into the presence and before the tribunal of God, that it might be determined, whether he were a righteous man or a hypocrite; which was the point on which he and his opponents were at issue. He was assured that his judgment would be according to truth: before him he could order his cause with confidence, and produce many and conclusive arguments in his own vindication. He should then know what God would answer, and he did not fear submitting to his award: he seems also to have hoped that he should then understand the reason of his uncommon afflictions. He was assured that God would not crush him by his power, or condemn him by prerogative; but would rather support him by his grace, and encourage him by his condescension in ordering his cause before him. So that an upright person, when calumniated and silenced by man, might be allowed to argue the matter before God: and having appealed to his mercy as a Saviour, and being declared a justified believer, he would have nothing more to fear from his just and holy Judge. Some think that he meant Eliphaz, who, as constituted to be his judge, had already most unjustly brought him in guilty of many atrocious crimes, and pronounced sentence against him. Job's consciousness of his integrity, and his confidence that the Lord would graciously decide in his favour, were well grounded: but there was a great want of reverence, humility, and patience, in his vehement manner of stating his desires: and in fact, the Lord did at last silence Job, by showing him his presumption, in thus pleading against his Almighty Sovereign.

V. 8—12. Job was sensible that God was every where present, and he was troubled at his presence as the author of his calamities, (15:) but his mind was in such confusion, that he could get no fixed apprehensions of his merciful presence, so as to obtain comfort and support by spreading his case before him; and he could perceive no tokens of the Lord's approach to deliver him, to silence his accusers. His efforts were all fruitless, and his views gloomy. The powerful operations of God were discernible; but his gracious presence was hid in anger; and he seemed to stand at a distance, or to frown upon him. Yet he was assured that the heart-searching God knew and approved his general conduct and character; and that when his integrity had been suitably tried, he should be brought forth, purified as gold from the furnace. For he was conscious that he was an upright believer; that he had obeyed the commands of God, and followed the example of his justice and goodness; and that he had steadily kept that path, without declining, turning back, or growing weary. Nay, he had relished and delighted in his truth and commandments more than in his necessary food: and would sooner have gone without his stated meals, than have deviated from his service. In these and similar protestations, it is evident that Job continually referred to charges brought against him, and the advice given him, by his friends. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 13—17. At this time Job seems to have felt that his vehement wishes and protestations were altogether vain, because he was aware that the purposes of God were irreversible and his power irresistible: so that neither persuasion nor opposition could induce him to deviate from his settled plan. It was God's decree and fixed purpose thus to afflict him, though he knew not on what account: but there were many such deep mysteries in Providence. The presence of the Almighty therefore filled him with terror, and melted his heart with anguish; and he could not conceive why he had not been cut off by death before these days of darkness: or why God would not cover him in the grave from the view of such distresses; or, as some understand him, how it was, that his exquisite sufferings did not cut him off, and thus terminate his sorrow.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

They, and they alone, who have experienced the conflict between faith and unbelief, hope and despondency, the desire to submit and the opposing power of self-will, during severe trials and sharp temptations, can clearly understand or account for the fluctuations observable in Job's language, and the state of his mind whence they arose: and the consideration, that so eminent a servant of

CHAP. XXIV.

Job inquires why the judgments of God on the wicked are not evident to his people? 1. He shows that the most atrocious offenders often go unpunished in this life, and die as all other men, 2—24. He challengeth any man to confute him, 25.

WHY, [a] seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, do [b] they that know him [c] not see his days?

2 *Some* remove the [d] landmarks; they [e] violently take away flocks, and * feed *thereof.*

3 They [f] drive away the ass of the fatherless, they take the widow's ox for a pledge.

4 They [g] turn the needy out of the way: the poor of the earth [h] hide themselves together.

5 Behold, *as* [i] wild asses in the desert,

a Ps. xxxi. 15. Ec. iii. 17. viii. 6, 7. ix. 11, 12. Is. ix. 22. Dan. ii. 21. Luke xxi. 22—24. Acts i. 7. xvii. 26. 1 Thes. v. 1. 1 Tim. iv. 1. vi. 15. 2 Pet. ii. 3. iii. 7, 8.
b Ps. ix. 10. xxxvi. 10. John xvii. 3.
c Gen. vii. 4. xviii. 17, 20—21. Ps. lxxiii. 16—19. Jer. xii. 1—3. Matt. xxiv. 33. Rom. ii. 5.
d Deut. xix. 14. xxvii. 17. Prov. xxii. 28. xxiii. 10. Hos. v. 10.
e Job 14. 17. v. 5.
* Or, *feed* them.
f Job xxii. 6. 9. xxxi. 16, 17. Deut. xxiv. 6, 10—13, 17—21. 1 Sam. xii. 3.
g Job xxxi. 16. Ps. cix. 16. Prov. xxii. 16. xxx. 14. Is. v. 2. Ez. xviii. 12. xxii. 29. Am. ii. 7. viii. 4—6. Mic. ii. 1, 2.
h Prov. xxviii. 28. Jam. v. 4—6.
i Job xxxix. 5—7. Jer. ii. 24. Hos. viii. 9.

God was harassed and perplexed exactly as they have been, cannot fail to bring them some relief. But our *bitter* complaints are very apt to savour of *rebellion:* and we should watch over ourselves in such circumstances, lest we provoke the Lord to increase his corrections. When we meet with unkind treatment or unjust censures, we should seek help and comfort from him: yet we ought to come in humble reverence, and wait his time with patience. Blessed be God, we may know where to find him: he is in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself; and upon a mercy-seat waiting to be gracious. Thither the sinner may come for salvation: and there the believer may order his cause, and fill his mouth with arguments taken from the perfections, promises, covenant, and glory of God; whatever his special request may be. Nor need we ever be at a loss for a conclusive argument, why he should pardon, teach, relieve, protect, comfort, and help us, if we trust his mercy and seek his glory. He will answer our inquiries by his word, and our prayers in his providence, and by his Spirit; and cause us to understand and approve his decisions. He will not crush or overawe us with his absolute power; but assist and encourage our supplications: and the only way to be delivered from our *offended Judge*, is to appeal to his mercy as *our loving Saviour*; for there is no condemnation for them who are approved true believers in Jesus Christ. Yet even for them there may be many temptations, sorrows, and perplexities: they may lose the sense of the favour of their God, and seek it in every ordinance, and by every means, for a season in vain. Yet He knoweth and approveth their path: he noticeth all their trials and difficulties: he will give them some distant intimation of a happy event: and when their uprightness is manifested, their graces increased, and their dross consumed, they shall come forth as the purest and most precious gold. But the Christian of whom we speak, is conscious of having uprightly embraced the salvation of God, and set out in his ways, by repentance, faith, and true conversion: he hath held his steps and kept his path, without turning aside for the sake of worldly advantages, or for fear of the cross. Many false steps he hath made; but he hath not been left to walk in the way of allowed sin: he obeys unreservedly, from love, and with the constancy of patient expectation. The word of God hath been the food of his soul; he hath an appetite for it; he relishes and digests it, converts it into nourishment, and is strengthened by it for service and for conflict. In his habitual judgment, he would rather want animal recreation, and starve for hunger, than be deprived of the spiritual sustenance of his soul: and therefore he takes pleasure in searching the Scripture, and in attending on God's ordinances. Those who answer this description, may be alarmed and troubled at afflictive events: they may be disquieted at the view of the unchangeable decrees and irresistible sovereignty of God; and perplexed about the reasons of his appointments. They may even think that the Almighty delights to trouble them, and wish that they had died before their trials: but this is their weakness and temptation. For nothing can come upon them, but what is appointed by infinite wisdom and love; nothing, but in order to humble, soften, and sanctify them; nothing but what shall terminate in their benefit, and that of their brethren, and tend to the glory of God: and in their sober judgment they would be willing to endure darkness and distress for a time, for these important purposes. May we then learn to obey and trust the Lord, even under tribulation; be willing to die when he pleases; for we know not from what evils we may thus be exempted; and to live as long as he sees good, as we are not aware for what good purposes our lives may be prolonged.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIV. V. 1. If God uniformly punishes the wicked in this life, according to the opinion of Eliphaz and his friends; Job supposed, that wise and godly men, who are acquainted with him and his way, would be able to give some account of the *times* of vengeance; to conclude how long the prosperity of wicked men would last; and to predict how it would terminate, and what degree of misery proportioned to their crimes would be inflicted: as men acquainted with the mind of the prince and the laws of the land, can foresee and expect the sentence, which will shortly be pronounced and executed upon notorious malefactors. There are *days* appointed for their trial, and *penalties* annexed to their crimes, and we know what to expect, as to the murderer or traitor. Doubtless the Governor of the world also hath his appointed times of vengeance: but, Why are they not discovered to his people? Why are they not marked or evident? They certainly would be if exact justice were awarded in this world: and as they are not, it is evident that the time of trial and the days of executing vengeance, are not appointed in this life.

go they forth to their work; [k] rising betimes for a prey: [l] the wilderness *yieldeth* food for them *and* for *their* children.

6 They [m] reap *every one* his * corn in the field: and † they gather the vintage of the wicked.

7 They cause [n] the naked to lodge without clothing, that *they have* [o] no covering in the cold.

8 They are [p] wet with the showers of the mountains, and [q] embrace the rock for want of a shelter.

9 They [r] pluck the fatherless from the breast, and take a pledge of the poor.

10 They cause *him* to go naked without clothing, and [s] they take away the sheaf *from* the hungry;

11 *Which* [t] make oil within their walls, *and* tread *their* wine-presses, and suffer thirst.

12 Men [u] groan from out of the city, and the soul of the [x] wounded crieth out: [y] yet God layeth not folly *to them.*

13 ¶ They are of those that [z] rebel against the light: [a] they know not the ways thereof, [b] nor abide in the paths thereof.

14 The [c] murderer rising with the light killeth the poor and needy, and [d] in the night is as a thief.

15 The [e] eye also of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight, saying, [f] No eye shall see me: and ‡ disguiseth *his* face.

16 [g] In the dark they dig through houses, *which* they had marked for themselves in the day-time; [h] they know not the light.

17 For the morning *is* to them even as the shadow of death: if *one* know *them they are* [i] *in* the terrors of the shadow of death.

18 He *is* [k] swift as the waters; [l] their portion is cursed in the earth: he beholdeth not the way of the vineyards.

19 [m] Drought and heat § consume the snow-waters: [n] *so doth* the grave *those which* have sinned.

20 The womb shall forget him; [o] the worm shall feed sweetly on him; [p] he shall be no more remembered; and [q] wickedness shall be broken as a tree.

k 14 Prov. iv. 16 Hos. vii 6. Mic. ii. 1. Zeph. iii. 3. John xviii. 28. Acts xxiii. 12
l v. 5 xii 6 Gen. xvi. 12. xxvii 40.
m Deut xxviii. 33. 51 Judg vi 3—6. Mic vi. 15.
* Heb *mingled corn* or *dredge.*
† Heb. *the wicked gather the vintage*
n 10 xxii. 6 xxxi. 19, 20 Ex. xxii. 26. 27 Deut. xxiv. 11—13. Is. lviii. 7 Acts ix. 39.
o Gen xxxi. 40.
p Cant. v. 2.
q Lam. iv 5. Heb. xi. 38.
r 2 Kings iv. 1. Neh v. 5.
s Deut xxiv. 19. Am. ii. 7, 8. v. 11, 12.
t Deut. xxv. 4. Jer. xxii 13. Jam. v. 4.
u Ex. i. 13, 14. ii. 23, 24. iii. 7. vi 5. xxii. 27 Judg. x 16. Ps. xii. 5. Ec iv 1.
x Ps lxix. 26. cix. 22. Jer li. 52. Hos v. 13.
y Ps. l. 21. Ec. viii. 11, 12. Mal. ii 17. iii. 15. Rom. ii. 4, 5. 2 Pet. iii. 15.
z Luke xii 47, 48.
a John iii. 19, 20. ix. 39—41. xv. 22—24. Rom. i. 22. ii. 17—24. Jam iv. 17
b Prov. iv. 19. John xii. 35. 40. Rom. iii. 12—17. 2 Thes. ii. 10—12 ——— b xxiii. 11, 12. John viii. 44 xv. 6.

c 2 Sam. xi. 14—17. Ps. x. 8—10. Mic ii 1, 2. Eph. v. 7—11.
d Luke xii. 39. 1 Thes. v. 2. Rev. iii. 3
e Ex xx 14 Lev. xx. 10. Ps. 1. 18 Prov vi 32—35. vii. 9.
f xxii. 13, 14 Ps. x. 11. lxxiii 11. xciv 7. Ez. viii. 12 ix 9
† Heb *setteth his face in secret.* Gen xxxviii. 14. 15
g Ex. xxii. 2, 3. Ez xii. 5—7. 12. Matt xxiv. 43.
h 13 xxxviii. 13. John iii 20. Eph v. 11—13.
i iii 5 Jer ii. 26.
k Ps. lviii. 7. lxxiii. 18—20. Is. xxiii. 10
l Deut. xxvii. 16—20. Ps lxix. 22 Prov. iii. 33. Mal. ii 2.
m vi. 15—17.
§ Heb. *violently take.*
n xxi. 23, 32—34. Ps. xlix. 14. lviii. 8. lxviii 2. lxxiii. 4. Ec. ix 4—6. Luke xvi. 22.
o xvii. 14 xix. 26.
p Prov. x. 7. Ec. viii. 10.
q xiv. 7, 8. xviii. 16, 17. Matt. iii. 10.

V. 2—12. In these verses Job proves from facts, that notorious tyrants, oppressors, and robbers, generally escape adequate punishment in this world. Unjust rulers often, under colour of law, disseize men of their estates; and take away their cattle and substance as if forfeited: they oppress the orphans and widows, and drive the poor into concealment or banishment. Many likewise disdain the yoke of obedience to God or man, as the wild ass refuses to labour; and rapine and plunder are their daily employments. Thus troops of Ishmaelitish free-booters lived in the wilderness by robbing the travellers: others reaped the corn, or gathered in the vintage, from the lands which they had violently seized on; whilst the poor creatures; whom they had ruined, were exposed without clothing or shelter, to the inclemencies of the weather, and driven to make the rocks their refuge, and to live like wild beasts. Such cruel tyrants would pluck away the fatherless children from their weeping mothers, to be their slaves; and take either them, or any poor person, into bondage, as a pledge for some debt contracted to keep their families from perishing. They regarded not the hunger, thirst, or nakedness even of those who laboured to support their luxury: but would take away the sheaf which the poor had gleaned; and suffer them to perish for hunger and thirst, amidst the abundance with which they were surrounded, and about which their labours had been employed. Men, thus wounded and crushed by oppression, publicly expressed their anguish in groans and lamentations: yet God inflicted no remarkable punishment upon the criminals, proportioned to their guilt, or equal to the miseries of the oppressed. Thus in this life, he did not expose and punish their folly; as he certainly will do, when he shall render to every man according to his works. The words rendered "they take away the sheaf from the hungry," may be rendered "They are hungry that carry the sheaf." Or, *Their reapers starve.*

V. 13—17. Job here prosecuted his argument by bringing instances of criminals, who escaped detection, and eluded justice; as those before mentioned out-braved it. Such persons *rebelled against the light*, as if enemies to the sun; shunning all intercourse with it, as not being able to endure the discoveries which it would make. They therefore lay still all day: or only went out to mark their prey, and to make observations and form plans. Thus the murderer rising *with* or *before* the day-break, lay in wait for the early traveller to murder him; or he spent the night in robbery. The adulterer or fornicator, waited for the dusk of the evening, and secretly having *put a mask on his face*, repaired to the haunts of his shameful practices. The house-breaker likewise concealed himself till all were asleep, and then forced his way into the habitations of honest men to plunder them. All these offenders hated day-light: they dreaded the approach of morning before they had accomplished their crimes; and detection was as death to them: and thus they often, through life, escaped the punishment due to their crimes.

21 [r] He evil entreateth the barren *that* beareth not: and [s] doeth not good to the widow.

22 He [t] draweth also the mighty with his power: he riseth up, and [*] no *man* is sure of life.

23 *Though* [u] it be given him *to be* in safety, [x] whereon he resteth; [y] yet his eyes *are* upon their ways.

r 1 Sam. i 6, 7. s 3. xxix. 13. xxxi. 16—18. t Esth. iii. 8—10. Dan. vi. 4—9. John xix. 12—16. Rev. xvi. 13, 14. xvii. 2, 3. * Or, *he trusteth not* his own *life*. u Ps. lxxiii. 3—12. Jer. xii. 1—3. x Ec. viii. 11. Is. x. 8—11. lvi 12. Luke xii. 16—20. 45. 1 Thes. v. 3. y Ps. x. 13, 14. xi. 4, 5. Prov. v. 21. xv. 3. Ec. v. 8. Am. viii. 7. ix. 8. Hab. i. 13. Rev. ii. 23.

24 They [z] are exalted for a little while, but are † gone and brought low; they are ‡ taken out of the way as all *other*, and [a] cut off as the tops of the ears of corn.

25 And if *it be* not *so* now, [b] who will make me a liar, and make my speech nothing worth?

z xx. 5. Ps. xxxvii. 10. 35, 36. lxxiii. 19. xcii. 7. Jam. i. 11 v. 1—3. † Heb *not*. viii. 22 *Marg.* ‡ Heb. *closed up*. a Is. xvii. 5, 6. Rev. xiv. 14—20. b ix. 24. xi. 2, 3 xv. 2.

V. 18—20. These atrocious offenders, and many others, rushed swiftly and silently, *like the gliding stream*, into every iniquity: they acquired a portion on earth by such *accursed* practices, without bestowing pains to cultivate the land: spending their time in deserts, and being seldom seen in the way towards the vineyards, which were frequented by those who laboured in them. Some understand the passage, as a description of pirates who, sailing over the waters in light and swift vessels, grew rich by plunder, and despised, as mean and vile, the drudgery of cultivating the earth, and the profit acquired by it. Yet, as dry weather and heat evaporate the waters arising from the melted snows, or they sink into the earth imperceptibly and unnoticed; so numbers of these criminals went down unobserved into the grave. They were not ignominiously suspended on gibbets, to be devoured by the fowls of the air, but were buried and became a delicious morsel for the worms. And as no remarkable misery or disgrace attended their lives or deaths, even their mothers and nearest relations were soon comforted for them, and they were forgotten, as if no more criminal than other men: so that their wickedness came to an end, as a tree that grows undisturbed, and is not cut down, but decays and is broken through length of time.

V. 21—25. According to the observation Job had made on human affairs, many escaped in this world, who had injured the childless and the widow. The first clause may be rendered, "He *feedeth* the barren, that she should not "bear:" and some interpret it of the methods which profligate men use of destroying infants in the womb, to prevent detection, or for other vile purposes. But it may signify, the oppression of the poor called *devouring them*, by which marriage is discouraged, and the increase of the human species prevented. Others, having become powerful by iniquity, were able to prevail even against the mighty; so that none could stand before them or be secure even as to their lives, when they arose to plunder or murder. Or they formed connexions with other powerful tyrants, for the purpose of oppression. Men often indeed purchased their favour and protection; and confiding in their promises, thought themselves safe: but they allowed them only a transient respite; and watched for every pretence, or opportunity, to injure them. Thus they had their season of exaltation: and then, (as all must die,) they were gone, and brought low, and removed in as advanced age, and with as much ease as other men. Job having stated these undeniable facts, challenged his friends or any other persons, to prove them false or inapplicable; or to refute his doctrine that calamities are no proof of wickedness.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—12.

The Lord knows the proper times for delivering his people, and executing vengeance on his enemies; and he orders every thing in perfect wisdom, justice, goodness, and truth. Yet to the wisest and best of men, the conduct of his providence appears involved in perplexity: but the approaching day of judgment will throw full light on all his ways and works. In the prospect of that solemn season, we should neither be stumbled nor distressed at witnessing the prosperity of the wicked; nor discouraged if we share the troubles of the righteous. The history of all ages and nations proclaims the desperate wickedness of the human heart. So far from loving their neighbour as themselves, men, if not powerfully restrained, are induced by selfishness and idolatrous love of worldly objects, not only to withhold from others the comforts of life, but to deprive them by fraud or violence even of what is necessary, and to reduce them to abject misery. When this dreadful principle has surmounted the fear of human justice, or climbed into the throne, iniquity is committed with a high hand, or prescribed by law! At other times it operates by rapine or fraud: and in all cases it dictates the violation of justice, truth, and mercy to man, as well as the duties which we owe to God. But who can express the crimes that have been committed, or the miseries which have been occasioned, by this inordinate self-love! Men, more savage than tigers, have ever been disposed to prey upon the helpless part of their own species; and to plunder, oppress, enslave, or murder them, as best suited their purposes, or as they were able to conceal or to defend what they had done! or by their brutal lusts to reduce individuals and families, perhaps to still deeper and more exquisite misery! And though the groans of the poor, the naked, and the perishing; of the fatherless, the widow, the defrauded labourer; of those who are enslaved, dragged, or driven from their native shores, and cruelly tormented by human avarice, ambition, malice, and sensuality, do not seem to interrupt the indulgence of their haughty licentious oppressors: yet their cries enter into the ears of the Lord of Hosts, who is their Patron; and who will at length show before the whole world, that it is *most* dangerous to injure those who are *least* able to defend themselves. But "because sentence against an evil work is not execut-"ed speedily; the heart of the sons of men is fully set in "them to do evil." God doth not immediately *impute folly to them:* and therefore they proceed and encourage one another; and the earth continues full of violence and misery in multiplied forms.

CHAP. XXV.

Bildad asserts the dominion and power of God, before whom man cannot be justified, 1—6.

a ix. 1—10. xxvi. 5—14. xl. 9—14. Ps. xcix. 1—3 Jer x. 6, 7. Dan. iv. 34—37. Matt xviii. 18. Rev. vi 16
b Is. lvii. 15 19. Matt v. 9 Eph. i. 10. Col. i. 20.

THEN answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,

2 [a] Dominion and fear *are* with him, [b] he maketh peace in his high places.

3 [c] Is there any number of his armies? and [d] upon whom doth not his light arise?

4 [e] How then can man be justified with God? or [f] how can he be clean *that is* born of a woman?

5 Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in his sight.

6 How [g] much less man, *that is* a worm; and the son of man, *which is* a worm?

c Ps. cii. 20, 21 cxlviii 4 cxlix 2, 3. Is xl 26. Dan vii. 10. Mat. xxvi. 53. Rev. v. 11.
d xxxviii. 12, 13. Gen. i 3—5. 14—16. Ps. xix. 4—6. Matt. v 45 John i 4. 9. Jam. i. 17.
e iv. 17—19 ix. 2. xv. 14—16 Ps. cxxx. 3 cxliii. 2. Rom. iii. 19, 20.
f xiv. 3, 4. Ps. li. 5.
g iv. 19. Gen. xviii 27 Ps. xxii. 6. Is. xli. 14

V. 13—25.

The workers of iniquity, however distinguished, universally "rebel against the light:" if they did no violence to their own conscience, and to the common reason of mankind, they would not need bestow so much pains to conceal or to palliate their crimes. But after all the efforts of infidels and profligates, their practices continue shameful and court darkness; they hate the light of day, (as well as the word of God,) even when not exposed to the sword of the magistrate: and their fear of detection is an earnest of future conviction and punishment. The murderer, the adulterer, and the robber, (characters associated in Scripture,) may enjoy their *accursed portion*, escape punishment from man, and live long, and go down quietly into the grave: and they may be ready to conclude, that no harm shall happen to them. But "after death is the judgment:" and then they shall find, that all the while they abused the patience of God, and hardened themselves in impenitency, they "were treasuring up wrath against the day of "wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, "who shall render to every man according to his works." "Then will they return and discern betwixt the righteous "and the wicked: betwixt him that serveth God, and him "that serveth him not." And where is he that can disprove these doctrines, or deny that they are of infinite importance? *Let us* then be thankful, if we have been kept from such atrocious crimes; let us be as assiduous in seeking the salvation of our souls and in doing good, as sinners are in doing evil: and let us remember the apostle's admonition: "ye have need of patience, that having done "the will of God, ye may receive the promise."

NOTES.

CHAP. XXV. V. 1—6. The appeal to undeniable facts, which Job had made, seems to have reduced his opponents to great difficulties. They were not convinced of their error: but they could not answer his arguments. Bildad therefore spoke but few words in reply, Zophar did not answer the third time, and Eliphaz declined leading on another attack. Bildad, however, thought that Job had spoken without a proper reverence of God, or a due sense of his own vileness. He reminded him, therefore, that the sovereign authority over all creatures belonged solely to the Lord; and that all ought to reverence his Majesty, and to fear his omnipotent displeasure. All the inhabitants of heaven in perfect unity and harmony obeyed him: his innumerable creatures, marshalled in exact order, were observant of his commands, and entirely under his control: and as the light of his sun pervaded all the earth; so all, that partook of his goodness, ought to submit to his authority. But if the heavenly bodies were obscure when compared with his infinite glory, and in *his* view of them; how could sinful man abide the severity of his judgment, or be approved holy in his sight? As his very birth, amidst the sorrows and pains of his mother, proved him born in sin and a fallen creature! And as he was so mean a worm and so vile at his best estate, he ought not to contend with God, or exalt himself above him.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is better for Christians to avoid controversy, or to decline it, when they do not speedily come to an agreement; and to converse on such subjects as all allow to be true and important. The pious, however distinguished, agree that the wicked may flourish for a time, but shall be rooted out at the last: they should therefore be careful not to quarrel with each other, not to envy the wicked, and not to faint in tribulation. If we were duly influenced by the reverential fear of God, we should submit to his sovereignty, do his will, seek his glory, and rejoice in his favour in peace and harmony, and without murmuring and disputing; even as the angels in heaven do. Indeed his innumerable armies, yea, all his creatures, except fallen angels and fallen men, are in their several ways subject to his command. All things living partake of his bounty: ought we not then to bear deserved correction patiently, and use his gifts to his glory? And ought we not to imitate his kindness to the unthankful and the evil?—It is very important, that we be humbled as mean, guilty, and polluted creatures before him; but sinners may expect to be justified by faith, to be made holy by divine grace, and to be exalted to glory in heaven; where the sun and moon shall no longer shine, but "the LORD himself will be our everlasting Light."—Our vileness will commend his condescension and love; and the riches of his mercy, and the power of his grace, will be magnified in every redeemed sinner, to all eternity.

CHAP. XXVI.

Job derides Bildad's speech, as little to the purpose, 1—4. *He shows the works and perfections of God to be unsearchable,* 5—14.

BUT Job answered and said,
2 [a] How hast thou [b] helped *him that is* without power? *how* savest thou the arm *that hath* no strength?
3 How hast thou [c] counselled *him that hath* no wisdom? and *how* hast thou [d] plentifully declared the thing as it is?
4 To whom hast thou uttered words? and [e] whose spirit came from thee?
5 ¶ [f] Dead *things* are formed from under the waters, * and the inhabitants thereof.
6 [g] Hell *is* naked before him, and [h] destruction hath no covering.
7 He [i] stretcheth out the north over the empty place, *and* hangeth the earth upon nothing.
8 He [k] bindeth up the waters in his [l] thick clouds; [m] and the cloud is not rent under them.
9 He [n] holdeth back the face of *his* throne, *and* spreadeth his cloud upon it.
10 He hath [o] compassed the waters with bounds, [p] until the † day and night come to an end.
11 The [q] pillars of heaven tremble, and [r] are astonished at his reproof.
12 He [s] divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding [t] he smiteth through ‡ the proud.
13 By [u] his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed [x] the crooked serpent.
14 Lo, these *are* parts of his ways: but [y] how little a portion is heard of him? but [z] the thunder of his power who can understand?

a 1 Kings xviii 27. b iv. 3, 4. vi. 25. xvi. 4. Prov. xxvii. 9. Ec. xii. 11. Is. xxxv 3, 4. c vi. 13. xii. 2, 3. xiii. 5. xv. 8—10. xvii. 10. d vi. 10. Ps. lxxi. 15—18. Acts xx. 20 27. e xx. 3. xxxii. 18. 1 Kings xxii. 23, 24. 1 Cor. xii. 3. 1 John iv. 1—3. Rev. xvi 13, 14. f xli 1, &c. Ps. civ. 25, 26. Ez. xxix. 3—5. * Heb *with.* g xi 8. Ps cxxxix. 8. Prov. xv. 11. Is. xiv 9. Am. ix. 2. Heb iv 13. h xxviii. 22. Ps. lxxxviii. 10—12. i ix. 8. Gen i. 1, 2. Ps. xxiv 2. civ. 2—5. cxxxvi. 6. Prov. viii 23—27. Is. xl. 22. 26.

k xxxvi. 29. xxxviii. 9. 37. Ps cxxxv. 7. Prov. xxx. 4. Jer x. 13. l xxxvii. 11—16 Ps. xviii. 10, 11. m Is v. 6. n Ex. xx. 21. xxxiii. 20—23. xxxiv. 3 1 Kings viii. 12. Ps. xcvii. 2. Hab. iii. 3—5. 1 Tim. vi. 16. o xxxviii. 8—11. Ps. xxxiii. 7. civ. 6—9. Prov. viii. 29. Jer. v. 22. p Gen. viii 22. Is liv. 9, 10 † Heb. *end of light with darkness* q 1 Sam. ii. 8 Ps. xviii. 7. Hag. ii. 21. Heb. xii 26, 27. 2 Pet. iii 10. Rev. xx. 11. r xv. 15 s Ex. xiv. 21, &c. Ps xxix. 10. lxxiv. 13 xciii. 3, 4. cxiv. 2—7. Is li. 15. Jer. xxxi 35 t xl. 11, 12. Is. ii 12 Dan. iv. 37. Jam. iv. 6. ‡ Heb *pride,* or Raheb. Psalm lxxxix 9, 10. Is li. 9 u Gen. i. 2. Ps. xxxiii. 6 civ. 30.

x Ps. lxxiv. 13, 14. Is. xxvii 1. Rev. xii. 9. ——— y xi 7—9. Ps. cxxxix. 6 cxlv 3 Is. xl. 26—29 Rom. xi. 33 i Cor. xiii. 9—12. ——— z xl. 9. 1 Sam ii. 10. Ps xxxix. 3.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXVI. V. 1—4. Bildad had brought no argument tending to refute Job's doctrine: and therefore he *ironically* admired the assistance which he had given to his friends in their extremity, and the instruction that he had afforded him in his perplexity! *They* had expected much help from him to their drooping cause; *he* had hoped for some important counsel in his difficulties: and *all* had supposed that he would abundantly clear up the controversy, and fully show how the matter really stood. But indeed he had spoken so little, and so foreign to the business, that *they* were no stronger, nor *he* any wiser; and all parties were just where they had been. Surely Bildad could not mean to utter words *to him,* as if he needed such counsel! Surely he did not suppose his words to be the dictates of the Spirit of prophecy, or even the language of faith and grace; when it was evident, that he spake in his own spirit. Many expositors indeed give another turn to the passage; and suppose, that Job meant to deride Bildad's speech; as if he thought the almighty and infinitely wise God needed such an advocate and counsellor. It is, however, evident that Job spake with peevishness and self-preference: but it is most surprising, that such a sufferer should have spirits for banter and ridicule.

V. 5—13. To show Bildad that he did not want his instructions, Job began more particularly to discourse on the works of God. The word translated *dead things,* may be rendered *giants* or *monsters.* Enormous creatures are produced under the waters, among the numberless inhabitants of the deep, by the mighty power of God. Neither the bodies which all over the earth are laid in the grave, nor the state of the departed souls of men, are concealed from his all-seeing eye; and even the place of punishment allotted to the wicked is under his inspection: the heavens are stretched out by him over the vast expanse of this *northern hemisphere;* and the earth is so wonderfully suspended in the pure space, that it needs no support. Immense quantities of water are treasured up in the atmosphere; and are so confined in the clouds, as not to rush down impetuously, but descend gradually, as is necessary for watering the earth. The throne of God in the heavens is hid by interposing clouds, being too dazzling for us frail mortals to behold: he confineth the raging ocean within its appointed bounds; nor will it ever break forth to cover the earth, whilst day and night endure. The mountains, (which appear as the *pillars of heaven,*) or the heavens themselves, are astonished and tremble, when the Lord speaketh in his wrath. He powerfully raises such storms in the ocean, as *divide it into ridges of mountains:* and he knoweth how to abase the proudest and stoutest of his enemies. Some think that the *dividing* of the Red Sea, and the destruction of *Egypt* or *Rahab,* (so the word is,) are here alluded to: but as there is no other reference to those events, as this is ambiguous, and as Job probably lived before that time; it perhaps refers to the general operations of the power of God. Finally, by his creating Spirit, he hath adorned the heavens with glorious luminaries; and replenished the worlds above with holy angels: and every formidable monster on the earth and in the waters, as dreadful serpents, crocodiles, and whales, are his workmanship, and under his control. Yea, the devil, who is become subtle and poisonous as the crooked serpent, was originally the creature of God, and is yet absolutely under his power.

V. 14. Job here declared his subject to be inexhaustible. They might discourse long on such things: yet a very little part of the works of God had come to their knowledge. And should *He* speak of his own power, in

CHAP. XXVII.

Job solemnly attests his integrity, and resolves to vindicate it as long as he lives, 1—6. *He declares the character and doom of the hypocrite,* 7—10. *He shows that the prosperity of the wicked is soon changed into hopeless misery,* 11—23.

MOREOVER [a] Job * continued his parable, and said,

2 *As* [b] God liveth, *who* hath [c] taken away my judgment; and the Almighty, *who* hath † vexed my soul;

3 All the while my breath *is* in me, and ‡ the spirit of God *is* in my nostrils:

4 [d] My lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit.

5 God forbid that I should [e] justify you: till I die [f] I will not remove my integrity from me.

6 My righteousness [g] I hold fast, and will not let it go: [h] my heart shall not reproach *me* ◊ so long as I live.

7 ¶ Let [i] mine enemy be as the wicked, and he that riseth up against me as the unrighteous.

8 For [k] what *is* the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul?

9 [l] Will God hear [m] his cry when trouble cometh upon him?

a Num. xxiii. 7. xxiv. 3 15. Ps. xlix. 4. lxxviii. 2. Pro xxvi 7.
* Heb *added to take up.*
b 1 Sam. xxv. 26. 34. 2 Sam. ii 27. Jer. v. 2. Ez. xxxiii. 11.
c x. 3. xxxiv. 5. Is. xl. 27.
† Heb. *made my soul bitter.* Ruth i. 20, 21 2 Kings iv 27.
‡ That is, *the breath which God gave him.* Gen ii. 7. Is ii. 22 Acts xvii. 25.
d xxxiv. 6. John viii. 55. 2 Cor. xi. 10. xii. 11.
e xxxii. 3. xlii. 7. Deut. xxv. 1. Prov xvii. 15. Gal. ii. 11.
f ii. 9. xiii. 15. xxix. 14. 2 Cor. i. 12.
g ii. 3 Ps xviii. 20—23. Prov. iv. 13.
h Acts xxiv. 16. 1 John iii. 20, 21.
◊ Heb. *from my days.*
i 1 Sam xxv 26 2 Sam xviii. 32. Dan iv. 19.
k xi 20 xiii. 16. xv 34. xx. 5. xxxi 3. Is xxxiii 14, 15. Matt. xvi 26. xxiii 14. Mark viii. 36, 37 Luke ix. 25. xii. 20, 21 1 Tim. vi 9, 10. Jam v. 1—3.
l xxxv 12, 13. Ps xviii. 41. lxvi. 18. cix. 7 Prov. i. 28. xxviii 9. Is i 15. Jer. xi. 11. xiv 12. Ez. viii. 18. Mic. iii. 4. Zech. vii. 13. John ix 3. Jam. iv. 3.
m Hos. vii. 14. Luke xiii. 25.

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a manner becoming the subject; it must be in a voice like thunder, which would confound and dismay instead of instructing sinful man.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The most important truths may be introduced unseasonably: and be so mis-stated and mis-applied, as to deceive instead of convincing, and to distress instead of encouraging. We ought therefore to consider not only what is true and good, but what may be suitable and useful: we should advert to the person whom we address, and his situation and frame of mind: we should have some special intention of speaking; such as, to awaken a careless, or comfort a wounded conscience; to establish important truth, or refute dangerous error: and we should select our subjects, and handle them with a view to this intention: otherwise we may be derided for speaking impertinently, when we have advanced doctrines, in other circumstances, worthy of being regarded. But disputants can hardly avoid aiming at victory more than improvement; this produces mutual contempt and reciprocal boastings and revilings: and what seems to one party pregnant with instruction, decisive, plentifully declaring the thing as it is, is often treated with ridicule by the other. It is well, however, when all parties agree to celebrate the praises and extol the works of the Lord: yet the effusions of passion or ostentation may be mistaken for the dictates of those holy affections that come from the Spirit of God. But wherever we turn our eyes we may perceive the power, and wisdom, and goodness of God. The earth, and its wonderful revolutions and productions; the ocean under the divine control, and all its monstrous and numerous inhabitants; the operations of nature, in the formation of the rains and dews; the dispensations of Providence, in the governing the haughty tyrants of the earth, and restraining the rage of Satan; the effects of God's indignation in earthquakes, hurricanes, and storms; and his authority over heaven, earth, and hell: these are indeed a part of his wonderful works, but infinitely more is hidden from our view; nor could we hear, understand, or support the thunder of his power, or the terrors of his law. But in redemption all the other wonderful works of God are eclipsed: hither we may draw near and hear of his glory without dismay; we may come and taste of his grace, and learn to love him and walk with delight in his ways: here we may contemplate the divine character to advantage; and may adore the depths which we cannot comprehend, with the joyful expectation, of at length "seeing him as he is," and being for ever like him in purity and felicity.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXVII. V. 1. Perhaps Job had paused to hear whether Zophar or his other friends would rejoin. But either they were unable to answer him, or they despaired of convincing him: so that at length they suffered him to speak without interruption, and he proceeded in a grave and instructive manner, and as one fully satisfied that he had truth on his side.

V. 2—6. Job solemnly protested, that, as sure as God liveth, he had spoken and would speak the truth. But he was not impressed with due reverence when he spake of God, as *taking away his judgment, and vexing his soul.* He meant that God having inflicted on him the heaviest calamities, left him exposed to the unjust charge of hypocrisy, and delayed to vindicate his character, which exceedingly vexed his soul. But his language was very exceptionable, and Elihu justly rebuked him for it. (*Marg. Ref.*) Job expected soon to be deprived of the *spirit*, or *breath*, which God had given him; and he most solemnly protested that, to the last, he would not speak falsehood, either in condemning, or excusing himself: he would by no means justify the censures of his accusers, by allowing himself to be a hypocrite; nor would he give up his integrity, or the confidence and comfort of it: his heart should not reproach him with bearing false witness against himself, or for any allowed wickedness; for this conscious integrity, and his hope in God as to another world, were all that he now had to support him.

10 Will he [n] delight himself in the Almighty? [o] will he always call upon God?

11 ¶ I will [p] teach you * by the hand of God: [q] *that* which *is* with the Almighty will I not conceal.

12 Behold, all [r] ye yourselves have seen *it;* why then are ye thus [s] altogether vain?

13 This *is* [t] the portion of a wicked man with God, and [u] the heritage of oppressors, *which* they shall receive of the Almighty.

14 [x] If his children be multiplied, *it is* for the sword; and his offspring shall not be [y] satisfied with bread.

15 [z] Those that remain of him shall be buried in death: and [a] his widows shall not weep.

16 Though he [b] heap up silver as the dust, and prepare [c] raiment as the clay;

17 He may prepare *it,* [d] but the just shall put *it* on, and the innocent shall divide the silver.

18 He buildeth his house [e] as a moth, and [f] as a booth *that* the keeper maketh.

19 The rich man [g] shall lie down, but he shall not be [h] gathered: [i] he openeth his eyes, and [k] he *is* not.

20 [l] Terrors take hold on him as waters, [m] a tempest stealeth him away in the night.

21 [n] The east wind carrieth him away, and he departeth: and as [o] a storm hurleth him out of his place.

22 For [p] *God* shall cast upon him and [q] not spare: † he would fain [r] flee out of his hand.

23 *Men* shall [s] clap their hands at him, and shall [t] hiss him out of his place.

n xxii. 26, 27. xxvii. 9. Ps. xxxvii. 4. xliii. 4. Hab. iii 18
o Ps. lxxviii.34—36. Luke xviii 1. Acts x. 2. Eph. vi 18. 1 Thes. v. 17
p iv. 3, 4. vi. 10. Is viii. 11.
* Or, being *in the hand.*
q xxxii. 8—10. Deut. iv. 5 Ps lxxi. 17, 18. Acts xx. 20. 27
r xxi. 28—30. Ec viii. 14. ix. 1—3.
s vi. 25—29. xiii. 4—9 xvi 3. xvii. 2. xix. 2, 3. xxi. 3. xxvi. 2—4.
t xx. 29. xxxi. 3. Ps. xi. 6. Ec. viii. 13. Is. iii. 11. 2 Pet. ii. 9.
u xv. 20, &c. xx. 19, &c Ps. xii. 5. Prov. xxii. 22, 23. Mal. iii. 5 Jam. v. 4—6.
x xxi. 11, 12. Deu xxviii. 32. 41. 2 Kings x. 6—10. Esth. v. 11. ix. 5—10. Ps. cix. 13. Hos. ix. 13. 14. Luke xxiii. 29.——y Ps. xxxvii. 36. cix. 13.——z 1 Kings xiv. 10. 11 xvi. 3, 4. xxi. 21 24.
a Ps. lxxviii. 64. Jer xxii. 18.——b xxii 24, 25. 1 Kings x. 27. Hab. ii. 6. Zech. ix. 3
c Matt. vi. 19. Jam. v. 2.
d Prov. xiii. 22. xxviii 8. Ec. ii. 26.
e viii. 14, 15. Is. li. 8
f Is. i. 8 xxxviii. 12. Lam. ii. 6.
g xiv. 13—15. xxi. 23—26. 30. xxx. 23.
h Gen. xlix. 10 Jer. viii. 2. Matt. iii. 12. xxiii. 37.
i xx. 7—9. Ps. lviii. 9. lxxiii. 19, 20
k viii. 22. xiv. 10. 12. xxiv. 24. *Marg.*
l xv. 21. xviii. 11. xxii. 16. Ps xviii. 4. xlii. 7. lxix. 14, 15. Jon. ii. 3.
m xx 23. xxi. 18. Ex xii 29. 2 Kings xix. 35. Dan v. 30
n Jer. xviii. 17. Hos xiii. 15.
o Ex. ix. 23—25 Ps. xi. 6. lviii. 9. lxxxiii. 15. Nah i. 3—8. Matt vii. 27.
p Ex ix. 14 Deu. xxxii. 23. Josh. x. 11.
q Deut. xxix. 20. Ez. ix. 5, 6. Rom. viii. 32. 2 Pet. ii. 4, 5.——† Heb. *in fleeing he would flee.*——r xx. 24. Ex. xiv. 25—28 Judg. iv. 17—21. Is. x. 3. Am. ii. 14. ix. 1—3.——s Esth. ix. 22—25. Prov xi. 10. Lam. ii. 15. Rev. xviii 20——t 1 Kings ix. 8. Mic. vi. 16. Zeph. ii. 15.

V. 7—10. It had been supposed, that Job counted the wicked *happy,* because he contended that they were *sometimes prosperous;* but he declared he could not devise a worse wish for his greatest enemy who rose up to ruin his character, seize on his property, reduce him to slavery, or murder him, than that he might have his lot with wicked men. Indeed they who hypocritically professed to be religious, (as his friends imagined he had done;) might thus obtain many temporal advantages, and retain them during life; but what would this avail them when God required their souls? Would he, in that or other seasons of anguish and trouble, hear the cries of those who had been dissemblers all their lives? As they had no delight in the favour and service of the Almighty, they would not call upon him at all times. In *public, to be seen of men,* they would make long prayers, but not in *secret:* in distress perhaps they would cry for ease; but being relieved, they would cease their prayers. Their best was but a pang of devotion of no continuance: and therefore God would at last reject them, as workers of iniquity.

V. 11, 12. By the powerful teaching of God, Job purposed to explain this subject to his friends; nor would he conceal any thing which he looked upon as a part of the truth. He thought they must acknowledge, that the wicked sometimes prosper, even to the end of life, of which they had all seen many instances. Why then did they answer so vainly? Did they take a pleasure in misinterpreting, contradicting, and condemning his discourse?

V. 13—23. Job may be thought in these verses, to have come over to the opinion of his opponents: but in fact he conceded all he could, to obviate misconstruction and to establish his own conclusions. He allowed that wicked tyrants and oppressors were often visited with sore judgments on themselves or their families, so that these might be called "their portion from God;" yet not *so constantly and uniformly, as to be a rule of judgment for deciding on men's characters:* this he had undeniably disproved, and it was all he contended against. He allowed that their numerous and prosperous families were often strangely impoverished and destroyed, whilst none were left to bury or weep over them; or they were hurried to the grave, and forgotten because abhorred. That they often laboured to get estates, which eventually came into the possession of better men: that the establishment of their families, which they had diligently promoted, was destroyed; as a moth is shaken out of a garment or removed as a tent, which was fixed for a temporary shelter to those who guarded the vineyards or gardens: and if they escaped such calamities, they soon *lay* down in death; and of all their riches, had not so much as the vain distinction of being *gathered* to their fathers by an honourable funeral: or they were not *gathered* amongst the righteous; but opened their eyes in hell, far from all their treasures and employments. The expectation of this doom overwhelmed them with terrors as an inundation: unexpected calamities swept them away, as men are plundered or murdered in the night. In short, the wrath of God, like a furious tempest, hurled them out of their places on earth, and cast misery upon them and did not spare: whilst they found it impossible to escape his dreaded and deserved vengeance; and those whom they had oppressed, rejoiced at their death and detested their memory. The main difference betwixt this passage, and the discourses of Job's friends on the same subject, is this: they spoke of the misery of wicked men before and at their death, as uniformly proportioned to their crimes: Job intimated that it might be so; but if not, the consequence of their death would assuredly be dreadful.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We may safely make our appeal to God, when we are conscious of integrity before him, and are fairly called to

CHAP. XXVIII.

Job shows that man is industrious and ingenious in searching out the treasures hid in the earth, 1—11. *But the more valuable treasure of the knowledge of God, lies beyond his reach,* 12—19. *God alone comprehends it,* 20—22. *Man's wisdom is to fear God, and depart from evil* 23—28.

SURELY there is a * vein for the silver, and a place for gold *where* they [a] fine *it.*

2 [b] Iron is taken out of the † earth, and brass *is* molten *out of* the stone.

3 He setteth an end to darkness, and [c] searcheth out all perfection: [d] the stones of darkness, and the shadow of death.

4 The flood breaketh out from the inhabitant; *even the waters* forgotten of the foot: they are dried up, they are gone away from men.

5 *As for* the earth, [e] out of it cometh bread: and under it is turned up as it were [f] fire.

6 The stones of it *are* the place of [g] sapphires: and it hath ‡ dust of gold.

7 *There is* [h] a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen:

8 The lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it.

9 He putteth forth his hand upon the ◊ rock; [i] he overturneth the mountains by the roots.

10 He cutteth out rivers among the rocks; and his eye seeth [k] every precious thing.

11 [l] He bindeth the floods from ‖ overflowing; [m] and *the thing that is* hid bringeth he forth to light.

* Or, *mine.*
a Ps. xii. 6. Prov. xvii. 3. xxvii. 21. Zech. xiii. 9. Mal. iii. 2, 3. 1 Pet. i. 7.
b Gen. iv. 22. Deut. viii. 9.
† Or, *dust.*
c 1 Kings iv. 33. Prov. ii. 4. Ec. i. 13. Hab. ii. 13. Matt. vi. 33. Luke xvi. 8.
d x. 21, 22. xii. 22. xxxviii. 16, 17.
e Gen. i. 11, 12. 29. Ps. civ. 14, 15. Is. xxviii. 25—29.
f Ez. xxviii. 14.
g 16. Ex. xxiv. 10. Cant. v. 14. Is. liv. 11. Rev. xxi. 19.
‡ Or, *gold ore.*
h 21—23. xxxviii. 19 24. Rom. xi. 33.
◊ Or, *flint.*
i Nah. i. 4—6.
k Prov. xiv. 23. xxiv. 4.
l Is. xxxvii. 25. xliv. 27.
‖ Heb. *weeping.*
m Is. xlv 2, 3. 1 Cor. iv. 5.

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it: but we are so apt to mix corrupt passions with our best services, to mistake delays for denials, and *corrections* for *vexations*, and to speak irreverently or impatiently when afflicted; that without continual applications of the blood of sprinkling, we cannot possibly have any well-grounded confidence before God. As we should not without scriptural evidence conclude that we are in the way of salvation, or deceitfully profess to serve God: so we should not be induced to condemn ourselves as hypocrites, if we are conscious that we trust in his mercy, and aim to do his will; nor should we justify those who censoriously condemn their brethren. A good conscience on evangelical principles, and a watchful opposition to sin, prevent our own hearts from reproaching us, and inspire confidence in God in the midst of afflictions and calumnies, and in the hour of death: "and this we should hold fast as long as "we live." No worse misery can be imprecated, than the doom of the most prosperous sinner; no more dreadful case imagined, than that of the successful specious hypocrite. He may indeed call on God, when frighted or distressed; but he will soon give over, in weariness or despondency, and seek some other relief. But the humble penitent will knock at mercy's door, till it be opened, and not be induced by any delay to depart without a blessing: and he who delights in God, will *always* call upon him, in adversity and prosperity, in life and death. If we would teach others, we must depend on the help of the Almighty, and not conceal his truth: and if we would convince the erroneous, we must guard against misconstructions, and carefully show in how many things we are agreed. In this at least all good men are of one judgment: that the wicked *may* be, and often are, grievously afflicted upon earth with outward calamities; that they *must* be subject to inward terrors and vexations: and that even if they prosper till death, and die in outward peace, they will then be driven from riches, pleasures, and honourable stations, into eternal poverty, misery, and contempt, by the wrath of God, like a furious storm hurling them into destruction. In vain will they seek to flee out of his hand, whilst he shall cast upon them, and not spare the punishments justly due to their crimes. But "What is a man "profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own "soul? And what shall a man give in exchange for his "soul?"

NOTES.

CHAP. XXVIII. V. 1—11. Job had maintained, that the dispensations of Providence were not regulated upon such principles as his friends contended for; but by a higher and incomprehensible wisdom; and to illustrate and confirm this, he here showed, that the sagacity of men was chiefly competent for *natural things*, and employed in them: it could not therefore be supposed they were acquainted with the deep counsels of God. The all-wise Creator hath treasured up the metals in the earth: but man's necessity or avarice, hath prompted him to search for them. There he finds the ore of gold or silver, iron or brass, mixed with other substances, and resembling stones: and he knows how to separate and refine them by fire. With their lamps the miners *put an end to the darkness* of the subterraneous caverns, and search out all the valuable treasures contained in them; *even* those *stones of darkness*, which are situated in such perilous and unwholesome places, as may be called the *shadow of death.* Here *floods break forth upon the inhabitants* of these dreary regions; being those waters which had sunk into the earth from the *foot of man*, and formed subterraneous springs and streams: and the miners are forced, with great labour and danger, to make new channels; that the waters may run away from them. As by the labour of

12 ¶ But [a] where shall wisdom be found? and where *is* the place of understanding?

13 Man [o] knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found [p] in the land of the living.

14 The [q] depth saith, *It is* not in me: and the sea saith, *It is* not with me.

15 * It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed *for* the price thereof.

16 It cannot be valued with [r] the gold of Ophir, with the precious [s] onyx, or the sapphire.

17 The gold and the [t] crystal cannot equal it: and the exchange of it *shall not be for* † jewels of fine gold.

18 No mention shall be made of ‡ coral, or of [u] pearls: for the price of wisdom *is* above [x] rubies.

19 [y] The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure gold.

20 [z] Whence then cometh wisdom? and where *is* the place of understanding?

21 Seeing it is [a] hid from the eyes of all living, and kept close [b] from the fowls of the § air.

22 [c] Destruction and death say, We have heard the fame thereof with our ears.

23 [d] God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof.

24 For [e] he looketh to the ends of the earth, *and* seeth under the whole heaven;

25 To make [f] the weight for the winds; and he weigheth the waters by measure.

26 When [g] he made a decree for the rain, and [h] a way for the lightning of the thunder:

27 Then did he see it, and ‖ declare it; [i] he prepared it, yea, and searched it out.

28 And [k] unto man he said, Behold, [l] the fear of the Lord, that *is* wisdom; and [m] to depart from evil *is* understanding.

n 20. 28. 1 Kings iii. 9. Ps. li 6. Prov. xviii. 1. Ec vii. 23—25. 1 Cor i. 19, 20. Col. ii. 3. Jam. i. 5. 17.
o 15—19. Ps xix. 10. cxix. 72. Prov. iii 14, 15. viii. 11. 18, 19. xvi. 16 xxiii 23. Ec. viii 12
p 21, 22 Ps lii. 5. Is xxxviii. 11. liii. 8.
q Rom xi. 33, 34.
* Heb. *Fine gold shall not be given for it.* 13.
r 1 Chr. xxix. 4. Ps. xlv 9.
s Ex. xxviii. 20. Ez. xxviii 13.
t Ez. i. 22. Rev. iv. 6. xxi. 11. xxii. 1.
† Or, *vessels.*
‡ Or, *Ramoth.* Ez. xvii. 16.
u Mat. vii. 6 xiii. 45, 46. 1 Tim. ii. 9. Rev. xvii 4 xviii. 12 xxi. 21.
x Prov. iii. 15. xxxi. 10. Lam. iv. 7
y Ex. xxxix. 10. Rev. xxi. 20
z 12. Prov. ii. 6. Ec. vii. 23, 24. 1 Cor. ii. 6—15.
a Ps. xlix. 3, *c.* Matt. xiii. 17. 35. 1 Cor ii. 7. Col ii. 3.
b 7.
§ Or, *heaven.*
c 14 Ps. lxxxviii. 10—12.
d Ps xix. 7 cxlvii. 5 Prov. viii. 14. Matt xi 27. Acts xv. 18. Rom xi. 33. Jude 25.
e 2 Chr. xvi. 9. Prov. xv. 3. Zech. iv. 10. Rev. v. 6.
f Ps cxxxv. 7. Is. xl. 12
g xxxvi 26, 27. 33 xxxviii. 26. Ps. cxlviii. 8. Jer. xiv. 22. Am iv. 7. Zech. x. 1
h xxxvii 3—5. Ps. xxix. 3—10.
‖ Or, *number.*
i Ps xix. 1. Prov. viii. 22—29
k Deut xxix. 29. Prov. viii. 4, 5. 32—36.
l Deut. iv. 6. Ps. cxi 10. Prov. i. 7. ix 10. Ec. xii. 13 Jam. iii. 13—71.
m Ps. xxxiv. 14. xxxvii 27. Prov. v. 7. xiii. 14. xvi. 6. 17 Is. i. 16. 2 Tim. ii. 19. 1 Pet. iii. 11.

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man, corn and other things suited for his food grow upon the surface of the earth: so precious stones, sparkling like fire; or inflammable substances, as brimstone or coals, are dug out of it. Among the *stones* of the earth are *sapphires*, as well as the ore of gold. In pursuit of these treasures men travel under ground, by a road which is unknown to the swiftest and most quick-sighted animals; by their persevering labour and contrivance, they undermine and *overturn* rocks and *mountains;* and they cut *rivers* and form banks under ground; whilst they seek out, and bring forth every *hidden valuable treasure* there reposited. This book is beyond all reasonable doubt one of the most ancient in the world; yet the art of mining and refining metals, and the use of precious stones, are spoken of as things well known in the east, where Job and his friends dwelt. But many ages after, populous nations have been found, which were little acquainted with these things: the iron especially, (which is in fact the most *useful* of all metals,) seems to have been little known or employed among the Greeks, in the very early ages of that nation; and it was totally unknown in America when first discovered. So that the most ancient times appear to have been far more civilized, and acquainted with things useful than, subsequent ages: and barbarous ignorance seems to have prevailed gradually; as the knowledge possessed by the antediluvians, and doubtless communicated by Noah and his sons, was then forgotten among their posterity. The Bible by no means favours the general notion, that the first ages of the world were the most rude and savage.

V. 12—19. Job here maintained, that *wisdom*, (or the knowledge of God, and his works and ways, which led to a prudent and holy practice, and might enable men to unravel the mysteries of Providence,) was far more difficult to be found, than the subterraneous treasures before spoken of. Indeed men in general neither knew where it might be obtained, nor its inestimable value. It was not to be found among men on earth, except as it came down from above. It could not be discovered either by digging into the bowels of the earth, or diving into the bottom of the sea, or sailing to all parts of the world. By these means indeed gold, silver, and all kinds of precious stones, might be procured; but none of them, nor all of them together, could purchase wisdom. Several different words are used in the original for *gold;* which are supposed to denote, either the place it came from, the manner in which it had been purified, or the form in which it was offered for sale, whether wrought or unwrought.

V. 20—22. As no wealth could purchase wisdom, so no creature could discover it. It was hid from the eyes of all living. Men of the greatest talents, who soared above the rest of mankind, as the fowls of the air above other creatures, could not, by all their speculations and discoveries, acquire wisdom. Death and destruction, indeed, brought some report of it: and if men thought on such subjects, they might have understood something of the reasons for which the wicked were permitted to prosper; and they would at length clear up difficulties, and effectually show what was man's wisdom. But previous and more particular instruction was necessary to make men truly wise

V. 23—28. All the preceding observations and inquiries, were evidently intended as introductory to these closing instructions; in which Job showed, that God alone was the source and giver of wisdom. He knew where it was laid up, and the way in which it might be found. He managed the whole creation in perfect wisdom; deter-

CHAP. XXIX.

Job regrets the loss of his comforts, and of the respect which had been shown him, 1—11. *He declares the good use that he had made of his authority,* 12—17. *And the grounds on which he had hoped for abiding prosperity,* 18—25.

* Heb. *added to take up.* xxvii. 1.

MOREOVER Job * continued his parable, and said,

2 O that I were [a] as *in* months past, as *in* the days *when* [b] God preserved me;

3 When [c] his † candle shined upon my head, *and when* [d] by his light I walked *through* darkness;

4 As I was in the days of my youth, when [e] the secret of God *was* upon my tabernacle;

5 When [f] the Almighty *was* yet with me, *when* [g] my children *were* about me;

a i. 1—5. vii. 3. b i. 10. Ps xxxvii. 28 Jude 1 c xviii. 6 xxi 17. Ps. xviii. 28. Prov xxiv. 20. † Or, *lamp* Prov. xiii. 9 xx 20. d xxii 28 Ps iv. 6. xxvii. 1. lxxxiv. 11. Is. ii 5 John viii. 12. xii. 46. Eph. v. 3. 14. e i. 10 xv. 8. Ps. xxv. 14. xxvii. 5. xci 1. Prov. iii. 32 Col. iii. 3. f xxiii. 3. 8—10. Deut xxxiii. 27—29. Josh i. 9. Judg. vi 12, 13. Ps. xxx. 7 xliii. 2 xliv 8, 9. Cant. ii. 4 iii. 1, 2 Jer. xiv. 8. Matt. ix. 15. ——g i. 2—5 xlii 13—16 Ps cxxvii 3—5. cxxviii. 3. Prov. xvii. 6.

mining the force and direction of every wind, and the quantity of water to be formed into rains and dews; regulating the course of the clouds, and directing the thunder and lightning. At the creation, He had his whole plan before him, and *declared* unto man as much as was good for him to know: and he had *prepared* the whole of his intended operations as accurately as if they had been *searched out* by intense study. This implied, that as men could not either alter or comprehend these works of God, they were equally unable to discover the methods of his providence. God had from the beginning plainly declared to man, that *his* wisdom consisted not in the knowledge of the *secrets* of nature, or of the divine government, but in "fearing the LORD and departing from evil." (*Notes, Gen.* xxii. 10—12. *Deut.* xxix. 29. *Marg. Ref.*) Thus Job intimated to the disputants, that they might show their wisdom much more, by a conscientious performance of their own duty, than by presumptuously intruding into the secret reasons of the divine dispensations; or rashly condemning their afflicted friend as a hypocrite.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The riches of this world are sought with unwearied labour and extreme danger: the faculties of the soul and the vigour of the body are alike devoted to the pursuit; and from age to age men sacrifice their ease, ruin their health, and venture their lives for them! Indeed they are good in themselves, and for the uses to which they were appointed: and the bountiful kindness of the Creator appears in covering the surface, and storing the bowels of the earth with so many useful productions: nor should the ingenuity or industry which men employ about them be condemned, except as disproportionate. Neither *silver* nor *gold*, but the *love of* them, "is the root of all evil:" and the avarice, pride, and luxury of the human heart, not the creatures which God hath made for our use, ought to bear the whole blame of the mischiefs to which they give occasion. It is also observable, that whilst God *gives* us all these things, he gives them in the way of industry; the productions of nature cannot be prepared for use, without venturing and enduring hardship for them; and in like manner, whilst wisdom and grace are *freely* bestowed, we must labour and deny ourselves if we would appropriate them. But did we understand the infinite value of these gifts, and our perishing want of them, we should think every hardship and sacrifice comparatively small. All earthly treasures are insufficient and precarious: they can give neither peace of conscience, nor health, nor contentment: they cannot prolong life, or abate the fear of death, or purchase exemption from future punishment: they must be left soon, and for ever, and an account must be given of them to God. But true wisdom and grace confer peace, and joy, and lively hope; they deprive death of his sting, and ensure an eternal inheritance. Who then can estimate their value? All the treasures of the world, and the whole world itself, are worthless in the comparison: yet, alas, every gilded bauble is preferred to them! No labour is deemed too great to employ about carnal things; every exertion is too much about our spiritual and eternal interests! "Go then to the *miner*, thou sluggard, consider his ways, "and be wise:" imitate his ingenuity, application, and intrepidity, in the affairs of thy soul: seek salvation, as he does the gold and silver ore, and thou shalt be enriched for ever. But where is this wisdom to be found? In the heart of the earth? In the depth of the sea? Or in the schools of the learned? It is "the LORD that giveth "wisdom." The treasures of it are hid in Christ, revealed by the word of truth, and received by faith, through the operation of the Holy Spirit. There the Lord hath prepared and declared it: there we may search for it and discover it. But it does not consist in explaining all mysteries, settling all controversies, or solving all difficulties in the phenomena of nature or in the divine government. It is not intended to feed our pride and vanity, to amuse our curiosity, or to embolden our presumption: but to teach us where we are, and what we are, whither we are going, and what we want, and where our wants may be supplied. It instructs and encourages us sinners to "fear "the LORD, and to depart from evil," in the exercise of continual repentance and faith, and it admonishes us to wait for that world to which death will soon convey us, for fuller light respecting all the ways and works of God. Our business here is to believe, adore, love, and obey; not to comprehend and dispute. We receive the benefit of the rain, and avail ourselves of the winds and tides, and seek shelter from the storm, whether we understand the theory of them or not. Thus let us flee from the wrath to come, take refuge in the hope of the Gospel, and receive the comforts of life thankfully, and bear its burdens cheerfully, without being desirous of knowing those secret things which "belong to the LORD our God." The government of the world is his, and he neither needs nor asks our advice: but "to man he saith, the fear of the "LORD, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is "understanding."

6 When [h] I washed my steps with butter, and the rock poured * me out rivers of oil;

7 When I went out [i] to the gate through the city, *when* I prepared my seat in the street;

8 The [k] young men saw me, and hid themselves: and [l] the aged arose, *and* stood up:

9 The princes [m] refrained talking, and [n] laid *their* hand on their mouth:

10 The † nobles held their peace, and [o] their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth.

11 When [p] the ear heard *me*, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw *me*, it gave witness to me;

12 Because [q] I delivered the poor that cried, and [r] the fatherless, and *him that had* none to help him.

13 [s] The blessing of him that was [t] ready to perish came upon me: and [u] I caused the widow's heart to [x] sing for joy.

14 [y] I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment *was* as a robe and [z] a diadem.

15 I was [a] eyes to the blind, and feet *was* I to the lame.

16 I *was* [b] a father to the poor; and [c] the cause *which* I knew not I searched out.

17 And [d] I brake the ‡ jaws of the wicked, [e] and § plucked the spoil out of his teeth.

18 Then I said, [f] I shall die in my nest, and I shall [g] multiply *my* days [h] as the sand.

19 My [i] root *was* ‖ spread out by the waters, and the dew lay all night upon my branch.

20 My [k] glory *was* * fresh in me, and [l] my bow [m] was † renewed in my hand.

h xx. 17. Gen. xlix. 11. Deut. xxxii. 13. xxxiii. 24. Ps. lxxxi. 16.
* Heb. *with me.*
i Deut. xvi. 18. xxi. 19. Ruth iv. 1, 2. 11 Zech. viii. 16.
k Lev. xix. 32. Prov. xvi. 31. xx. 8. Rom. xiii 3, 4. Tit. iii. 1. 1 Pet. v. 5
l Rom. xiii. 7. 1 Pet. ii. 17.
m iv. 2. vii. 11. Pro. x. 19. Jam. i. 19.
n xxi. 5. xl. 4. Judg. xviii. 19. Pro xxx. 32.
† Heb. *voice of the nobles was hid.*
o Ps. cxxxvii. 6. Ez. iii 26.
p xxxi. 20. Prov. xxix. 2. Luke xi. 27.
q xxii. 5—9. Neh. v. 2—13. Ps. lxxii 12. lxxxii. 3—4. Prov. xxi. 13. xxiv. 11, 12. Jer. xxii 16.
r Ex. xxii 22—24. Deut x. 18. Ps. lxviii. 5. Jam. i 27.
s Deut xxiv. 13. Acts ix. 39—41. 2 Cor. ix. 12—14. 2 Tim. i. 16—18
t xxxi. 19. Deut. xxvi. 5. Prov xxxi. 6—9. Is. xxvii 13.
u Deut. xvi. 11. Neh viii. 10—12. Philem. 7.
x Ps lxvii. 4. Is. lxv 14.
y Ps cxxxii 9. Is. lix. 17. lxi. 10. Rom. xiii. 14. 2 Cor. vi. 7. Eph. vi. 14. 1 Thes. v. 8. Rev. xix 8.
z Is xxviii. 5. lxii. 3.
a Num. x. 31. Matt. xi. 5. 1 Cor xii. 12, &c.
b xxxi. 18 Esth. ii. 7. Ps. lxviii. 5. Eph v. 1. Jam. i 27.
c Ex. xviii 26. Deut xiii. 14. xvii. 8—10 1 Kings iii 16—28. Prov. xxv. 2 xxix. 7
d Ps iii. 7 lviii. 6. Prov. xxx. 14.
‡ Heb. *jaw-teeth*, or *grinders.*
e 1 Sam. xvii. 35. Ps cxxiv 3. 6.
§ Heb. *cast.*
f Ps. xxx. 6, 7. Jer. xxii 23. xlix. 16 Obad. 4 Heb. ii. 9.
g v. 26. xlii. 16, 17. Ps. xci 16.
h Gen. xxxii. 12. xli. 49
i xviii 16. Ps i. 3 Jer xvii. 8 Hos. xiv. 5—7. ——— ‖ Heb. *opened.* ——— k 14. xix. 9 Gen. xlv 13 Ps iii. 3 ——— * Heb *new* ——— l Gen. xlix. 24. ——— m Ps. ciii. 5. Is xl. 31. 2 Cor. iv. 16. ——— † Heb. *changed.*

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIX. V. 1—6. It is probable that when Job had finished his commendation of wisdom, he paused to hear whether his friends had any thing to add: but as they were silent, he proceeded to contrast his former prosperity and his honourable conduct as a magistrate, with his present abject misery, in order to excite their compassion and to excuse his complaints: and perhaps to engage their more fixed attention to the other parts of his discourse. Indeed he could not but wish that matters were so with him at the present as formerly. Then God preserved his health, his property, his family, his honour, and his peace, having "made a hedge about him." Providence smiled upon him, and he enjoyed spiritual consolations; so that he lived happily, and walked securely, in this dark and wretched world. Thus he had been favoured early in life: the *secret wisdom* of God had been communicated to him, and his *secret blessing* had rested upon him and prospered his habitation: his soul had been refreshed with the *secret pleasures* of communion with God, before whom he had walked as his Almighty Friend; whilst his children shared and doubled his enjoyments. His cattle fed in rich pastures, afforded such plenty of milk and *butter*, that he could, had he pleased, have *washed his steps in it:* and his olive-yards, planted upon the rocky grounds, yielded such abundance, that it was *as rivers of oil.* But he intimated that God had now withdrawn his protection, and the light of his consolations; excluded him from communion with him; and bereaved him of his wealth and children.

V. 7—11. Job next expatiated on the *honour* that had been rendered him. He had acquired great authority, and was become a chief ruler over his people; probably through his reputation for wisdom and justice, as well as on account of his affluence. So that when he went through the city to the gate, where his throne for administering justice was prepared, the young men stood so much in awe of him, and so feared his reprehension for their irregularities, that they kept out of the way; the aged rose in respect of his character; and the nobles and princes were silent, as if bereft of speech, that they might attend and be instructed by his arguments and decisions: and indeed all that saw and heard him, applauded his impartial justice, and bare testimony to his wisdom and discretion.

V. 12—17. 'Because Job's adversaries did so much 'charge him with wickedness, he is compelled to render 'an account of his life.' And as no one attempted to disprove his attestations, no doubt he spoke what was undeniably true. He could confidently protest, that it was his constant object to redress the grievances of the orphans and destitute, who demanded justice against their powerful oppressors: so that widows and others, who were about to be crushed, murdered, or starved, thanked him, and prayed for him as their patron with joyful hearts. He never appeared in public, but with an evident determination to do justice: the equity of his conduct was to him the *robe*, or the *badge of his authority*, and he deemed it more his honour, than any *royal diadem.* By counselling the ignorant how to manage their affairs, he became *as eyes to the blind:* by supporting the helpless with his power and authority, he was *as feet to the lame:* he was the general guardian and father to all poor people; and neither spared pains and expense, nor feared opposition, in searching out their causes and rescuing them from oppression: so that he deprived rich oppressors of their power to do mischief, as effectually, as a wild beast is disabled when its *jaws are broken;* and constrained them to make restitution, as when the *prey is plucked out of their mouths.*

21 Unto me *men* [n] gave ear, and waited, and kept silence at my counsel.
22 [o] After my words they spake not again; and [p] my speech dropped upon them.
23 And they waited for me [q] as for the rain; and they opened their mouth wide *as* for [r] the latter rain.

n 9, 10. xxxii 11, 12.
o xxxii. 15, 16. xxxiii 31—33. Is. lii 15. Matt. xxii 46.
p Deut xxxii 2. Cant iv 11. Ez. xx. 46. Am vii. 16. Mic. ii. 6. *marg.*
q Ps lxxii. 6.
r Hos. vi. 3. Zech. x 1.

24 *If* I laughed on them, [s] they believed *it* not; and [t] the light of my countenance they cast not down.
25 I [u] chose out their way, and sat chief, and [x] dwelt as a king in the army, as [y] one *that* comforteth the mourners.

s Gen. xliv. 26. Ps. cxxvi. 1. Luke xxiv. 41.
t Ps. iv. 6. lxxxix. 15.
u Gen. xli. 40. Judg. xi. 8. 2 Sam v. 2 1 Chr. xiii. 3, 4
x Gen xiv. 14—17. Deu. xxxiii. 5.
y iv 3, 4. Is. xxxv. 3, 4. lxi 1—3. 2 Cor. i 3, 4 vii 5—7. 1 Thes. iii. 2, 3

V. 18—25. Thus respected, useful, and conscientious, and considering all as coming from the favour of God, Job had hoped to live long in prosperity, and to die in peace and honour in a good old age: for he seemed like a tree, that had struck deep root in a well-watered soil, and was refreshed every night by the kindly dew. Heaven and earth seemed to favour him continually. He had done nothing to impair or to prevent the increase of his reputation or influence. His counsel was silently attended to, and his decisions were waited for with great expectation, and were refreshing as the seasonable rain. His smile was counted a very great favour: and if he relaxed from his usual gravity, and grew more familiar with the people, they did not abate in their respect, or undervalue his kindness. Still they allowed him to counsel and command in all their affairs, as a king with uncontrolled authority rules over his troops: yet amidst all he never lost sight of the kind employment of comforting the mourners.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord protects and prospers us as he pleases; and he confers on those who love him whatever can be beneficial to them. Yet riches and flourishing families, though a candle of the LORD, may be soon and finally extinguished; they do but little towards illuminating our way through this dark world, and nothing towards cheering the vale of death. But when the mind is enlightened by the holy Spirit; when a man walks in the light of God's comforting presence, and enjoys the *secret* pleasure of communion with him; every outward comfort is doubled, every trouble is diminished, and he may pass cheerfully, by this light, through life and death to heaven. The sensible comfort, however, of this happy state is often withdrawn from those who have enjoyed it, and they regret the months and days which they have formerly known, and long for their return. In general, this change arises from negligence and grieving the holy Spirit: but sometimes it may be an honorary trial of a man's faith and grace. Yet it is always right in such cases to examine ourselves, to inquire into the cause by fervent prayer, and to redouble diligence and watchfulness. Many, however, who *profess* that they have walked in this heavenly light; complain that now it is not with them as in months past; and rest satisfied with unavailing lamentations! Depending on past experience, and concluding their state safe, they put up at present with worldly comforts, and are as negligent as they are joyless. And others, who have *really* walked with God, finding their comforts decline, are tempted to think all past experience a delusion, and to conclude that the Almighty hath finally forsaken them. But for those comforts which are indeed from God, the believer can find no substitute in the whole creation: and though they may be withdrawn, they shall never be extinguished, but shall be restored, and endure till lost in the blaze of heavenly glory. —Years, rank, and authority, if connected with eminent justice, wisdom, and piety, confer peculiar dignity and influence; they over-awe the careless and lawless; they command the respect of inferiors and equals; and procure a deference even from superiors. When a man's judgment and integrity have thus obtained him an established reputation, his opinions are readily approved and his measures adopted. Then it is peculiarly happy for him and others, if he be preserved humble, zealous for the honour of God, and ambitious only of doing good: if he value the blessing of the needy and afflicted, and the testimony of men's consciences to his equity and humanity as his robe, his diadem, and his recompense: if he continue a stranger to fear, favour, and affection, to covetousness and self-indulgence; and become the patron of the poor, the widow, the orphan, and the oppressed; desiring that their hearts may rejoice, and that their prayers for their benefactor may be united with many thanksgivings unto God: if by the use of his wealth, authority, and wisdom, he be as "eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame;" a father to the poor, and a terror and restraint to wealthy oppressors, and spare no labour for the effecting these valuable purposes. Such persons are public blessings: their protection is courted, and their friendship valued by all good men; though their excellency be hated, and their power dreaded, by the tyrants whose jaws they break, and whom they spoil of their prey. They prevent much mischief, make many wretched mourners joyful, and are an ornament to religion. And they have the peculiar honour to resemble him, who hath "put on righteousness as a robe, and is clad with zeal "as a cloak;" who rescues poor sinners from the power of Satan, and breaks the jaws of that devourer; who, in a far nobler sense, "is eyes to the blind, and feet to the "lame, and a Father to the poor;" whose words are all in wisdom, truth, and love, and his favour more refreshing than the latter rain; whose smile is so great a blessing to the desponding soul that waited for it, that he can hardly believe his own experience, when the Saviour manifests his love; and he will adore and revere him the more for his unspeakable condescension. How many that were ready to perish, are now blessing him! How many mourners hath he comforted? But who can show forth all his praises? May we trust his mercy, and copy his equity, truth, and love! Let us not however flatter ourselves with the expectation of continued honour and prosperity in this world. In the midst of all we should think of dying soon; and even before death, of being deprived of all our out-

CHAP. XXX.

Job complains that he is sunk into extreme contempt, 1—14. *That he suffers great anguish of soul and body,* 15—19. *That God deals rigorously with him,* 20—24. *That he, who had comforted others, now suffers without a comforter,* 25—31.

BUT now [a] *they that are* * younger than I have me in derision, [b] whose fathers I would have disdained to have set with the dogs of my flock.

2 Yea, whereto *might* the strength of their hands *profit* me, in whom old age was perished?

3 For want and famine *they were* † solitary; [c] fleeing into the wilderness ‡ in former time desolate and waste.

4 Who cut up mallows by the bushes, and juniper roots [d] *for* their meat.

5 They were [e] driven forth from among *men,* (they cried after them as *after* a thief;)

6 To [f] dwell in the clefts of the valleys, *in* § caves of the earth, and *in* the rocks.

7 Among the bushes they [g] brayed; under the nettles they were gathered together.

8 *They were* [h] children of [i] fools, yea, children of ‖ base men: they were [k] viler than the earth.

9 And now [l] am I their song, yea, I am their by-word.

10 They [m] abhor me, they [n] flee far from me, and * spare not to [o] spit in my face.

11 Because he hath [p] loosed my cord, and afflicted me, they have also [q] let loose the bridle before me.

12 Upon *my* right *hand* [r] rise the youth; they push away my feet, and [s] they raise up against me the ways of their destruction.

13 They mar my path, [t] they set forward my calamity, they *have* no helper.

14 They came *upon me* [u] as a wide breaking in of *waters:* in the desolation they rolled themselves *upon me.*

a xix. 13—19. xxix. 8—10. 2 Kings ii. 23. Is. iii. 5.
* Heb. *of fewer days than I.*
b Ps xxxv. 15, 16. lxix 12 Mark xiv 65 xv. 17—20. Luke xxiii. 14. 18, 19. 35, 36. 39. Acts xvii. 5. Tit. i. 12.
† Or, *dark as the night.* xxiv. 13—16.
c xxiv. 5. Heb. xi. 38.
‡ Heb. *yesternight.*
d 2 Kings iv. 38, 39 Am. vii. 14. Luke xv. 16.
e Gen iv. 12—14. Ps. cix. 10 Dan. iv. 25. 32, 33
f Judg vi. 2. 1 Sam. xxii. 1, 2. Is. ii. 19. Rev. vi. 15.
§ Heb. *holes.*
g vi. 5. xi 12. Gen. xvi. 12.
h 2 Kings vii. 18. 27. 2 Chr. xxii. 3. Jer vii. 13. Mark vi. 24.
i Prov i. 7. 22. xvi. 22.
‖ Heb. *men of no name.*
k xl 4. Ps. xv. 4. Is xxxii 6.
l xvii 6 Ps. xxxv. 15, 16. xliv. 14. lxix. 12 Lam. iii 14 63
m xxix 19 xlii. 6 Ps lxxxviii. 8. Zech xi. 8.
n xix. 13, 14. Ps. lxxxviii. 8. Prov xix. 7. Matt. xxvi. 56.
* Heb. *withhold not spittle from.*
o Num. xii. 14. Deut xxv. 9. Is. l. 6. Matt. xxvi. 67 xxvii. 39.
p xii. 18 21. 2 Sam. xvi. 5—8.
q Ps. xxxv. 21. Matt. xxvi. 67, 68. xxvii. 39—44 Jam. i. 26.
r l. xix. 18. Is. iii 5.
s xix. 12.
t Ps. lxix. 15. Zech. i. 15.
u xxii. 16 Ps. xviii 4 lxix. 14, 15 Is viii. 7, 8.

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ward comforts; though there should be every appearance, that life and prosperity will be continued to us. Storms will succeed to calms, and calms to storms in this changeable world: but in heaven will be uninterrupted and unchangeable felicity. Let us then look to our Captain and King: he hath chosen out our way, and hath been chief in *sorrows* as well as in *honours:* and as he comforteth his mourning followers; so he hath led the whole army of his saints the way to victory and glory, through tribulation, sufferings, and death; and hath said, "If any man will "come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his "cross, and follow me:" and "Where I am, there shall "my servant be."

NOTES.

CHAP. XXX. V. 1—14. Here Job most pathetically contrasts his present condition with his former honour and authority. Now the *youths,* that before had hid themselves lest they should be punished for their crimes, treated him with the greatest contempt: nay, the children of the most abject persons imaginable insulted him, whom he described as the vilest outcasts of society. They were so destitute of fidelity and honesty, so lazy and ignorant, that they were not capable of doing so much good as the dogs of his flock; and he would have disdained to have employed them in the meanest services about his cattle. Their lives, wasted in wickedness, had left them debilitated and ignorant, debauched and infamous in old age: and being burdens and nuisances by their crimes, they were expelled from society in a most miserable manner. Incapable of obtaining an honest livelihood, and afraid of being punished for their past offences, they had fled into the most desolate parts of the wilderness; and there *lived,* or rather *starved,* upon roots and herbs not fitted to sustain the life of man. For they were driven away as thieves, and concealed themselves in dens and caves from the search of pursuers; or among the weeds and bushes, where they grew savage like the wild asses. Such worthless wretches, of whom Job's active magistracy had rid the country, returned with their families when he was reduced: and, though their ignorant and profligate parents neglected to give them any good instructions; yet they had learned to make songs and jests about Job; and to show their contempt and abhorrence by affecting to shun him as a loathsome object, or drawing near him to spit in his face. It may be supposed, that these were the expressions of their resentment for his former opposition to their villany; and of their joy that his authority was terminated. Because the Lord had loosed his cord, by depriving him of power and affluence, they behaved with *unbridled insolence,* and attempted to injure and destroy him by every means they could devise. It is likely that they accused Job of oppression, because he had punished them for their crimes: and thus they endeavoured to "*fortify* the ways of their "destruction," or to secure themselves from punishment in their abandoned courses. By these methods they *marred* or *vilified* his path, and helped forward his calamity, exciting his friends to treat him as a hypocrite; and they had no need of help from Job's former friends, being already sufficiently daring and ingenious in their malice:

15 ¶ [x] Terrors are turned upon me: they pursue my * soul as the wind: and my welfare passeth away [y] as a cloud.

16 And now [z] my soul is poured out upon me; the days of affliction [a] have taken hold upon me.

17 [b] My bones are pierced in me [c] in the night-season: and my sinews take no rest.

18 [d] By the great force *of my disease* is my garment changed; it bindeth me about as the collar of my coat.

19 He hath [e] cast me into the mire, and I am become like [f] dust and ashes.

20 [g] I cry unto thee, and thou dost not hear me: I stand up, and thou regardest me *not*.

21 Thou art † become [h] cruel to me: with ‡ thy [i] strong hand thou opposest thyself against me.

22 Thou [k] liftest me up to the wind; thou causest me [l] to ride *upon it*, and dissolvest my § substance.

23 For I know *that* thou wilt bring me *to* death, and *to* [m] the house appointed for all living.

24 Howbeit he will not stretch out *his* hand to the ‖ grave, though [n] they cry in his destruction.

25 [o] Did not I weep for him that was in trouble? [p] was *not* my soul grieved for the poor?

26 [q] When I looked for good, then evil came *unto me;* and when I waited for [r] light, there came darkness.

27 [s] My bowels boiled, and rested not: the days of affliction prevented me.

28 [t] I went mourning without the sun: I stood up, *and* I cried in the congregation.

29 I am [u] a brother to dragons, and a companion to † owls.

30 [x] My skin is black upon me, and [y] my bones are burned with heat.

31 [z] My harp also is *turned* to mourning, and my organ into the voice of them that weep.

x vi. 4 vii. 14. ix. 27, 28. x. 16. Ps. xxxviii 15.
* Heb. *principal one.*
y Is. xliv 22. Hos. vi. 4. xiii. 3
z Ps xxii. 14. xlii. 4. Is. liii. 12.
a Ps. xl. 12.
b xxxiii. 19–21. Ps. vi. 2 — 6 xxxviii. 2 — 8.
c vii 4 Ps. xxii. 2. Is. xxxviii. 13.
d ii. 7 vii 5 xix. 20 Ps. xxxviii 5 Is i 5, 6.
e ix. 31. Ps lxix. 1. 2 Jer xxxviii. 6.
f ii. 8. xlii. 6 Gen. xviii 27.
g xix. 7. xxvii. 9 Ps xxii 2. lxxx. 4, 5 Lam iii. 8. 44 Matt xv 23
† Heb. *turned to be*
h vii 20, 21 x 14. 17. xiii 25 —28 xvi. 9— 14 xix 6 9 Ps lxxvii. 7—9. Jer xxx 14.
‡ Heb *the strength of thy hand.*
i vi 9. xxiii 6. Ps lxxxix 13. 1 Pet v. 6.
k xxi. 18 Ps. i. 4. Is xvii. 13 Jer. iv. 11, 12. Ez v. 2. Hos iv. 19. xiii. 3
l Ps. xviii. 10 civ. 3.
§ Or, *wisdom.*
m xiv. 5 xxi 33. Gen. iii 19. 2 Sam xiv 14. Ec. viii 8 ix. 5. xii. 5—7. Heb. ix. 27.
‖ Heb. *heap.*
n Judg. vi. 31. Ps. xxxv 25 Matt. xxvii 39—44.
o Ps xxxv 13. Jer. xiii 17. xviii 20 Luke xix. 41 John xi. 35. Rom. xii 15
* Heb *hard of day.*
p xxxi. 16—21. Ps. xli 1 Prov. xiv. 21 31. xvii. 5. xix. 17. xxviii. 8. Is. lviii 7, 8. Dan. iv. 27. 2 Cor. ix 9
q iii. 25, 26. xxix. 18 Jer viii. 15. xiv 19. xv 18. Mic. i. 12.
r xviii 6. 18. xxiii. 17 Ps. xcvii. 11. Is 1. 10
s Ps. xxii 14. Jer iv 19. xxxi. 20 Lam. i. 20. ii. 11.
t Ps xxxviii. 6. xlii 9. xliii. 2. Is liii. 3, 4. Lam. iii. 1—3.
u xvii. 14 Ps. cii. 6. Is. xiii. 21, 22. xxxviii. 14. Mic. i. 8. Mal i 3.
† Or. *ostriches.*
x Ps. xix 83. Lam. iii. 4 iv. 8. v. 10.——y Ps. cii. 3.——z Ps. cxxxvii. 1—4. Ec. iii. 4. Is. xxi. 4. xxii. 12. xxiv. 7—9. Lam. v. 15. Dan vi. 18.

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for they came upon him as a torrent of waters, which bursts the banks, and rolls on with rapid desolation.

V. 15—19. Job again complained of terrors, which doubtless arose in great measure from Satan's temptations. These agitated and pursued his soul like a tempest, and drove all his comfort away as a cloud vanisheth: so that all his courage and resolution were destroyed, and his very soul poured out as if melted by the fire. For affliction had so seized upon him that he was unable to escape. His bones and sinews also were in such incessant anguish, that they seemed to be pierced with a sword, and he could have no rest. His sores defiled his garments, and so confined him that he could not move without extreme pain. He was as disgustful to the sight, through the calamity which God had inflicted, as if he had been rolled in the mire: yea, he was become like dust and ashes, before he was laid in the grave.

V. 20—24. It added greatly to Job's distress, that he could obtain no answer to his prayers; and though he stood up to appeal to the Lord respecting his injured character, he was disregarded. He therefore rashly concluded that the Lord was become rigorous to him, even to a degree of cruelty, and used his power expressly to oppose and distress him: so that he, as it were, lifted him up into the air, to be the sport of conflicting winds, and to be driven from one misery to another; and his whole body was dissolving with excessive heat and debility, as if by the fire of the divine indignation: nay, he thought himself sure, that God intended to pursue him to the grave with these extreme miseries. But in that house appointed for all living, he hoped to be at ease, and that the Lord would not stretch out his hand against him beyond the grave: though some would interpret his miserable death as a token of his final destruction; and exult over him, upon the supposition that he was thus proved to be a wicked man: or, though many lamented a man's deliverance by death from pain, as if it were destruction.

V. 25—31. These events were the more overwhelming to Job; because they were so contrary to his expectation. He was conscious, however, and could appeal to God, that he had always sympathized with the afflicted and relieved the poor, and never oppressed them: and on this ground he had hoped for much comfort, when these dark and dreadful trials came upon him. This astonishing change so affected him, that he spent his time in mourning as one immured from the light of the sun: nor could he help crying out in the bitterness of his soul, even in the midst of those who condemned him. He was no longer fit for the society of men; but he was driven into solitude, or caused to associate with noxious and ominous creatures, like dragons or owls, as if they were his relatives and friends. His skin was become black by the effect of his boils, his bones were burned with a fever; and his joyful praises, which he used to accompany with the harp or timbrel, were turned into doleful lamentations.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14.

All earthly honour, prosperity, and comfort, are precarious: and 'they build too low who build beneath the skies.' But if a contrast, so affecting as this narrative exhibits, may be drawn between the summit of earthly felicity and the depth of earthly misery; how inconceivable must be the distance betwixt eternal life and eternal punishment! and if the thoughts of former enjoyments greatly enhance the

CHAP. XXXI.

Job solemnly, before God, protests, that he was not guilty of unchastity or dishonesty, 1—12. *Of unkindness to his servants, or to the poor,* 13—22. *Of trusting in riches; of idolatry, revenge, neglect of hospitality, hypocrisy, or fear of man,* 23—34. *He challenges his accusers to prove their allegations,* 35—40.

I MADE [a] a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I [b] think upon a maid?

2 For [c] what portion of God *is there* from above? and *what* inheritance of the Almighty from on high?

3 *Is* not [d] destruction to the wicked? and [e] a strange *punishment* to the workers of iniquity?

4 [f] Doth not he see my ways, and count all my steps?

a Gen. vi. 2. 2 Sam. xi. 2—4. Ps. cxix. 37. Prov. iv. 25. xxiii. 31—33. Matt. v. 28, 29. 1 John ii. 16.
b Jam. i. 14, 15.
c xx. 29. xxvii. 13. Heb. xiii. 4.
d xxi. 30. Ps. lv. 23. lxxiii. 18. Prov. i. 27. x. 29. xxi. 15. Matt. vii. 13. Rom. ix. 22. 1 Thess. v. 3. 2 Thes. i. 2 Pet. ii. 1.
e Is. xxviii. 21. Jude 7.
f xiv. 16. xxxiv. 21. Gen. xvi. 13. 2 Chr. xvi. 9. Ps. xliv. 21. cxxxix. 1—3. Prov. v. 21. xv. 3. Jer. xvi. 17. xxxii. 19. Heb. iv. 13.

anguish of present sufferings; in what a wretched case will the wealthy, honoured, and self-indulgent sinner be, when it shall be said to him, "Remember that thou in thy life-"time hadst *thy* good things!" The vicious and debauched, who live in sloth and riot, by fraud and rapine, hate those who attempt to make them labour and live honestly, or punish them for their crimes. A few individuals prosper by iniquity, and live in splendour: but multitudes are by their vices reduced to the most extreme misery. They forfeit their characters, as well as ruin their circumstances and constitutions: every one suspects and becomes averse to employ them: their lives are wasted in brutality, fraud, and extravagance: and for the peace of society, they must be confined, destroyed, or driven away, like ravenous beasts. In distant regions or desolate places they drag on a miserable existence, without the comforts, and almost without the necessaries, of life. Their folly and their wickedness are alike great: their present condition and future prospects are both deplorable. A Christian, indeed, must neither disdain or despair of any fellow creature, nor reproach men for their poverty, nor indulge resentment; and they who, through incapacity or the imbecility of old age, cannot work, have a right to be maintained by others: yet men may persevere in so base a conduct, that no wise man can employ, trust, or favour them; and whilst they continue in their vile practices, they are less entitled to regard than the meanest of the inoffensive and useful brute creatures. There are numbers who cannot, by any human wisdom or power, be preserved from present and future ruin: we may lament to see them dying with disease and in misery; but we cannot make them willing to be done good to: and in some scenes, it is equally surprising and afflicting to notice the multitudes which answer to this description. As, however, some of every sort may be rescued from ruin, it is *our* business to do what we can in the use of proper means; and to look to him with whom all things are possible for an effectual blessing. But they who are themselves base and foolish, train up families of children of the same vile character, inured to vice, and fitted to be the nuisance of society. So that except some method be devised to prevent the rising generations, one after another, from being corrupted, no extensive reformation can take place; and, alas! the sword of the magistrate will still find abundance of employment. These are they that take the lead in reviling, insulting, and opposing the wise and pious reformer, or the active magistrate: as much as they dare, and as soon as authority is at all relaxed, they give a loose to their insolence: and if such as have rebuked or chastised their crimes fall into affliction, they will show their enmity by every kind of indignity. But instead of regretting this circumstance, we should rejoice if we are despised, reviled, and hated only by wicked men: and we should look "unto Jesus, who endured the "contradiction *of sinners* against himself;" and against whom, (as against Job,) the very abjects were gathered together, to insult, mock, and spit upon him. Considering who he was, and what we are; and how much lighter our sufferings are than those which he endured, we may well be ashamed to complain of the insults and injuries we experience.

V. 15—31.

When inward temptations unite with outward calamities, the soul often loses its firmness, is hurried as in a tempest, and is filled with confusion. It then becomes difficult to speak or complain, without seeming "to charge God "foolishly," as if he dealt too rigorously with us and were become our *enemy*. But wo be to those who have him for an *enemy!* They will not only be brought with others to the grave, but to the bottomless pit of destruction. Compared with this perdition of ungodly men, what are all outward or even inward *temporal* afflictions? If our whole bodies were filled with exquisite pain, and were rendered loathsome by disease; if we were shut up in a dungeon, driven from society, or thrown into the mire; if our friends were become cruel, and our enemies triumphant; if the Lord frowned, Satan tempted, and the world loaded us with infamy: yet, while we retained a hope that death would terminate our sorrows, and bring us to a state of happiness, we might well mingle joy with our mourning, and thanksgiving with our lamentations. No chastening, however, seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; and unexpected afflictions are hardest to endure. They will therefore mar our cheerfulness: but we should not yield to despondency; nor convert grounds of consolation into topics of discouragement. If none are disposed to pity us as we have sympathised with others, our correcting God pities us, "even as a father pitieth his own children." But as the grave is the house appointed for all living, let us look more to the things of eternity. Then the believer who is here a mourner, will take his golden harp, and joyfully celebrate the praises of redeeming love.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXI. V. 1—4. Job had been accused of many crimes; and as his accusers could not prove his

5 [g] If I have [h] walked with vanity, or if my foot hath hasted to deceit;

6 * Let me be [i] weighed in an even balance, that God may [k] know mine integrity.

7 [l] If my step hath turned out of the way, and [m] mine heart walked after mine eyes, and if any blot hath [n] cleaved to mine hands:

8 *Then* [o] let me sow, and let another eat; yea, [p] let my offspring be rooted out.

9 [q] If mine heart hath been deceived by a woman, or [r] *if* I have laid wait at my neighbour's door;

10 *Then* let my wife [s] grind unto another, [t] and let others bow down upon her.

11 For this *is* [u] an heinous crime; yea, it *is* [x] an iniquity *to be punished by* the judges.

12 For it *is* [y] a fire *that* consumeth to destruction, and would root out all mine increase.

13 ¶ If I did despise [z] the cause of my man-servant, or of my maid-servant, when they contended with me:

14 [a] What then shall I do when God riseth up? and [b] when he visiteth, [c] what shall I answer him?

15 [d] Did not he that made me in the womb make him? and † did not one fashion us in the womb?

g Ps. vii 3—5. h Ps iv. 2. xii. 2. Prov. xii. 11. Jer. ii. 5. Ez. xiii. 8.
* Heb. *Let him weigh me in balances of justice.*
i 1 Sam. ii. 3. Ps. vii. 8, 9. xvii 2, 3. xxvi 1 Prov. xvi. 11 Is xxvi. 7. Dan v. 27. Mic. vi 11
k Josh xxii. 22. Ps. i 6. cxxxix 23 Matt. vii. 23 2 Tim ii 19.
l Ps xliv 20, 21.
m Num. xv. 39. Ec. xi 9. Ez. vi. 9. Matt. v. 29
n Ps. ci 3. Is. xxxiii. 15
o v 5 xxiv. 6. Lev xxvi. 16. Deut xxviii. 30—33. 51. Judg vi. 3—6 Mic. vi 15.
p v. 4. xv 30. xviii. 19. Ps. cix 13 ——q Judg. xvi. 5 1 Kings xi 4. Neh. xiii. 26. Prov. ii. 16—19. v. 3, &c vi. 25. vii. 21. xxii. 14. Ec. vii. 26 ——r xxiv. 15, 16. Jer. v. 8. Hos. vii. 4 ——s Ex. xi 5 Is. xlvii. 2. Matt. xxiv 41.

t 2 Sam. xii. 11 Jer viii. 10. Hos iv. 13, 14.
n Gen. xx. 9. xxvi 10 xxxix. 9 Ex. xx 14. Prov. vi. 29—31
x Gen xxxviii. 24. Lev xx 10. Deut xxii. 22—24 Ez xvi. 38.
y Prov iii 33 vi. 27. Jer v 7—9.
z Ex xxi 20. 21 26, 27. Lev xxv. 43 46 Deut. xv 12—15. Jer xxxiv 14—17. Eph vi. 9 Col iv 1.
a ix 32 x 2. Ps. vii 6 ix 12 19 x. 12—15 lxxvi. 9 cxlii. 2 Is x. 3. Zech ii 13
b Hos ix. 7. Mic. vii 4 Matt. vii. 2. Jam ii 13.
c Rom iii 19
d xxxiv. 19 Neh v 5. Prov. xiv 31. xxii. 2. Is. lviii. 7. Mal. ii 10.
† Or, *did he not fashion us in one womb?* x. 8—12 Ps. cxxxix. 14—16.

guilt, so it would have been difficult for him to prove his innocence: he was therefore compelled, as it were, to answer upon oath, that he solemnly appealed to God that he was not guilty of the charge which had been brought against him. He adduced a variety of particulars, to obviate the suspicion of any secret iniquity having been committed by him: and he showed that he acted upon *principle* in his whole conduct: and that he understood the spiritual nature of God's commandments, as reaching to the thoughts and intents of the heart, far better than almost any of those did to whom the written law was delivered, and among whom it was preserved. He first appealed to God, that he had avoided all unchastity, and had kept to the original institution of marriage; and that he strictly inhibited his eyes from gazing upon any woman, however beautiful, to lust after her, though she were unmarried or his inferior. He had *covenanted* with them, that they should be confined to the beholding of the beauties of creation, and the examining of the works of God, and not be allowed to admit a licentious desire into his heart: and no doubt his imagination was equally forbidden to entertain the polluting thought by which lust is conceived, and sin is produced. For however man might excuse these things, Job knew that God abhorred them: and if he were guilty of them, he could expect nothing from above, but destruction in another world; and perhaps some strange punishment in this life, such as befel the inhabitants of Sodom: for God saw all his ways and marked his steps, though he might conceal them from man. In this chapter, and in the twenty-ninth, vastly more is contained of genuine purity and equity; of condescending, liberal, self-denying kindness to the poor and needy; of superiority to the love of the world and the fear of men, and all corrupt motives, as well as of sterling piety, than in all the writings of pagan antiquity combined. The standard of duty is fixed as high as in the moral law, and explained as spiritually as in our Saviour's sermon on the mount. And the entire coincidence of this ancient book even with the new testament, in this essential matter, as well as in the grand doctrines of revealed religion, and the effect of them on the practice of true believers, forms a striking proof, that it was "written by "inspiration from God;" that all the sacred writers spake "as they were moved by the Holy Ghost:" and that true religion has been the same for substance in every age from the beginning. Job's conduct as a magistrate, in his public capacity, was before exhibited; this chapter contains an avowal of his habitual conduct in private life.

V. 5—8. Job next solemnly protested, that he had not yielded to covetous desires. He had not dealt fraudulently; or imposed on others by *vain* pretences; or hastily seized unjust advantages; or turned aside from the direct path of honesty. He had not looked on his neighbour's goods to covet them, and then devise means to obtain them: for this seems to be the meaning of the phrase, "If mine heart "hath walked after mine eyes." There was no blot of this kind on his hands. In this matter he desired an impartial trial, and that God would know or *make known* and *approve*, his integrity: but if he were guilty, he submitted to the sentence as most just; that all the remnant of his ruined fortunes should be seized, and every *production* of his labour torn from him, *even* as his offspring had been cut off.

V. 9—12. Job next declared, that his heart had not been deceived by the beauty or blandishments of another man's wife, to entertain a sinful affection for her, or to wait for an opportunity of committing adultery with her. If he ever had attempted such a crime, he was willing that his guilt should be detected, by his own wife becoming the vilest slave or even concubine to others. But as he should abhor the thought of her being so wicked or so wretched; so he equally abhorred the thought of adultery: for he knew that it was not only hateful to God, but destructive to society, and deserved to be punished by the civil magistrates; as it would *consume like a fire*, not only the soul of him who committed it, but every thing valuable in social and domestic life.

V. 13—15. Not only was Job clear from the guilt of cruelly oppressing his servants; but he did not disdain to hearken to their cause, when they objected to his orders, or complained of his conduct towards them: being ever

16 If I have [e] withheld the poor from *their* desire, or have caused [f] the eyes of the widow to fail;

17 Or [g] have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof;

18 (For from my youth he was brought up with me, [h] as *with* a father, and I have guided * her from my mother's womb;)

19 If I have seen any [i] perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering;

20 If [k] his loins have not blessed me, and *if* he were *not* warmed with the fleece of my sheep;

21 If I have [l] lifted up my hand against the fatherless, [m] when I saw my help in the gate;

22 *Then* [n] let mine arm fall from my shoulder-blade, and mine arm be broken from the † bone.

23 For [o] destruction *from* God *was* a terror to me, and [p] by reason of his highness I could not endure.

24 ¶ If I have [q] made gold my hope, or have said to the fine gold, *Thou art* my confidence;

25 If I [r] rejoiced because my wealth *was* great, and [s] because mine hand had ‡ gotten much;

26 If I [t] beheld the § sun when it shined, or [u] the moon walking ‖ *in* brightness;

27 And [x] my heart hath been secretly enticed, or * my mouth hath [y] kissed my hand:

28 This also *were* [z] an iniquity *to be punished by* the judge: [a] for I should have denied the God *that is* above.

29 ¶ If [b] I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me, or

e xxii. 7-9 Deu. xv. 7-10. Ps cxii 9. Luke xvi 21 Acts xi. 29 Gal. ii. 10.
f Deu xxviii 32. Ps lxix. 3 cxix. 82 123. Is. xxxviii. 14. Lam iv 17.
g Deut xvi. 11 14. Neh. viii. 10. Luke xi. 41. John xiii 29. Acts iv 32.
h xxix 13-16. Ez. xviii. 7. 16 Rom. xii. 13. Jam i. 27. 1 John iii. 17
* *The widow.*
i xxii. 6. 2 Chr. xxviii. 15. Is. lviii. 7. Matt xxv. 36. 48. Luke iii. 11. Acts ix. 39. Jam. ii. 16 1 John iii. 18.
k xxix 11 Deu. xxiv. 13.
l vi. 27. xxii. 9. xxiv. 9 xxix 12. Prov xxiii. 10, 11. Jer. v. 28. Ez xxii. 7.
m Mic. ii 1, 2. vii 3
n 10 40. Josh. xxii. 22, 23 Ps. vii. 4, 5. cxxxvii. 6
† Or, *chanel bone.*

o xx 23. xxi. 26. Gen xxxix. 9. Ps. cxix. 120. Is xiii. 6. Joel i. 15. 2 Cor. v. 11.
p xiii. 11. xl. 9. xlii. 5, 6.
q Gen. xxxi 1. Deut. viii. 12—14. Ps. xlix. 6, 7. 17. lii. 7. lxii. 10. Prov. x. 15. xi. 28. xxx. 9. Mark x. 24. Luke xii 15. Col. iii 5 1 Tim. vi. 10. 17.
r Est. v. 11. Prov. xxiii 5. Jer. ix. 23 Ez. xxviii. 5. Luke xii. 19. xvi. 19. 25.
s Deu. viii. 17, 18. Is x. 13, 14. Dan. iv. 30. Hos. xii. 8. Hab. i. 6
‡ Heb. *found.*
t Gen. i. 16—18. Deut. iv. 19. xvii. 3 2 Kings xxiii 5. 11 Jer. viii. 2. Ez. viii. 16.
§ Heb. *light.*
u Ps viii. 3, 4. Jer. xliv. 17.
‖ Heb. *bright.*
x Deut xi. 16. xiii. 6. Is. xliv. 20. Rom. i 21. 28.——* Heb. *my hand hath kissed my mouth.*——y 1 Kings xix. 18. Ps. ii 12. Hos xiii. 2——z 11. ix. 15 xxiii 7. Gen. xviii. 25. Deut xvii. 9. Judg. xi. 27. Ps. l. 6 Heb. xii 23.——a Josh xxiv. 23. 27 Prov xxx 9. Tit. i. 16. 2 Pet ii. 1. 1 John ii. 23. Jude 4.——b 2 Sam. i 12 iv. 10, 11. xvi. 5—8. Ps. xxxv 13, 14 25. 26. Prov. xvii. 5. xxiv. 17, 18.

ready to do them justice and make them easy. He knew that before his Master in heaven, he could not vindicate any oppressions of an inferior, when He should arise to visit the transgressions of sinners upon them: and he was sensible that they had a right to equity and kindness: being equally the creatures of God, partakers of the same rational nature, and descended from the same common parents with himself. Compare this statement, and the motives here adduced, with the conduct of the most civilized pagans towards their slaves, and the opinions of their strictest moralists on this subject: and note the immense disparity between natural principles and that religion which God has revealed!

V. 16—23. Instead of having oppressed the poor, the fatherless, and the widow, as it had been asserted, Job could appeal to God that he had ever been their kind friend. He had not only supplied their urgent necessities, but regarded their reasonable desires; and had not left the poor widow to behold, with unavailing wishes, the abundance of which she might not partake. He had shared his provision with the fatherless and destitute: for he had been educated to such maxims and habits; and, from his earliest youth, he had been accustomed to bring up poor orphans, and to counsel, protect, and provide for the widows. He had made clothes of his wool for those who were destitute of proper covering, that being made comfortable by him they might pray for him. And if he had ever used his authority and influence to defraud the fatherless, he would consent that God should manifest his iniquity, by causing his arm to wither and drop off from his shoulder-blade. But indeed he feared a more dreadful destruction from God in another world: and as the mightiest princes could not endure before his holy Majesty, this fear alone was sufficient to restrain him from such iniquities. As the most of Job's servants had been killed, and the rest were disobedient to him; and as his cattle had been taken away from him; so it was a comfort to him to reflect, that he had behaved well to the one and made a good use of the other whilst he had them: and especially that he had acted, in these respects, not from regard to man, but from the fear of God, and reverence to his authority. In what other ancient book, not witten by an Israelite, shall we meet with such kind sentiments concerning the lower orders in society?

V. 24—28. Job had been very rich; but he was conscious that he had neither gloried, rejoiced, nor confided in his wealth; nor thought himself, on that account, a wiser, better, or happier man. But considering himself as a steward, in respect of his possessions, and expecting to account for them, he had shunned this common idolatry; and he had also entirely kept himself from all gross idolatry, open or secret: he had never in the smallest instance given that honour to the sun or moon, those splendid and useful creatures, which belonged to the Creator alone. (*Marg. Ref.*) For he knew that this was a denial of the unity, sovereignty, and exclusive right to adoration, of the God above. The words rendered "an iniquity to be "punished by the judge," have led some to think that this book was written after the giving of the Mosaic law: but the circumstance of no idolatry, except that of the sun and moon, being mentioned, is a much more probable argument in favour of a higher antiquity. The judicial law for punishing idolatry by the magistrate, seems to have been intended for Israel alone, as under the Sinai-covenant. The plural of the same word is used and rendered *judges* when the punishment of adulterers is spoken of; (11.) Adultery is a crime which tends to destroy the peace of society, and as such falls directly under the cognizance of magistrates, but idolatry is committed immediately against God: and if our translation be just, He, as the judge of the world, seems rather meant than the civil magistrate. But indeed, the passage is rendered by the old translators, perhaps more properly, "an iniquity to be condemned."

lifted up myself when evil found him:
30 Neither [c] have I suffered [d] my
* mouth to sin, by wishing a curse to
his soul.
31 If [e] the men of my tabernacle said
not, [f] Oh that we had of his flesh! we
cannot be satisfied.
32 [g] The stranger did not lodge in
the street: *but* I opened my doors to
the † traveller.
33 If I [h] covered my transgressions
‡ as Adam, by hiding mine iniquity in
my bosom:
34 [i] Did I fear a great multitude, or
did [k] the contempt of families terrify me,
[l] that I kept silence, *and* went not out
of the door?

35 [m] Oh that one would hear me!
behold, § my desire *is*, [n] *that* the Al-
mighty would answer me, and *that*
[o] mine adversary had written a book.
36 Surely [p] I would take it upon my
shoulder, *and* bind it *as* [q] a crown to me.
37 I would [r] declare unto him the
number of my steps; [s] as a prince
would I go near unto him.
38 If my land [t] cry against me, or
that the furrows likewise thereof ‖ com-
plain;
39 If I have eaten the * fruits thereof
without money, or have † caused the
owners thereof [u] to lose their life;
40 [x] Let thistles grow instead of
wheat, and ‡ cockle instead of barley.
[y] The words of Job are ended.

[c] Ex. xxiii. 4, 5. Matt. v 43, 44. Rom. xii. 14. 1 Pet. ii. 22, 23. iii. 9.
[d] Ec. v. 2. 6. Mat. v. 22. xii. 36. Jam. iii. 6. 9, 10.
* Heb. *palate.*
[e] 1 Sam xxiv. 4. 10. xxvi. 8. 2 Sam xvi. 9, 10. xix. 21, 22. Jer xl. 15. 16. Luke ix. 54, 55. xxii. 50, 51.
[f] xix. 22. Ps. xxvii. 2 xxxv 25. Prov i. 11, 12. 18. Mic. iii. 2, 3.
[g] 17, 18. Gen. xix. 2, 3. Judg. xix. 15. 20, 21 Matt. xxv. 35. 40. 44, 45. Rom. xii. 13. 1 Tim. v. 10. Heb. xiii. 2. 1 Pet. iv 9.
† Or. *way*
[h] Gen. iii. 7, 8. 12. Josh vii. 11. Pro xxviii. 13. Acts v 8 1 John i. 8—10.——‡ Or, *after the manner of men.* Hos vi. 7.——[i] Ex. xxiii. 2. Prov. xxix. 25. Jer. xxxviii. 4, 5. 16. 19. Matt. xxvii. 20—26.——[k] xxii 8. xxxiv. 19. Ex. xxxii. 6. Num. xxv. 15. Neh. v. 7. xi. i. 4—8. 28 2 Cor. v. 16.——[l] Esth. iv. 12. 14. Prov xxiv. 11, 12. Am. v. 11—13. Mic. vii. 3.

[m] xiii. 3. xvii. 3. xxiii 3—7. xxxiii 6. xxxviii. 1—3 xl. 4, 5.
§ Or, *my sign* is that *the Almighty will answer me.*
[n] xiii. 21, 22. Ps xxvi. 1.
[o] xiii. 24. xix. 11 23, 24 xxxiii. 10, 11. Matt. v. 25.
[p] Ex. xxviii. 12 Is xxii 22.
[q] xxix. 14. Is lxii. 3. Phil. iv 1.
[r] ix. 3. xiii. 15 xiv. 16. xliii. 3—6. Ps. xix. 12.
[s] Gen. xxxiii. 24. Eph. iii. 12. Heb. iv. 15, 16. 1 John iii. 19—21.
[t] xx 27. Hab. ii. 11. Jam v. 4.
‖ Heb. *weep.* Ps. lxv. 13
* Heb. *strength.* Gen iv. 12.
† Heb *caused the soul of the owners thereof to expire*, or, *breathe out.*
[u] 1 Kings xxi. 13—16. Prov. i. 19. Is xxvi 21. Ez. xxii. 6. 12, 13.——[x] Gen. iii. 17, 18. Is. vii 3. Zeph. ii. 9. Mal. i. 3.——‡ Or, *noisome weeds*——[y] Ps. lxxiii. 20.

V. 29—32. So far from hating his enemies, or revenging himself on them, Job declared, that as he valued the favour of God above, he had not allowed himself to rejoice or triumph when mischief befel them, or to wish them any harm. Nay, when his dependents were so enraged at those who injured him, that they were ready to devour them, he would by no means permit them to follow the impulse of their vindictive rage. At the same time, in imitation of faithful Abraham, he was ever ready to entertain strangers and travellers, as circumstances required. Bishop Hall thus paraphrases the thirty-first verse. 'If 'the people of my house were not so taken up with the 'offices of my hospitality to others, that they had no 'leisure to feed themselves, and therefore complained for 'the want of that flesh which they dressed for others.' —The words may be rendered, "Who will give us of his "flesh: we shall not be satisfied."

V. 33, 34. So far from being a hypocrite, Job was conscious that he had not, after the manner of Adam and his posterity, attempted to conceal or justify his faults: but he was ever open to conviction, and ready to confess his offence to God or man, as there was occasion; not fearing reproach or contempt on that account; 'Whereby it is 'evident that he justified himself before men, and not 'before God.' Nor was he ever induced by the fear of the multitude or the contempt of the great families around, to neglect any part of his duty as a magistrate.

V. 35—37. After this particular protestation of his integrity, Job renewed his appeal to God, desiring that he would hear and decide his cause. He challenged his *adversary* or *accuser*, to produce a libel or written indictment against him: he was confident that it would prove no disgrace, but an honour to him; as every article would be disproved, and the reverse be manifested. He was ready to go through his whole life, step by step, even assisting his accuser in drawing up the charge; and prepared in every particular to justify himself from the crimes alleged against him: and he would appear in court with the confidence of a prince who came to be crowned, not with the dejection of a criminal who dreaded condemnation. Upon the whole, this protestation and appeal were well grounded and honourable to Job's character. St. Paul in different places makes similar appeals: but in a more modest and reverential manner. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 38—40. As Job was about to conclude, another particular seems to have occurred to him, concerning which he had not exculpated himself. He had never seized upon lands, by putting the owner to death as a criminal, and confiscating his estate; or by any other oppression or fraud. Nor had he reaped his harvest, without duly paying his labourers their wages. If he had, let God avenge it, by rendering the whole accursed, producing nothing but useless noxious weeds. With this Job concluded, as with an air of triumph and confidence.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

"The grace of God, which bringeth salvation," hath in all ages, taught men "to deny ungodliness and worldly "lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this "present world." Repentance and faith produce hatred of sin, and love to God and man; and our interest in redeeming love is evidenced by a course of conscientious obedience. In general, however, it is best to let our actions speak for us: and though in some cases we owe to ourselves and to the cause of God a solemn protestation of innocency as to those crimes of which we are falsely accused, yet this is seldom made without some *real* or *apparent* ostentation. Every wickedness is first conceived in the heart; where ten thousand enormities are devised which are never perpetrated, being prevented by fear of man, regard to character, or want of opportunity and ability. The eye, the ear, and all the senses are the common inlets of those evil thoughts which excite inward concupiscence; we must therefore keep a strict guard upon them and upon the imagination also, if we would keep out of the way of temptation and transgression.

CHAP. XXXII.

Job's three friends being silenced, Elihu speaks, and is angry both with Job and them, 1—5. *He excuses his interference, though young; because great and aged men are not always wise,* 6—10. *He complains, that the reasonings of the disputants were not suited to produce conviction,* 11—15. *He shows that he is earnestly desirous of speaking; and declares that he will be impartial,* 16—22.

SO these three men ceased * to answer Job, because he *was* [a] righteous in his own eyes.

2 Then was [b] kindled the wrath of

* Heb. *from answering.*
a vi. 25. x. 2. 7. xiii. 15. xxiii. 7. xxxii. 4—6. xxx. 11—17. xxxi. 1, &c. xxxiii. 9.
b Ps. lxix. 9. Mark iii. 5. Eph iv. 26.

While we pray to the Lord "to turn away our eyes from "beholding vanity," we should be careful to have all our senses and faculties occupied about lawful things: and lest secrecy, or the hope of impunity entice us, we should habitually recollect, that "the LORD sees our ways and "counts all our steps." Without strict honesty and fidelity in all our dealings, we can have no good evidence of true godliness. Yet how many who profess to believe the Gospel of Christ, are unable to bear this touchstone! Alas! most men haste to deceive: they covet riches, "their "heart walketh after their eyes," and they turn aside; manifest blots defile their hands; God sees and man often detects their dishonesty; and it is well if the ruin of their substance prevent the ruin of their souls. Alas, that adultery also should be so common amongst professed Christians! It is indeed highly desirable that the authority of the magistrate should stop the spread of this fire, which destroys domestic peace and every principle of purity, honesty, truth, and conscience; and which often provokes retaliation, till whole nations are filled with wickedness. But, if men suffer the criminals to escape, the Judge of the world will surely call them to a severe account: and this is sufficient to put all that fear him on their guard, lest their hearts should at any time be deceived.

V. 13—40.

Genuine religion uniformly teaches us to treat inferiors and domestics with humanity, equity, and affection; to bear with their faults, to sympathize in their troubles, to hearken to their complaints, and to seek their present and future welfare: remembering that they are our brethren, as near to the great Creator, and as capable of eternal salvation as ourselves. It disposes us likewise to kindness as well as justice towards the poor: to consult their inclinations, to share our comforts with them, whether we have abundance or only a moderate provision; and to seek an interest in the grateful prayers of the fatherless and the widow, by sparing from our own indulgence, to feed, clothe, educate, or protect them. How contrary then must it be to Christianity, for men to enslave, oppress, and plunder the poor, because they "see their help in the "gate," and have the law of the land and the countenance of the ruler on their side! A worse punishment, than the falling off of the arm from the shoulder-blade awaits such oppressors, especially when they bear and disgrace the Christian name; even "destruction from the LORD, before "whose highness they cannot endure." These crimes spring from covetousness, which makes gold a man's confidence, hope, and joy; as if his life consisted in the abundance of his possessions. But divine grace destroys this idolatry, by teaching us to seek our whole happiness from God; to subordinate all other affections to the love of him; and to receive and use all worldly possessions as his stewards, and to his glory. Yet it is to be feared, that but few prosperous Christians can properly appeal to a heart-searching God, that they have not rejoiced because their gains were great. Through the determination to be rich, numbers fall into temptations which ruin their souls, or pierce them through with many sorrows. This is the *idolatry* to which *we* are most tempted: but it is a great favour to be preserved from all the false and fashionable kinds of religion, which from age to age supplant "the "truth as it is in Jesus" and its sanctifying effects, and eventually prove "a denial of God above." The Holy Spirit always hath taught his children to do good against evil, to bless, and not to curse their enemies, to repress revenge, to forgive as they hope to be forgiven, to avoid all rejoicing in calamities, and to restrain others from revenge and cruelty. In respect of all these things, and in every particular, we should examine with prayer, how far we are followers of this ancient believer? Whether we use hospitality without grudging, and are ready for every good work? Whether the fear of reproach or resentment, from the great or the many, do not induce us to neglect our known duty? Whether we possess any ill-gotten property to cry out against us? or whether we deprive the labourer of his wages? If our conscience testify for us in these and similar inquiries, we should give God the praise, but we may have confidence now before his mercy-seat; and may hope to stand with humble boldness, as justified believers before his judgment-seat: we need fear no adversary, or accusation, or scrutiny; for "who is he that "condemneth? It is God that justifieth:" and the slanders of our enemies will then be our crown: as princes we shall go near unto him, and enter into his glory, and sit down with him on his throne. But let us all judge ourselves, and not cover our sins as Adam; and where we are guilty, let us seek forgiveness; entreating "the Lord to "have mercy upon us, and write all his laws in our hearts," by the influences of his Holy Spirit.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXII. V. 1. Job's opponents were at length silenced, though not convinced; they could not answer his arguments, but they retained their unfavourable opinion of him; and they declined all further dispute, because he was righteous in his own eyes, and determined as they thought at any rate to vindicate himself.

Elihu the son of Barachel the [c] Buzite, of the kindred of Ram: against Job was his wrath kindled, [d] because he justified * himself rather than God.

3 Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled, [e] because they had found no answer, [f] and *yet* had condemned Job.

4 Now Elihu had † waited till Job had spoken, because they *were* ‡elder than he.

5 When Elihu saw that *there was* no answer in the mouth of *these* three men, then [g] his wrath was kindled.

6 And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered and said, [h] I *am* ◊ young, and [i] ye *are* very old; wherefore I was afraid, and ‖ durst not shew you mine opinion.

7 I said, [k] Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom.

8 But *there is* a spirit in man: and [l] the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.

9 [m] Great men are not *always* wise: [n] neither do the aged understand judgment.

10 Therefore I said, [o] Hearken to me; I also will shew mine opinion.

11 Behold, [p] I waited for your words; I gave ear to your * reasons, [q] while ye searched out † what to say.

12 Yea, I attended unto you, and [r] behold, *there was* none of you that convinced Job, *or* that answered his words;

13 [s] Lest ye should say, [t] We have found out wisdom. [u] God thrusteth him down, not man.

14 Now he hath not ‡ directed *his* words against me: neither will I answer him with your speeches.

15 They were [x] amazed, they answered no more: they ◊ left off speaking.

16 When I had waited, ([y] for they spake not, but stood still, *and* answered no more;)

17 *I said,* [z] I will answer also my part, I also will shew mine opinion.

18 For I am full of ‖ matter, [a] the spirit * within me constraineth me.

19 Behold, my belly *is* as wine *which* † hath no vent: it is ready to burst like [b] new bottles.

c Gen. xxii. 21.
d x. 3. xxvii. 2. xxxiv. 5, 6. 17, 18. xxxv. 2. xl. 8. Luke x. 29.
* Heb. *his soul.*
e i. xxiv. 25 xxv. 2—5. xxvi. 2—4.
f viii. 6 xv. 34. xxii 5, &c Acts xxiv. 5. 13.
† Heb *expected Job in words.* 11, 12. Prov. xviii 13.
‡ Heb. *elder for days*
g 2. Ex. xxxii. 19.
h Lev. xix. 32. Rom. xiii. 7. 1 Tim v. 1. Tit. ii. 6. 1 Pet. v. 5
◊ Heb. *few of days*
i xv. 10.
‖ Heb. *feared* xv. 7. 1 Sam xvii. 28—30.
k viii. 9—10. xii. 12. 1 Kings xii. 6—8. Ps. xxxiv. 11, 12. Prov. i. 1—4. xvi. 31. Heb v. 12.
l iv. 12—20. xxxiii. 16 xxxv 11. xxxviii. 36. Gen. xli 39. 1 Kings iii. 12 28. iv 29. Prov. ii. 6. Ec. ii. 26. Dan. i. 17. ii. 21. 1 Cor. ii. 10—12. xii. 8 2 Tim. iii 16. Jam. i. 5.
m Jer. v, 5 Mat. xi. 25. John vii. 48 1 Cor i. 26. ii. 7, 8. Jam. ii. 6, 7.
n xii. 20. Ec. iv. 13.
o 3. 1 Cor vii. 25 40.
p 4. xxix. 21. 23.
* Heb. *understandings.*
q v 27. Prov. xviii. 17. xxviii. 11. Ec. xii. 9, 10.
† Heb. *words.*
r 3. 1 Tim. i. 7.
s Gen xiv. 23. Judg. vii 2 Is. xlviii. 5. 7. Zech. xii. 7.
t xii. 2 xv. 8—10. Is. v. 21. Jer. ix. 23. Ez. xxviii. 3. 1 Cor. i. 19—21. 27—29. iii. 18.
u i 21. ii. 10. iv. 9. vi. 4. xix. 6. 21. John xix 11.
‡ Heb. *ordered.*
x vi. 24, 25 xxix. 22 Matt. vii. 28. xxiii. 22. 33, 34. 46.
◊ Heb *removed speeches from themselves.*
y xiii. 5. Prov. xvii. 28. Am. v. 13. Jam. i. 19.
z 10 xxxiii. 12. xxxv. 3, 4.
‖ Heb. *words.*
a Ps. xxxix. 3. Jer. xx. 9. Ez. iii. 14, &c. Acts iv. 20. 2 Cor. v. 13, 14
* Heb. *of my belly.*
† Heb *is not opened.*
b Mat. ix. 17.

V. 2—5. It is evident, that others besides the disputants were present during this controversy, and Elihu among the rest. His name signifies *My God is he.* He was the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram, which some suppose to have been the original name of Abraham, to whom Buz was nearly related; though others think that Aram, the son of Kemuel, is meant. (*Gen.* xxii. 21.) Many singular opinions have been formed concerning Elihu: yet it is evident, that he was a young man of singular modesty and wisdom; but nothing more. He came nearer the true state of the case, than any other of the contending parties: but he evidently bore too hard on Job, and in some instances put also harsh constructions on his words. He, however, charged him with no crime, except his misconduct in the management of the argument: and in this respect he was justly displeased both with him and with his friends. He alleged with truth, that Job had been more anxious to vindicate his own character, than to clear up the justice and goodness of God in afflicting him: and that his friends had persisted in condemning him as a hypocrite, though unable to refute his doctrine or to answer his arguments. But as he was younger than they, he had modestly waited till the controversy was dropped, before he attempted to declare his opinion.

V. 6—14. Young men are commonly most forward to dispute, and aged men best qualified to be moderators; but here the case was reversed. Elihu allowed it to be a good general rule, that they who had had the longest experience should speak first, and teach wisdom to the young. But there is a rational soul in man, and God giveth wisdom, both natural and spiritual, as he pleaseth; and facts prove, that the greatest and most aged are not always the wisest: this reflection therefore at length emboldened him to state his opinion. He had carefully listened to the arguments of the disputants, as long as they could find any thing to say: but he found they could neither convict Job of iniquity, nor refute his doctrine. Indeed Elihu thought that they were left to be thus foiled, lest they should glory in their own wisdom, and improperly exult over Job, as proved to be a wicked man, by the testimony of God in his dealings with him. Or, as some explain the words, they reluctantly yielded that they were overcome, by counting it their wisdom to be silent, and leaving it to God to confute Job by continuing his afflictions. But as Job had not spoken against Elihu, he purposed to answer him in a different manner; and without attempting to prove him a hypocrite, he would reprove some things in which he was evidently culpable.

V. 15—17. These verses favour the opinion, that Elihu was the writer of this book: for he seems here to address himself as *an historian to the reader*, rather than as *a speaker to that company.* He observed, that the disputants had been amazed to hear Job so confidently protest his own integrity, and perplexed to reconcile his situation with the divine justice and goodness, unless he were a wicked man. They had given up the argument, as if deprived of speech; and they seemed to look for some one else to throw light upon the subject. So that he had full liberty to speak his sentiments; having patiently waited for this opening.

c xiii. 13. 19. xx. 2. xxi. 2.
* Heb. *breathe.*
d Prov. viii. 6, 7.
e xiii. 8. xxxiv. 19. Lev. xix. 15. Deut. i. 17. xvi. 19. Prov. xxiv. 23. Matt. xxii. 16.
f 2 Sam. xiv. 17. 20. Acts xii. 22, 23. xxiv. 2, 3.
g xvii. 5. Ps. xii. 2, 3. Prov. xxix. 5. 1 Thes. ii. 5.

20 [c] I will speak, that I may * be refreshed: [d] I will open my lips and answer.

21 Let me not, I pray you, [e] accept any man's person, neither let me give [f] flattering titles unto man.

22 For [g] I know not to give flattering titles; *in so doing* my Maker would soon take me away.

CHAP. XXXIII.

Elihu requires Job's attention, while he pleads with him, in God's stead, and without terrifying him, 1—7. *He blames him for being too earnest in vindicating himself, and for irreverently complaining of God,* 8—13. *He shows how God instructs men by dreams, afflictions, and messengers; that repenting they may find mercy,* 14—30. *He calls on Job to answer further, or to attend to his discourse,* 31—33.

a xiii 6. xxxiv 2. Ps. xlix. 1—3. Mark iv. 9.
b iii. 1. Ps. lxxviii. 2. Matt. v 2
* Heb. *palate.*
xxxi. 30.
c xxvii. 4. Prov. viii. 7. 8. 1 Thes. ii. 3, 4.
d xv 2. xxxvi. 3, 4. xxxviii. 2. Ps. xxxvii. 30, 31. Prov. xv. 2. 7. xx. 15. xxii. 17, 18.
† Heb *purely.*
e x. 12. xxxii. 8. Gen. ii. 7. Ps. xxxiii 6 Rom. viii. 4. 1 Cor. xv. 45.
f 32, 33. xxxii. 1. 12.
g xxiii. 4, 5. xxxii. 14. Ps 1. 21.

WHEREFORE, Job, I pray thee, [a] hear my speeches, and hearken to all my words.

2 Behold, now [b] I have opened my mouth, my tongue hath spoken in my * mouth.

3 My words *shall be of* [c] the uprightness of my heart: and [d] my lips shall utter knowledge † clearly.

4 [e] The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.

5 [f] If thou canst answer me, [g] set *thy*

V. 18—22. Elihu's mind was full of thoughts, in consequence of his having for a long time silently reflected on the subject, and he was inwardly constrained to speak. With much uneasiness he had refrained himself: his mind was agitated by his own meditations in the manner that fermenting wine is ready to burst the bottle when it cannot have vent; so that it would be a refreshment to him to speak, though it should not profit them. He intended to be impartial, and not to flatter either party, though they were his seniors and superiors; but he would freely reprove what he thought wrong in them, without respect of persons. Indeed he was not used to give flattering titles to any man; and he knew it would displease his Maker; and therefore, as he feared his awful displeasure, and desired mercy from him, he was determined to avoid them. The original word signifies, to give an additional name, as a title of distinction.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The self-flattery of the human heart often prevents men from being convinced of their errors, or from acknowledging that they are such; so that even when not determined at all events to have the last word; they will imagine or pretend some plausible reason for declining an argument in which they have been foiled, whilst they hold their sentiments and criminate their opponents. Indeed it is not worth while to reason with the pertinacious and self-sufficient, or with such as are righteous in their own eyes: yet sometimes *they* who are accepted with God, and have truth and justice on their side, are unjustly charged with obstinacy and self-confidence. An unprejudiced by-stander frequently understands controverted points better than the eager disputants; in almost all contests much may be reproved on both sides: and they who endeavour to distinguish betwixt what is right and what is wrong among all parties, will seldom be approved by the zealots of any, but will commonly come nearest to the truth. If we perceive others in a fault, it is generally adviseable to mention it before them: and it is not sinful anger, if we are *greatly displeased*, to hear God dishonoured, his truths misrepresented, and men unjustly condemned or fatally deceived. It belongs to the aged to take the lead in conversation, and to teach wisdom: and modesty, and deference towards seniors and superiors always become the young. Yet reason is common to man, and God communicates both natural abilities and spiritual gifts, in measure as he pleases. "So that great men are not always wise, neither do the "aged understand judgment:" and by an attention to the word, and a dependence upon the Spirit of God, the young may become wiser than the aged, than their teachers, and their rulers. But this wisdom will render them "swift "to hear, slow to speak," and disposed to give others a patient attention, though they seem to argue inconclusively, and to say little to the purpose. However full we may think ourselves of suitable matter, for the conviction of others, and the termination of a controversy; and whatever uneasiness we feel in keeping silence, when others are discoursing, as we think, in a manner contrary to truth, we should remember, that it is indecent, and savours of arrogance to interrupt them. Nay, if we were sure that the Spirit of God suggested to us what we were about to say, we ought to refrain, until it fairly come to our turn to speak: for 'the spirits of the prophets are subject to "the prophets," and God is the source of order, and not of confusion. But the faithful minister of God, who is filled with the knowledge of his truth and will, and with zeal for his glory and compassion for souls, must be greatly pained by every attempt to silence him: nay, indeed he cannot be silenced; whatever be the consequence, he cannot but speak the things which he has heard and believed. Times and seasons he will regard; but he must speak, that he may be refreshed, whether men will hear or forbear: and he must speak faithfully, without respect of persons, or knowing to give flattering titles: for "he is not a man-"pleaser, but a servant of Jesus Christ;" and is ambitious, whether present or absent, of being accepted of him.

words in order before me, [h] stand up.

6 Behold, [i] I *am* according to thy
* wish [k] in God's stead: [l] I am also
† formed out of the clay.

7 Behold, [m] my terror shall not make
thee afraid, neither shall [n] my hand be
heavy upon thee.

8 Surely thou hast spoken in mine
‡ hearing, and I have heard the voice of
thy words, *saying*,

9 I *am* [o] clean without transgression,
I *am* [p] innocent; neither *is there* iniquity
in me.

10 Behold, [q] he findeth occasions
against me, [r] he counteth me for his
enemy.

11 He [s] putteth my feet in the stocks,
[t] he marketh all my paths.

12 Behold, *in* this [u] thou art not just:
[x] I will answer thee, that [y] God is greater
than man.

13 Why dost thou [z] strive against
him? for [a] he ‖ giveth not account of
any of his matters.

14 ¶ For [b] God speaketh once, yea,
twice, *yet man* [c] perceiveth it not.

15 In [d] a dream, in a vision of the
night, when [e] deep sleep falleth upon
men, in slumberings upon the bed;

16 Then [f] he ‖ openeth the ears of
men, and [g] sealeth their instruction,

17 That he may [h] withdraw man *from*
his * purpose, and hide [i] pride from man.

18 He [k] keepeth back his soul from
the pit, and his life from † perishing by
the sword.

19 He is [l] chastened also with [m] pain
upon his bed, and the multitude of his
bones with strong *pain:*

20 So that [n] his life abhorreth bread,
and his soul ‡ dainty meat.

21 [o] His flesh is consumed away, that
it cannot be seen; and [p] his bones *that*
were not seen stick out.

22 Yea, [q] his soul draweth near unto
the grave, and [r] his life to the destroyers.

h Acts x 26. i ix. 32. 35 xiii. 3. 21, 22. xxiii. 3, 4. xxxi. 35. * Heb. *mouth.* k Gen. xxx. 2. Ex iv. 16. 2 Cor. v. 20. l iv. 19. x. 9. xiii. 12 Gen ii. 7. iii. 19. 2 Cor. v. 1 † Heb. *cut out of.* m ix 34 xiii. 21. Ps lxxxviii. 16. n Ps xxxii. 4. ‡ Heb. *ears.* Deu. xiii 14. Jer. xxix. 23. o ix 17. x. 7. xi. 4. xvi. 17. xxiii. 11, 12. xxvii. 5, 6. xxix. 14. xxxi. 1, &c. p ix. 23. 28. xvii. 9. Jer. ii. 35. q ix. 30, 31 x. 15—17. xiii. 25, 26. xiv. 16, 17. xxxiv. 5, 6. r xiii. 24 xvi. 9. xix 11 xxx 21, 22 xxxi. 35 s xiii. 27 Ps. cv. 18 Jer. xx. 2. Acts xvi 24. t xxxi 4 u i 22 xxxiv. 10—12. 17—19 23 xxxv. 2. xxxvi. 22. 23 Ez. xviii 25 Rom. ix. 19—21. x xxxii. 17 xxxv. 2. y ix. 4 xxvi. 14. xxxv 5. xxxvii. 23. xl 2. 8, 9. Jer. xviii 6. z ix. 14 xv. 25, 26 Is. xlv. 9. Jer. l 24. Ez. xxii 14. Acts v. 39. ix 4, 5. 1 Cor. x. 22. a xl 2 Deut. xxix. 29. Ps cxv. 3 Is xlvi. 10. Dan. iv. 35. Matt. xx. 15 Acts i. 7. Rom. xi. 34 ——‖ Heb *answereth not.*

b xl. 5. Ps. lxii. 11. c 2 Chr. xxxiii. 10. Prov. i. 24. 29. Is. vi. 9. Matt. xiii 14. Mark viii. 17, 18. Luke xxiv. 25. John iii. 19. d iv. 13. Gen. xx. 3. xxxi. 24. Num. xii. 6. Jer. xxiii. 32. Dan. iv. 5. Heb. i. 1 e Gen. xv. 12. Dan. viii. 18. x. 9. f xxxvi. 10. 15. Ps. xl. 6 Is. vi. 10 xlviii 8. l. 5. Luke xxiv. 45 Acts xvi. 14. ‖ Heb. *revealeth*, or, *uncovereth.* 2 Sam. vii. 27. g Neh. ix. 38. Rom xv. 28. h Gen. xx. 6. Hos ii. 6. Matt. xxvii. 19 Acts ix 2—6 xxvii. 10—13. * Heb *work.* i Deut viii. 16. 2 Chr. xxxii. 25, 26 Is ii. 11. Dan iv 30—37 2 Cor xii. 7. Jam iv 10. k Acts xvi. 27—33 Rom ii. 4. 2 Pet iii 9. 15. † Heb *passing.* l v 17, 18 Deut. viii. 5. Ps. xciv. 12, 13 cxix. 67. 71. Is xxvii 9. 1 Cor. xi. 32. Rev. iii. 19.——m vii. 4. xx. 11. xxx. 17, 18 30. 2 Chr. xvi. 10 12 Ps xxxviii. 1—8. Is xxxviii. 12, 13.——n Ps. cvii. 17, 18.——‡ Heb. *meat of desire.* Gen. iii. 6. Jer. iii. 19 Am v. 11. *Marg.* o vii. 5. xiii 28 xiv. 20, 22. xix. 20 Ps. xxxii. 3, 4. xxxix 11 ciii. 3—5 Prov v. 11. p Ps. xxii. 15—17 ——q vii 7. xvii. 1. 13-16. 1 Sam ii. 6. Ps. xxx. 3 lxxxviii. 3—5. Is. xxxviii. 10 ——r xv 21. Ex. xii 23. 2 Sam xxiv. 16. Ps xvii 4. Acts xii 23. 1 Cor. x 10. Rev. ix. 11.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXIII. V. 1—7. Elihu had given his reasons for speaking, and here he demanded the attention of Job in particular, (for Job had sufficiently answered his friends.) He did not speak in haste or passion, but deliberately and with recollection. He meant to speak his undisguised sentiments, in the plainest and most instructive manner: he was the creature of God, dependent on him, and accountable to him; from whose life-giving Spirit he derived his being and rational nature. Job might therefore stand up before him to make the best of his cause. He had desired an impartial judge to be appointed in God's stead to decide upon his appeal: and behold here was one according to his wish, a man like himself, who would neither terrify nor hurt him; as the glorious God might have done, if he had entered into judgment with him; nay, he would not bear so hard on him as his other friends had done.

V. 8—11. Elihu had heard Job's words, and did not condemn him upon suspicion, as his other friends had done. He did not accuse him of being a hypocrite; but as having spoken language unbecoming a man of piety. He had so strenuously insisted upon his own integrity, that he seemed to say, "I am clean without transgression, I am "innocent: neither is there any iniquity in me." Job had not said exactly these words: nay, he had avowed the contrary doctrine: but he had used incautious expressions that admitted of such a construction. The other words charged upon him were nearly what he had spoken. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 12, 13. In this thing at least Elihu maintained, that Job had been culpable; he had charged God foolishly and unjustly, as if his dealings with him were causelessly severe. But he ought to have recollected the infinite greatness of the almighty Sovereign; so that it was the height of madness and presumption to contend with him. He gives no account of his conduct; and which of his creatures hath a right to demand an explanation of his reasons, in those things which he sees good to conceal?

V. 14—18. In many things God acts as a Sovereign, who explains not the meaning of his orders; but in general he shows himself a merciful and kind Father. He does not ask men what methods he should use, but he employs such as are most proper. He *speaks* to them in various ways, and with *frequent repetitions:* but they are so dull, careless, and prejudiced, that *they perceive not his meaning.* Elihu lived before there was a written revelation, and therefore that grand medium of communication is not mentioned: but God then frequently spake to men in dreams and visions; and thus in the dark and retired hours of the night, he caused them even in their sleep to attend to him, and deeply impressed his instructions on their memories. This was intended, not to enable men to understand the reasons of the divine dispensations, but to withdraw them from their sinful purposes, and from their proud rebellion; that being humbled in repentance, and made sensible of their guilt and vileness, they might be preserved from that destruction of soul and body into which they were about to be hurried. Nay, the long-suffering of God, by preserving men from sudden and violent death, when living in sin, kept back their souls from hell, and gave them space for repentance.

23 If there be [s] a messenger with him,
[t] an interpreter, [u] one among a thousand,
[x] to shew unto man his uprightness:
24 [y] Then he is gracious unto him, and
saith, [z] Deliver him from going down to
the pit; [a] I have found * a ransom.
25 [b] His flesh shall be fresher than
† a child's: he shall [c] return to the days
of his youth:
26 He shall [d] pray unto God, and he
will be favourable unto him: [e] and he
shall see his face with joy: for [f] he will
render unto man his righteousness.
27 [g] He ‡ looketh upon men, and *if*
any say, [h] I have sinned, and [i] perverted
that which was [k] right, and [l] it profited
me not;
28 He § will [m] deliver his soul from
going into the pit, and his life shall [n] see
the light.
29 Lo, [o] all these *things* worketh God
‖ oftentimes with man,
30 [p] To bring back his soul from the
pit, to be [q] enlightened with the light of
the living.
31 [r] Mark well, O Job, hearken unto
me: hold thy peace, and I will speak.
32 If thou hast any thing to say, answer me: speak, [s] for I desire to justify
thee.
33 If not, [t] hearken unto me: hold thy
peace, and [u] I shall teach thee wisdom.

s Judges ii 1. *Marg.* 2 Chr. xxxvi 15, 16. Hag. i. 13. Mal. ii. 7 iii. 1. 2 Cor v. 20.
t x. 2. xxxiv. 32. Ps. xciv. 12. Is. lxi. 1—3. Acts viii. 30, 31. 1 Cor xi 30—32. Heb xii. 5—12.
u ix 3 Ec vii.28. Rom xi. 13.
x xi. 6 xxxiv 10, 12. xxxv. 14. xxxvi 3. 8—13. xxxvii 23 Neh. ix. 33 Ps cxix. 75. Lam. iii. 22, 23. 32 39—41. Ez. xviii 25—28. Dan ix. 14.
y v. 18. xxii 21. Ex. xxxiii 19 xxxiv. 6, 7. Ps. lxxxvi. 5. 15 Hos. xiv. 2. 4 Mic vii 18—20. Rom v 20, 21 ——z xxxvi. 10, 11. Ex. xv 26 Ps xxx 9—12 xl 2 lxxi. 3. lxxxvi 13. Is. xxxviii 17—19. Jer. xxxi 20. Zech. ix. 11 ——a xxxvi. 18 Ps. xlix 7, 8 Matt xx. 28. Rom. iii. 24—26. 1 Tim. ii 6. 1 Pet i. 18, 19.——* Heb *an atonement* ——b 2 Kings v. 14.——† Heb *childhood.*——c xlii 16 Deut. xxxiv 7. Josh. xiv. 10, 11. Ps. ciii 5 Hos ii. 15.——d 2 Kings xx. 2—5. 2 Chr xxxiii 12, 13 19. Ps. vi. 1—9 xxviii 1, 2 6. xxx 7—11. xli. 8—11. 1 15. xci. 15. cxvi. 1—6 Is xxx. 19 Jer xxxiii 3 Jon ii 2—7 Acts ix. 11.——e xlii. 8, 9. Num. vi 25. 26. Ps. iv. 6, 7 xvi 11. xxx. 5 lxvii 1. Acts ii 28 Jude 24.——f xxxiv. 11. 1 Sam xxvi. 23 Ps xviii. 20. lxii. 12. Prov. xxiv 12. Matt. x. 41, 42 Heb. xi. 26.——g Gen. xvi. 13 2 Chr xvi. 9. Ps xi. 4. xiv. 2 cxxxix. 1—4 Prov. v. 21. xv. 3. Jer. xxiii. 24.——‡ Or, *shall look upon men, and say I have sinned*, &c.

h vii. 20. Num. xii. 11. 2 Sam. xii. 13. Prov. xxviii 13. Jer. iii 13. xxxi. 18, 19. Luke xv. 18—22 xviii. 13. 1 John i. 8—10.
i Ec v. 8.
k Ps xix. 7, 8. cxix 1. 29. Rom. vii. 12—14. 16. 22.
l xxxiv.9 Jer ii. 8 Matt xvi. 26. Rom. vi 21.
§ Or, *hath delivered my soul*, &c or, *my life.*
m 18 24. xvii. 16. Ps. lv. 23 lxix. 15 Is xxxviii. 17, 18. Rev. xx. 1—3
n 20. 22. iii. 9 16. 20 Ps. xlix. 19. Is. ix. 2 John xi 9
o 14—17. 1 Cor. xii 6 2 Cor v. 5. Eph. i 11. Phil. ii 13. Col. i. 29. Heb. xiii. 21.
‖ Heb. *twice* and *thrice.* 14. xl. 5. 2 Kings vi. 10.
2 Cor xii 8.——p 24. Ps. xl. 2. cxviii. 17, 18 ——q Ps. lvi. 13. Is. ii. 5. John viii. 12.
r xiii 6. xviii 2. xxi. 2. xxxii 11.——s xv. 4, 5. xxi. 27. xxii. 5—9. xxvii. 5.——t Ps. xxxiv. 11. Prov. iv. 1, 2. v. 1, 2.——u 3. Ps. xlix. 3. Prov. viii. 5.

V. 19—26. When men disregard the warnings, and despise the patience of God, he often sends severe afflictions. And if Job had been afflicted on this account, instead of murmuring against God and justifying himself, he ought to have considered what sins he had committed, and what duties he had neglected. For God in love often confined men to beds of sickness, and filled them with exquisite pain in every part, causing them to loathe even the most necessary or delicious food, and reducing them to mere skeletons: and whilst it appeared, that the body was about to drop into the grave, the poor sufferer was perhaps affrighted, lest the soul should fall into the hands of the *destroyers*. Yet all this tended to good, and often terminated well: especially if some pious person were sent as the messenger of God, (as Elihu hoped he was to Job,) to be an interpreter of the painful dispensation, and of the truth and will of God, and to show the sufferer the way of pardon and peace. As such interpreters were scarce, not one amongst a thousand being capable of the service, they were the more to be valued: for they would show the sinner the justice of God in his sufferings and condemnation; his way of pardoning and justifying the penitent believer; his sincerity and faithfulness to his promises; and the way of holiness. Such a messenger frequently proved the instrument of the man's conversion: and the Lord in mercy commanded his deliverance from the pit of destruction, through the *ransom* or *atonement* which he had appointed and revealed, even that of the promised Messiah: and sometimes restored his health, vigour, and comeliness, as if he were become young again. Thus the sinner was taught to pray unto God, and he forgave him; he had comfortable communion with him at his mercy-seat, and hoped to see his face with joy in heaven: and would be graciously recompensed for all the works of righteousness, which he had performed in humble faith and love. Some interpret this *Messenger* or *Angel*, of Christ himself, the *Interpreter* of God's will to man, the chief among the ten thousands of his saints and servants. But as in general He comes to men by his messengers or ministers; and as their instructions and encouragements are deduced from his mediation, and are made effectual by his gracious presence; it does not much signify, whether we interpret the passage, of the messengers of God pointing to the Saviour, or the Saviour revealing himself by their ministry. It is equally immaterial, whether the words, "Deliver him from going "down to the pit," be considered as the language of Christ's intercession, pleading the *ransom* of his blood, in behalf of the sinner: or the words of the Father accepting of this plea, and giving command to save the sinner, satisfied with that appointed ransom: for it cannot reasonably be doubted, but that Elihu had reference to it; though he might also intend the sacrifices which prefigured the great atonement.

V. 27—30. Elihu further showed, that God always observed the ways of men; and when any sinner humbly confessed his transgressions of his *just* and *good* laws, as unreasonable and unprofitable, being ashamed and weary of them, and grieved and self-condemned for them; he would deliver his soul from going down into the pit of destruction, and he should live to enjoy his favour. Thus he brought back sinners from the brink of ruin, to be enlightened in the living and the life-giving knowledge of salvation. He awakened their consciences by visions; he visited them with afflictions, he sent them his messengers and his Gospel; and by his goodness he thus led them to repentance and salvation. Therefore Job had no reason to think that God was become his enemy; but to hope to derive great advantage from his calamities.

V. 31—33. Elihu again demanded Job's attention, as he had much more to say; but if he could answer any thing to what he had urged, he would have him speak before he proceeded: for he greatly desired to find that he was a righteous man, and to clear up his aspersed character. But if Job could not refute his charge, let him be silent, and he would proceed to instruct him further in true wisdom. It seems, that Job was so far convinced by his discourse, that he would not attempt an answer.

CHAP. XXXIV.

Elihu calls on the wise to judge in the cause; and charges Job with arraigning the divine justice, 1—9. He affirms, that the all-powerful and all-perfect God cannot do iniquity; and vindicates his dealings with men, 10—30. He shows Job, that he ought to humble himself before God, and sharply reproves his words, 31—37.

FURTHERMORE Elihu answered and said,

2 Hear my words, [a] O ye wise *men*; and give ear unto me, ye that have knowledge.

3 For [b] the ear trieth words, as the * mouth tasteth meat.

4 Let us [c] choose to us judgment:

a Prov. i. 5. 1 Cor. x. 15. xiv. 20.
b vi 30. xii. 11. 1 Cor. ii. 15. Heb. v. 14.
* Heb. *palate.* xxxi.30. xxxiii. 2.
c 36. Judg. xix. 30. xx. 7. 1 Cor. vi. 2—5 Gal. ii. 11—14. 1 Thes. v. 21.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—13.

We ought always to discourse upon religious subjects with seriousness, recollection, candour, sincerity, and plainness; if we expect to be heard with attention, and to convince and instruct others. When we have evident truth on our side, we may often convince our opponents that they cannot stand before the tribunal of God, by showing them that they cannot justify their conduct before a fellow sinner; who can neither dismay nor hurt them, while he pleads against them in the behalf of God. In the heat of controversy, and when greatly afflicted and tempted, we are apt to utter words which cannot be justified; and if a worse construction be put upon them than we intended, we need not wonder, and should not be offended. Public offences should be publicly rebuked or retracted, to prevent scandal; we may allow a man's general character to be good, and yet reprove him for particular offences. If we seem to justify our whole conduct and murmur against God, in this we are not just: for when we adopt this conduct the subject impeaches the Sovereign, and the foolish sinful worm arraigns the conduct of the wise and righteous Lord of all! The infinite power and authority of God should deter us from thus contending with him; for he will not, he cannot, submit his conduct to our judgment. But when we consider that he excels the noblest of his creatures in all things else, as much as in majesty and greatness, and is in all respects consummate perfection; we must perceive, that every objection to his dispensations is rebellion and ingratitude.

V. 14—33.

The general tendency of all the Lord's dealings with men, is to lead them to repent and turn unto him: but the proud careless rebel does not regard, though he speak to him again and again. The works of creation proclaim his eternal power and Godhead, and leave all those without excuse, who neither worship him nor are thankful. He speaks by conscience; but its voice is silenced by the clamorous demands of men's lusts and passions. Terrifying dreams convey forcibly salutary alarms, but unless the Lord open the ear and seal the instruction, they are speedily forgotten. The judgments of God on others have a warning voice to us; and should serve to withdraw us from our sinful purposes, and to induce us to humble ourselves before him, that we may be kept from the pit of destruction: whilst his merciful protection of us, when others are cut off and we are in danger, should lead us to repentance. When these methods are ineffectual, sharp afflictions become the voice of God. Wasting sickness and excruciating pain mar our relish of every comfort, and remind us of death and eternity. This proclaims the vanity of the world, the evil of sin, the power of God's wrath, our need of mercy, and the danger to which we are exposed. But how many repeatedly endure all this, yet remain unhumbled and unchanged! It is however a token for good, when the servants and ministers of God are sent to interpret to the afflicted his dispensations and word. This is a good service, and it is lamentable that so few are qualified for it and take pleasure in it: and it is a most important additional charity, when the sick in hospitals are diligently attended by faithful instructors; as it often proves the means of salvation to their souls. But Christ himself is the only effectual *Interpreter;* by his Spirit he shows the sinner the way of acceptance and salvation; who believing, receives the gift of righteousness and partakes of sanctification: and through the ransom of the atoning blood, his prayers are answered, his soul is rescued, and perhaps his health and comfort are restored: he comes with joy before the mercy-seat, and beholds by faith the countenance of his reconciled Father; and waits for the Saviour's appearing to judge the world, with animating hope of receiving that crown of righteousness, which is laid up for him in heaven. In short, the eyes of the Lord are upon all the ways of the children of men: he sees them when committing their secret abominations; he sees them when, convinced of guilt, they condemn themselves, abhor their crimes, are covered with shame, and filled with fear of wrath; and when weary of their sins they long for deliverance: and he will assuredly have mercy upon, and save them. By what means soever we are kept back from the pit to be "enlightened with the "light of the living," we shall bless the Lord for them at last, and should bless him for them now, though painful and distressing. To the end of our lives corrections are the needful and salutary means of keeping us near, or bringing us nearer, to God, and as such, are not only to be submitted to, but to be valued as pledges of love: for it is better to be "chastened of the Lord, than to be con-"demned with the world." Finally, we should desire to justify others, as far as consists with truth: but a wise man will be afraid of too strenuously justifying himself; he will rather hearken to reproof and receive instruction, that he may increase in wisdom and knowledge.

let us [d] know among ourselves what *is* good.

5 For Job hath said, [e] I am righteous: and [f] God hath taken away my judgment.

6 Should [g] I lie against my right? my * wound *is* incurable without transgression.

7 What man *is* like Job, *who* [h] drinketh up scorning like water?

8 Which [i] goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.

9 For he hath said, [k] It profiteth a man nothing that he should [l] delight himself with God.

10 Therefore hearken unto me, ye men of † understanding: [m] far be it from God, *that he should do* wickedness; and *from* the Almighty, *that he should commit* iniquity.

11 For [n] the work of a man shall he render unto him, and [o] cause every man to find according to *his* ways.

12 Yea, [p] surely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty [q] pervert judgment.

13 [r] Who hath given him a charge over the earth? or who hath disposed ‡ the whole world?

14 If he [s] set his heart § upon man, *if* [t] he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath;

15 [u] All flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust.

16 If now [x] *thou hast* understanding, hear this: hearken to the voice of my words.

17 Shall [y] even he that hateth right ‖ govern? and [z] wilt thou condemn him that is most just?

18 *Is it fit* [a] to say to a king, *Thou art* wicked? *and* to princes, *Ye are* ungodly?

19 *How much less to him* that [b] accepteth not the person of [c] princes, nor [d] regardeth the rich more than the poor? for [e] they all *are* the work of his hands.

d Is. xl. 2–5. John vii. 24. Rom xii. 2.
e x. 7. xi. 4. xvi. 17 xxix. 14. xxxii. 1. xxxiii. 9.
f ix. 17 xxvii. 2.
g xxvii. 4–6.
* Heb. *arrow*. vi. 4. xvi. 13. 17.
h xv. 16 Deut. xxix. 19. Prov. i. 22 iv. 17.
i ii. 10. xi 3. xv. 5. Ps i 1 xxvi. 4. 1. 18. lxxiii 12–15. Prov. i. 15. ii. 12. iv 14 xiii 20. 1 Cor. xv. 33.
k ix. 22, 23. 30, 31. xxi. 14–16 30. xxii 17. xxxv 3. Mal. iii. 14.
l xxvii. 10. Ps. xxxvii. 4.
† Heb. *heart* 2, 3. 34. Prov vi 32 xv 32 *Marg.*
m xxxvi 23. xxxvii. 23 Gen. xviii. 25. Deut xxxii 4. 2 Chr. xix. 7. Ps xcii. 15 Jer. xii. 1 Rom. iii 4, 5. ix. 14. Jam. i. 13.
n xxxiii. 26 Ps. lxii. 12. Prov. xxiv. 12 Jer. xxxii 19. Ez xxxiii. 17–20. Matt. xvi 27. Rom. ii 6. 2 Cor. v. 10. 1 Pet. i. 17 Rev. xxii 12.——o Prov i. 31. Gal. vi 7, 8.
p Ps. xci. 7. cxlv 17. Hab. i. 12, 13.
q viii. 3.
r xxxvi. 28. xxxviii. 4, &c. xl. 8–11. 1 Chr. xxix. 11 Prov. viii. 23–30. Is. xl 13, 14. Dan. iv. 35. Rom xi 34–36.
‡ Heb. *all of it.*
s vii. 17. ix. 4.
§ Heb. *upon him.*
t Ps. civ. 29. Is. xxiv. 22.
u xxx. 23 Gen. iii. 19. Ps. xc 3–10. Ec. xii. 7. Is xxvii. 4 lvii 16.
x xii. 3 xiii. 2–6.
y Gen. xviii. 25. 2 Sam xxiii. 3. Rom. iii 5–7.
‖ Heb. *bind.*
z i 22. xl. 8. 2 Sam xix. 21. Rom. ix. 14.
a Ex xxii. 28 Prov. xvii 26. Acts xxiii. 3 5. Rom xiii. 7. 1 Pet ii. 17. 2 Pet. ii. 10. Jude 8.
b xiii. 8 Deu. x. 17. 2 Chr. xix. 7 Acts x. 34. Rom. ii 11. Gal. ii. 6. Eph vi 9. Col iii 25. 1 Pet i. 17.
c xii 19 21. Ps ii. 2–4 Ec v. 8 Is iii. 14.
d xxxvi. 19. Jam ii. 5.——e xxxi 15 Ps. xlix. 6, 7. Prov. xiv. 31 xxii. 2.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXIV. V. 1—4. Elihu, having paused to hear whether Job had any thing to answer, proceeded to call upon those present to attend to his discourse. He addressed them as men of wisdom and discernment; and doubted not but that their understandings would decide whether the expressions which Job had used were proper or not, as readily as the palate distinguishes the taste of meat. He desired therefore that certain principles might be laid down, according to which they might form a judgment: and that they would confer among themselves, and come to an explicit determination on that subject.

V. 5—9. In vindicating his character, Job had used language which seemed to imply an intention of fully justifying himself; and whilst he complained that God dealt rigorously with him, he expressed himself so vehemently, that he appeared to charge him with *injustice;* when urged to confess his crimes, he still more earnestly protested his righteousness, and a determination not to accuse himself falsely; and in his bitter complainings he spake of his *wounds as incurable*, without admitting that his *transgressions had deserved them.* These expressions induced Elihu to conclude that Job allowed himself in an astonishing license of language: that he took pleasure in scoffing at the works and truths of God, as well as in scorning the warnings and counsels of his friends; and that he agreed in principles and practice with wicked men, whose company he seemed to prefer, and whose conduct he encouraged; having indeed asserted that no profit would accrue to those who delighted in the service of God. Yet Job by no means intended all that Elihu charged upon him. He had not spoken precisely all the words which Elihu, quoting from memory, attributed to him; those which he had used might admit of a more favourable construction; and other parts of his discourse plainly showed that his deliberate judgment widely differed from the sentiments apparently conveyed by some of his detached expressions. He had repeatedly owned that he was a sinner; and he spake of the wicked as reserved to the day of wrath and destruction. (*Marg. Ref.*) But Elihu did not condemn Job as a hypocrite, and he, upon reflection, would be conscious that he had spoken unadvisedly; he therefore quietly submitted to his reproof: choosing, as we may suppose, rather to bear more blame than he deserved, than to vindicate himself when he knew that he had been criminal.

V. 10—15. Elihu next laid down the principle by which he desired that Job's conduct might be tried, namely: It must appear to every pious mind, impious and blasphemous to intimate that God was capable of committing injustice: but whatever expressions seemed to imply that he punished without cause, partook of this impiety; and as Job's words implied this charge, they must be condemned. On the contrary it was certain, that the righteous Judge of all would render to every man according to his works; punishing no one above his deserts, nor suffering any of the wicked to escape with impunity; yet graciously rewarding the good works of the penitent and believing.—And surely none could think that the almighty Sovereign of the world would pervert judgment! His perfections and authority being underived, independent, and absolute, he must be all-sufficient for his own glory and felicity, he could not be biassed by fear or partiality. Indeed, if he were disposed to exercise rigorous justice, and to set his heart *upon* or *against* man: the world was so absolutely at his disposal, that he needed only to recal the spirit or soul, and withdraw the breath that he had given, and all the inhabitants of the earth would perish without being able to make the least resistance.

20 In [f] a moment shall they die, and the people shall be [g] troubled at midnight, and pass away: and * the mighty shall be taken away [h] without hand.

21 For [i] his eyes *are* upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings.

22 *There is* [k] no darkness, [l] nor shadow of death, where [m] the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.

23 For [n] he will not lay upon man more *than right;* [o] that he should † enter into judgment with God.

24 He shall [p] break in pieces mighty men without ‡ number, and [q] set others in their stead.

25 Therefore [r] he knoweth their works, and he overturneth *them* [s] in the night, so that they are ◊ destroyed.

26 He striketh them as wicked men [t] in the ‖ open sight of others;

27 Because they [u] turned back * from him, and [x] would not consider any of his ways.

28 So that [y] they cause the cry of the poor to come unto him, [z] and he heareth the cry of the afflicted.

f Ps. lxxiii 19. Is. xxx 13. xxxvii. 38 Dan v. 30. Luke xii 20 Acts xii. 23. 1 Thes. v. 2 2 Pet ii 3.
g Ex. xii 29. Is. xxxvii 36 Mat. xxv. 6. Luke xvii. 26—29
* Heb. *they shall take away the mighty*
h 1 Sam. xxv. 37—39. xxvi. 10 Is. x. 16—19. xxx. 30—33 Dan. ii. 34. 44, 45. Zech. iv. 6
i xxxi 4. Gen. xvi. 13 2 Chr. xvi. 9. Ps. xxxiv 15. Prov. v. 21. xv. 3. Jer. xvi. 17. xvii 10. xxxii. 19 Am. ix. 8.
k Ps. cxxxix. 11, 12. Is xxix. 15. Jer. xxiii. 24. Am. ix. 2, 3. 1 Cor. iv. 5. Heb. iv 13. Rev. vi. 16.
l iii. 5. xxiv. 17. Is. ix. 2.
m xxxi. 3. Ps v. 5. Prov x. 29. Matt. vii. 23. Luke xiii. 27.
n 10—12. xi 6. Ezra ix. 13 Ps. cxix. 137. Dan. ix. 7—9.
o ix. 32. 33. xvi. 21. xxiii. 7. Jer. ii. 5. Rom. ix. 20.
† Heb. *go.*
p xix. 2. Ps ii. 9. lxxii. 4. xciv. 5. Jer. ii. 20—22. Dan ii. 34, 35. 44, 45 ——q 1 Sam. ii 30—35. xv 28. 1 Kings xiv. 7, 8. 14. Ps. cxiii. 7, 8. Dan. v. 28—31 ——r Ps. xxxiii. 15 Is. lxvi. 18 Hos. vii 2 Am. viii. 7. Rev. xx 12.——s 20. Cant. iii 8 Is. xv 1 1 Thes v 2.——◊ Heb. *crushed.*
t Ex. xiv 30. Deut. xiii. 9—11. xxi 21. 2 Sam. xii. 11, 12. Ps lviii. 10, 11 Is lxvi 24. 1 Tim. v. 20 Rev. xviii 9, 10. 20.——‖ Heb. *place of beholders.*——u 1 Sam xv. 11 Ps. cxxv. 5. Zeph. i. 6. Luke xvii. 31, 32. Acts xv. 38. 2 Tim iv. 10 Heb. x 39
* Heb *from after him.*——x Ps. xxviii. 5. cvii. 43. Is. i. 3. v. 12. Hag. ii. 15—19
y xxii 9, 10. xxiv. 12. xxix 12, 13 xxxi. 19, 20 xxxv. 9. Ex. ii. 23, 24 iii. 7. 9. Ps xii. 5. Is. v. 7. Jam. v. 4.——z Ex. xxii. 23—27.

29 [a] When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? and [b] when he hideth *his* face, [c] who then can behold him? [d] whether *it be done* against a nation, or against a man only:

30 [e] That the hypocrite reign not, lest the people be ensnared.

31 Surely [f] it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne *chastisement,* I will not offend *any more:*

32 *That* [g] *which* I see not teach thou me: [h] if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.

33 [i] *Should it be* † according to thy mind? [k] he will recompense it, [l] whether thou refuse, or whether thou choose; and not I: therefore speak [m] what thou knowest.

34 Let men of ‡ understanding tell me, and let a wise man hearken unto me.

35 Job [n] hath spoken without knowledge, and his words *were* without wisdom.

36 ◊ My desire *is that* Job may be [o] tried unto the end, because of [p] *his* answers for wicked men.

a xxix. 1—3. 2 Sam. vii 1. Is. xiv. 3—8. xxvi. 3 xxxii. 17. John xiv 27. Rom. viii. 31—34. Phil. iv. 7.
b xxiii 8, 9. Ps. xiii. 1. xxvii 9. xxx. 7. cxliii. 7.
c xii. 14. xxiii. 13.
d 2 Kings xviii. 9—12. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 14—17. Jer xxvii. 8.
e 24. 1 Kings xii. 28—30. 2 Kings xxi. 9. Ps. xii. 8. Ex. ix. 18. Hos v. 11 xiii. 11. Mic. vi. 16. 2 Thes. ii. 4—11. Rev. xiii. 3, 4. 11—14.
f xxxiii. 27. xl. 3—5. xlii. 6. Lev. xxvi. 41. Ezra ix. 13, 14. Neh. ix. 33—38. Jer. xxxi. 18, 19. Dan. ix. 7—14. Mic. vii. 9.
g x. 2. Ps. xix. 12. xxv. 4, 5. cxxxix. 23, 24. cxliii. 8—10.
h Prov. xxviii 13. Luke iii. 8—15. Eph. iv. 25—28.
i ix 12. xviii. 4. Is. xlv. 9. Rom. ix. 20. xi. 35.
† Heb. *from with thee?*
k 11. xv. 31. Ps. lxxxix 30—32. Prov. xi. 31. 2 Thes. i. 6, 7. Heb. ii. 2. xi. 26.
l Ps. cxxxv. 6.
Matt. xx 12—15.——m xxxiii. 5. 32 ——‡ Heb. *heart.* 2. 4. 10. 16. 1 Cor. x. 15.
n xiii. 2. xv 2. xxxv. 16. xxxviii. 2. xlii. 3 ——◊ Or, *My father, Let Job,* &c.——o xxiii. 10. Ps xvii. 3. xxvi. 2. Jam. v. 11.——p 8, 9. xii. 6. xxi. 7. xxiv. 1.

V. 16—19. In the next place Elihu appealed to Job himself, who was reputed to be a man of understanding. Could he suppose that the Lord resembled those earthly princes, who hate right and abuse their authority, and who are unfit to rule, being the scourges of mankind? If he abhorred that idea, would he allow God to be most just, and yet condemn his conduct in afflicting him? It would be highly criminal and extremely imprudent to revile an earthly monarch as a tyrant, or even his nobles as iniquitous and oppressive; though the charge might be just, and a prophet might very properly prefer it. How impious and infatuated must it then be to accuse the almighty God in such a manner, whose justice is as absolute as his authority; and who in perfect impartiality regards the poor as much as the rich, having formed both as his creatures, and made the one poor and the other rich in his providence!

V. 20—30. Men respect the great, from dread of their resentment, as well as desire of their favour; but God could have no inducement of this kind. When he saw good to inflict vengeance, he was able to cut off the most powerful by a sudden and irresistible stroke: earthquakes or other calamities, sometimes in a moment overwhelmed whole multitudes, at midnight, when asleep, or most secure; at once they were troubled and destroyed, even the mightiest of them, without any human concurrence; (*Marg. Ref.*) His omnipresence and omniscience could not be evaded, nor his omnipotence resisted: yet he would punish none above their deserts, nor use his power to oppress, that any one should have just cause to institute a process against him. But whilst he crushed the mightiest without number, (or *such* as if paid to examine evidences,) and exalted others to their stations, he knew all their secret sins, and therefore destroyed them at once. Many he thus openly punished, for an example to others, as malefactors are scourged or executed publicly: but these were generally apostates, or impious persons, or vile hypocrites; who by their oppression of the poor, caused them to cry and pray unto him, and he heard and avenged them. In short, if he were pleased to give outward prosperity or inward peace, none could interrupt it: but if he in anger withdrew his protecting or comforting presence, none could obtain the benefit or enjoyment of it; and whole nations are as liable to these changes as individuals. Indeed one great end of all these dispensations was, to deprive ambitious hypocrites of their authority, which they sought by iniquitous means, and abused to bad purposes; ensnaring, corrupting, oppressing, or fatally prejudicing the people, over whom they aspired to reign. Even Elihu seems to have had some suspicions that Job was a dissembler; and spake as if he was at a loss how to reconcile his calamities with his character for piety; and though the case would have been plain, if he had been a hypocrite, advanced to authority, but now depressed, lest he should lead the people

q 1 Sam. xv. 23. Is. i. 19, 20. r xxvii. 23.

37 For he addeth [q] rebellion unto his sin, [r] he clappeth *his hands* among us, and [s] multiplieth his words against God.

s viii. 2, 3. xi. 2, 3 xxxv 3, 3. 16. xlii. 7.

into sin and misery: yet he still dared not to condemn him, but hoped the best.

V. 31—37. Elihu maintained, that it behooved Job to speak and act in a far different manner under his afflictions; it was meet that any man in his situation, should express himself with humble resignation to the will of God; should consider his afflictions as a chastisement, and a call to repent of his sins; and should promise greater watchfulness against them. He ought to entreat the Lord to teach him what he did not know, and to convince him of those sins which he did not recollect; determining by divine grace to repent and forsake them. But could Job suppose, that things would be ordered according to his mind, whilst he continued so rebellious? Did he expect that God would change his plan to please him? No; he would certainly recompense him for his harsh and rash speeches and other sins, whether he accepted of, or rebelled against, the correction. This was the Lord's doing, not Elihu's; though he warned him, and advised him to retract his words and humble himself before God. Let him, however, give the best reasons for his conduct, that he was able: for hitherto any wise man would determine Job's words to have been very erroneous. He desired therefore that his conduct might be fully investigated, nay, that his heavy trials might continue till he was humbled, and brought to retract his confident self justification: for he had in fact made an excuse for wicked men, as if their conduct was not so ruinous and hateful as it really was. So that rebellion against Providence was added to his other sins: yea, he had concluded his protestation of innocence, with an air of insulting triumph over his opponents; and had multiplied his words against God himself. Job had given some ground for these charges: but Elihu evidently made the worst of his expressions, and criminated him much more than the Lord afterwards did. Several of the clauses in these verses are to us very difficult; and consequently are differently interpreted. That which appeared the most satisfactory interpretation has been chosen. Bishop Patrick paraphrases the thirty-third verse thus; 'Hast thou addressed God in this manner? Answer me that question; for God will recompense it, if thou dost despise such good counsel; which perhaps thou wilt choose to do; but so would not I. Speak therefore thy opinion.'

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—15.

It is generally prudent to conciliate the affections of all whose benefit we seek, or whose help we want, by acknowledging in them the good which they really possess; and when we address men, as endued with wisdom and piety, we cogently admonish them to act consistently with their character: nor should we withhold this tribute of respect from any, because we deem them in some respects mistaken. An appeal may safely be made to the plainest person, whose understanding is enlightened, and whose heart is sanctified by the Spirit of God, and who is well versed in the Scriptures, how far such and such sentiments, expressions, tempers, and actions, accord with the Christian character? and he will readily decide a case, when impartially stated, with more accuracy, than the most sagacious of those who are wise in this world, and lean to their own understandings. For he chooses to himself the oracles of God as his standard; and by experience, observation, and conference with his brethren, he has his senses exercised to discern good and evil, and to know, approve, and savour that which is good. It is discordant in the ears of a spiritual man, to hear men intent on justifying themselves; or reflecting on the dealings of God, as unjust or unkind; or supposing that they suffer without remedy or transgression. He listens to their words with astonishment, and is apt to suspect them of pride and contempt of God. He thinks that they imitate the example, and join themselves to the company of evil doers, and he is ready to infer, that they consider religion itself as an unprofitable thing. This jealousy for the honour of God, and deep acquaintance with the depravity of man, will indeed sometimes render pious persons too suspicious and severe in censuring such as vindicate themselves from unjust aspersions, in an unguarded manner: and thus they will fail of making due allowance for circumstances of peculiar temptation and difficulty. But the believer, when convinced that his reprover means well, and when conscious of having deserved censure, will on calm reflection, submit to such rebukes as are too rigorous, rather than engage in minute exculpation. All pious men have ever agreed, that it is delightful and profitable to serve God: they all abhor the thought of charging him with injustice: they are satisfied that his moral perfections are underived, absolute, and unchangeable, as well as his power and authority: they know that he readily could, and justly might, consign the bodies of all the millions of the human species to the dust, and their souls to destruction: and it appears to them madness to provoke him "in whom our breath is, and whose are all "our ways." And whilst life and hope remain, they cannot deliberately allow, that a sinner can have cause to murmur, but are sure that he must have great cause to be thankful.

V. 16—37.

It is evident, that it must be immensely more dangerous and atrocious to arraign the conduct of God, than that of an earthly prince. Yet all our murmurs, when duly investigated, will be found to have a tendency to the blasphemous sentiment, that the Governor of the world hates right; and to condemn him who is most just! and therefore they are pregnant with rebellion. But indeed his impartiality and condescension are infinite; "he accepts "not the persons of princes; nor regards the rich more "than the poor." When he seeth good to punish, destruction becometh inevitable; and frequently cometh with sudden and dreadful surprise, upon the careless multitude, or the haughtiest potentate. "His eyes are upon the ways of "men, and he seeth all their goings:" there is no secret cavern or midnight darkness, "where the workers of "iniquity can hide themselves," or their crimes, from their omnipresent Judge; or where they may shelter themselves from his omnipotent indignation. But he will never give any man cause to appeal from his judgment, by laying upon him more than he deserves. He knows the works

CHAP. XXXV.

Elihu further reproves Job's words in justifying himself; and shows, that the effects of man's conduct extend to man alone, and not to God, 1—8. *He observes, that if God hear not the cry of the oppressed, it is because they do not address him aright,* 9—13. *He exhorts Job to patience and trust in God,* 14—16.

a Matt. xii. 36, 37. Luke xix. 22.
b ix. 17. x. 7. xvi. 17. xix. 6, 7. xxvii. 2 xxxiv. 5. xl. 8.
c ix. 21, 22. x. 15. xxi. 15. Ps. lxxiii. 13 Mal. iii. 14.

ELIHU spake moreover, and said,
2 [a] Thinkest thou this to be right, *that* thou saidst, [b] My righteousness *is* more than God's?
3 For thou saidst, [c] What advantage will it be unto thee? *and,* What profit shall I have, * *if I be cleansed* from my sin?
4 I will † answer thee, and [d] thy companions with thee.
5 [e] Look unto the heavens, and see; and behold [f] the clouds *which* are higher than thou.
6 If thou sinnest, [g] what doest thou against him? or *if* thy transgressions be multiplied, what doest thou unto him?
7 If thou be righteous, [h] what givest thou him? or what receiveth he of thine hand?
8 Thy wickedness [i] *may hurt* a man as thou *art;* and thy righteousness [k] *may profit* the son of man.

* Or, by it *more than by my sin.*
† Heb. *return to the words*
d xxxiv 8. Prov. xiii 20.
e xxii. 12. xxv. 5, 6. xxxvi 26—33. xxxvii 1—5. 22 23 1 Kings viii. 27. Ps. viii. 3, 4. Is. xl. 22, 23 lv. 9
f xxxvi 29 xxxvii. 16. Nah. i. 3.
g Prov. viii. 36. ix. 12. Jer. vii. 19
h xxii. 2, 3, 1 Chr. xxix. 14. Ps. xvi. 2. Rom. xi. 35.
i Josh. vii 1—5. 24, 25. xxii. 20. Ec ix. 18. Jon. i 12.
k xlii. 8. Gen. xii. 2. xviii 24, &c. xix 29. Ps. cvi. 23. 30. Ez. xxii. 30. Acts xxvii. 24. Heb. xi. 7.

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of all men, and sees far more evil in every one than we suspect: therefore in his most terrible judgments his justice must be acknowledged; and even when "the wicked shall "be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God;" the publishing of their crimes will demonstrate the righteousness of their dreadful doom. But the vengeance of the Almighty, either here or hereafter, will be most terrible against apostate professors; those who have deliberately rejected his authority and his Gospel; and such as have cloaked their ambitious designs under a hypocritical profession of piety. Men of these characters will perhaps be disappointed and exposed in this world, for a warning to others, and to prevent the effect of their crimes. It is, however, certain, that they who have the Lord for their adversary must eventually be wretched. But, if he be for us, who can be against us? If he give quietness who can create trouble? The slanderer's envenomed tongue, the persecutor's cruel rage, the tempter's malicious assaults, with pain, poverty, tortures, and impending death, in vain attempt to render those miserable whom God comforts; or to separate his people from his love. This "indeed is the "heritage of the servants of the LORD;" but it is also proposed to the chief of sinners: and chastenings often concur with his word in warning them to flee from the wrath to come. Surely then it is meet that we should address ourselves unto God, when he afflicts us with the language of humble submission: confessing our transgressions, and praying to be further enlightened in the knowledge of his truth, and in an acquaintance with our own sinfulness; and that he would incline and enable us to repent and forsake all our sins; that "where we have done iniquity, we may do so no more." When we are brought to this frame of spirit, we shall see it unreasonable to expect that matters should be according to our minds: we shall perceive, that whether we refuse or choose, God will chasten us as much and as long as he seeth good; and probably this will be, till we kiss the rod and welcome the correction. But, alas! how often are our tempers and conduct contrary to this reasonable state of mind! When we have spoken all we know, men of understanding and wisdom will agree that we have uttered things which sprang from ignorance or error, or savoured of pride and ingratitude: nay, we shall often upon a review be conscious of it ourselves. As far as this emboldens wicked men in their crimes, or hardens them in their prejudices, it should be openly retracted; and all concerned should combine to convince the offender and bring him to repentance. This is an act of genuine friendship: but we should be careful not to do it with asperity, or to represent the words and actions of our brethren as worse than they are. It is, however, desirable for us all to be tried completely; and even to have our afflictions continued, till they have done their work: for it is better to be severely reproved and chastened, than to be left to persevere in rebellion, to prosper in iniquity, to triumph in error, and to multiply words and transgressions against God.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXV. V. 1—3. As Job attempted no answer, Elihu proceeded still further to reprove his improper language. Job had laboured to prove, that there was no exact discrimination in this world betwixt the righteous and the wicked: and he seemed to Elihu to assert, that it would be no advantage to any one, as it had been none to him, to bestow pains in seeking to be cleansed from sin. This he thought equivalent to saying, "that his righteousness was more than God's:" for that he did his duty: but God did not fulfil his promises, and punished him more severely than he deserved. Job had not spoken exactly these words, and certainly had no such meaning; but he had dropped some expressions capable of being thus understood; and it was proper they should be noticed, lest others should make a bad use of them.

V. 4—8. In answer to Job, and those, whether present or absent, who were disposed to side with him, Elihu called his attention to the visible heavens, the very clouds of which were higher than he, out of his reach, and not affected by his conduct: it must then be evident, that the infinitely glorious God could not be either a gainer or loser by any of his actions: (*Note,* xxii. 1—4.) The most numerous and atrocious crimes which men could perpetrate, would not interrupt the divine felicity; nor

9 By reason of the multitude of oppressions, [l] they make *the oppressed* to cry: they cry out by reason of [m] the arm of the mighty.

10 But [n] none saith, [o] Where *is* God [p] my Maker, [q] who giveth songs in the night;

11 Who [r] teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven?

12 [s] There they cry, but no one giveth answer, because of the pride of evil men.

13 Surely [u] God will not hear vanity, neither will the Almighty [x] regard it.

14 Although [y] thou sayest thou shalt not see him, [z] *yet* judgment *is* before him; therefore [a] trust thou in him.

15 But now, [b] because *it is* not *so*, * he hath [c] visited in his anger; yet † he knoweth *it* not [d] in great extremity:

16 Therefore doth Job [e] open his mouth in vain; he multiplieth words without knowledge.

l xxiv. 12. xxxiv. 28. Ec. ii. 23. iii. 7. 9. Neh. v. 1—5. Ps. xii. 5. xliii. 2. lv. 2, 3. lvi. 1. 2. Luke xviii. 3—7.
m xl. 9. Ps. x. 15.
n xxxvi. 13. 1 Chr. x. 13, 14. 2 Chr. xxviii. 22, 23. Is. viii. 21.
o Is. li. 13. Ec. xii. 1. 1 Pet. iv. 19.
p xxxvii. 22. xxxvi. 3. Is. liv. 5.
q Ps. xlii. 8. lxxvii. 6. cxix. 62. cxlix. 5. Acts xvi. 25.
r xxxii. 8. Gen. i. 26. ii. 7. Ps. xcix. 12.
s Ps. xviii. 41. Prov. i. 24. John ix. 31. —— t Ps. lxxiii. 6—8. cxxiii. 3, 4. Is. xiv. 14—17.
u xxii. 22—27. xxvii. 8, 9. Pro. xv. 8, 29. xxviii. 9. Ec. v. 1—3. Is. i. 15. Jer. xi. 11. Hos. vii. 14. viii. 2, 3. Matt. vi. 7. xx. 21. Jam. iv. 3.
x xxx. 20. Ps. cii. 17. Am. v. 22.
y ix. 11. xxiii. 3. 8—10.
z ix. 19. xix. 7. Ps. xcvii. 2. Is. xxx. 18. liv. 17. Mic. vii. 7—9.
a Ps. xxvii. 12—14. xxxvii. 5, 6. lxii. 5. 8. Is. l. 10. Rom. viii. 33, 34.
b ix. 14. xiii. 15. Num. xx. 12. Luke i. 20.
c Ps. lxxxix. 32. Rev. iii. 19. —— † That is, *Job*. —— d iv. 5. xxx. 15, &c. Ps. lxxxviii. 11—16. Heb. xii. 11, 12. —— e iii. 1. xxxiii. 2. 8—12. xxxiv. 35—37. xxxviii. 2. xlii. 3.
* That is, *God*.

could any human righteousness profit God or confer an obligation upon him. His government was therefore administered upon the purest principles of equity and wisdom, for the display of his own glorious perfections, and for the greatest good of the universe. And therefore, as the Lord acted upon such fixed and immutable principles, it was absurd and impious to suppose that he deviated from rectitude, in any particular instance, to punish those who did not deserve it: or that piety could eventually prove unprofitable.

V. 9—13. (xxiv. 12.) Job had stated that the *oppressed cry out*, but are not delivered, and that the oppressors remain unpunished: and Elihu, in showing how the wickedness of some men made others to suffer, attempted to account for this. The afflicted cried out indeed by reason of the power of their oppressors; but they did not repent, or seek comfort from God, who can fill the hearts of his servants with joy, and their mouths with songs of praise, in the darkest night of distress. (*Marg. Ref.*) The Creator had endued them with a capacity of knowing more than the beasts and fowls; having formed them capable of receiving the knowledge of his being and perfections, and thus of seeking help and comfort from him under their trouble. But they who only groaned under distresses, without repentance, faith, or prayer, did no more than the brutes, which cry out when they are pained. Therefore they received no answer from God, when suffering under the oppression of proud tyrants; for he would not regard the *vain* and rebellious complaints of ungodly men. And indeed Job's complaint, that the Lord would not hear his cry, (xix. 7.) originated from a similar cause: for though he might not be an ungodly man; yet he had not duly humbled himself under his afflictions, and therefore was disregarded. The original word rendered *my Maker*, (10.) is plural: and some think it indicates the plurality of persons in the unity of the Godhead.

V. 14—16. Job had frequently expressed himself as having no hope that the Lord would appear for his relief. But Elihu reminded him, that God set judgment before him, and always acted in wisdom, equity, and faithfulness: he would therefore certainly do him justice; and he would likewise show him mercy if he duly sought it: and he exhorted him to trust in him and wait his time. But as he had yielded to unbelief and impatience, the Lord had visited him in anger; and so long as he indulged the same rebellious spirit, he would not *know him*, or *take any favourable notice of him*, in his greatest extremity. Therefore he hitherto had spoken to no purpose, but had multiplied inconsiderate and sinful words, in disputing with his friends, when he ought to have been humbling himself before God.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is very useful to appeal to men's reason and conscience, concerning their conduct in those things which have been evidently faulty: for many speak and do in haste, and when warmed in dispute, what they will not deliberately justify. Indeed the expressions of men when angry are often worse than their meaning: and though it be unfair to condemn them for *inferences* which they disallow; yet it is proper to show them how their words may produce bad consequences, that they may be humbled for their rashness, and speak more cautiously another time. The immensity of the works of God may lead us to some feeble apprehensions of his infinite Majesty: and the consideration of his underived and unchangeable glory and felicity should convince us, that all his commandments, judgments, and dispensations, result from his essential perfections. He forbids and punishes that which is evil in itself and tends to misery: he commands and delights in what is good and tends to felicity, without any possible accession to his own infinite blessedness. This is the proper display of his own glory, and demands the tribute of our adoring praise. The Judge of all the earth cannot but do what is right, though we are often incapable of discerning the reasons of his conduct: but as we have all multiplied transgressions against him; and as he cannot receive any thing from us which he hath not first given unto us, we can have no cause to complain of hard measures when afflicted: and as our Judge is now, as a Saviour, on a mercy-seat, we can have no reason to conclude, that it would be in vain for us to repent, seek forgiveness, and cleanse ourselves from our iniquities: and when impatience, pride, and unbelief suggest such conclusions, we associate ourselves for the time with the workers of iniquity, and expose ourselves to just reproofs. Whilst a righteous man becomes a public blessing, in proportion to his station in society, the exalted oppressor multiplies iniquities and miseries: and though the oppressed, through their own criminality, may fail of finding redress, or though God may leave them for a time under this trial

CHAP. XXXVI.

Elihu requires attention, while with truth and knowledge he shows the justice of God in all his judgments, the designs of his chastisements, and the profit of making a right use of them, 1—15. *He reproves, warns, and counsels Job,* 16—21. *He reminds him that the power of God is uncontrollable, and that his works and dispensations should be magnified, but cannot be comprehended,* 22—33.

ELIHU also proceeded, and said,

2 [a] Suffer me a little, and I will shew thee that * *I have* yet to speak [b] on God's behalf.

3 I will [c] fetch my knowledge from afar, and will [d] ascribe, righteousness to my Maker.

4 For truly [e] my words *shall* not *be* false: he that is [f] perfect [g] in knowledge *is* with thee.

5 Behold, God *is* mighty, and [h] despiseth not *any: he is* [i] mighty in strength *and* † wisdom.

6 He [k] preserveth not the life of the wicked; but [l] giveth right to the ‡ poor,

7 He [m] withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous: but [n] with kings *are they* on the throne; yea, [o] he doth establish them for ever, and they are exalted.

8 And [p] if *they be* bound in fetters, *and* be holden in [q] cords of affliction;

9 Then [r] he sheweth them their work, and [s] their transgressions that they have exceeded.

10 He [t] openeth also their ear to discipline, and [u] commandeth that they return from iniquity.

11 [x] If they obey and serve *him*, they shall [y] spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures:

12 But [z] if they obey not, they shall ∮ perish by the sword, and they shall [a] die without knowledge.

13 But the hypocrites in heart [b] heap up wrath: [c] they cry not when he [d] bindeth them.

14 ‖ They [e] die in youth, and their life *is* among the * unclean.

15 He [f] delivereth the † poor in his affliction, and [g] openeth their ears in oppression.

a xxi. 3. xxxiii. 31—33. Heb. xiii 22.
* Heb. there are *yet words for God*
b xiii.8, 9 xxxiii. 6. Ex. iv. 16 Jer. xv 19. Ez. ii 7. 2 Cor.v.20.
c xxviii. 12, 13. 20—24. xxxii. 8. Prov. ii. 4, 5. Matt. ii. 1, 2. xii 42. Acts viii. 27, &c. Rom. x. 6—8. Jam. i. 5. 17. iii. 17.
d xxxii 2 xxxiv. 5. 10—12 Deut. xxxii. 4. Ps. xi. 7. cxlv. 17. Jer. xii. 1. Dan ix. 7. 14. Rom. iii. 25, 26. ix. 14. Rev xv. 3.
e xii. 4. 7. xxi. 27 34. xxii. 6, &c. Pro viii 7, 8 2 Cor ii. 17.
f xxxvii.16. Luke i. 3. Acts xxiv 22. 1 Cor xiv 20. *Marg* Col. iv. 12. 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17
g Ps xlix 3. Prov. xxii. 20, 21
h x 3 xxxi 13 Ps xxii 24. cxxxviii 6.
i ix. 14 19 xii. 13—16. xxvi. 12—14 xxxvii. 23. Ps. xcix. 4. cxlvii 5 Jer. x. 12. 1 Cor. i. 24—26.
† Heb *heart*
k xxi. 7—9 30. Ps. lv. 23. Jer xii 1, 2. 2 Pet. ii. 9
l xxiv 12. xxix. 12—17. Ps. ix. 12 x 14, 15 lxxii 4 12—14 lxxxii 1—4. Prov xxii. 22, 23. Is xi 4.——‡ Or, *afflicted.* Ex. xxii. 22—24 Ps cxl 12
m 2 Chr xvi. 9. Ps. xxxiii. 18. xxxiv 15 Zeph. iii. 19. 1 Pet iii 12.
n i. 3. xlii 12. Gen. xxxii 6. xli. 40 1 Sam. ii. 8 Esth. x. 3. Ps lxxviii. 70—72. cxiii. 7, 8
o 2 Sam vii. 13—16. Ps cxii 7—10 2 Thes iii 3.
p xiii 27 xix. 6. xxxiii. 18, 19. Ps xviii 5 cvii. 10 cxvi. 3 Lam. iii. 9.
q Prov. v. 22.
r x 2 Deut. iv. 21, 22 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11—13. Ps xciv 12. cxix. 67—71. Lam iii. 39, 40. Luke xv 17—19. 1 Cor xi 32
s Ps v. 10. Is. lix 12. Ez. xviii. 28—31. Rom. v. 20. 1 Tim i 15.
t 15. xxxiii 16—23 Ps xl. 6. Is. xlviii. 8. 17. 1. 5. Acts xvi. 14
u Prov i. 22. 23. viii. 4, 5 ix. 4—6 Is i. 16—20 lv. 6, 7. Jer. iv 3, 4. vii 3—7 Ez xviii 30, 31 Hos. xiv. 1. Matt. iii 8. Acts iii 19. xvii. 30. Jam. iv 8.
x xxii. 21, &c. Deut iv. 30, 31. Is i. 19 Jer.vii. 23. xxvi. 13. Rom. vi 17. Heb xi. 8
y xi. 13—19. xxi 11—13 xxii. 23—25 xlii 12 Ec ix 2, 3. Jam. v. 5. Rev. xviii 7.
z Deut xviii 15 &c xxix 15—20 Is i. 20 iii 11. Rom ii. 8, 9.——∮ Heb *pass away.*
a iv 21 John viii 21—24 ——b Num xxxii 14 2 Chr. xxviii 13 22. Rom ii 5.
c xv. 4. xxvi. 8—10 xxxv. 9, 10 Mat xxii 12, 13 ——d 8. Ps. cvii 10.——‖ Heb. *their soul dieth* ——e xv 32 xxi 23—25 Gen xxxviii. 7—10. Lev x. 1, 2. Ps lv 23 ——* Or, *sodomites* Gen xix. 5 24, 25 Deut xxiii. 17.——f 6.——† Or, *afflicted.*——g 10. 2 Chr. xii 8.

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for their good; yet he will certainly at length punish the haughty oppressor. But how few of the afflicted, who groan under their miseries, inquire after God and trust in his name! The most, even of the wretched, disregard their obligations and accountableness to him, and refuse to repent and humble themselves for their sins, and to seek forgiveness and comfort from him. But to humble believers he causes light to arise in the darkness, and he fills their mouths with songs of deliverance, in the midnight season of tribulation. God our Creator having formed us after his own likeness, hath made us vastly more capable of knowledge than the brute creation: but, alas! sin has rendered us more stupid in many things than they: and, except we partake of renewing grace, we are prone to murmur under our sufferings, without inquiring after the cause, or the remedy. These howlings of distress are not acceptable to God: they are vain, selfish, and consistent with the grossest impiety and enmity; and therefore we need not wonder, that impenitent sufferers are left, without succour, to endure the just punishment of their obstinate wickedness, even from the hands of oppressors more wicked than themselves. If pious persons are betrayed into any degree of a similar spirit, and delay to humble themselves under the afflicting hand of God, or to seek all their help and comfort from him; they may expect their trials will be continued, till they are reduced to a better temper. In all these things "the LORD is a God of judgment, and by him actions are weighed." All his works are in wisdom and justice; and he showeth mercy to those who humbly trust in him. But when his corrections excite obstinacy, impatience, and unbelief, he will infuse more anger into the bitter cup; he will with-hold comfort, and appear to disregard the extremities to which even his people are reduced. Then their rebellious murmurs only add to their guilt and vexation, and they multiply words without knowledge in attempting to excuse themselves. Let not then any afflicted person, like Job, prolong his own misery by keeping at a distance from a throne of grace, standing in his own vindication, expecting help from other quarters, or despairing of help from God: but let us call upon him in our troubles, and he will hear us, and we shall praise him.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXVI. V. 1—4. As Job still received Elihu's reproofs in humble silence, Elihu again demanded his attention: indeed he supposed that he was entitled to it, as he was speaking in the cause of God, and to vindicate his righteousness, which had been *apparently* denied. He had some arguments to adduce, which had not occurred to the other speakers, and which were brought from afar, or originally derived from divine revelation: he promised that he would admit of no flattery, calumny, or sophistry, into his discourse: and he was confident that his knowledge upon the subject was so clear and full, as to be worthy of their serious regard.

V. 5—15. In this passage Elihu laid down his system

16 Even so would he have removed thee out of the strait *into* [h] a broad place, where *there is* no straitness: and * that which should be set on thy table *should be* [i] full of fatness.

17 But thou hast [k] fulfilled the judgment of the wicked: judgment and justice † take hold *on thee.*

18 [l] Because *there is* wrath, *beware* lest he take thee away with [m] *his* stroke, [n] then a great ransom cannot ‡ deliver thee.

19 [o] Will he esteem thy riches? *no,* not gold, nor all the forces of strength.

20 [q] Desire not the night, when people are [r] cut off in their place.

21 Take heed, [s] regard not iniquity: for [t] this hast thou chosen rather than affliction.

22 Behold, [u] God exalteth by his power; [x] who teacheth like him?

23 [y] Who hath enjoined him his way? or who can say, [z] Thou hast wrought iniquity?

24 Remember that thou [a] magnify his work, [b] which men behold.

25 Every man may see it; man may behold *it* afar off.

26 Behold, [c] God *is* great, and [d] we know *him* not; [e] neither can the number of his years be searched out.

27 For [f] he maketh small the drops of water: they pour down rain according to [g] the vapour thereof:

h xix. 8. xlii. 10—17. Ps xviii 19. xxxi. 8. xl. 1—3. cxviii 5.
* Heb. *the rest of thy table*
i Ps xxiii. 5. xxvi 8 lxiii. 7. Is. xxv 6. lv. 2
k xv 5 xxxiv. 8—36. Rom i 32. Rev. xviii. 4.
† Or, *should uphold thee.*
l Ps. ii. 5. 12 cx. 5 Matt iii. 7. Rom. i. 18 ii. 5. Eph. v. 6.
m Ps xxix. 10. Is. xiv. 6. Ez. xxiv 16.
n xxxiii. 24. Ps xlix 7, 8. 1 Tim ii. 6 Heb. ii. 3. x. 26.
‡ Heb. *turn thee aside.*
o Prov. x 2. xi 4. Is. ii. 20. Zeph. i. 18. Jam. v. 3.
p ix 13. xxxiv. 20. Ps. xxxiii. 16, 17. Prov. xi 21. Is. xxxvii 36.——q iii 20, 21. vi 9. vii. 15 xiv. 13. xvii. 13, 14. John ix. 4
r Ex xii 29. 2 Kings xix 35. Prov xiv. 32 Ec. xi. 3 Dan. v. 30 Luke xii. 20. Acts i. 25. 1 Thes. v. 2, 3.——s Ps. lxvi. 18. Ez xiv. 4. Matt. v. 29, 30.

t xxxiv. 7—9. xxxv 3. Dan iii. 16—18 vi. 10. Matt. xiii. 21. xvi. 24. Acts v. 40, 41. Heb. xi. 25 1 Pet. iii. 17. iv 15, 16
u 1 Sam ii 7, 8. Ps. lxxv 7. Is. xiv 5 Jer. xxvii. 5—8 Dan. iv. 25. 32. v. 18. Luke i. 52. Rom xiii 1.
x Ps. xciv. 10. Is. xlviii 17. liv. 13. Jer xxxi. 33. John vi 45
y xxxiv. 13—33. Is. xl 13, 14. Rom. xi 34. 1 Cor. ii. 16. Eph. i. 11.
z viii. 3. xxxiv. 10 xl. 8. Rom. ii. 5. iii. 5. ix 14.
a xii. 13, &c xxvi 5—14 Ps. xxviii. 5. xxxiv. 3 lxxii. 18. lxxxvi. 8—10. xcii. 4, 5. civ. 24. cvii. 8—15. cxi 2 4 cxxxix. 5, 6. 14. cxlv. 10—12. Jer. x. 12, 13 Dan. iv. 37. Luke i 46—55. Rev. xv. 3—5——b Deu. iv 19 Ps xix 1—4. Acts xiv. 17. Rom. i. 19—21.——c xxxvi 5. Ps. cxlv. 3. cxlvii 5.
d xl 7—9. xxvi 14. xxxvii 23. 1 Kings viii. 27 Matt xi 27. John xvii 25, 26 1 Cor. xiii. 12.——e Ps. xc. 2. cii 24—27. Heb. i. 12. 2 Pet. iii. 8——f v 9, 10 xxxviii. 25—28. 34. Gen ii. 5, 6 Ps. lxv. 9—13. cxlvii. 8. Is v 6. Jer xiv. 22.——g 33 Ps. cxlviii. 8.

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of divine providence; in which he spake more accurately than the other disputants, without aiming to decide upon Job's character. Yet he seems to have leaned to the sentiments of Job's friends, that, in some way or other, *temporal* deliverance and prosperity, or the contrary, generally distinguished betwixt the righteous and the wicked. He observed that God was mighty in strength and wisdom: yet, contrary to the common example of the wise and powerful in this world, he despised not the persons or the causes of the meanest of his subjects, he overlooked none, and oppressed none: and he noticed the most ignorant, poor, and contemptible of the earth, and would surely do them justice; yea, they all partook of his common benefits, and the vilest likewise, of his special mercies, when willing to seek for them. Elihu further stated, that wicked men were not under the *peculiar protection* which secured the righteous; and therefore their lives were more exposed, and generally terminated prematurely; and that this often took place by the judgment of God, in doing right to the poor whom they had injured. But assuredly He continually noticed and took care of his people: sometimes he advanced them to temporal authority; they were at all times watched over, with as much care as the greatest monarchs, whose lives were of vast importance to multitudes; and they would be sure at last to be established for ever in the most exalted and glorious state. If in this world they were imprisoned by oppressors, or any other way afflicted and distressed, it was intended for their benefit: the Lord would then show them whatever was sinful in their conduct: thus he would dispose them to receive instruction, and enforce their obligations to repent and turn from every sin, and follow after holiness. When they were brought more humbly and faithfully to submit, obey, and worship him, he would restore and increase their comforts and prosperity, and they would spend their lives in peace and pleasure. But if any continued obstinate and impenitent, they might expect to be cut off by some sudden judgment, and to perish in their sins. Thus hypocrites, who cloaked their secret crimes with a show of piety, treasured up wrath: because, when bound with the cords of affliction, they refused to humble themselves and cry for help unto God. They were therefore often cut off prematurely, or left to apostatize, and spend their lives amongst the most atrocious sinners, increasing their own condemnation: and at last they would be doomed to misery with the most abominable transgressors, such as were the *unclean inhabitants of Sodom.* But the poor in spirit, the humble and contrite, would certainly be delivered from their afflictions; and their oppressions would prove lessons of useful and durable instruction.

V. 16—21. Elihu next applied his doctrine to the case of Job. He was persuaded that God would before that time have delivered him out of trouble, and restored him to liberty, comfort, and plenty, if he had behaved properly under correction. But he had copied the language and sanctioned the rebellions of the wicked. It was not therefore necessary to determine what his former character had been: at present he certainly was suffering justly; and as the wrath of God was kindled against him, instead of persevering to provoke him by presumptuous murmurs, he ought to be very careful what he spake: for a single stroke of Omnipotence would take him away beyond the reach of any ransom: so that, if he had possessed all the riches and power in the world, it would not be accepted, or be availing, for the deliverance of his soul. He ought not therefore so earnestly to desire the *night of death,* that he might rest from his sufferings: for in his present rebellious state of mind it was likely to come in wrath, if at all; and he should remember, that men by it were cut off in that *place* or *state* in which they had lived and were found, and their sentence was then rendered irreversible. He ought therefore to take heed, that he allowed himself in no sin, and especially that he did not unjustly reflect upon God; for it had appeared from many of his expressions, that he actually chose iniquity rather than affliction. No doubt Elihu in this conclusion was far too severe on Job: for though he had impatiently and rashly wished for death, he had never insinuated that he preferred sin to suffering.

28 Which [b] the clouds do drop *and* distil upon man abundantly.

29 Also can *any* understand [i] the spreadings of the clouds, *or* [k] the noise of his tabernacle?

30 Behold, [l] he spreadeth his light upon it, [m] and covereth the * bottom of the sea.

31 For [n] by them judgeth he the people; [o] he giveth meat in abundance.

32 [p] With clouds he covereth the light; and commandeth it *not to shine* by *the cloud* that cometh betwixt.

33 The [q] noise thereof sheweth concerning it, [r] the cattle also concerning † the vapour.

b xxxvii. 11—13. Gen. vii. 11, 12. Prov. iii 20.
i xxxvii. 16. xxxviii. 9. 37 1 Kings xviii. 44, 45. Ps. civ. 3.
k xxxvii. 2. 5. Ps xviii. 13. xxix 3 — 10. lxxvii 16—19. civ. 7. Nah i. 3. Hab. iii. 10.
l xxxviii. 25. 34, 35
m xxxviii. 8—11. Gen. i. 9 Ex. xiv 22. 28. xv. 4, 5. Ps. xviii. 11—16. civ 5—9.——* Heb. *roots.*——n xxxvii. 13. xxxviii. 22, 23 Gen. vi. 17. vii. 17—24. xix. 24. Ex. ix. 23—25. Josh x 11. 1 Sam. ii 10. vii. 10. x. i. 18.
o xxxviii 25. 27 Ps lxv. 9—13. civ 13—15 27, 28 cxxxvi 25. Acts xiv. 17.
p xxvi. 9 Ex. x. 21—23 Ps. xviii. 11 cxxxv. 7. cxlvii. 8, 9. cxlvii. 8. Acts xxvii. 20.
q 29 xxxvii. 2. 2 Sam xxii. 14. 1 Kings xviii. 41—45.
r Jer. xiv. 4—6. Joel i. 18 ii. 22.——† Heb. *that which goeth up.* 27.

V. 22—33. Elihu here again renewed his attempt to convince Job of his presumption, by representing to him the incomprehensible majesty and power of God. It was madness to contend with *him*, who alone was able to deliver or exalt him; or to dedicate to *him*, who alone can teach man wisdom; and from whom Job should have sought instruction, how to behave under his afflictions and obtain deliverance from them. Who could pretend a right to enjoin to the Sovereign of the universe, the Fountain of life and excellence, how He ought to act? Or to find fault with any of his appointments? It was far more proper for men to remember their duty, and to magnify, admire, and praise the works of God, as presented to their view, than to pass a judgment upon those dispensations which are beyond their comprehension. The most distant view of the creation and of the course of nature, discovered his eternal power and Godhead, to those who would behold them: but the greatness of the infinite and eternal God could not be known, or searched out. Even the rain, which Elihu had before noticed, displayed exceedingly his wisdom and goodness: as he pleased, the clouds distilled their contents in gentler rains or heavier showers, for the abundant benefit of man. But none could fully comprehend how the clouds were formed and spread abroad, or the thunders produced in those pavilions of the Almighty. For whilst a glorious light was at one moment diffused over the clouds, at the next that light was veiled by the water, drawn even from the bottom of the sea: or the thick clouds seemed to darken the sea even to the bottom. Thus by dreadful thunder-storms, inundations, or deluges, the Lord sometimes executed his judgments upon sinners, and at others he made the earth yield in abundance food for man and beast. The same clouds, which just before were a blaze of light, immediately after obscure the light of the sun and darken the air. The distant noise portended the approaching tempest: and the cattle had an instinctive dread of it, whilst the vapours were ascending or condensing in the atmosphere. It seems evident that a terible storm, actually approaching, suggested these thoughts to Elihu.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—15.

When wise and pious men speak in God's behalf, and show his righteousness in all his precepts, judgments, and appointments, they are entitled to our strictest and most patient attention. But they who attempt this service, should watch their own hearts, and beware of insincerity and corrupt motives: for many professed teachers of divine truth are evidently consulting their own interest and reputation, and not seeking to glorify God and edify their brethren. They should likewise carefully weigh their principles, and seek wisdom from Him who alone is, strictly speaking, "perfect in knowledge;" that their instructions may be scriptural, convincing, and edifying; that none may be able to object to them; and that they may not fairly admit of a bad construction. In the glorious character of our God, almighty power, infinite wisdom and knowledge, harmonize with the most perfect justice, and the most condescending goodness and mercy: and whilst his providential kindness reacheth to the most rebellious of his enemies on earth; he receiveth to his special favour the meanest and vilest who trust in his mercy, and seek to return to him and his service. May we enjoy his love and copy his example! and not despise the poor and weak, or treat with undue severity or disdain the most atrocious criminals. The wicked however have no security for the preservation of their lives and comforts: they are interested in no promises, but lie under dreadful threatenings, and are liable every moment to be cut off in their sins; though spared from day to day, that they may have space for repentance, or if they neglect it, to fill up the measure of their iniquities. But God watches over the righteous continually; no evil can befal them: they are more honourable in his sight than the greatest princes; and they shall all of them be exalted and established as kings and priests before him for ever. In this world they have many tribulations, in order to humble, and prove them, and do them good at last. For they are thus brought acquainted with the evil of their own hearts, and all their deviations from the holy law of God; and disposed to receive instruction, and to return from iniquity: being forgiven and accepted, their graces are increased, and their evil tempers subdued: and in proportion as they obey and serve the Lord in simplicity and diligence, their souls at least prosper, and divine consolations cause them to spend their years in pleasure; except as they are sometimes suspended for their greater good. But when they disobey and turn aside, they mar their own comfort: and whilst they continue unhumbled under rebukes and chastenings, they prolong their own sufferings, and bring their characters into doubt, both with themselves and others. The impiety even of the wicked is greatly aggravated by their obstinacy under afflictions and terrors. Many of them thus provoke God to cut them off: and in this way hypocrites especially fill up the measure of their iniquities; for it is undeniable that judgments

CHAP. XXXVII.

Elihu extols the power of God, shown in thunder and lightning, snow, rain, whirlwinds, and frost, 1—13. *His works in these things are inexplicable,* 14—22. *His perfections should impress men with lowly fear,* 23, 24.

a iv. 14. xxi. 6. xxxviii. 1. Ex. xix 16. Ps. lxxxix. 7 cxix. 120 Jer. v. 22. Dan x. 7, 8. Hab. iii 16. Heb xii. 21
* Heb *Hear in hearing*
b 5 xxxvi. 29.33. xxxviii. 1 Ex. xix. 16—19 Ps civ. 7.
c Ps. lxxvii 18. xcvii. 4. Matt xxiv. 27. Rev. xi. 19
† Heb *light.*
‡ Heb. *wings.* xxxviii. 13. Is. xi. 12. *Marg.*
d Ps xxix. 3—9. lxviii. 33.
e Ex xv. 7, 8. Deu. xxxiii. 26.
f xxxvi. 27—33
g 2 Sam xxii. 14, 15
h v. 9. ix. 10. xi. 7 xxvi. 14. xxxvi. 26. Is xl. 21, 22 28. Rev. xv. 3.

A T this also [a] my heart trembleth, and is moved out of his place.

2 * Hear attentively [b] the noise of his voice, and the sound *that* goeth out of his mouth.

3 [c] He directeth it under the whole heaven, and his † lightning unto the ‡ ends of the earth.

4 After it [d] a voice roareth: he thundereth with [e] the voice of his excellency; and [f] he will not stay them when his voice is heard.

5 God [g] thundereth marvellously with his voice; [h] great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend.

6 For [i] he saith to the snow, Be thou *on* the earth; § likewise to the small rain, and to the [k] great rain of his strength.

7 He [l] sealeth up the hand of every man; [m] that all men may know his work.

8 Then [n] the beasts go into dens, and remain in their places.

9 Out of the ‖ south cometh [o] the whirlwind, and cold out of the * north.

10 By the breath of God [p] frost is given: and the breadth of the waters is straitened.

11 Also by watering [q] he wearieth the thick cloud: [r] he scattereth † his bright cloud:

12 And [s] it is turned round about by his counsels: [t] that they may do whatsoever he commandeth them upon the face of the world in the earth.

13 He causeth it to come, [u] whether for ‡ correction; or [x] for his land, or [y] for mercy.

i xxxviii. 22. Ps. cxlvii 16—18. cxlviii 8.
§ Heb *and to the shower of rain, and to the showers of rain of his strength* xxxvi. 27
k Gen. vii. 10—12. Ezra x. 9 13. Prov. xxviii. 3. Ez. xiii. 11. 13. Am ix. 6 Mat. vi. 25—27.
l v 12. ix 7
m xxxvi 24 Ps. xlvi 8. lxiv. 9. xcii 4 cix 27. cxi 2. Ec. viii. 17. Is v. 1 xxvi 11.
n Ps. civ 22.
‖ Heb. *chamber.* ix. 9 Ps civ. 3
o xxxviii. 1. Is xxi 1. Zech ix. 14.
* Heb. *scattering winds.*
p 22 xxxviii. 29. 30 Ps lxxviii 47 cxlvii. 16—28.
q xxxvi. 27, 28.
r xxxvi. 30. 32. Is xviii 4. Matt. xvii. 5.
† Heb. *the cloud of his light.*
s Ps lxv 9, 10. civ. 24 Jer xiv 22 Joel ii. 23. Am. iv. 7.
t Ps. cxlviii. 8. Jam v 17, 18 Rev xi. 6.
u 6. xxxvi. 31. xxxviii. 37, 38. Ex. ix. 18—25. 1 Sam. xii. 18, 19. Ezra x. 9.——‡ Heb. *a rod.*——x xxxviii. 26, 27.——y 2 Sam. xxi. 10. 14. 1 Kings xviii. 45. Joel ii. 23.

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and mercies make less impression upon them than upon the openly profane. And whether sinners die in youth, or live long to heap up wrath, their case is dreadful, and their eternal portion must be among the abominable and unclean.

V. 16—33.

It is lamentable that men professing godliness should ever so yield to murmurs and despondency, as to seem to favour the cause and justify the objections of the wicked. Surely they ought to be plainly rebuked, and even warned not to deceive themselves, but to fear lest that wrath come upon them which awaits the workers of iniquity: for how can it be determined that *they* are the servants of God, who are imitating the conduct of his enemies? It is therefore proper to remind any one, who murmurs against the Lord's appointments, of the power of his wrath, the strictness of his justice, and the unchangeableness of his judgments. If he cut off the sinner by the stroke of his wrath, all the treasures and all the power on earth will be utterly unavailing. Nay, the great ransom of the Saviour's blood will not profit the finally impenitent and unbelieving. The ransom indeed is of infinite sufficiency: but if rejected till the night of death cometh, the door of mercy is then shut, and hope expires for ever. Yet men often desire, and even rush upon death, to get rid of present uneasiness, whilst perfect strangers to this great atonement; as if in haste to be for ever removed from the sound and hope of salvation! And believers seldom vehemently wish for death, when the evidences of their acceptance are most bright, or their graces in most lively exercise. All then should remember, that men at their death are cut off *in their place*, and their condition becomes eternally irreversible. Instead therefore of shrinking from adversity, we should seek deliverance from the love and power of sin; and prefer the greatest suffering to the least iniquity. Yet, alas! most men choose iniquity rather than affliction; 'They ease their 'cares by sinful pleasures, they increase their wealth by 'sinful pursuits, escape their troubles by sinful projects, 'and evade sufferings by sinful compliances.' (*Henry.*) But this is a miserable choice, of which they will at length bitterly repent: for the favour of God alone can exalt or make us happy. He alone can teach us to behave wisely and live comfortably in every situation: he needs no counsellor, and allows of no accuser; but justly requires all to admire the discoveries of his glory which they can understand; to adore the depths they cannot comprehend; and to stand in awe of his unsearchable wisdom, power, and authority. Every appearance in nature at once *displays* and *conceals*, his infinite glories; much remains incomprehensible; but enough is seen to call forth our gratitude, animate our praises, or excite our consternation. The clouds and rain with the thunders and lightnings declare his goodness, and proclaim the power of his wrath. Each object bears a double aspect: and whilst the worker of iniquity ought to tremble; the true believer should rejoice. "It is the glorious God that maketh the thunder," as well as that fertilizes the earth: and the children should hear with pleasure their Father's voice, even when nature seems convulsed, and he speaks in terror to his enemies.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXVII. V. 1—13. In these verses Elihu continues his discourse. The nearer approach of the thunder-storm caused him inwardly to tremble, as if his

14 ¶ Hearken unto this, O Job: [z] stand still, and [a] consider the wondrous works of God.

15 [b] Dost thou know when God disposed them, and caused [c] the light of his cloud to shine?

16 Dost thou know [d] the balancings of the clouds, the wondrous works of him which is [e] perfect in knowledge?

17 How thy garments *are* warm, when [f] he quieteth the earth by the south *wind?*

18 Hast thou with him [g] spread out the sky, *which is* strong, *and* [h] as a molten looking glass?

19 [i] Teach us what we shall say unto him; *for* [k] we cannot order *our speech* by reason of darkness.

20 [l] Shall it be told him that I speak? If a man speak, [m] surely he shall be swallowed up.

21 And now *men* [n] see not the bright light which *is* in the clouds: but the wind passeth, and cleanseth them.

22 * Fair [o] weather cometh out of the north: [p] with God *is* terrible majesty.

23 *Touching* the Almighty, [q] we cannot find him out: *he is* [r] excellent in power, and [s] in judgment, and in plenty of justice: [t] he will not afflict.

24 Men do therefore [u] fear him: [x] he respecteth not any *that are* wise of heart.

z Ex. xiv. 13. Ps. xlvi. 10. Hab. ii. 20.
a xxvi. 6—14. xxxvi. 24. Ps. cxi. 2. cxlv. 5, 6. 10—12.
b xxviii. 24—27. xxxiv. 13. xxxviii. 4, &c. Ps. cxix. 90, 91. Is. xl. 26.
c 11. xxxvi. 30—32. xxxviii. 24, 25.
d xxvi. 8. xxxvi. 29. Ps. civ. 2, 3. Is. xl. 22. Jer. x. 13.
e xxxvi. 4. Ps. civ. 24. cxlviii. 5. Prov. iii. 19, 20.
f vi. 17. xxxviii. 31. cxlvii. 18. Luke xii. 55.
g ix. 8, 9. Gen. i. 6. Ps. civ. 2. cxlviii. 4—6. cl. 1. Prov. viii. 27. Is. xl. 12.
h Ex. xxxviii. 8.
i xii. 3. xiii. 3, 6.
k xxvi. 14. xxviii. 20, 21. xxxv. ii. 2. xlii. 3. Ps. lxxiii. 16, 17. 22. cxxxix. 6. Pro xxx. 2—4. 1 Cor. xiii. 12. 1 John iii. 2.
l Ps. cxxxix. 4. Mat. xii. 36, 37.
m vi. 3. xi. 7, 8. Prov. xxx. 2, 3. Ec. ix. 12.
n xxvi. 9. xxxvi. 32. xxxviii. 25.
* Heb. *gold.*
o Prov. xxv. 23.
p xl. 10. 1 Chr. xxix. 11. Ps. xxix. 4. lxvi. 5. lxviii. 7, 8. lxxvi. 12. xciii. 1. civ. 1. cxlv. 6. Is. ii. 10, 19. Mic. v. 4. Nah. i. 3. Hab. iii. 3, &c. Heb. i. 3. xii. 29. Jude 25.
q 19. xi. 7. xxvi. 14. xxxvi. 26. Prov. xxx. 3, 4. Ec. iii. 11. Luke x. 22. Rom. xi.
r ix. 4. 19. xii. 13. xxxvi. 5. Ps. lxv. 6. lxvi. 3. xciii. 1. xcix. 4. cxlvi. 6, 7.
s Ps. xxxvi. 5, 7.
t xvi. 7—17. Ps. xxx. 5. Lam. iii. 32, 33. Heb. xii. 10.
u Ps. cxxx. 4. Jer. xxxii. 39. xxxiii. 9. Hos. iii. 5. Luke xii. 4, 5. Rom. ii. 4. xi. 20—22.
x v. 13. Ec. ix. 11. Is. v. 21. Mat. xi. 25, 26. Luke ix. 21. 1 Cor. i. 26. iii. 19.

heart was moved out of its place. He therefore called on Job and all the company to hearken with attention and awe to the thunder, as the majestic voice of God. Whatever account might be given of the *second causes* that produced these tremendous effects, the great First Cause must be acknowledged in them, who thus alarmed the minds of careless sinners. The giving of the law was attended by tremendous thunderings and lightnings; and so was the Lord's speaking to Job out of the whirlwind. By the divine mandate, the flashes of lightning darted from one part of the sky to the other; along with the crashing roar of the thunder, which not reaching the ear so soon as the lightning did the eye, seemed to follow it. This voice of God surpassed all other sounds in majesty and solemnity: nor could *any one stay* or *prevent* the effects of it when he pleased thus to speak in terror. In this he wrought marvellously, and all his works were great and incomprehensible. Whether he commanded the snow, the gentler rains, or more impetuous showers sweeping all before them, he acted in a manner which man could not explain. By tempestuous weather he put a stop to the works of men, as if their hands were sealed up: and this gave them leisure to consider *his works;* whilst the beasts retired and lay inactive in their dens. When the wind blew from the south, terrible whirlwinds were excited; and when it shifted to the north, cold weather ensued: but who could understand the manner in which these changes were wrought? Indeed the wind might be called the *breath of God;* and by it, when he pleased, the *inexplicable* frost was produced, and the rivers were contracted, or formed into a solid substance. The thick clouds were *wearied* and *worn out*, by watering the earth: and often, by the shining of the sun on them, they appeared bright, and the beauteous rainbow was formed. But all these, and all the bright clouds, which contained no rain, were turned about by the counsels of God, and executed his commands; whether by drought or excess of rain he corrected a guilty nation, or by moderate rain he showed mercy to a favoured land.

V. 14—22. Elihu next called upon Job to consider and explain all these wonderful appearances; and if he could not, to confess his presumption, in arraigning the more mysterious dispensations of the divine government. Did he know when God made all these arrangements? Or could he understand how light and fire were produced from the watery cloud? or the splendid rainbow from the dark cloud? Could he explain in what manner the clouds were balanced to move about, continue in the air, or descend in showers; or how the air grew warm, and his garments too heating, when the gentle south wind blew? Had he assisted in spreading the expanse of heaven, which was immoveably strong, and in which, as in a *mirror*, the reflection of the divine glory might be perceived? —(Mirrors were in those days formed of brass, cast into a proper form and highly polished.) If Job could explain these matters, and teach those present how to speak of God, it would be very acceptable: for they were conscious that they could not order their discourses on such subjects with clearness or certainty; because of their own ignorance, and the darkness which rested upon the manner in which the works of God were performed. Indeed Elihu must acknowledge, that all he had spoken was beneath the subject, and unworthy of the Lord's acceptance, or of being mentioned to him at all: for he found his thoughts and powers swallowed up, and lost in this bottomless abyss. Whilst he was speaking, he observed that the wind had scattered the clouds, and the lightnings were ceased, and that the north wind had brought on fair weather, bright and resplendent as *gold;* (for that is the meaning of the original word.) In these and all the works of God his glorious and terrible majesty were displayed. How presumptuous then must it be to contend with him; when his ordinary works were too dazzling for man to look upon!

V. 23, 24. It is evident that towards the close of his discourse, Elihu spake as one in great confusion. Some conjecture, that what is rendered *Fair weather cometh out of the north*, referred to some *glorious appearance in the north*, which intimated the Lord's immediate presence, as about to speak. Elihu therefore hasted to conclude; briefly declaring, that the Almighty God was unsearchable and incomprehensible; that he infinitely excelled all creatures,

CHAP. XXXVIII.

The Lord, out of the whirlwind, challenges Job to answer him, 1—3. By enumerating his mighty works in creation and providence, he convinces, Job of ignorance, 4—30. And of weakness, 31—41.

THEN the LORD answered Job [a] out of the whirlwind, and said,

a xxxvii 1, 2 8. 14 Ex xix.16—18 Deut. iv 11, 12 v. 22—24. 1 Kings xix. 11. 2 Kings ii. 1. 11. Ez. i 4 Nah. i. 3.

in power, justice, and judgment: that he would oppress none, nor afflict his people without cause. Men ought therefore to stand in awe of him, and fear to offend him, or to murmur against his appointments: for he disregarded all the supposed wisdom of those who deemed themselves authorized or qualified, to scrutinize and find fault with his conduct. Elihu evidently thought, that Job had been *thus* irreverent and presumptuous: and when the Lord himself spake, he brought exactly the same charge against him.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—13.

The attentive mind will perceive affecting displays of the power, wisdom, goodness, and majesty of God, in the operations of nature: and the terrors excited by some of them should remind us of that tremendous scene which will usher in "the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men." If the thunder-storm caused the heart of pious Elihu to tremble and start; if Moses was exceedingly alarmed before mount Sinai; if even faith, and love to God cannot utterly preserve men from dismay in these inferior circumstances of terror: what will be the horror and despair of the wicked at that tremendous season? Oh that men would attentively hearken to the voice of God, who in various ways "warns them to flee from the wrath to come;" and from his mercy-seat, with a voice of less terror, but of more glorious excellency, invites them to accept of his salvation and be happy!—All irrational creatures obey the voice and subserve the will of the great Creator: surely then we, whom he hath endued with reason, should be shamed into obedience and submission! We behold the marvellous works of God, and partake of his bounty, in the revolution of the seasons and the change of the weather: for heat and cold, rain and snow, or dry weather, have their several beneficial effects. But who can fully comprehend the whole mechanism of *Nature*, or rather *these operations of God?* How incompetent then must we be to explain the mysteries of his incomprehensible and eternal existence, of his decrees, or of his universal government! But as they who know nothing of natural philosophy, receive the full benefit of the revolving seasons, whilst they who are most informed cannot evade the inclemency of the weather, or prevent storms, or secure themselves against their effects: so the simplest believer may receive the benefit and comfort of divine mysteries and of the Lord's protection; whilst the proudest and most learned objector cannot annul his counsels, alter his dispensations, or escape his vengeance. Our wisdom then consists in accommodating ourselves to the situation allotted us, and in deriving benefit, as we can, from those appointments which we cannot alter: in accepting of proffered mercy in the Lord's way; in submitting to his correction and his righteousness; and in leaving all difficulties to another world. When Providence takes us off from secular employments, we should occupy ourselves more entirely in meditating on the works of God, in the study of his word, and in the exercises of devotion: else in what do we surpass the beasts, who retire and remain in their dens? —The weather is altogether of God's appointment: it is generally ordered in mercy as well as in wisdom, for the common good; and if at any time it be really afflictive, it is sent for correction, and to call us to repentance and prayer. But the ill opinion which men entertain of the divine management, is evident in their incessant murmurs in this particular: though the result of the whole system, through the year, generally demonstrates the folly and ingratitude, as well as the rebellion, of their complaints. Believers should carefully avoid such peevishness: there are no bad days as the Lord makes them; but we make ourselves many by our sins.

V. 14—24.

In all our discourses of the works of God, we either are conscious of our own ignorance, or we soon expose it. "We cannot order our speech by reason of darkness," or teach one another satisfactorily in these sublime subjects: we may well be ashamed of our best attempts to magnify the glorious excellencies and works of God: indeed, we have nothing to boast of on any account; but must still confess, not only that we are unprofitable servants, but that we are wretched sinners. In short, "with God is terrible majesty:" we cannot search him out or comprehend his designs: but if our meditations lead us to more admiring adoring views of his greatness, holiness, justice, wisdom, and goodness; if they terminate in a deeper sense of our own ignorance, vileness, and sinfulness; if they warn us to reverence and submit to him, and to cease from our own wisdom; the effect will be honourable to him, useful to us, and edifying to our brethren. And whatever scenes we witness, whatever changes we experience; we may stay our minds on him, who will give strength to his people, and bless them with his unspeakable peace.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXVIII. V. 1. Both Job and his opponents had appealed to the Lord, and earnestly desired that he would decide the controversy. Job had silenced, but he had not convinced his friends: Elihu had silenced Job, but had not brought him to plead guilty; and his character was yet undecided. The debate would therefore have terminated inconclusively, had it not pleased God to interpose: but he soon made Job sensible of his faults; and he convinced his friends that he was a righteous man, and that they had done him injustice; and thus all parties were humbled and profited by the transaction. With terrible majesty the

2 Who *is* this that [b] darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?

3 [c] Gird up now thy loins like a man; [d] for I will demand of thee, and * answer thou me.

4 [e] Where wast thou when [f] I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou † hast understanding.

5 Who hath [g] laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or [h] who hath stretched the line upon it?

6 [i] Whereupon are the ‡ foundations thereof § fastened? or who laid [k] the corner-stone thereof;

7 When [l] the morning stars sang together, and all [m] the sons of God [n] shouted for joy?

8 Or [o] *who* shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, *as if* it had issued [p] out of the womb?

9 When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and [q] thick darkness a swaddling-band for it,

10 And ‖ brake up for it my decreed *place*, and set bars and doors,

11 And said, [r] Hitherto shalt thou come, [s] but no further: and here shall * thy proud waves be stayed.

b xii. 3. xxiii. 4, 5. xxiv. 25. xxvi. 3. xxvii. 11 xxxiv. 35. xxxv. 16. xlii. 3. 1 Tim. i. 7.
c xl. 7. Ex. xii. 11. 1 Kings xviii. 46. Jer. i. 17. 1 Pet. i. 13.
d xiii. 15. 22. xxiii. 3—7. xxxi. 35—37.
* Heb. *make me know.*
e Prov. viii. 29, 30. xxx. 4.
f Gen. i. 1. Ps. cii. 25. civ. 5.
† Heb. *knowest understanding.*
g xi. 9. xxviii. 25. Prov. viii. 27. Is. xl. 12, 22.
h Ps. xix. 4. lxxviii. 55. Is. xxxiv. 11. Zech. ii. 1, 2. 2 Cor. x. 16.
i xxvi. 7. 1 Sam. ii. 8. Ps. xxiv. 2. xciii. 1. civ. 3. Zech. xii. 1. 2 Pet. iii. 5.
‡ Heb. *sockets.* Ex. xxvi. 18. 25.
§ Heb. *made to sink.*
k Ps. cxviii. 22. cxliv. 12. Is. xxviii. 16. Eph. ii. 20, 21.
l Rev. ii. 28. xxii. 16.
m i. 6. ii. 1. Ps. civ. 4. Rev. v. 11.
n Ezra iii. 10, 11. Zech. iv. 7.
o 10. Gen. i. 9. Ps. xxxiii. 7. Prov. viii. 29.
p 29.
q Gen. i. 2.
‖ Or, *established my decree upon it.* xxvi. 10. Gen. i. 9, 10. ix. 15. Ps. civ. 9. Jer. v. 22.
r Ps. lxv. 6, 7. xciii. 3, 4. Prov. viii. 29. Mark iv. 39—41.
s i. 12. ii. 6. Ps. lxxvi. 10. lxxxix. 9. Is. xxvii. 8. Luke viii. 32, 33. Rev. xx. 2, 3, 7, 8.
* Heb. *the pride of thy waves.*

Lord spake out of the cloud, which was attended with a vehement whirlwind whilst he was speaking. He addressed Job, and continued Elihu's argument; 'but in in 'imitable words, excelling his and all other men's, in the 'loftiness of the style, as much as a thunder doth a whis-'per.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) He rebuked Job first, and then his friends: but Elihu, who had come nearest to the truth, and had spoken with reverence, seriousness, and temper, was not reproved, though in some things he bore too hard upon Job. In attempting to comment upon these words of the Almighty, we may well say, with Elihu, "If a man speak, surely he shall be swallowed up." The very attempt might create a tremor, lest it should be reproved, "as darkening counsel by words without know-"ledge:" and as the whole discourse was intended as a reproof of the want of reverence and modesty, which an eminently wise and pious man had fallen into, it stands as a beacon, cautioning the expositor to keep at a distance from the same perilous rock. But, if giving the supposed meaning, in language more intelligible to the plain *modern* reader, though immensely less suited to the sublime subject, may assist in understanding the passage, the attempt will meet with a pardon from a merciful God, and perhaps a candid perusal from man.

V. 2. As Elihu had spoken last, it might have been thought that he was addressed: but Job knew that he was especially intended, and this first word seems to have brought him to a more becoming temper. He had discoursed upon the counsels of God and the methods of Providence; but he had expressed himself rashly and irreverently, as if God had afflicted him without cause, and with rigour and cruelty: thus he had rendered the subject more obscure, and the auditors more perplexed, than before, and had only manifested his own ignorance. "But who "was he, that thus darkened counsel by words without "knowledge?" Did an ignorant sinful man presume to speak such language concerning the infinite God! Did Job, the servant of the Lord, go thus in company with his enemies! JEHOVAH would not, in such a cause, deign to vindicate his wisdom, justice, goodness, or truth, against so presumptuous an accusation: but he would make the accuser feel his own ignorance and impotence, and shame him out of his indecent and unreasonable murmurs: he would teach him to contend with his equals, the potsherds of the earth; and not cite God to his bar, as if he were his compeer or his judge. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 3. *Gird up*, &c. Job had spoken of *ordering his cause before God*, of *demanding of him, and being answered*, and of *coming as a prince before him:* and he had grievously complained that he could not get a hearing. But now the time of trial was come; and the Lord summoned him to collect all his courage and resolution; and without delay to prepare his answers to some previous questions, that he had to propose unto him.

V. 4—7. These abrupt questions, which could only be answered in the negative, were suited to impress Job with a conviction of the infinite knowledge, wisdom, and power of the eternal God, and of his own extreme ignorance, and incompetency to form a judgment of his appointments. Was *he* present, counselling or assisting, when the earth was created? Did he appoint the dimensions and proportions of that immense structure? Could he understand whence its stability arose, or how it was fixed as a building upon a firm foundation?—At that period, the first and brightest productions of creative power, the stars in the firmament, or rather the holy angels, the morning stars of the creation, the sons of God, witnessed, adored, and rejoiced with exultation. And would Job, who had then no existence, find fault with the work which *they* admired? Would he presume to direct the government of what he had no hand in forming? Or would he suppose the dispensations of Providence less perfect than the work of creation? But if *this* exceeded his comprehension, would he dare to decide on other still more mysterious works of God?

V. 8—11. Job was next called to consider the mighty ocean. At the Creator's word, the seas separated from the dry land, issuing forth as an infant from the womb. The clouds that hover over the ocean, and the unknown shores which surround it, form, as it were, the swaddling band and garment of it, 'as if it were but as a little babe in the 'hands of God.' The vast hollows of the earth are its appointed place in which it is confined, as with bolts and bars: and though it is vehemently tossed by tempestuous winds, and the tides roll its billows to the shore, as if it were about to cover the earth again; yet, at the Lord's command, the storm subsides, and the tide rolls back; and

12 ¶ Hast thou [t] commanded the morning [u] since thy days; *and* caused [x] the day-spring to know his place;

13 That it might [y] take hold of the * ends of the earth, that [z] the wicked might be shaken out of it?

14 It is turned as clay *to* the seal; and they stand [a] as a garment.

15 And [b] from the wicked their light is withholden, and [c] the high arm shall be broken.

16 ¶ Hast thou entered into [d] the springs of the sea? or hast thou [e] walked in the search of the depth?

17 Have [f] the gates of death been opened unto thee? or hast thou seen the doors of [g] the shadow of death?

18 Hast thou perceived [h] the breadth of the earth? declare if thou knowest it all.

19 Where *is* [i] the way *where* light dwelleth? and *as for* [k] darkness, where *is* the place thereof?

20 That thou shouldest take it † to the bound thereof, and that thou shouldest know the paths *to* the house thereof?

21 Knowest thou *it*, [l] because thou wast then born? or *because* the number of thy days *is* great?

22 ¶ Hast thou entered into [m] the treasures of the snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail,

23 [n] Which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?

24 By what way is [o] the light parted, *which* scattereth the east wind upon the earth?

25 Who hath [p] divided a water-course for the overflowing of waters, or a way for the lightning of thunder;

26 To cause it to rain on the earth, *where* no man *is*; [q] *on* the wilderness, wherein *there is* no man;

27 To satisfy the desolate and waste *ground*; and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth?

28 [r] Hath the rain a father? or who hath begotten the drops of [s] dew?

29 [t] Out of whose womb came the ice? and the hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendered it?

30 The waters are hid as *with* a stone, and [u] the face of the deep is ‡ frozen.

t Gen. i. 5. Ps. lxxiv. 16. cxxxvi. 7. 8. cxlviii. 3—5.
u 4. 21. viii. 9. xv. 7.
x Luke i. 78. 2 Pet. i. 19.
y Ps. xix. 4—6. cxxxix. 9—12.
* Heb. *wings.* xxxvii. 3.
z xxiv. 13—17. Ex. xiv. 27. Ps. civ. 21, 22. 35.
a Ps. civ. 2. 6.
b v. 14. xviii. 5. 18. Ex. x. 21—23. 2 Kings vi. 13. Prov iv. 19. Is. viii. 21, 22. Jer. xiii. 16. Acts xiii. 10, 11.
c Ps. x. 15. xxxvii. 17. Ez. xxx. 22.
d Ps. lxxvii. 19. Prov. viii. 24. Jer. li. 36.
e xxvi. 5, 6.
f Ps. ix. 13. cvii. 18. cxvi. 3.
g iii. 5. xii. 22. Ps. xxiii. 4. cvii. 10. 14. Am v. 8 Matt. iv 16
h Ps. lxxiv. 17. lxxxix 11, 12. Is. xl. 28. Jer. xxxi. 37. Rev. xx. 9.
i 12, 13 Gen i. 3, 4. 14—18. Deut. iv 19. Is. xlv. 7. John iii. 8 viii. 12
k Ps xviii. 11. civ. 20. cv. 28. Jer. xiii. 26. Ez. xxxii. 8. Am. iv. 13. Matt. xxvii 45.
† Or, *at.*
l 4. 12. xv. 7.
m vi. 16. xxxvii. 6. Ps. xxxiii. 7. cxxxv. 7.
n xxxvi 31. xxxviii 13. Ex. ix. 18. 24. Josh. x. 11. Is. xxx. 30. Ez. xiii. 11—13. Mat. viii. 27. Rev. xvi. 21.
o 12, 13 Jon. iv. 8. Matt. xxiv 27
p xxviii. 26. xxxvi. 27, 28 xxxvii. 3—6 Ps. xxxix. 3. 10.
q Ps. civ. 10—14. cvii. 35 cxlvii. 8, 9 Is. xxxv. 1, 2. xli. 18, 19. xliii 19, 20. Heb. vi. 7, 8.
r 8. v. 9, 10. 1 Sam. xii. 17, 18. Ps lxv. 9, 10. Jer v. 24? x. 13. xiv 22. Joel ii. 23. Am. iv. 7. Matt. v. 45.
s xxix 19. Gen. xxvii. 28. 39. Deu. xxxiii. 13—28. 2 Sam. i. 21. 1 Kings xvii. 1. Prov. iii. 20. Hos. xiv. 5.
t 8. vi. 16. Ps. cxlvii 16, 17.
u xxxvii. 10.
‡ Heb. *taken.*

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he deals with this most furious element as easily as with an infant: and this, not so much by the barrier of the shores, as by virtue of that *inexplicable* property which we call *gravitation*. Thus he stays the proud waves of the sea, and assigns them their bounds which they cannot pass. But had Job any hand in contriving or effecting this? Or could he comprehend how it was done?

V. 12—15. It was evident that the things hitherto mentioned had existed before Job was born: by which he might be led to reflect upon the eternity of God, and contrast it with the few days of his life. But had he, during that short time, given orders for the succession of night and day? At the appointed hour the morning is ushered in, and the light gradually overspreads the horizon, and drives away the wicked from their deeds of darkness. Immediately the earth assumes a new form, as the wax from under the seal, and appears in fresh beauty as arrayed in splendid garments. Thus the wicked are disappointed of their expected success, and are detected and repressed. But did Job command this beneficial and welcome change? Did it depend on his care and management? Nay, could he explain in what manner the sun, at such an immense distance, enlightened the earth? Or could he supply the want, should his beams be withheld; or command them to come when he pleased?

V. 16—18. The vast ocean covereth immense treasures and wonderful productions of the Creator. But had Job surveyed these repositories, or taken an inventory of their contents? Had he visited all the deep and dark caverns of the earth? Or was he fully acquainted with the nature and consequences of death, and with what takes place in the invisible world? Nay, had he traversed the whole of the earth; so as to be able to show its dimensions, and describe all the lands, climates, and creatures, which it contains?

V. 19—21. Could Job fully explain the nature, and declare the origin, of light or darkness? What they are, and whence they come? Could he trace the streams of them back to the fountain, so as to visit their residence, and bring them forth to accomplish his own purposes? Or show whither the light retired during the night; and the abode of darkness after the approach of the sun? Was he born before the present order was established? and had long observation acquainted him with these matters, which to all else were incomprehensible?—Though modern experiments have enabled men to form some theories concerning light and colours; yet how very little do we yet know about them, or *what* they are, and *how* they are!

V. 22—30. To convince Job of his ignorance, and of the unsearchable wisdom and knowledge of God, some other perplexing questions were proposed to him. The snow and hail seem to be brought forth out of a treasury. But had Job ever entered thither? Did he understand the manner of their production? or were they at his command? With them the Lord troubles and fights against his enemies, when he sees good: but could Job employ them in his own cause, after the same manner? Could he explain the way in

31 Canst thou bind the sweet influences of * Pleiades, or loose the bands of † Orion?

32 Canst thou bring forth ‡ Mazzaroth in his season? or canst thou § guide Arcturus with his sons?

33 Knowest thou [x] the ordinances of heaven? [y] canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth?

34 [z] Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee?

35 [a] Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, ‖ Here we *are*?

36 [b] Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts? or [c] who hath given understanding to the heart?

37 Who can [d] number the clouds in wisdom? or [e] who can * stay the bottles of heaven,

38 When the dust † groweth into hardness, and the clods cleave fast together?

39 [f] Wilt thou hunt the prey for the lion? or fill the ‡ appetite of the young lions,

40 When [g] they couch in *their* dens, *and* abide in the covert to lie in wait?

41 [h] Who provideth for the raven his food? when his young ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of meat.

* Or, *the seven stars* Heb. *Kimah.* ix. 9. Am. v. 8.
† Or, *Cesil.*
‡ Or, *the twelve signs.*
§ Heb. *guide them* ix. 9.
x Gen. i 16. viii. 22. Ps. cxix. 90, 91. Jer. xxxi. 35, 36. xxxiii. 25.
y 12, 13.
z 1 Sam. xii. 18. Am. v. 8. Zech. x. 1. Jam. v. 18.
a Ex. ix. 23—25. 29. Lev. x. 2. Num. xi. 1. xvi. 35. 2 Kings i. 10. Rev. xi. 5, 6.
‖ Heb. *Behold us.* 1 Sam. xxii. 12. Is. vi. 8. *Marg.* lxv. 1.
b xxxi. 3. Ps. ii. 6. Prov. ii. 6. Ec. ii. 26. Jam. i. 5. 17.
c Ex. xxxi. 3. xxxvi. 1, 2. Is. xxviii. 26.
d Gen. xv. 5. Ps. cxlvii. 4.
e Gen. viii. 1. ix. 15.
* Heb. *cause to lie down.*
† Or, *is turned into mire.* Or, *is poured.*
f iv. 10, 11. Ps. xxxiv. 10. civ. 21. cxlv. 15, 16.
‡ Heb. *life.*
g Gen. xlix. 9. Num. xxiii. 24. xxiv. 9.
h Ps. civ. 27, 28. cxlvii. 9. Matt. vi. 26. Luke xii. 24.

which the *morning light from the east is divided and scattered over the whole earth?* Could he suppose that any but God directed the clouds, as a water-course, to convey the waters above the firmament to their appointed places, attended by thunder and lightning, so that even the uncultivated parts of the earth were watered, and made to produce food for the beasts which inhabit them? Could any account be given of the formation of the rain into larger or smaller drops? Was any one instrumental in the production of the dew, the ice, or the hoar-frost? Were not all these entirely the work of God, and inexplicable to man? Thus the course of rivers was arrested, the fluidity of the water changed, and even the ocean covered as with a pavement of stone. These are most stupendous displays of the divine power, and only unnoticed because so common.

V. 31—41. The different seasons of the year are marked out by the relative situation of the fixed stars to the earth and to the sun. But could Job prevent the effects of those constellations, which seemed to preside either over the genial spring, or the dreary winter? Could he even explain how these effects were produced? If he felt his ignorance and weakness in this matter, let him learn to keep his proper place, and to leave the government of the world to its Creator. Could he in a dry season command the clouds to water the earth from their abundance? Would they or the lightnings obey his orders, and execute his purpose? Was he the author even of his own scanty measure of wisdom and knowledge? Could he explain what thought was? Could he keep a register of the clouds and their contents, and of the commerce which they carried on? Could he seal up those "bottles of heaven," and prevent more rain from falling; *when the dust is melted into a mass, and the clods are joined together?* Would he undertake to provide food for the lions? Was not even this far beyond his power? Nay, he could not provide for the young ravens; when deserted or expelled from the nest, they by their natural call seem to cry unto God for food. In short, whatever Job considered, above or beneath, within or around him, he must perceive the infinite wisdom, knowledge, power, and goodness of God; and feel his own incapacity to discourse on such subjects as he had presumptuously ventured on.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—11.

The condescension of the God of glory, in making himself known to sinful man for his humiliation, instead of executing vengeance upon him for his rebellion, demands our highest admiration and our warmest gratitude: and the most tremendous method, by which he abases a sinner in the dust, should be acknowledged as the effect of his mercy; for it tends to comfort and joy. When the wisest of men presume to intrude into those "secret things which "belong to God," and to be wise above what is written, they are sure to "darken counsel by words without know-"ledge," and perhaps undesignedly to serve the cause of impiety or skepticism: so that numbers who have been vain of their acute, learned, and accurate reasonings upon mysterious subjects; and who have been admired for their sagacity and judgment, will meet with such a rebuke from the Lord as Job did, or rather one far more severe. We should then be very careful, in all our investigations, not to exceed our assigned limits, or to go out of our depth; or to leave the friendly shore of the word of God, to launch into the immense ocean of *infinities*. Conscious of our ignorance, guilt, and weakness, it becomes us to speak with trembling humility and reverence, when the perfections, decrees, or operations of God are our subject: for "such knowledge is too high for us, we cannot attain "unto it." But indeed we are none of us suitably impressed with awe of the infinite majesty of God: our appeals to him generally savour of presumption; and we should not be able to answer before him, as we are apt rashly to think we could. Though he sometimes deigns to reason with his creatures, and to demonstrate his equity in his dealings with them: yet he more generally silences the arrogant objector, by a display of his infinite power, authority, and majesty: as more becoming the Sovereign of the world. Indeed all nature proclaims his glory: no creature fully comprehends his works; but contemplation of them, with adoring and exulting triumphant praises, forms the delight of each intelligent being, in exact proportion to the extent of his powers, and the degree of his holiness.

CHAP. XXXIX.

God shows his power and man's weakness and ignorance, by instancing, from among animals, the wild goats and hinds, 1—4. *The wild ass,* 5—8. *The unicorn,* 9—12. *The peacock and ostrich,* 13—18. *The war-horse,* 19—25. *The hawk and eagle,* 26—30.

a 1 Sam. xxiv. 2. Ps. civ. 18.

KNOWEST thou the time when [a] the wild goats of the rock bring forth? *or* canst thou mark [b] when the hinds do calve?

b Ps. xxix. 9. Jer xiv. 5.

2 Canst thou number [c] the months *that* they fulfil? or knowest thou the time when they bring forth?

c Jer. ii. 24.

3 They bow themselves, they bring forth their young ones, they cast out their sorrows.

4 Their young ones are in good liking, they grow up with corn; they go forth, and return not unto them.

Thus when the creation was finished, and appeared in all its beauty, "The morning-stars sang together, and all "the sons of God shouted for joy." Yet they discover still brighter glories in the mysteries of redeeming love: into which especially "they desire to look" with ceaseless admiration: and in proportion as the new-creating Spirit renders us like to them in knowledge and holiness; we shall become capable of participating their exalted joys, and find pleasures of which we now have scarcely a conception. But in other things the boasted knowledge of mankind is in fact a very small matter: the best informed must perceive their own ignorance in every thing: none can fully understand the most common *phenomena* of nature: and after all the discoveries of modern times, most of them remain in some respects as inexplicable as ever. Indeed we are of yesterday; our days are passing away as a shadow: and a humble willingness to be taught of God, and to credit his sure testimony, as contained in the sacred oracles; with a diligent attention to our proper interest and duty, as fallen creatures under a dispensation of mercy, are infinitely preferable to all the learning of the schools. Not that learning should be depreciated; provided it be accompanied with humility, kept in its proper place, directed to its proper objects, and not allowed to interfere within the province of revelation and faith. Yet even in natural things man's scanty measure of knowledge avails him but little; for he still finds himself unable to effect those alterations, which might give him ease or conduce to his comfort. But whatever the Lord doeth must be right: because he is infinite in wisdom, justice, truth, and goodness. As the world was created, so it is governed, by him, exactly as it should be. The contemplation of his wise and surprising contrivance, in the economy of nature, should silence all our objections to his providential dispensations, and teach us to desire that he would choose and manage all for us as he pleases. His power, which formed and bounds the mighty ocean, and which is displayed wherever we turn our eyes, should remind the sinner of the power of his wrath; convince him how vain it will be to oppose his authority; and warn him without delay to seek pardon and reconciliation: and it should teach the believer to rejoice in his Friend and Protector; who can say to the proudest persecutors, or to the hosts of hell, "Hitherto shall ye come, and no further, and here shall "your proud rage be stayed."

V. 12—41.

The innumerable and varied creatures that God hath formed, may teach us that the reasons of his conduct may be numerous, when we can discern none. The revolutions of day and night, and of the seasons of the year, with all that profusion of bounty with which they are crowned, and of which his enemies richly partake, should encourage us to expect large blessings from his covenant-love in Jesus Christ, and to be followers of him in love to our enemies. And as he feeds the lions, and the ravens that cry unto him; let us learn to ask and expect our daily bread from him. The constancy and exactness, with which natural effects are produced, should remind us of the faithfulness of the Lord's promises, and the immutability of his counsel; and excite us to be constant and exact in our course of daily worship and obedience. The consideration of his all-sufficiency and eternity should teach us to choose his favour as our portion and blessedness for ever: and every view that we take of his manifested perfections, is suited to convince us of his right to our love and obedience, of the evil of sinning against him, and of our need of his mercy and salvation. The humiliating recollection of our comparative insignificancy should check our pride and presumption, and lay us low in reverential fear and self abasement. It would be in vain for us to command the clouds to rain, or to attempt to stay these bottles of heaven: but if we call upon the Lord in our necessities or fears, he will regulate all these things for our good. In fine, the more we contemplate, the more we are confounded with the vastness and the variety of these discoveries of our God. All his ways are in wisdom; and every thing will concur to ruin his obstinate enemies: but all things work together for good to them that love him.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXIX. V. 1—4. In this chapter some animals are selected, the nature or situation of which is peculiarly illustrative of the power, wisdom, and manifold works of God: and the questions proposed concerning them, were suited to convince Job how little he knew, or could do. The several species of the wild goats and hinds are continued from age to age: but not by the care of man. He does not know how long they go with young, or at what time they will bring forth: nor if he did, could he in any way tend on or assist them, as he can the domestic animals. Though they bring forth their young with much difficulty and pain, yet they need no human help: they soon forget their sorrows; and their young, being active and vigorous, are in a short time able to shift for themselves, as if they fed upon corn, or even by entering into the corn-fields, notwithstanding the precautions of the owner.

5 ¶ Who hath sent out [d] the wild ass free? or [e] who hath loosened the bands of the wild ass?

6 Whose house I have made the wilderness, and the * barren land his dwellings.

7 He [f] scorneth the multitude of the city, neither regardeth he the crying of the † driver:

8 [g] The range of the mountains *is* his pasture, and he searcheth after every green thing.

9 ¶ Will [h] the unicorn be willing to serve thee, [i] or abide by thy crib?

10 Canst thou [k] bind the unicorn with his band in the furrow? or will he harrow the valleys after thee?

11 Wilt thou [l] trust him, because his strength *is* great? or [m] wilt thou leave thy labour to him?

12 Wilt thou believe him that [n] he will bring home thy seed, and [o] gather *it into* thy barn?

13 ¶ *Gavest thou* the goodly wings unto the [p] peacocks? or ‡ wings and feathers unto the [q] ostrich?

14 Which leaveth her eggs in the earth, and warmeth them in the dust;

15 And forgetteth that the foot may crush them, or that the wild beast may break them.

d vi. 5. xi. 12. xxiv. 5 Gen. xvi 12. Ps. civ. 11. Is. xxxii 14 Jer ii. 24. xiv. 6. Dan v 21. Hos viii 9.
e Gen. xlix. 14.
* Heb. *salt places.* Deut xxix. 23. Ps. cvii. 34. *Marg* Jer. xvii. 6. Ez. xlvii. 11.
f 13 iii. 18. Is. xxxi. 4.
† Heb. *exactor.* Ex. v. 13-16. 18. Is. lviii 3
g xl. 15 20—22. Gen. i 29, 30. Ps. civ 27, 23. cxlv 15, 16.
h Num xxiii. 22. Deu xxxiii. 17 Ps. xxii. 21. xcii. 10.
i Is. i 3
k 5 7. i. 14. xli. 5. Ps. cxxix. 3. Hos x. 10. 11. Mic i. 13.
l Ps. xx 7. xxxiii. 16, 17. cxlvii 10. Is. xxx. 16. xxxi 1--3.
m Gen i. 26 28. ix 2. xlii. 26 Ps. cxliv. 14. Prov. xiv. 4 Is. xxx 6. xlvi. 1.
n Neh. xiii. 15. Ag. ii. 13.
o Prov. iii 10. Hag. ii. 19. Mat. iii. 12. xiii 30.
p 1 Kings x. 22. 2 Chr. ix 21.
‡ Or, *the feathers of the stork and ostrich.* Lev. xi. 19. Ps. civ 17. Jer. viii. 7. Zech. v. 9.
q xxx. 38. *marg.*

16 She is [r] hardened against her young ones, [s] as though *they were* not her's: [t] her labour is in vain without fear;

17 Because God hath [u] deprived her of wisdom, neither hath he imparted to her understanding.

18 What time she lifteth up herself on high, [x] she scorneth the horse and his rider.

19 ¶ Hast thou given [y] the horse strength? hast thou [z] clothed his neck with [a] thunder?

20 Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper? [b] the glory of his nostrils § *is* terrible.

21 ‖ He paweth in the valley, [c] and rejoiceth in *his* strength: [d] he goeth on to meet the * armed men.

22 He [e] mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted; neither turneth he back from the sword.

23 [f] The quiver rattleth against him, the glittering spear and the shield.

24 [g] He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage: [h] neither believeth he that *it is* the sound of the trumpet.

25 He saith among the trumpets, [i] Ha, ha: and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting.

r Lam. iv. 3.
s Deu. xxviii. 56, 57. 1 Kings iii. 26, 27. 2 Kings vi. 28, 29. Lam. ii. 20. Rom. i. 31.
t Ec x. 15. Hab. ii. 13.
u xvii 4 xxxv. 11. Deut ii. 30. 2 Chr. xxxii. 31. Is. xix. 11-14. lvii. 17. Jam. i. 17.
x 7. 22 v. 22. xli. 29. 2 Kings xix. 21.
y Ex. xv. 1. 21. Ps cxlvii 10.
z Ps. xciii. 1. civ 1.
a 25. Mark iii. 17.
b xli 20, 21. Jer. viii. 16.
§ Heb *terrors.*
‖ Or, his feet *dig.* Judg. v. 22
c 1 Sam. xvii 4—10. 42. Ps. xix. 5 Jer ix. 23.
d Prov xxi. 31. Jer viii 6.
* Heb. *armour.*
e 16. 18. xli. 33.
f xli. 26—29.
g xxxvii. 20. Hab. i. 8. 9.
h ix 16 xxix 24. Luke xxiv. 41.
i Ps. lxx. 3. Ez. xxvi. 2. xxxvi. 2.

V. 5—8. Some animals are evidently created for labour, others scorn the yoke: the tame ass is formed for a patient drudge; but the wild ass cannot be subjected. He has liberty as it were by charter: the barren wilderness is his residence, and its scanty productions his subsistence: yet it would be vain to attempt enticing him into populous cities, for the sake of a more plentiful support; or rendering him obedient to a driver's voice. But who gave him this liberty? Did not the Lord? And would Job suppose that he had not wise reasons for so doing? And as no human power can alter the nature of this animal, or render him serviceable to man: so it is equally impossible to alter the appointments of God, whether we are satisfied with them or not.

V. 9—12. The *rhinoceros*, (which is supposed to be here intended,) is possessed of immense strength; and might perform proportionable labour, if he could be made to bear the yoke as the passive ox does. Yet Job was not so absurd as to expect this from him; nor would he depend on his assistance to plow his land, or gather in his harvest; knowing that it would be vain and dangerous to meddle with so powerful and fierce a creature. But was it not more perilous to quarrel with the allotments of the Almighty?

V. 13—18. The Creator hath divided his gifts among his creatures as he saw good; and in this, and in every other thing, his will and wisdom should be implicitly submitted to. To the peacock he hath given most beautiful plumage: but it is not remarkable for any thing else. The ostrich hath wings and feathers as a bird; but it is vastly larger than other birds, and is unable to mount aloft on its wings. It is likewise remarkable for its stupid insensibility in various respects. The female bird prepares no nest for her eggs, but lays them upon the earth, to be warmed by the heat of the sun, and that of the sand or dust, without any further attention. She has no instinctive remembrance that they are liable to be trodden upon and destroyed by man or beast; she is as regardless of her eggs and young, as if they did not belong to her; and is destitute of fear or care about them. For God hath not imparted to her that instinctive wisdom, which he hath to other creatures in this particular. But when she is alarmed for her own safety, she uses her wings to assist her in running, and in this manner exceeds in swiftness the fleetest animals, and when pursued by those who thus attempt to take her she seems to despise both the horse and his rider.

V. 19—25. This description of the horse hath been universally admired as inimitably sublime. It especially relates to those horses which are used in war; and in which the eastern countries have always excelled. God alone hath given the war-horse his strength and courage;

k Lev. xi. 16. Deut. xiv. 15.
l Cant. ii. 12. Jer. viii 7.

26 ¶ Doth [k] the hawk fly by thy wisdom, *and* [l] stretch her wings toward the south?

m Ex xix.4. Lev. xi. 13. Ps ciii. 5. Pro. xxiii. 5. Is xl. 31. Hos viii. 1.
* Heb. *by thy mouth.*
n Jer. xlix. 16. Ob. 4.

27 Doth [m] the eagle mount up * at thy command, and [n] make her nest on high?

28 She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon [o] the crag of the rock, and the strong place.

o 1 Sam. xiv. 4.

29 From thence [p] she seeketh the prey, *and* her eyes behold afar off.

p ix. 26.

30 Her young ones also suck up blood: and [q] where the slain *are*, there *is* she.

q Ez. xxxix. 17—19. Matt. xxiv. 28. Luke xvii. 37.

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the flowing mane, which clothes his neck, adds to the fierceness of his appearance, and seems to indicate his triumph. When going to the battle, he cannot be made afraid, or driven back, like the puny locust: the snorting of his nostrils, by which he bids defiance to his enemies, is dreadful. He paweth with his feet, as if he would tear up the earth in his impatience to engage: he glorieth and exulteth in his strength, and in going out to meet the armed men, in his eagerness to start, and his fierceness and rage for the fight, he as it were devoureth the intervening space. He can scarcely wait for the signal for the battle, or stand still, because of his impatience; and he deems the dreadful alarm of the trumpet a joyful sound: he has an instinctive sense of the battle, at a distance; and is all on fire to rush amongst the captains, who with most terrific shouts are marching to the assault. Yet is this fierce and intrepid animal easily subjected to man, made to fear the touch of the whip or spur, obey the motion of the bridle, or even the voice of the rider, and almost that of a child. So wonderfully hath God formed and fitted him for the service of man!

V. 26—30. The hawk is remarkable for the force with which it flies, and the skill with which it takes its prey: but did Job communicate those properties by his wisdom? The species of hawk here meant is supposed to have removed southward at stated periods, for the sake of a warmer climate. In like manner the eagle, which is remarkable for soaring higher than any other bird, and for building her nest in the most inaccessible situations, utterly disregards man's command. From her towering heights she seeks her prey; and by her most piercing sight sees it at a vast distance, and darts down upon it in a moment. Thus her young are trained up to suck the blood of the prey; and she resorts where the dead bodies of man or beast abound.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The infinite power, wisdom, and goodness of God, are legible in all the variety of his creatures: "He openeth "his hand and satisfieth the desire of every living thing," and he watches over them all with constant attention. Such as have no help from man, are taken care of as well as those that have: and in like manner his people will surely be provided for and protected, either *by*, or *without*, the instrumentality of their fellow-creatures. Every species of animals reminds us of our ignorance and impotence: they continue as God hath created them, and we can neither understand whence their different propensities arise, nor yet alter them; we often can derive no benefit from them; nay, they seem a nuisance to us, nor can we know for what purpose they were created. Yet we should acknowledge the wisdom of God and submit to his will: we ought to be thankful for the benefit derived from some, and to be patient under the inconveniences occasioned by others: and we may learn from them to confide in his kind providence, and to aim to answer the end of our creation. Liberty is most valuable; yet the savage licentious freedom of the half-starved wild ass is not enviable. It is more desirable to be subject to wholesome laws, to labour, to be useful, and to live in plenty, than to set authority at defiance, and to live an indolent, unserviceable, and penurious life. In like manner, strength and power are only valuable when well employed; and the patient ox is far preferable to the untameable rhinoceros: for one talent improved is far better than many misemployed. It is very absurd for rational creatures to be vain of personal beauty, strength, courage, agility, or external decorations; when they are eclipsed in them all by the various species of brutes. God hath better endowments to confer on those whom he loves: and if he do not impart wisdom and grace, all the rest will prove a snare and a curse. It is lamentable to observe, that many human creatures are more stupid and hardened against their young, than the very ostrich, the disgrace of the animal tribes. They willingly forget their wants, dangers, and interests; they take no care of their welfare, either in this world or in the next, any more than if they did not belong to them: and thus their unavoidable labour and pain become vain, and to bad purpose, for want of subsequent attention, and fear about them; and by reason of the bad examples they set, and the pernicious instructions they give them. But we may cease to wonder at this, when we consider how stupidly insensible most men are to the interests of their own souls, which they neglect more fatally than the ostrich doth her young. By their contemptuous defiance or forgetfulness of God; or their vain attempts to hide or excuse their sins, they plainly show that he hath *judicially* deprived them of understanding. Indeed man by nature is prone to imitate the animals in their worst qualities. Like the wild ass he scorns the yoke of God, and like a wild bull in a net he rages against his corrections. Even his courage is generally unreasonable, instinctive, and furious, like that of a horse. His feet are swift to shed blood, or to venture his own life, when ambition, avarice, or revenge inspire him. In this case he mocketh at fear in his fierceness and rage; and not only rushes upon the weapons of death, but upon the divine vengeance without hesitation. Yet would he be afraid as the grasshopper, if called to prefer his plain duty towards God, his family, and society, to the caprice of fashion and the *diabolical* honour of revenge, in the midst of the ridicule and reproach of ungodly men! How would he then act, if called to venture, or lay down his life in the despised cause of truth and righteousness? Moreover, men naturally glory in their own strength and prowess,

CHAP. XL.

God calls on Job to answer, 1, 2. *Job humbles himself, and will proceed no further,* 3—5. *God requires him to show, by acts of power, that he is able to save himself,* 6—14. *The power of the Lord is shown in Behemoth,* 15—24.

MOREOVER [a] the LORD answered Job, and said,

2 [b] Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty [c] instruct *him?* [d] he that reproveth God, let him answer it.

3 ¶ Then Job answered the LORD, and said,

4 [e] Behold, I am vile; [f] what shall I answer thee? [g] I will lay mine hand upon my mouth.

5 Once have I spoken; [h] but I will not answer: yea, [i] twice; [k] but I will proceed no further.

6 ¶ Then answered the LORD unto Job [l] out of the whirlwind, and said,

7 [m] Gird up thy loins now like a man: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

8 [n] Wilt thou also [o] disannul my judgment? [p] wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?

9 [q] Hast thou an arm like God? or [r] canst thou thunder with a voice like him?

10 [s] Deck thyself now *with* [t] majesty and excellency; and array thyself with [u] glory and beauty.

11 [x] Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath: and [y] behold every one *that is* proud, and abase him.

a 6. xxxviii. 1. b ix. 3. xxxiii. 13. Ec. vi. 10. Is. xlv. 9. 1. 8. 1 Cor. x. 22. c Is. xl. 14. 1 Cor. ii. 16. d iii. 11, 12. 20. 23. vii. 12. 19—21. ix. 17. 18. 32—35. x. 3—7. 14—17. xiii. 21—27. xiv. 16, 17. xvi. 11—21. xix. 6—11. xxvii. 2 xxx. 21—23. Ez. xviii. 2. 25. Mat. xx. 11—15. Rom. ix. 19—23. xi. 34—36. e xlii. 6. Gen. xviii. 27. xxxii. 10. 2 Sam. xxiv. 10. 1 Kings xix. 4. Ezra ix. 6. 15. Neh. ix. 33. Ps li. 4, 5. Is. vi. 5. liii. 6. lxiv. 6. Dan. ix. 5. 7. Luke v. 8. xv. 18 19. xviii. 13. 1 Tim. i. 15 f ix. 31—35. xvi. 21. xxiii. 5—7. xxxi. 37. g xxi. 5. xxix. 9. Judg. xviii. 19. Ps. xxxix. 9. Prov. xxx. 32. Mic. vii. 16. Hab. ii. 20. Zech. ii. 13.

h xxxiv. 31, 32. Rom. iii. 19. i xxxiii. 14. 2 Kings vi. 10. Ps. lxii. 11. k Jer. xxxi. 18, 19 l xxxviii. 1. Ps. l. 3, 4. Heb. xii 18—20. 2 Pet. iii. 10—12. m xiii. 22. xxiii 3, 4. xxxviii. 3 n Ps. li. 4. Rom iii. 4. o Is. xiv. 27. xxviii 18. Gal. iii. 15. 17. Heb. vii. 18. p x. 3. xxvii. 2—6. xxxii. 2. xxxiv. 5, 6. xxxv. 2, 3. q ix. 4. xxxiii. 6 xxxiii. 12, 13. Ezra xv. 6. Ps. lxxxix 10. 13. Is. xlv. 9 1 Cor. x 22. r xxxvii. 4, 5. Ps. xxix. 3—9. s xxxix. 19. Ps. xciii 1. civ. 1, 2. Is lix 17. t 1 Chr. xxix. 11. Ps xxi. 5. xlv. 3, 4. Matt. vi. 13. 2 Pet. i. 16, 17. Jude 24, 25. u Ex. xxviii. 2. Ps. l 2. xc. 17. cxlix. 4. Is. iv. 2. *Marg.* 1 Cor. xv. 54

x xx. 23. xxvii 22. Deut. xxxii 22. Ps. lxxviii. 49, 50. cxliv. 6. Rom. ii. 8, 9. —y Ex. ix. 17 xv. 6—12. xviii. 11 Is ii 11, 12. 17 x 12—19. Ez. xxviii. 2—9. Dan. iv. 37. v. 22—24. Ob 3, 4. Mal. iv. 1. Luke xviii. 14. Acts xii. 22, 23. Jam iv. 6.

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and rejoice in ostentatiously displaying them; and are more disposed to seek renown by rendering themselves terrible, than by becoming useful. The qualities of the horse, when united with his docility and promptitude to labour, are admirable; but when found in a rational creature, and separated from more useful dispositions, they become dreadful and detestable. Even the eagles, which teach their young to suck up the blood, do not prey upon their own species: they leave that cruelty to man. Yet from each of these animals we might learn useful lessons: they almost all instruct us to attend to our own safety, and that of our offspring; and to secure ourselves in some effectual refuge from the dangers to which we are exposed. But God forbid that we should be like the eagle only in soaring aloft and in keenness of sight, while we still look down to the earth for our prey, by ambition and worldly sagacity: or by using our religious knowledge, and our credit among Christians, only to cloak ambition, covetousness, and worldly lusts! But, reverencing the divine Majesty, and abasing ourselves before him in deep repentance, may we by faith and love mount upwards as on eagles' wings, till we obtain those things which are above, where Jesus sitteth on the right hand of God!

NOTES.

CHAP. XL. V. 1, 2. It is probable, the voice from the whirlwind ceased for a short space, that Job might speak, if he could make any reply: but as he continued silent, God *answered* his very thoughts, and in few words showed him what he intended by his multiplied questions. Job had complained of the Lord's dispensations, as if he meant to *contend with him:* but could Job give him any instructions how to govern the world? Did he think it wise to contend with omnipotence? or, having arraigned the dispensations of his Maker, would he also presume to vindicate his conduct, and to answer what had been spoken?

V. 3—5. At length Job ventured to speak; but not with that confidence which he had previously thought of. His friends had attempted to prove too much, and had only emboldened him in self-vindication: Elihu had reproved him with sharpness, and he had submitted to it. But the voice of God, and the declaration of his glorious perfections, effectually convinced him of his rashness and irreverence, in speaking of God, as he would have spoken of his equal. In this comparison, he perceived and acknowledged, that he was *vile*, a poor, mean, foolish, sinful creature, who ought not to have uttered one word reflecting upon the divine conduct. He was astonished at his own presumption, and could find nothing to plead in excuse: he would therefore be silent, in submission to the will and righteousness of God; having already spoken too often, and in a very unbecoming manner.

V. 6—8. In order that Job might be still more deeply humbled; the Lord again addressed him in the same majestic and awful manner as before, requiring his attention and his answer: and he more expressly reproved him for insisting upon his own righteousness, in such a manner as to seem to his friends, and even to Elihu, to charge God himself with injustice. Did he then require that the divine decrees respecting him should be reversed because they had been too severe? Or, that the Lord should be deemed unjust in his judgments, rather than that himself should be suspected of hypocrisy? Indeed wicked men often murmured against Providence in this blasphemous manner: but would Job copy their example, and charge God foolishly? Would he allow his tongue such liberty while vindicating himself from unjust accusations, or complaining of his sufferings, and the wrongs which were done him? Yet this had been the tendency of many expressions, which he had used in the heat of dispute and the bitterness of his soul.

12 Look on every one *that is* proud, *and* bring him low; and [z] tread down the wicked [a] in their place,

13 [b] Hide them in the dust together; *and* [c] bind their faces in secret.

14 Then will I also confess unto thee, [d] that thine own right hand can save thee.

15 ¶ Behold now * behemoth, [e] which I made with thee; [f] he eateth grass as an ox.

16 Lo now, his strength *is* in his loins, and his force *is* in the navel of his belly.

17 He † moveth his tail like a cedar: [g] the sinews of his stones are wrapped together.

18 His [h] bones *are as* strong pieces of brass; his bones *are* like bars of iron.

19 He *is* [i] the chief of the ways of God: [k] he that made him can make his sword to approach *unto him*.

20 Surely [l] the mountains bring him forth food, [m] where all the beasts of the field play

21 He lieth under the shady trees, in the covert of [n] the reed, and fens.

22 The shady trees cover him *with* their shadow; [o] the willows of the brook compass him about.

23 Behold, ‡ he drinketh up a river, *and* [p] hasteth not: he trusteth that he can draw up [q] Jordan into his mouth.

24 ♁ He taketh it with his eyes; *his* nose pierceth through snares.

z Ps. lx 12. Is. x. 6. Zech. x. 5. Mal. iv. 3 Rom. xvi. 20. *Marg.*
a xxxvi. 20. Ec. xi. 3. Acts i. 25.
b xiv 13. Ps. xlix. 14. Is ii. 10.
c xxxvi. 13. Esth. vii. 8. John xi. 44.
d Ps. xliv. 3. 6. Is. xl. 29. Rom. v. 6. Eph. ii. 4—9.
* Or, *the elephant*, as some think
e Gen. i. 24—26.
f 20. xxxix. 8. Ps. civ. 14.
† Or, *settleth up.*
g xli. 23.
h vi 12 Is. xlviii. 4. Mic. iv. 13.
i xxvi. 13, 14. Ps. civ 24
k Ps vii 12. Is. xxvii. 1 xxxiv 6. Luke ii. 35.
l 15 Ps. cxlvii 8, 9.
m Ps. civ. 26.
n Is. xix. 6, 7. xxxv. 7.
o Lev. xxiii. 40. Is. xv. 7. Ez. xvii. 5.
‡ Heb *oppresseth.* Is. xxxvii. 25.
p Ps lv. 8. Is. xxviii. 16.
q Gen. xiii. 10. Jos iii 15.
♁ Or, *Will any take him in his sight*, or *bore his nose with a gin.* xii. 1, 2.

V. 9—14. The Lord would not at all deign to argue the question of *right* with his servant: but insisted on *that* being taken for granted. "Shall not the judge of all the "earth do right?" He purposed therefore to induce Job's unreserved submission, by making him sensible, that he was acting most absurdly and presumptuously in attempting to decide on the conduct of the infinitely glorious God! Let him then consider whom he was offending: let him compare his puny arm with omnipotence, or his feeble voice with the tremendous thunder; and then let him inquire, whether he was able to make his cause good against such an adversary? But ere he ventured any further, let him make trial of his strength against the more potent of his fellow-men. Let him collect all his forces, assume all royal authority and majesty, and appear upon a glorious throne, arrayed with every magnificent decoration, and all the insignia of royalty: let him then declare his fiery indignation against every one of the proud tyrants and oppressors of the earth, and issue out his orders, that they should all be abased and trodden down, wherever they lived, and that their faces should be covered as condemned criminals, and either put to death, or confined in dark and noisome dungeons. And when, with a look or a word, he had effected this work, (as the Lord did in his own time and manner,) then it should be allowed that he had power sufficient to be his own deliverer and protector; though still unable to contend with the Almighty.

V. 15—24. There have been various opinions concerning *behemoth:* but probably the most ancient is the most true; namely, that the elephant is intended. This animal is the largest and most remarkable of the quadrupeds; it is unlikely that it should be totally omitted in this enumeration; and the several particulars seem best to accord with it. The Lord reminded Job, that he had made behemoth "*with him;*" both were his creatures, and behemoth is often found near the habitations of men. This immense animal *eateth grass as an ox;* for if he devoured flesh as a lion, he could neither be resisted nor satisfied: the strength of his loins and the sinews of his body are equal to his bulk; and it is known that the elephant often carries on his back a large wooden tower, with several men in it. His *tail*, or rather *trunk*, (for the word may mean either extremity of the body;) is very large, strong, and flexible, and by it he bears all down before him, as by the moving of a cedar. The *sinews of his thighs* are so interwoven, as to contribute very much to his vast strength, and his bones are so hard and firm, that they are like iron or brass. He is the chief of all the works of God, that is, *of this kind:* and it is evident that the elephant surpasses all other quadrupeds in size, strength, sagacity, and longevity; and yet is as remarkable for his gentleness, when not provoked. He is content to feed upon the herbage of the mountains; and the other beasts play around him without dread of harm. He lies down to rest, not in a den as carnivorous animals generally do, but under the shade of the trees, or in the reeds and rushes, as fearless of any assailant. When he drinks, he seems as if he would empty a river; and makes no haste, not being in the least fear. He seems as if he were confident that he could drink up Jordan at once: he greedily looks to the water when he thirsteth, and will not be kept from it by any impediments or snares; but removes them all by his trunk, which is situated above his nose. Probably it was not become customary at that time to take, tame, and employ elephants, in war or in journeying, as hath since been done. But though man did not know how to deal with behemoth, the Creator had him entirely in his power, and could destroy him at his will. This thought was suited to remind Job not to contend against his omnipotent Sovereign.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

It behooves us to speak with great reverence and caution concerning the ways and works of God: for it will appear at length that many of our expressions sprang from such corrupt principles, and led to such desperate conclusions, as we could not deliberately excuse. Yet all our words must be given an account of at the day of judgment, and be produced as evidences of the frame of our hearts: and probably it will then appear, that the presumptuous cavils and objections of philosophic speculators, sprang from

CHAP. XLI.

The power of God shown in the huge and terrible Leviathan, 1—34.

CANST thou draw out * leviathan with an hook? or his tongue with a cord *which* thou † lettest down?

2 Canst thou [a] put an hook into his nose? or bore his jaw through with a thorn?

3 Will he make many supplications unto thee? [b] will he speak soft *words* unto thee?

4 [c] Will he make a covenant with thee? [d] wilt thou take him for [e] a servant for ever?

5 Wilt thou [f] play with him as *with* a bird? or wilt thou [g] bind him for thy maidens?

6 Shall [h] thy companions make a banquet of him? shall they part him among the merchants?

7 Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons? or his head with [i] fish-spears?

8 [k] Lay thine hand upon him, remember the battle, do no more.

9 Behold, the hope of him is in vain: [l] shall not *one* be cast down even at the sight of him?

* That is, *a whale* or, *a whirlpool.* iii. 8. *Marg.* Ps. lxxiv. 18. civ. 26. Is xxvii. 1
† Heb. *drownest.*
a Is. xxx. 28 xxxvii. 29. Ez. xxix. 4, 5.
b Ps. lv. 21. Pro. xv. 1 xxii. 23. xxv. 15. Is xxx. 10
c 1 Kings xx. 31—34
d Gen. i 28. ii. 19. Ps. viii. 5 6.
e Ex. xxi. 6. Deut xv 17.
f Judg. xvi. 25—30.
g xxxix. 10.
h Judg. xiv. 11.
i 26—29.
k 1 Kings xx. 11. 2 Kings x. 4. Luke xiv. 31, 32.
l Deut xxviii. 34. 1 Sam. iii 11. Is. xxviii. 19. Luke xxi. 11.

deeper enmity against God, and were more provoking to him than the scandalous profligacy of the profane and licentious. Indeed, when we murmur under correction, do we not contend with God, and dictate to him how he ought to deal with us? But can we seriously think that such weak and rebellious creatures have any right to be consulted, or are qualified to instruct, or authorized to reprove, the Almighty? We should therefore now judge ourselves on this account, that we may not be judged of the Lord. Every increasing discovery of the glorious perfections of God will proportionably humble us in the dust before him. One clear and distinct view of his holy majesty would appal the stoutest rebel upon earth; or even drive him to despair, if not tempered with discoveries of his mercy. How then will the wicked bear the blaze of his glory at the approaching day of wrath and judgment? Even believers have but faint apprehensions of his glory: and if they saw it more clearly, their self-complacency, in disputing with each other, would be turned into self-abhorrence: their mouths would be stopped, or only opened to say, "Behold I am vile!" The subjects of their controversies, their management of them, and their whole characters, would appear in another light; and they would impose silence upon themselves, not knowing what to answer, and aware of having already spoken far more than they could justify. But when we see this glory of our God in the face of Jesus Christ, we are humbled without being terrified; and our deepest reverence and self-abasement consist with filial confidence and love. When we clearly perceive how vile we are, we are ashamed and grieved for many of those words and actions which before we vindicated: and when we truly repent, we retract what hath been improperly spoken, and sincerely purpose and attempt a change in our conduct and conversation.—The progressive renewal of a believer proceeds in the same way of conviction, humiliation, and watchfulness against remaining sin, as his first conversion did. If we have been much humbled before God, we need still deeper humiliation: if convinced of many evils in our conduct, we need convincing of many more: and every progressive step in this way makes us more and more sensible that we in no case have either right or reason to complain. Even when we protest against ill treatment from men, or vindicate ourselves from injurious charges, we are apt to reflect upon God; and to be so tenacious of our own right or reputation, as to neglect a proper regard to his honour; and we seem as if we would "disannul his judgment, "and condemn him, that we might be righteous."

V. 9—24.

The proud, stout, and profane words of sinners, might almost induce us to conclude, that they suppose themselves to have "an arm like God," and "can thunder with "a voice like his!" yet they are exposed without the least defence to his Almighty vengeance. Nor can words express their madness in persisting in rebellion, and neglecting his invitations to be reconciled. Alas! what is all the majesty, excellency, glory, or beauty, with which sinful worms can deck themselves? How impotent their rage! How vain their ostentation! The Lord alone can, and he certainly will, abase every one that is proud; either in true repentance, or as condemned criminals in destruction. And they who proudly trust that their own right hand, their own contrivances, efforts, or merits, can save them, will be numbered among these enemies and rivals of God.—Our consideration of the power, and our dread of the rage, of the beasts of the field, might teach us the folly of resisting the will, or provoking the indignation, of the Lord. Every haughty rebel should be reminded, that HE who made him, can make his sword to approach unto him; and not only to destroy his temporal life, but fill his soul with unutterable anguish. Against HIM all power is vain, none can break through his snares, or out-brave his vengeance; though they drink down iniquity like water, and still covet and thirst for more, and make no haste to flee from the wrath to come. But on the other hand we may note, that it is well when the powerful are gentle and equitable; and love to see their inferiors secure, at liberty, and in comfort around them: and when content with the provision appointed for them, they do not injure, oppress, or defraud any one. The all bountiful Creator can supply our wants, however large; and he will, if we be content with what our nature requires, and be not desirous of meat or drink for our lusts, but seek first his kingdom and righteousness. Happy are they who trust in him, and leave him to manage all their concerns, who ordereth all things in heaven and earth, in perfect wisdom, justice, truth, and goodness.

10 None *is so* fierce that [m] dare stir him up: [n] who then is able to stand before me?

11 [o] Who hath prevented me, that I should repay *him?* [p] *whatsoever is* under the whole heaven is mine.

12 ¶ I will not conceal his parts, nor his power, nor his [q] comely proportion.

13 Who can discover the face of his garment? *or* who can come *to him* * with his [r] double bridle?

14 Who can open [s] the doors of his face? [t] his teeth *are* terrible round about.

15 *His* † scales *are his* [u] pride, shut up together *as with* [x] a close seal.

16 One is so near to another, that no air can come between them.

17 They are joined one to another, they stick together, that they cannot be sundered.

18 By his neesings a light doth shine, and his eyes *are* like [y] the eyelids of the morning.

19 [z] Out of his mouth go burning lamps, *and* sparks of fire leap out.

20 Out of his nostrils goeth smoke, as *out* of a seething-pot or caldron.

21 His breath [b] kindleth coals, and a flame goeth out of his mouth.

22 [c] In his neck remaineth strength, and sorrow ‡ is turned into joy before him.

23 The § flakes of his flesh [d] are joined together: they are firm in themselves; they cannot be moved.

24 His heart is as firm as a stone; yea, [e] as hard as a piece of the nether *mill-stone.*

25 When he raiseth up himself, the mighty are afraid; [f] by reason of breakings they purify themselves.

26 [g] The sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold: the spear, the dart, nor the ‖ habergeon.

27 He esteemeth iron as straw; *and* brass as rotten wood.

28 The arrow cannot make him flee: [h] sling-stones are turned with him into stubble.

29 Darts are counted as stubble; [i] he laugheth at the shaking of a spear.

30 * Sharp stones *are* under him: he

m Gen. xlix. 9. Num. xxiv. 9. Ps. ii. 11, 12. Ez. viii 17, 18.
n ix. 4. xl. 9 Jer. xii. 5. 1 Cor. x. 22
o xxii 2, 3 xxxv. 7. Ps. xxi. 8. Rom xi. 35.
p Ex. xix 5. Deu. x. 14 1 Chr xxix 11—14. Ps. xxiv. 1. 1 12. cxv. 16. 1 Cor. x. 26 28.
q Gen. i. 25.
* Or, *within.*
r 2 Kings xix. 28. Ps. xxxii. 9. Jam. iii. 3.
s xxxviii.10. Ec. xii. 4.
t Ps. lvii 4. lviii. 6. Prov. xxx. 14. Dan. vii. 7.
† Heb. *strong pieces of shields.*
u Jer. ix. 24.
x Rev. v. 2, 3. 5.
y iii. 9. *Marg.* Rev. i. 14.
z Ps. xviii. 8.
a Jer. i. 13, 14.
b Ps. xviii 8. 12. Is. xxx. 33 Hab. iii. 5.
c xxxix. 19. xl. 16.
‡ Heb. *rejoiceth.* Hos. xiii. 14. 1 Cor xv 55—57.
§ Heb *fallings.*
d 17.
e Is. xlviii 4 Jer. v. 3. Zech. vii. 12.
f Ps. cvii.28. Jon i. 4—6.
g xxxix. 21—24
‖ Or, *breastplate*
h xxix. 7. Hab i. 10.
i 2 Chr. xxvi 14.
* Heb. *sharp pieces of the potsherd*

NOTES.

CHAP. XLI. V. 1—11. It hath been much disputed what we are here to understand by Leviathan. Many interpret it of the *crocodile:* but the crocodile is an inhabitant of rivers, and leviathan of the sea. (*Marg. Ref.*) Others suppose the *whale* to be meant: yet naturalists find many difficulties in applying the particulars of the description to that creature. But there are several species of whales which are known, and probably others in different parts of the ocean with which we have but little acquaintance: and there is some reason to think that the deep contains enormous creatures, comprehended under that general name, which are much larger than any which have yet been taken. (*Note,* xxvi. 5—13.) As *behemoth* seems to denote the largest of the quadrupeds, so it is probable, *leviathan* means the largest of the inhabitants of the ocean. Moses especially mentions the creation of great whales; (*Gen.* i. 21:) and it is not likely that this animal, so particularly noted in the brief account of the creation, should be overlooked, when the Creator so copiously enumerated his works for the display of his own glory in them. The Lord, in order more deeply to convince Job of his presumption in contending with him, demanded of him, whether he was able to master leviathan? Could he draw him out of the sea with a line and hook, which might fasten through his tongue, nose, or jaws; after the various methods of taking other fishes?—Could he bring this prodigious animal to yield and become his supplicant, to speak him fair and court his favour! Could he engage him in a covenant to be his servant, and to labour for him? Or could he tame or confine him for the amusement of his family? Would he and his acquaintance make a feast upon his flesh? Or, if it were unfit for that use, would he divide the oil and bones among the merchants? Perhaps in the days of Job, it was not thought possible to take whales as they now do: but some of the species might have been cast on the shore, and divided for the use of different persons. It, however, served equally for Job's humiliation, if *he supposed it impossible* to take them, as if it really had been so. He was therefore directed to consider, whether he was able to wound leviathan in his body, or head, with barded irons, or fish-spears, and thus to take him? He was challenged to lay his hand on him if he dared: but should he attempt it, and escape with life, he would remember his perilous situation so well, that he would not make another attempt. All hope of taking him would be vain: the very sight of him would daunt any man. None would dare to stir him up when asleep or basking on the surface of the ocean; and who would dare to meet him when enraged? How could Job then expect to prevail on his almighty Creator to alter his plan of government to please him, or to use his power to serve his interests or humour his wayward inclinations? For where was that man, who had *first* given to the Lord and made him his debtor, that he should have a right to demand payment; when all things in the whole universe were the work and property of God?

spreadeth sharp-pointed things upon the mire.

[k] 20 1 Kings xiv. 10 2 Kings xxi. 13 Is. xiv 23 Amos ix. 15. Matt. xiii. 33.

31 He maketh [k] the deep to boil like a pot: he maketh the sea like a pot of ointment.

32 He maketh a path to shine after him; *one* would think the deep *to be* hoary.

[l] 1 Heb. *treasure themselves without fear.* 24. [m] Isa. xxvi. 12 Ex. v. 2 Ps. 6 Ps. lxxv. 5, 6, 14 Is. xxxvii. 1 Ez. xxviii. 3 Rev. xii. 1—3 xiii. 2 xx. 2, 3.

33 [l] Upon the earth there is not his like, who * is made without fear.

34 He beholdeth all high *things:* [m] he *is* a king over all the children of pride.

V. 12—34. The remainder of this chapter contains a particular and most sublime description of leviathan. The Lord declares, that he did not mean, by confining this prodigious animal in the vast ocean, to conceal from man "his parts, and power, and comely proportion:" for though we call such creatures monsters, and deem them mis-shapen, the Creator sees them to be formed in a suitable and becoming proportion of one part to another. At first sight leviathan appears exceedingly formidable: and who could draw near to him, to examine particularly his whole scale, which serves as his garment, or to strip it off from him? Who would undertake to bridle him like the horse for his use? Or to look into his mouth; when a sight of his teeth would make any man dread immediate destruction? The *scales*, (or strong pieces of *shields*,) with which he is covered as with an impenetrable coat of mail, are his confidence: by them he is secured, as if a seal fastened one part to another; so that no air can penetrate between them, no separation can be effected. When he *neeses* or *sprinkles the water into the air*, his breath sparkles like fire, and his eyes appear like the morning-light; so that burning lamps, and sparks, and smoke appear to be emitted from his mouth, as from under a furnace; and the flame, which arises in his breath seems as if it would set coals on fire. His head is joined to his body with the most surprising strength: and it is as if sorrow marched before him, exulting in the havock that he makes of other creatures: or, however assaulted, his confidence in his own strength turns all his sorrows into joy. His muscles are immoveably firm: and his heart as incapable of fear or compassion, as if it were a mill-stone. When he appears above water, he causes such commotion and agitation in the waves, that the stoutest mariners are terrified, as in a furious storm; and betake themselves to confessions and prayers, expecting immediate death. No weapons either offensive or defensive are of any avail: he is undaunted by them; they make no impression on him or resistance to him; but he despises and derides them all. Indeed he reclines his enormous weight upon the sharp-pointed stones, at the bottom of the sea, with as much ease as if he lay on the soft mire. His motion in the deep maketh the waters to move, as ointment in a pot over a vehement fire. His path may be tracked by this violent commotion, and by the white foam which he leaves upon the waters. In the whole earth there is no creature equal to him, being formed destitute of fear. He beholds every other animal, or the *stately* ships and *aspiring* man, with contempt and disregard: he feels himself capable of ruling over the stoutest and proudest animals: and he hath more strength and courage, than the children of pride who exalt themselves against their Maker. It is undeniable, that several particulars in this description, do not accord to any species of whale, which is at present known: for none of them are covered with scales, or have an impenetrable skin: but it less agrees with any other creature we know. The ancient fathers generally understood the passage as an emblematic, or typical description of Satan, that king over all the children of pride.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Man was formed to be the lord of all other creatures here below: but his superiority consists principally in the powers of his rational nature, which teach him to submit to his Creator and to serve him: if therefore he *irrationally* forgets his place and duty, he should be reminded of his inferiority in other respects, even to many of the animals. Indeed some of these are so powerful and formidable, that we are by no means able to cope with them: how mad then must the presumptuous transgressor be who defies the power and wrath of the Almighty!—If such sublime language was proper in describing the terrible force of leviathan; what words can express the power of God's indignation who is a consuming fire? He indeed beholdeth all high things in order to abase them: he resists and will crush all those who proudly exalt themselves against him: and who may stand in his sight when he is angry? But he more delights in showing his glory from the mercy-seat, and in encouraging sinners to take refuge under the shadow of his wings, and to prostrate themselves before him. If his anger be thus turned away from us, his omnipotence will be our protection; and then we need fear no enemy; though we shall have those that are far more formidable than leviathan. Satan, the king and father of all the children of pride, with his legions of evil spirits, is not confined to the ocean; nor can he be fenced out or resisted by our puny arm. Our wisdom, strength, and resolution, are unavailing in this unequal contest; and far more useless than sword or spear against leviathan: all opposition or hope of overcoming or escaping, if left to ourselves, would be in vain: his heart is stoned against compassion, and he hath been the cruel murderer of souls from the beginning: he rejoices in causing destruction: and he looketh on all the proud and lofty of the earth as his own. But the poor in spirit, who humbly trust in the Lord's mercy, are safe: relying on their almighty Assistant, they may defy and resist this tremendous foe, and be made more than conquerors over him. They must, however, remember, that they are saved wholly by grace: "For who hath prevented "the Lord, that he should repay him?" And if they are mercifully rescued from the deserved wrath of God, and from the malice of Satan, they have no right to complain of any affliction or distress; or to boast of any wisdom, strength, or endowment of their own. Submission, dependence, and grateful obedience, are *their* part: it behoves them to revere the divine Majesty, to be abased under a consciousness of their own vileness, to take and fill their allotted place, to cease from their own wisdom, and to

CHAP. XLII.

Job, in deep humiliation, submits to God, 1—6. *God decides in Job's favour, requires his three friends to present burnt-offerings for their sin, and submissively to engage Job to pray for them,* 7, 8. *They obey, and God accepts Job,* 9. *His prosperity is restored and doubled,* 10—12. *His children,* 13—15. *His age and death,* 16, 17.

THEN Job answered the LORD, and said,

2 I know that [a] thou canst *do* every *thing*, and *that* [b] no thought * can be withholden from thee.

3 [c] Who *is* he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; [d] things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.

4 [e] Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: [f] I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

5 I have [g] heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now [h] mine eye seeth thee.

6 Wherefore [i] I abhor *myself*, and [k] repent in dust and ashes.

7 ¶ And it was *so*, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to [l] Eliphaz the Temanite, [m] My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for [n] ye have not spoken of me *the thing that is* right, as my servant Job *hath*.

8 Therefore take unto you now [o] seven bullocks and seven rams, and [p] go to my servant Job, and [q] offer up for yourselves a burnt-offering; and [r] my servant Job shall pray for you; for † him I will accept: [s] lest I deal with you *after your* folly, in that ye have not spoken of me *the thing which is* right, like my servant Job.

9 So Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, *and* Zophar the Naamathite, went, and [t] did according as the LORD commanded them: the LORD also accepted ‡ Job.

a Gen. xviii. 14. Jer. xxxii 17. Matt xix. 26. Mark x 27. xiv. 36. Luke xviii. 27
b Ps xliv 21. cxxxix 2. Jer. xvii. 10. Ez. xxxviii. 10. John ii. 24, 25. xxi. 17. Heb. iv. 12, 13.
* Or, *of thine can be hindered.* xxiii. 13. Prov. xix. 21. Ec. iii. 14. Is. xlvi. 10. Dan. iv. 35. Eph. i 11.
c xxxviii. 2.
d Ps xl. 5. cxxxi. l. cxxxix. 6. Prov. xxx 2—4
e Gen. xviii. 27. 30—32.
f xxxviii. 3. xl. 7.
g iv. 12 xxviii. 22. xxxiii 16. Rom. x. 17.
h xxiii. 8, 9. Num. xii 6—8 Is. vi. 1 John i. 18. xii. 41. 45. Acts vii. 55, 56.
i ix. 31. xl. 4. Ezra ix. 6. Is. vi 5 Jer xxxi. 19 Ez xvi 63. xx. 43. xxxvi. 31 Luke 15. 18, 19. 1 Cor. xv. 8, 9 1 Tim. i. 13—16. Jam. iv. 7—10.
k ii 8 xxx. 19. 1 Kings xxi. 27. Esth v 1—3. Is. lviii. 5 Jon. iii 6-10 Dan. ix. 8. Matt. xi. 21. Luke x. 13.
l ii. 11 iv. 1. viii 1. xi. 1.
m xxxii. 2, 3. 5.
n xi. 5, 6.
o Num xxiii. 1. 14. 29. 1 Chr. xv. 26. 2 Chr. xxix. 21. Ez. xlv 23 Heb. x. 4. 10—14.
p Matt. v. 23, 24.
q i. 5. Ex. xviii. 12
r Gen xx. 17. Is. lx. 14. Jer. xiv. 11. xv. 1. Ez. xiv 14. Heb. vii. 25. Jam. v. 14—18. Rev. iii. 9.
† Heb. *his face* or, *person* 9. 1 Sam. xxv. 35. Mal. i. 9. Matt. iii 17 Eph i. 6.
s Ps ciii 10. 2 Tim iv 14.
t xxxiv 31, 32.
‡ Heb. *the face of Job.* 8. xxii. 27. Ec. ix. 7.
Is. lx 14. Matt. vii. 24 John ii. 8. Acts ix. 6. x. 33. Heb. xi. 8

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give all the glory to their gracious God and Saviour.—When any man becomes proud of his personal strength and courage; let him be reminded of leviathan: when he is vain of his sagacity, ingenuity, or mental endowments, let him consider how much Satan excels him in them all. Let us all consider the holiness of our God, that we may be ashamed of our remaining unholiness: and remembering from whom every good gift cometh, and for what end it was given, let us walk uprightly and humbly with the Lord; for "before honour is humility."

NOTES.

CHAP. XLII. V. 1—6. Job, borne down, as it were, with a torrent of light and conviction, at length answered, not in his own vindication, but with unreserved submission. He was fully assured that the Lord could do every thing; and therefore it was madness to contend with him, and folly to despair of help from him. He knew that none of his impatient thoughts could be concealed from God: or, perhaps he meant, that the Lord could not be prevented from accomplishing every thing which he intended. He had allowed these truths before *peevishly*, (xxiii. 13, 14;) but now acknowledges them with humble acquiescence, and not without hope of relief. In reproof of his presumption, God had said, "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?" And Job here, in indignant astonishment at his own presumption, repeats the sentiment, and plead guilty to the charge, as if he had said, 'Who indeed 'am I, a poor sinful worm, that I should venture to darken 'such deep subjects, by my ignorant and impatient discourses!' He confessed that he had spoken things beyond his knowledge, and too wonderful or mysterious for him to comprehend; and in a manner which merited the severest punishment. God had likewise commanded Job to prepare his answer whilst he proposed some questions to him, and blamed him for presuming to instruct the Almighty: but Job now humbly besought the Lord that he would allow him to speak; and that he would answer the questions he desired to propose, solve those difficulties with which he was perplexed, declare his truth unto him, and become his Instructor. He had indeed obtained some distant knowledge of God from education, instruction, and conference with his friends; and he had thought himself competent to discourse upon such subjects: but the scene, which he had now witnessed, had made such discoveries to him of the divine glory, and had so affected his heart, that, compared with this *intuitive* knowledge, all he ever knew before seemed to be but hearsay. He was now far more sensible than ever of his own guilt and pollution: so that he despised and abhored himself as an abominable sinner in heart and life; but especially for his presumption and impiety, in murmuring against God. Of this, and of all his sins, he sincerely repented, and willingly took shame to himself for them: and whilst he abased his body in the dust and ashes as a humble penitent; he desired to lie as low in self-condemnation, and in the frame of his spirit before God, casting himself wholly on his mercy, and submitting unreservedly to his will. No doubt Job before this, had had spiritual and experimental knowledge of God in some measure; but nothing equal to what he received on this occasion. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 7—9. While the Lord was speaking to Job with

10 And the LORD [u] turned the captivity of Job, [x] when he prayed for his friends: also [y] the LORD * gave Job twice as much as he had before.

11 Then came there unto him [z] all his brethren, and all his sisters; and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and [a] they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him: [b] every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an ear-ring of gold.

12 [c] So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for [d] he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses.

13 He had also [e] seven sons and three daughters.

14 And he called the name of the first Jemima; and the name of the second, Kezia; and the name of the third, Kerenhappuch.

15 And in all the land were [f] no women found *so* fair as the daughters of Job: and their father [g] gave them inheritance among their brethren.

16 After this lived Job [h] an hundred and forty years, [i] and saw his

u v. 18—20. Deut. xxx. 3. Ps. xiv. 7. liii. 6 cxxvi. 1. 4.
x Ex xvii. 3, 4. Num. xii. 2. 13. xiv 1—4. 10. 13—20. xvi. 21, 22. 46—48. Deut. ix. 20. Luke xxiii. 34. Acts vii 59, 60
y viii 6, 7. xxii. 24. 25. Deut. viii. 18. 1 Sam. ii. 7. 2 Chr. xxv. 9. Prov. xxii. 4. Hag ii. 9
* Heb. *added all that* had been *to Job unto the double.* Is. xl. 2. lxi. 7
z xix. 13, 14. Prov. xvi. 7.
a ii. 11. iv 4. xvi. 5. Gen xxxvii. 35. Is xxxv. 3, 4. John xi 19
b Gen. xxiv. 22. 53. Rom. xii. 15. 1 Cor xii. 26. Heb. xiii. 12. xiii. 3.——b vi. 22, 23. 1 Sam. x. 27.——c viii. 7. Prov. x. 22. Ec. vii. 8. 1 Tim. vi. 17. Jam. v. 11.
d i. 3. Gen xxiv. 35. xxvi 12—14. Ps. cvii. 38. cxliv. 13—15.
e i. 2. Ps. cvii. 41. cxxvii. 3. Is. xlix. 20.
f Ps cxliv. 12. Acts vii. 20.
g Num. xxvii. 7. Josh. xv. 18, 19. xvii. 4
h Gen. xi. 32. xxv. 7. xxxv. 28. xlvii. 23. 1. 26. Deut. xxxiv. 7. Josh. xxiv. 29 Ps xc. 10.
i Gen. l. 23 Ps. cxxviii. 6. Prov. xvii. 6

sharp rebukes, his friends perhaps thought him altogether wrong, and themselves blameless and commendable; and it is not unlikely, that some readers have been ready to conclude, whilst we have gone through the preceding chapters, that the discourses of Job have been too favourably, and those of his friends too unfavourably, explained. But this chapter was all along considered as the clue of the whole narration; without which it would have been presumptuous to have decided positively and without hesitation. It is, however, evident, that the general doctrine of Job was more honourable to God and consistent with the truth, than that of his friends. They had misrepresented the dispensations of Providence, as if this world had been the state of retributions; and had greatly lost sight of the future state: they had considered extraordinary afflictions as a demonstration of wickedness, and as the effect of vindictive anger, rather than as trials and chastenings: and on this ground alone they had condemned a most eminent servant of God of hypocrisy and atrocious iniquity, and treated him with severity and disdain, while he was enduring the extremest sufferings, and struggling with violent temptations: and though Job had irreverently and impatiently, vindicated himself; yet on the whole his sentiments were true, and his arguments conclusive. When, therefore, the Lord had brought Job to deep repentance and a proper frame of mind, he answered his confidence and decidedly took his part. His friends, instead of a recompense for their service, as perhaps they expected, were informed that God was very angry with them, and would not forgive them; except they brought numerous and costly sacrifices as a confession of their guilt, and of their dependence on his mercy; and unless by proper concessions they induced Job to become their priest and intercessor, and to pray for them, while they offered their burnt-offerings. Four times in two verses God called Job *his servant*, as if he gloried in *him* in the midst of his poverty and distress, and when he was treated as a hypocrite. Him alone the Lord would accept, and his friends for his sake and in answer to his prayers; otherwise he would severely chastise them, and put them to shame, according to their folly, in misrepresenting his dispensations, and condemning his servant.—The prosperity of those who were more guilty, and the afflictions of Job who received this testimony of his superior piety, were indeed a refutation of their whole doctrine. Job, being himself humbled and pardoned, heartily and readily forgave them, and prayed for them: and they submitted to this humiliating expedient of making their peace with God. Thus a cordial reconciliation took place. Job's character was cleared and honoured: and if he were not an intended type of the Saviour, the whole history is suited to bring him to our remembrance.

V. 10—17. Whilst Job murmured, disputed, justified himself, and spoke contemptuously of his friends, his afflictions continued: but as soon as he repented and submitted to God, and forgave and prayed for them, the tide began to turn in his favour. "The LORD turned his captivity." Some think that the Chaldeans and Sabeans were wonderfully disposed to restore to him his substance. His afflictions, however, by which he had been held as in bondage or captivity, were terminated; his reputation and honour were restored; Satan's permission was recalled, Job's health was re-established, his spirits were calmed, and his comforts renewed. All his relations and neighbours, who before had treated him with disdain, on account of his poverty and supposed hypocrisy, now came around him: being either afraid of disregarding one, who was a favourite of heaven, or desiring the benefit of his prayers and instructions, or through love and esteem. They condoled with and comforted him; and, according to the custom of those times, every one of them made him a present of a piece of money stamped with the figure of a lamb, and an ornament of gold for the ear or face. He seems likewise to have been again acknowledged and submitted to as ruler, and in process of time his substance was in every thing exactly doubled. But as a testimony that his children were not extinct, or lost to him by death, he had only the former number replaced to him; which, with those who had been removed to another world, doubled them likewise. After this he lived in prosperity and honour, no less than one hundred and forty years: probably above two hundred years in all: and instead of being written childless, as he once feared, he saw his posterity to the fourth generation; and at length died in peace, satisfied with living here, and ripe for a better world. Thus in every particular his integrity was evidenced by those testimonies which his friends had improperly demanded.

sons, and his sons' sons, *even* four generations.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

The Lord will assuredly bring those whom he loves to adore him, in humble submission and self-abasement. Their corrections will continue till they cease from murmuring, boasting, and censuring: but when they repent and kiss the rod, their deliverance draws nigh. Clear discoveries of the glorious power and wisdom of God, even in the inanimate or irrational works of the creation, tend to humble our pride, and to induce us to subscribe to his rebukes, and to the charges which his word brings against us; to fear his wrath above all things, and to expect every blessing from his favour. As none of *his* thoughts can fail of accomplishment; so none of *ours* can escape his notice, but must all be accounted for at the day of judgment.—Calm reflection will often convince us, "that we "were hiding counsel by words without knowledge," at the very time when we thought that we were fully declaring the truth in a clear and convincing manner: and grace in lively exercise will always influence us to confess without hesitation our sins, when we discover them; and without being much concerned to justify what was right, to take shame to ourselves for the things which have been faulty in our conduct. Even the true believer, in discoursing of heavenly things, is very liable to go out of his depth; and by uttering what he does not understand, and speculating on things too wonderful for him, he often exposes himself to rebukes for his rashness and irreverence. What then will be the case of the infidel, the skeptic, and the disputer of this world? They will be speechless, and despair; whilst all the world beholds the wisdom, justice, and goodness of those laws, truths, and decrees, which they arraigned and blasphemed as unjust, oppressive, and unreasonable. Instead of citing the eternal God to the bar of a rebellious worm, and calling upon him to answer our rash objections, it behooves us humbly to crave his instructions, and to be satisfied with the explanations, which he vouchsafes to give of those difficulties which intercept our path. For many hear of him from parents and teachers, and learn to discourse of his works and ways, who have no heart-affecting influential views of his perfections. After all they have heard, he is to them an *unknown God;* for they do not so know him, as to reverence, love, trust, and submit to him. Nay, believers who have some experimental acquaintance with God, may even in this world receive such clear discoveries of his glory, and experience so much of his power and love, that all which they know before shall seem as a mere report, compared with their present views. How then will it be when we shall see him as he is, and know him as we are known?—All true knowledge of God, proportionably humbles and abases us, and causes us to abhor ourselves, and repent in dust and ashes: but false doctrines and mere speculative knowledge puff men up, and feed their self-importance. By this criterion let us judge ourselves and our knowledge in religion: let us take care not to be put off with empty notions; or to be satisfied with present measures of humiliation and experience: for when we are the most abased as sinners before God, we are in the readiest way of being exalted by him. Did such self-abasing language suit the lips of Job, that most eminent saint and servant of God, at the moment when every grace was in its fullest exercise? and can any language be too humiliating for us? If we start and scruple to say that we *abhor ourselves;* or if we find, that we cannot do it with sincerity, does it not demonstrate that we have never perceived so much of the divine glory as Job had, and therefore are not made so sensible of our own guilt and pollution? For it would be very arrogant for any of us to suppose ourselves better by nature and practice, or more eminent in faith, patience, or piety, than this most approved and applauded character.

17 So Job died, *being* old and [k] full of days.

k v. 26 Gen. xv. 15 xxv. 8. Deut. vi 2 Ps. xci. 16. Prov. iii. 16.

V. 7—17.

When the Lord hath duly humbled and graciously pardoned his servants, he will clear their reputations, silence their slanderers, answer their confidence, and exceed their largest expectations; and he will also teach them after his example to forgive, love, and pray for those who have injured them. In this frame of spirit they will be prepared to bear honour in an unassuming manner, and then he will confer it. He generally *first* rebukes those whom he most loves: but let not such as for a time escape be overconfident, for their turn will soon come. Even pious men may kindle the wrath of God against them, by not speaking humbly and honourably of him: but as all his controversies with us begin by our sin; so every reconciliation must be effected in that way which he hath revealed, and in the use of those means which he hath prescribed. They who refuse to come in this way, shall be dealt with after their folly: but no true believer or real penitent will finally persist in such a refusal. It is indeed very painful to be confuted, rebuked, and constrained to confess our mistakes and offences, and to beg the assistance and good offices of those whom we have despised, condemned, and injured. Yet the true penitent will submit to all this and more, when the will of God is known: his self-abasement will be proportioned to his former self-confidence: and whenever we approach God in his ordinances, such mutual concessions, restitutions, and forgivenesses, should *first* be attended to. (*Marg. Ref.*) Nothing cements the affections of believers, who have jarred or disputed, so much as praying with and for each other: when they enjoy communion with their common Saviour, they feel a disposition to delight in the communion of the saints; and to forget all which for a season interrupted it: and "the effectual fer-"vent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." We should be careful not to judge any thing before the time; we know not how the Lord may clear up one man's character or expose another's: and therefore we should be candid towards others, and jealous of ourselves. Neither are we competent to decide which is the most happy man; for the end crowns the day. When a man is oppressed, censured, and tempted, he appears very different from what he does when delivered and comforted: and he that is at ease can scarcely conceive what effect sharp trials would have upon him. Satan's prevalence is limited in duration, as

well as in degree: and when he is rebuked, the gloom of those whom he hath tempted will be dispelled, and way be made for their returning consolations. "When a man's "ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to "be at peace with him:" he is graciously pleased with the very imperfect services of the humble believer; and when he has stood the trial, he shall come forth, as gold purified from the furnace. True religion mortifies that avarice which covets the wealth of other men, and that pride which induces numbers to scorn the needful, well meant, and proper assistance which is offered them. Whether the Lord give us health, long life, affluence, friends, and flourishing families, or not, we shall eventually be happy, if we patiently suffer according to his will: and those things which once we thought were altogether against us, shall at length appear to have been wisely chosen for our greater and more enduring good. (*James* i. 12.)—We know not for what good purposes our lives may be prolonged; and therefore should not be impatient for death, even when greatly afflicted. And whether our children and friends go before, or follow us, into the eternal world, they will not be lost to us, if the Lord hath made them partakers of his grace: this, above all things, we should seek, for an inheritance for them and for ourselves, being infinitely more valuable than all the wealth and personal accomplishments in the world. But though Job's trials and their happy event are replete with instruction and consolation, to the suffering tempted believer: yet we shall be still more edified and encouraged by looking unto Jesus. His abasement, temptations, and sufferings were vastly greater than those of Job; and he endured them with perfect patience, and they issued far more gloriously. For us he was tempted, and suffered, and emerged, and triumphed, and is glorified: for us, when we were enemies, he offered himself a sacrifice, and now for us he pleads before the throne. In him believers are pardoned and accepted: "he sees his seed, and prolongs his days, and the "pleasure of the Lord prospers in his hands:" but there is no salvation in any other. To him we must come, in him we must confide, to him we must submit, and from him receive all that we can want: but we can give him nothing, except the honour of our whole salvation, and ourselves to be by his grace his redeemed and devoted servants. May we then experience his grace, share his victories, tread in his steps, and copy his patience: and we shall find in the event, "that the Lord is pitiful, and of tender mercy." But "we have need of patience, that after having done "the will of God, we may receive the promise."

THE BOOK OF

PSALMS.

THE Hebrew name of this book is Tehillim, *or* Praises: *because the praises of God form its grand scope and object, to which all other subjects contained in it are, in one way or other, rendered subservient.—The word* Psalms *is taken from the Greek, and denotes that these sacred hymns were, when sung, accompanied with the psaltery, harp, or lute: and indeed, from the time of David, psalmody, with various kinds of instrumental music, formed a considerable part of the daily worship at the sanctuary. The whole collection is often called, 'The Psalms of David.' He indeed was, undoubtedly, the writer of the greatest part of them: his name is prefixed to above seventy Psalms: and he certainly wrote some, and probably many of those which are not expressly ascribed to him: concerning others, it remains doubtful who composed them; but one is entitled "The prayer of Moses, the Man of God;"* (xc.) *and there is internal proof that some were written long after the time of David, and even during or subsequent to the Babylonish captivity. David, however, as the first who especially employed his poetical talents by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in composing sacred poems, and who established or regulated the psalmody at the Sanctuary, was warranted to call himself "the sweet Psalmist of Israel:" and to add, "The Spirit of the* LORD *spake by me, and his word was on my tongue."—Josephus informs us, that the Levites were enjoined to preserve at the temple all such hymns as might be composed in honour of God: and it is thought by some learned men, that the book of Psalms which we now have, was selected from a much larger number, as being divinely inspired, and so admissible into the canon of Scripture; while many others were rejected, as not entitled to this honourable distinction. The entire book, however this may be, has certainly been considered as a part of "the oracles of God" in every age, by an invariable testimony. St. Paul quotes the* second Psalm *expressly as a prophecy of Christ;* (Acts xiii 33:) *which implies that the Psalms were arranged after the same order, in general, as they now are. Nearly fifty of the Psalms are quoted or referred to in the New-Testament. Our Lord, proposing a question to the Scribes concerning the Messiah, introduces a passage from the hundred and tenth Psalm, in this manner, "David himself said* by the holy Ghost:" *or "David* in Spirit *calls him Lord:" and when instructing his disciples, after his resurrection, he says, "all things must be fulfilled which are "written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me." In like manner, the apostle Paul, quoting a passage from the ninety-fifth Psalm, which he ascribes to David, uses this language, "Wherefore as* the Holy Ghost saith, *To-day, if ye will hear my voice," and the assembled Christian church applies the second Psalm to Christ, in these words—"Lord, thou art God, who by "the mouth of thy servant David hast said." In so decided a manner is the divine inspiration of the Old Testament attested by Christ and his apostles.—The Jewish writers indeed are unwilling to bestow on David the title of prophet, and ascribe to him only a subordinate kind of inspiration; according to the several distinctions which they have devised in this respect: but St. Peter expressly calls him a prophet; and the number and clearness of the predictions he delivered, and which were evidently fulfilled after many ages, most fully prove him entitled to that character. And the several particulars respecting the descent, kingdom, and priesthood of Christ, the contempt and persecution he endured, and the intenseness and variety of his sufferings, the manner of his death, his resurrection, ascension, and glory, with the success of his gospel, and the calling of the Gentiles, are so circumstantially foretold in one or other of the Psalms, that a history of these events might in great measure be compiled from them: and in some cases with a minuteness to which historians seldom descend.—The words which our Lord used on the cross in two instances were taken from the Psalms; and the insulting language of his persecutors was the very same that David above a thousand years before had put into their mouths.* (Ps. xxii. 1. 8. xxxi. 5. Matt. xxvii. 43. 46. Luke xxiii. 46.)—*Many Psalms indeed, are directly and throughout prophecies of Christ; various passages in others must be interpreted of him: and David was so eminent a type of the Saviour, that his very name in some instances in the prophecies, is given to this his most illustrious descendant.* (Is lv. 3. Ez. xxxiv. 23. Hos. iii. 5) *But, besides this, that union which subsists betwixt the Redeemer and his people, and the conformity thence resulting, are of such a nature, that it is impossible but the same things should apply in many respects to both: though a discrimination must needs be observed in others. This may lead us to an obvious decision of the contro-*

versy which has often been agitated—whether all the Psalms should be applied to Christ or not. No doubt every pious mind will allow, that each of them either immediately points to him in his Person, character, and offices; or may be so applied as to lead the believer's thoughts to Him, who is the centre of all acceptable religion: and probably there are few persons, who suppose that all the Psalms speak of Christ in exactly the same manner; but rather according to the nature of the subject It cannot indeed be doubted, but that the Psalms in general are devotional and experimental, the language of the gracious heart under its various exercises; whether mourning for sin, thirsting after God, or rejoicing in him; whether burdened with affliction, struggling with temptation, or triumphing in the hope or enjoyment of deliverance; whether admiring the divine perfections, thanking God for his mercies, meditating on his truths, or delighting in his service. They are in great measure a divinely appointed standard of genuine experience; by which we may judge whether, or how far our own desires, aims, fears, hopes, joys, and sorrows are spiritual; and how far they are carnal, or verge to enthusiasm or delusion. The value of the Psalms in this particular is inestimable; and the more cordially we can enter into the views, and appropriate the language of the Psalmist, the higher is our progress in genuine religion. 'The 'Psalms are an epitome of the Bible, adapted to the purposes of devotion. They treat occasionally 'of the creation and formation of the world, the dispensations of Providence, and the economy of Grace; 'the transactions of the patriarchs; the Exodus of the children of Israel, their journey through the 'wilderness, and settlement in Canaan; their law, priesthood, and ritual; the exploits of their great 'men, wrought by faith; their sins and captivities; their repentance and restoration; the sufferings 'and victories of David; the peaceful and happy reign of Solomon, the advent of Messiah, with its 'effects and consequences; his incarnation, birth, life, passion, death, resurrection, ascension, kingdom, 'and priesthood; the effusion of the Spirit, the conversion of the nations; the rejection of the Jews; 'the establishment, increase, and perpetuity of the Christian church; the end of the world; the general judgment, the condemnation of the wicked, and the final triumph of the righteous with their Lord 'and King. These are the subjects here presented to our meditation.—They are adorned with the figures 'and set off with the graces of poetry: and poetry itself is designed yet further to be recommended by 'the charms of music, thus consecrated to the service of God: that so delight may prepare the way for 'improvement, and pleasure become the handmaid of wisdom; while every turbulent passion is calmed 'by sacred melody, and the evil spirit is still dispossessed by the Harp of the son of Jesse.—They present religion to us in its most engaging dress, communicating truths, which philosophy could never investigate, in a style which poetry can never equal; while history is made the vehicle of prophecy, and 'creation lends all its charms to paint the glories of Redemption.—Besides their incomparable fitness 'to express our sentiments, they are at the same time memorials of, and appeals to, former mercies and 'deliverances—they are acknowledgments of prophecies accomplished' (Bp. Horne's preface to Psalms.) *In commenting therefore upon this book, we should continually keep the Saviour in our mind: and whilst we consider who he was, and what he did; how and why he suffered, and how he rose and reigns; we should also endeavour to learn what his true disciples are, what they ought to be, and what they actually do aspire after The literal meaning, as far as the Psalmist is concerned, should be adverted to, where it can be ascertained; the particulars, in which Christ is predicted or typified, noted; and the use that is to be made of every part of each Psalm to encourage the faith and hope, to direct the temper and conduct, to enliven the devotions, and to assist the self-examination of the reader, should be plainly shown.—We are also here continually reminded of what we must have to struggle against from within and from without, and how we may succeed in this conflict: and solemn warnings, and denunciations of vengeance against oppressors and persecutors, and the despisers and opposers of Christ and his gospel, are every where interspersed. This indeed has been considered as an objection to the use of the Psalms in public or private devotion, and a prejudice has arisen in some pious minds against several parts of them; as if contrary to the Christian spirit: but, doubtless, the* right spirit *has always been the same; and these parts must be considered, either as direct prophecies, or as divinely inspired declarations of the certain doom awaiting all the opposers of Christ and his cause or people; and not as expressions of private resentment, or malevolence against injurious individuals. In short, there is nothing in true religion, doctrinal, experimental, and practical, but will present itself to our attention, whilst we meditate upon the Psalms. Scarcely any part of the book, but, when properly understood and accommodated, suits the case of private Christians, and may be usefully employed in public worship: and hardly an occasion of praise and thanksgiving can be conceived, to which some portion of them, faithfully rendered*

in poetical versions, may not be applied with peculiar energy and propriety: and indeed the Christian's use of them in the closet, and the minister's in the pulpit, will generally increase with their growing experience of the power of true religion in their own hearts. From this eulogium on this part of Scripture, let the reader be excited to meditate on it carefully for himself: but let him not expect too much from the expositor. Brevity must be consulted; a writer's inclination may exceed his ability; and at the last, the teaching Spirit of God, sought in fervent prayer, leading the pious soul into the genuine exercise of faith, hope, love, and gratitude, will do more to enable a man to enter into the Psalmist's views, than any human explication. If the author is enabled to suggest a few profitable hints upon each Psalm, he shall have occasion to be very thankful.

Various divisions of this book have been made, apparently without much reason. The present order seems to have been very ancient; though by no means coincident with the date of the several Psalms, which, indeed, have seldom much connexion with each other.—The Septuagint throw the ninth and the tenth Psalms into one, as also the hundred and fourteenth, and the hundred and fifteenth; and they divide the hundred and sixteenth, and the hundred and forty-seventh each into two.—Various other particulars respecting the titles, the dates, and the occasions of the several Psalms, will be noted as we proceed. 'The version of the Psalms, in our Bible, which was made by the translators employed by James the 'first, is posterior to that printed in our prayer books, which was executed in 1539. This last, as very 'excellent, and familiarized by custom, was retained in the Liturgy; though, as translated chiefly 'from the Septuagint, it does not so exactly correspond with the original, as does that in our Bibles.' (Grey's Key.) *It may be added, that the former is in no respect comparable to the latter.*

B. C 450.
a ii. 12. xxxii. 1, 2 xxxiv. 8. lxxxiv. 12. cvi. 3 cxii. 1. cxv. 12 — 15. cxix. 1,2 cxliv. 15. cxlvi. 5 Deut. xxviii. 2, &c xxxiii. 29. Jer. xvii. 7. Matt. xvi. 17. Luke xi. 28. John xiii. 17 xx. 29. Rev. xxii. 14.
b lxxxi. 12. Gen. v. 24 Lev xxvi 27, 28. 1 Kings xvi. 31. Job xxxi. 5. Prov. i. 15. iv. 14, 15. xiii 20. Ez xx. 18. 1 Pet. iv. 3.——— c lxiv. 2. Gen xlix. 6. 2 Chr xxii 3—5 Job x. 3. xxi. 16. Luke xxiii. 51.——— * Or, *wicked.*——d xxvi. 12. Rom. v. 2. Eph. vi. 13, 14.——— e 6. xxxvi. 4. cxlvi 9. Prov. ii. 12. iv. 19. xiii. 15. Matt. vii. 13, 14.

PSALM I.

The character and happiness of the righteous, 1—3. The misery and ruin of ungodly men, 4—6.

a BLESSED *is* the man that b walketh not in c the counsel of the * ungodly, nor d standeth in e the way of sinners, nor f sitteth in the seat of the g scornful.

2 But h his delight *is* in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he i meditate k day and night.

3 And he shall be like l a tree planted by the rivers of water, that m bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also n shall not † wither; and o whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

B. C. 450.
f xxvi 4, 5. cxix. 115. Jer. xv 17.
g Prov. i. 22 iii. 34. ix. 12. xix. 29.
h xl. 8. cxii. 1. cxix 11. 35. 47, 48 72. 92. Job xxiii. 12. Jer. xv. 16. Rom. vii. 22. 1 John v. 3.
i civ. 34. cxix. 1. 15 97—99 Josh. i. 8. 1 Tim. iv. 15.
k lxxxviii. 1. Luke ii. 37. xviii. 7. 1 Thes ii. 9. 2 Tim. i. 3.
Job xiv. 9 Is. xliv. 4. Jer. xvii 8. Ez. xvii. 8. xix. 10. xlvii. 12. Rev. xxii. 2.
m xcii 14 Matt. xxi. 34 41 ——n Is xxvii 11. Matt. xiii. 6. xxi 19. John xv. 6. Jude 12.——† Heb. *fade* ——o cxxviii. 2. Gen. xxxix. 3. 23. Josh. i. 7, 8. 1 Chr. xxii. 11. 2 Chr xxxi. 21. xxxii. 23. Is. iii. 10.

NOTES.

PSALM I. V. 1—3. This psalm is generally considered as a preface to the book, and supposed to have been prefixed to it by Ezra. It establishes the important distinction betwixt the righteous and the wicked; and assures us of the *felicities* of the former, and the misery of the latter. All men shun misery, and aim to be happy: but few understand that misery springs from sin, and that happiness can only be enjoyed in the favour of God. This the Scriptures declare; and by this light the believer seeks and finds it. In such portions of the word of God, we ought not to look for the way in which sinners are made righteous; or the origin of that difference which subsists among men, who are all of one nature: for they only inform us of the character of such as are accepted by God, and are in the way to heaven. The translation in our prayer-book renders this in the past tense, and though the original might very well bear that meaning, yet the context and the whole tenour of Scripture show that this cannot be the exclusive sense; for that would imply, that they alone were blessed, who never had walked in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seat of the scornful: whereas penitent believers, whatever their previous character has been, are partakers of the blessings which is evidenced by their subsequent conduct: and none else but they answer this description. *The ungodly* are those, however moral or virtuous, who profanely despise spiritual blessings, and live without any due regard to God and religion, as all unconverted men do. *The counsel of the ungodly* signifies, the maxims and principles of worldly men, who form their plans and calculate advantages or disadvantages, according to their several pursuits, without bringing the favour or displeasure of God or eternal things into the account: and *walking in this counsel*, signifies an habitual conduct formed on such principles, and regulated according to such rules. *Sinners*, in this climax, seems to mean, those who add to their ungodliness gross immoralities, and such crimes as natural conscience and the opinion of the world protest against. And to *stand in the way of sinners*, implies, the habit of such vices gradually overcoming the sense of shame and remorse of conscience, till a quiet, rarely interrupted by convictions, is supe-

o xxxv. 5. Job xxi. 18. Is. xvii. 13. xxix. 5. Hos. xiii. 3. Mat. iii. 12.
q v. 5. xxiv. 3. Luke xxi. 36. Jude 24.
r xxvi. 9. Mal. iii. 18. Matt. xiii. 49. xxv. 32.

4 The ungodly *are* not so: but *are* [p] like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

5 Therefore the ungodly [q] shall not stand in the judgment, nor [r] sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

s xxxvii. 18—24. cxxxix. 1, 2. cxiii. 3. Job xxiii 10. Nah. i. 7. John x. 14. 27. 2 Tim ii. 19.
t cxii. 10. cxlvi. 9. Prov. xiv. 12. Matt. vii. 13. 2 Pet. ii. 12.

6 For the Lord [s] knoweth the way of the righteous: but [t] the way of the ungodly shall perish.

induced. Yet these occasional convictions are the source of uneasiness; and this prepares the sinner for "sitting "down in the seat of the scornful." *The scornful*, no doubt, are such as encourage themselves and each other in ungodliness and wickedness, by infidel and atheistical tenets; and as have recourse to corrupt principles, to bear them out in corrupt practices; and so are given up to a blind and deluded mind, as a punishment of their conduct in following the impulse of a wicked heart. And to *sit in the seat of the scornful*, is to become teachers and apostles of infidelity, and impiously to ridicule, with all the genius, wit, and sense which they possess, the doctrines, precepts, and worshippers of God. The Septuagint translate the last clause, '*The seat of pestilences.*' (*Acts* xxiv. 5. *Marg.*) thus "the simple ones love simplicity, and fools "hate knowledge, and scorners delight in their scorning." —But the happy persons here described, have been preserved or recovered from these dreadful evils. They have, by divine grace, separated from all ungodly companions, and lost their relish for the vain pleasures of the world; they have learned to delight in the word of God, and to meditate continually upon it. This engages their affections, and occupies that time and those thoughts which others waste in vanity or sloth: thus they become like a tree planted in a well watered soil, which seasonably brings forth fruit, and abides verdant and flourishing; and whilst they are rendered steadfast and joyful in hope, and fruitful in holiness, they are made useful to others, and eventually prosper in the best desires and purposes of their heart.

V. 4—6. The Psalmist, having briefly stated the character and felicity of the righteous, contrasts with these the worthlessness and misery of the ungodly man, however distinguished. He is not only an unfruitful and withered tree, but he is despicable and useless as the chaff; he is readily driven from one delusion to another; and shall soon be torn away from all his worldly prosperity, and cast into hopeless misery. However his success may now be envied, or his character mistaken, the judgment of God will infallibly separate him from the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord hath *appointed*, and he *approves*, the way in which the righteous walk; he *knows* all its snares, dangers, and difficulties, and will watch over all that walk in it: but he leaves the wicked to the consequences of that way which they choose, and it leads directly to the pit of destruction.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The tendency of corrupt nature is from bad to worse. Men first forget and neglect God and his worship, and act from worldly maxims and principles; then they often venture upon gross and scandalous crimes; and at length they frequently settle in infidelity or an impious contempt of religion, and become the avowed and determined enemies of its doctrines and precepts. None know when they first shake off the impressions of a religious education, or venture to neglect known duty, how far they may be left to proceed: when inward and outward restraints are surmounted, they may rush downward into impiety and iniquity with accelerated force, as the stone falls to the earth. We ought to be thankful, if we have been preserved from these dreadful enormities, and have not been left to sit down finally in the seat of the scornful. And young persons should be warned not to venture aside into a path which leads to such fatal consequences: for numbers are left to wander from God, to be hardened in sin, and finally to perish. But blessed be God for the covenant of grace, and Jesus the Mediator of it: by his perfect obedience even unto death, he is become "the end of the "law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Whenever the sinner becomes sensible of his guilt and misery, he may return by Christ the living Way, into the company of the righteous. In the exercise of repentance and faith, he separates from the company of the ungodly in which he can no longer delight. He cannot now act according to their maxims, or conform to their fashions, join in their pleasures, or relish their profane scoffs and jests. Perceiving the vanity of the world and the odiousness of sin, he begins to delight in the word of God, which shows him the preciousness of Christ and the beauty of holiness. Reading, and meditating daily upon, the sacred Scriptures with faith and prayer, he becomes "in Christ a new crea-"ture;" he has now new desires, pleasures, hopes, fears, sorrows, companions, and employments: his thoughts, words, and actions, are changed: he enters upon a new state, and bears a new character. "Behold all things are "become new!" and the word of God is the support, comfort, and rule of his new and heavenly life. This man's religion does not consist in notions or forms; but in due season he will bring forth the substantial fruits of righteousness: for he is planted and takes root in a good soil; and through the word, derives from Christ those communications of divine grace, which gradually transform his soul into the Redeemer's image. Nor will his profession issue in apostacy: for his Saviour lives, and he shall live also; and though he may be tried and often disappointed, yet he shall find at last, that he had all profitable success in each of his undertakings. How different the character, prospect, and end of the ungodly! Their doom will be as dreadful as their characters were worthless; for being vessels of wrath fitted for destruction, they will be driven from the presence of the Lord into unquenchable fire. They may indeed here impose upon their fellow creatures, as well as deceive themselves: but the Judge will perfectly and finally separate them from the righteous; and will send them away into everlasting punishment, whilst he receives his people into life eternal. If we would then be happy, we must choose the way which the Lord knows and approves, though it be unfashionable, and despised; we must come out and be separate from the wicked:

PSALM II.

The Throne of Christ established, in contempt of all opposers, 1—6. Christ declares the Father's decree concerning his kingdom, 7—9. Kings and Rulers are warned to submit to him, 10—12.

WHY [a] do the heathen * rage, and [b] the people †imagine a vain thing?

2 [c] The kings of the earth set themselves, and [d] the rulers take counsel together, [e] against the LORD, and [f] against his anointed, *saying*,

3 [g] Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.

4 [h] He that sitteth in the heavens [i] shall laugh: the LORD shall have them in derision.

5 Then [k] shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and ‡ vex them in his [l] sore displeasure.

6 [m] Yet have I set § my king upon ‖ my holy hill of Zion.

7 ¶ I will declare * the decree: The LORD hath said unto me, [n] Thou *art* my Son; [o] this day have I begotten thee.

8 [p] Ask of me, [q] and I shall give *thee* the heathen *for* thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth *for* thy possession.

9 Thou shalt [r] break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

a xviii. 43. xlvi. 6. lxxxiii. 4—8. Is. viii. 9, 10. Luke xviii. 32. Acts iv. 25—27.
* Or, *tumultuously assemble.* Luke xxiii. 1, 2. 5. 22, 23. Acts xvi. 22. xvii. 5, 6. xix. 28—32.
b Matt. xxi. 28. John xi. 49, 50. Acts v. 39. Rev. xvii. 14.
† Heb. *meditate.*
c 10. xlviii. 4. cx. 5. Matt ii. 16. Luke xiii. 31. xxiii. 11, 12. Acts xii. 1—6. Rev. xvii. 12—14.
d Matt. xxvi. 3 59. xxvii. 1. Acts iv. 5—8.
e Ex. xvi 7. Pro. xxi. 30. John xv. 23. Acts ix. 4.
f xlv. 7. lxxxix. 20. Is. lxi. 1. John i. 41. iii. 34. Acts x. 38. Heb. i. 9.
g Jer. v. 5. Luke xix. 14. 1 Pet. ii. 7, 8. ——h xi. 4. lxviii. 33. cxv. 3. Is. xl. 22. lvii. 15. lxvi. 1.
i xxxvii. 23 liii. 5. lix. 8. 2 Kings xix. 21. Prov. i. 26.
k l 16—22. Is. xl. 4 lxvi. 6 Matt. xxii. 7. xxiii. 33—36 Luke xix. 27. 43, 44. Rev. i. 16. xix. 15.
† Or, *trouble.*
l cx. 5, 6. Zech. i. 15
m xlv. 6. lxxxix. 27. 36, 37 cx. 1, 2 Is. ix. 6, 7. Dan vii 13, 14. Mat. xxviii. 18. Acts ii 34—36. v. 30, 31. Eph. i. 22 Phil. ii. 9—11.
§ Heb. *anointed.*
‖ *Zion, the hill of my holiness.*
xlviii. 1, 2 l. 2. lxxviii 68. cxxxii. 13, 14. Heb. xii. 22. Rev. xiv. 1.
* Or, *for a decree.* cxlviii 6. Job xxiii 13. Is. xlvi. 10.
n Matt viii. 29. xvi. 16. Acts viii. 37. xiii 33. Rom i. 4. Heb. i 5. iii. 6. v 5. 8.——o lxxxix. 27. John i. 14. 18 iii. 16. Heb. i. 6 ——p John xvii. 4, 5 ——q xxii. 27 lxxii. 8. Dan. vii. 13, 14 r xxi. 8, 9. lxxxix. 23. cx. 5, 6. Is. xxx. 14. lx. 12. Jer. xix. 11. Dan. ii. 44. Matt. xxi. 44 Rev. ii. 26, 27 xii. 5.

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we must learn to redeem our time for the study of the scriptures and attendance on God's ordinances: we must examine whether we can and do delight in these sacred exercises, and in any measure become fruitful in holiness. And if we meet with troubles by the way, we should keep the end in view: for surely we can never envy those, however prosperous or admired, who throng that broad road which leads to destruction.

NOTES.

PSALM II. V. 1—3. The occasion of this psalm might be taken from David's advancement to the throne, and his expectation of triumphing over the opposition made to his authority, both by disaffected Israelites and the surrounding nations: but it is throughout an evident prophecy of Christ, and repeatedly quoted as such in the New Testament; where it is ascribed to David, though his name is not prefixed to it. (*Marg. Ref.*) The Jews and Gentiles, the rulers and the people, sat themselves to oppose Christ, when he was condemned by the Jewish council, and crucified by the Roman authority, amidst the insults of surroundig multitudes. After his resurrection the same opposition was made to the establishment of his religion; and in every age, in one form or other, his kingdom has generally been opposed by the rulers of this world. But the event has uniformly proved, that this attempt, however wisely planned or vigorously conducted, was *a vain thing*, an ineffectual and ruinous contest against omnipotence; which originated from a rooted enmity to the authority and commandments of God, and the restraints which they impose on the self-will and corrupt passions of mankind.

V. 4—6. The almighty Sovereign, being fully aware of the intentions of his combined enemies, and able to disconcert them in a moment, disdained their impotent rage; as men deride and laugh at those who would but cannot hurt them: yet at the same time their enmity excited his wrath, and by his powerful word he determined to confound and destroy them: whilst he would establish his King, the Messiah, upon his throne and in his authority over his holy church; of which the temple, and its worship, and the kingdom of the house of David, upon mount Zion, were types. Accordingly, when the priests and rulers prevailed on Pilate to crucify their anointed King, they eventually forwarded his exaltation: and their persecution of his disciples drove numbers into remote regions, and thus greatly promoted the promulgation of the Gospel. —After a time, the Roman legions, the executioners of divine vengeance, surrounded Jerusalem; and at length destroyed the city and temple, and subverted both their civil and ecclesiastical state, with the most unheard of miseries and destruction of the devoted Jews; the wretched remains of whom to this day, scattered throughout the nations, unwillingly attest the fulfilment of this ancient prophecy. The Roman empire too, having set itself against the cause of Christ, began directly to decline, and at length sunk in the unequal contest. The emperor Julian, also, an apostate from Christianity, having undertaken to rebuild the temple and restore the Jews, was strangely baffled, and soon came to an untimely end: while the kingdom of Christ continues to this present time, in contempt and defiance of all the machinations of earth and hell. The Septuagint render the sixth verse, as the words of David or of Christ: 'But I have been constituted king by him,' &c.

V. 7—9. The King himself is here introduced, proclaiming the eternal purpose of the Father respecting his mediatorial authority, which was to be the recompense of his propitiatory sufferings. At his resurrection from the dead he was declared to be the Son of God. His *sonship* in this place seems mentioned as coeval with the decree, and not with the declaration of it. Christ is here recognized as the begotten of the Father, and as really partaker of the divine nature and perfections, as any son is of the nature of him who begat him. When he had accomplished his work on earth, he was authorized to ask and receive the heathen for his inheritance. For his mediatorial authority extends throughout the earth, for the benefit of his church: and all who are not made his willing subjects, will be as easily and entirely destroyed by his power, as a potter's vessel is broken by the stroke of an iron rod. —The divine appointment of David to be king of Israel, the special favour shown him, the victories he obtained, and the dominion he exercised over the surrounding

10 [s] Be wise now therefore, [t] O ye kings: [u] be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

11 [x] Serve the LORD with fear, and [y] rejoice with trembling.

12 [z] Kiss [a] the Son, lest he be angry, and [b] ye perish *from* the way; [c] when his wrath is kindled but a little. [d] Blessed *are* all they that put their trust in him.

s Jer. vi. 8. Hos. xiv. 1.
t xlv. 12. lxxii. 10, 11. Is. xlix. 23. lii. 15. lx. 3. 10, 11.
u lxxxii. 1—8.
x lxxxix 7 Heb. xii. 28, 29
y xcv.1- 8. xcvii. 1. xcix. 1. cxix. 120. Phil. ii, 12. Heb. iv. 1, 2 xii. 25.
z Gen. xli. 40. 43, 44. 1 Sam x. 1. 1 Kings xix. 18. Hos. xiii. 2. John v. 23.
a 7.
b i. 6 John xiv 6.
c 5. 2 Thes. i. 8, 9. Rev. vi. 16, 17. xiv. 9—11.———d xl. 4. cxlvi. 3—5 Prov. xvi. 20. Is. xxvi. 3, 4. xxx. 18. Jer. xvii. 7. Rom. ix. 33. x. 11. Eph. i. 12. 1 Pet. i. 21. ii 6.

PSALM III.

David, amidst numerous insulting foes, firmly relies on the divine protection, 1—6. He prays for deliverance, and ascribes salvation to the Lord, 7, 8.

A psalm of David, [a] when he fled from Absalom his son.

a 2 Sam. xv — xviii.

B. C. 1021.

LORD, [b] how are they increased that trouble me? [c] many *are* they that rise up against me.

b 2 Sam xv. 12. xvi. 15. xvii. 11 — 13 Matt. xxvii. 25.
c xvii. 7. Mat. x. 21.

nations, were very faint shadows of the intended events.

V. 10—12. It would be vain to oppose the unalterable decree of God, that his Son should reign over the whole earth. It would therefore be the wisdom even of kings and rulers to submit; to fear the wrath and reverence the majesty of JEHOVAH, and become his servants; to rejoice in their superior rank with trembling, lest it should subject them to more aggravated vengeance; to do homage to Christ as their superior Lord, from whom they have their authority; to adore him as their God, and to welcome him as their Saviour, by the kiss of reverence, submission, and affection. Otherwise they must perish in their rebellion, far from the way of life: for even those who provoked this almighty King, by rejecting his authority, though without any circumstances of peculiar aggravation, would experience the terrible effects of his wrath: and all who put their trust in him, as their Saviour, would share the blessings of his righteous and merciful government. The evident fulfilment of the unequivocal predictions in this psalm, by a series of events exactly answerable to them, during the lapse of many ages, is in reality a full demonstration, that both the prophecy and the accomplishment were from God; and that our holy religion is of divine original and authority. The Jews themselves attest, that this psalm was extant many ages before the birth of Jesus; and many of them allow, that it principally relates to the promised Messiah, whom they are yet vainly expecting! And can any one be so absurdly skeptical, as to imagine, that human sagacity, or mere conjecture, could have suggested explicit predictions, which should at length be verified in the most exact and circumstantial manner, by events no otherwise to be accounted for than on scriptural principles, and by allowing them to have been effected by the power of God himself?

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

As this apostate world is in fact the kingdom of Satan, unconverted men of every rank, party, or character, may be excited by him to concur in opposing the cause of God, and the kingdom of Christ. But the kings and the rulers of the earth have generally been most instigated by the slanders and misrepresentations of false teachers, and other interested persons, as well as by their own prejudices and passions, to combine in this opposition. They do not brook submission to a superior; the humbling truths and spiritual precepts of Christ run counter to their ambitious projects and worldly lusts: and they are apt to suppose that this authority is inconsistent with their dignity or their felicity. Thus they are often excited to employ all their power and policy against the Lord, and against his Anointed; whilst they deceive themselves with the idea, that they are only opposing some obstinate sectaries who refuse submission to their edicts. But these are vain imaginations which the Lord disdains and abhors; and can effect nothing but the confusion and ruin of those who indulge them. For Jesus, the eternal Son of God, is established, and shall reign upon his holy throne, as the Saviour of his people and the avenger of his enemies. The decree of the Father has taken effect in part: the kingdom of the Mediator is fixed upon the ruins of Jewish and Heathen opposers; and it shall at length universally prevail, whilst every enemy shall be dashed in pieces by his iron rod. He was indeed crucified in apparent weakness; but he arose in power, and hath asked and received his kingdom over all things, for the benefit of his church. Let then kings and rulers, as well as their subjects, lay down their arms, submit to his authority, trust in him as their Saviour, and worship him as their Lord and God; and use all their influence, as his servants, to promote his cause, and advance his kingdom. Indeed we should rejoice with trembling in all outward distinctions and possessions; lest the abuse of them should enhance our condemnation: and even in our attempts to serve the Lord, we sinners have need to fear and tremble, lest we come short of his acceptance: but if we have submitted to the Saviour, and come to the Father in his name and merits, we may rejoice in him with reverence, but without consternation. For he casteth out none who come to him, however sinful they may have been; but they shall all be blessed for ever: whilst all who oppose, despise, neglect, or abuse his Gospel, and will not have him for their Saviour and their King, will incur his indignation; the effects of which even when kindled but a little, will be too dreadful for words to express, or imagination to conceive.

NOTES.

PSALM III. *Title.* These titles are found in the Hebrew, though it is said that several of them are wanting in some manuscripts. They seem, however, in general, to belong to the Psalms to which they are prefixed, and to be of the same authority with them. In this and other instances, they are useful in fixing the interpretation: but often their meaning is *to us* doubtful or difficult. (Notes, &c. 2 *Sam.* xv—xviii.)

2 Many *there be* which say of my soul, *There is* [d] no help for him in God. [e] Selah.

3 But thou, O LORD, *art* [f] a shield * for me; [g] my glory, and [h] the lifter up of mine head.

4 [i] I cried unto the LORD with my voice, and he heard me out of [k] his holy hill. Selah.

5 [l] I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for [m] the LORD sustained me.

6 [n] I will not be afraid of [o] ten thousands of people, that have [p] set *themselves* against me round about.

7 [q] Arise, O LORD; save me, O my God: for [r] thou hast smitten all mine enemies *upon* the cheek-bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly.

8 [s] Salvation *belongeth* unto the LORD: [t] thy blessing *is* upon thy people. Selah.

d xxii. 7, 8. xlii. 3. 10. lxxi. 11. 2 Sam. xvi. 8 Mat xxvii. 42, 43. e 4. 8. iv 2. 4. Hab. iii 3 9. 13. f xviii 2 xxviii. 7. lxxxiv. 11. cxix. 114 Gen. xv. 1. Deut. xxxiii. 29. * Or, *about.* g iv 2. lxii 7. Is. xlv 25 lx 19. Luke, i. 32. Rev. xxi. 11. 23. h xxvii. 6. cx. 7. Gen. xl 13. 2 Kings xxv. 27. i xxii. 2-5 xxxiv. 6. 1. 15. lxvi. 17—19 lxxxvi. 3, 4. xci 15. cxvi. 1—4. cxxx. 1, 2. cxxxviii. 3. cxlii. 1—3. Is lxv. 24. Jer. xxix. 12, 13. Matt. vii. 7. Jam v 13. k ii 6. xliii 3 xcix 9. cxxxii. 13, 14.——l iv. 8 Lev xxvi. 6. Job xi 18, 19. Prov iii. 24 Acts xii 6 ——m iv. 8 lxvi. 9 Pro xiv. 26 xviii 10. Is. xxvi. 3.——n xxvii. 1—3. xlvi. 2 7 cxviii. 10—12 2 Kings vi. 15—17. Rom. viii. 31.——o 2 Sam. xviii 7. p ii. 2 ——q x. 12 xii. 5. xxxv. 23. xlix. 23 lix. 5. lxxiv. 11. lxxvi. 9. Is li 9. Hab ii. 19. r lviii. 6. Job xvi 10 xxix. 17 Lam. iii. 30 s xxxvii 39, 40. Prov xxi. 31. Is xliii 11. xlv. 21, 22 Hos xiii. 4 Jon ii 9. Acts iv. 12 Rev. vii. 10 xix. 1. t xxix. 11 lxxii. 17 Acts iii 26. Eph i. 3 Heb. vi. 14. 1 Pet iii 9.

PSALM IV.

David calls on God to hear him, 1. *He reproves, warns, and counsels his enemies,* 2—5. *He shows his comfort and confidence in God,* 6—8.

To the * chief Musician on [a] Neginoth, A Psalm of David.

* Or, *overseer* xxii. xlii. xlv. *titles.* 1 Chr. xxv 1—6. a vi. lxvii. lxxvi. *titles* Hab. iii. 19. *Marg.*

V. 1, 2. David abruptly, but in lively faith, addresses himself to the Lord, as amazed to hear of the numbers who followed the unnatural rebellion of Absalom; and especially that many whom he had favoured and trusted had joined his party. He also was astonished at the insolence and impiety of his enemies, and that they should interpret his troubles as evidences that God had rejected him, and either could not or would not help him. The meaning of the word *Selah*, which occurs three times in this psalm, and frequently in others, and also in the prophecy of Habakkuk, is not fully ascertained by expositors. Some entirely omit it: but this may be thought taking an unwarrantable liberty with Scripture: others suppose it to be merely a musical term, and the Septuagint seem to have thus understood it. In general, however, it appears to be used as a call on him who read or sang, to pause, and reflect: as something peculiarly important or surprising had been mentioned. 'Selah here signifies a lifting up 'the voice, to cause us to consider the sentence, as a thing of 'great importance.' (*Marginal Notes to Barker's Bible.*)

V. 3—5. Instead of despairing of help and salvation from God, the afflicted Psalmist considered him as "a "Shield around him," yea, as his *glory*. He had often called on God in trouble and danger, on former occasions, and had been heard: and having now, as in many former instances, committed himself to the divine protection by faith and prayer, he was enabled to sleep with as much composure as if he had been in perfect peace; and accordingly he was supported and protected from all injury.

V. 7, 8. The Lord had helped David, and disabled his enemies, when persecuted by Saul and his *ungodly* adherents; and he was confident that he would thus appear for him in his present distress: for salvation, temporal and spiritual, came from God alone: and he never failed to bless his faithful people.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The most excellent and eminent persons must expect opposition and ill usage; and they should prepare for ingratitude and contempt, as the recompense of their labours for the good of others. The number and power of their adversaries may become very formidable; and they may be astonished to find among them such as they have most depended on: nay, their very confidence in God will often be derided as delusion or presumption. Yet he is a *Shield* to all those that trust in him: they count their relation to him their *glory*, in preference to all dignities or achievements; and in all dangers they continue to hope that he will yet lift up their head above all their enemies. Indeed all true Christians should avow their confidence in God and their expectation from him, in seasons of deep distress; and be open, as well as fervent, in their prayers unto him, upon his mercy-seat in his holy temple. Thus they will enjoy safety and inward peace, in the midst of enemies and the alarms of war: for the Lord will hear and sustain them; and what are ten thousands of armed foes encamped against those whom the Omnipotent protecteth?—Past experience should encourage the hope of future answers to our prayers: we may even rejoice in the enmity of the ungodly, and desire that they may be deprived of their power to do mischief, but not that any further harm may befal them. Every temporal deliverance should be received as an earnest of eternal salvation; the honour of which must be ascribed to the Lord, who confers that blessing on his people. But we shall cease to wonder at the troubles of the king of Israel, and almost to think of our light afflictions, if we duly look unto Jesus, and contrast his glory and his grace with the contempt and cruelty with which he was treated. Having yielded himself to death, he sanctified the grave, and became the first fruits of the resurrection; his head was then lifted up above his enemies; and thus he hath opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. His enemies, therefore, will surely be disappointed and perish: but his people may go down to the grave, as to their beds, in hope and comfort; for the same God watches over them in both, and they will at length awake to everlasting happiness.

NOTES.

PSALM IV. *Title.* The *chief musician*, or *overseer*, or *president*, seems to have been the person appointed in the Psalmody of the sanctuary, to set the tune and lead the singers and musicians. *Neginoth* may either mean the in-

HEAR me when I call, [b] O God of my righteousness: [c] thou hast enlarged me *when I was* in distress; * have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.

2 O [d] ye sons of men, [e] how long *will ye turn* [f] my glory into shame? *how long* will ye [g] love vanity, *and* seek after [h] leasing? Selah.

3 But know that [i] the LORD hath set apart him that is godly [k] for himself: [l] the LORD will hear when I call unto him.

4 [m] Stand in awe, and [n] sin not: [o] commune with your own heart upon your bed, and [p] be still. [q] Selah.

5 Offer [r] the sacrifices of righteousness, and [s] put your trust in the LORD.

6 *There be* [t] many that say, Who will shew us *any* good? LORD, [u] lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.

7 Thou hast [x] put gladness in my heart, more than in [y] the time *that* their corn and their wine increased.

8 [z] I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep; for [a] thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.

b xl. 7. xxiv. 5. xii. 12. Is. xlv. 24. Jer. xxiii. 6. 1 Cor. i. 30. 2 Cor. v. 20, 21. c xviii. 18, 19. xxxi 8. xl 1—3. cxvi. 6. 16. 1 Sam. xvii. 37. xix. 11, 12. xxiii. 26—28. Job xxxvi. 16. 2 Cor. i 8—10 * Or, *be gracious unto me.* lvi. 1. lvii. 1. lxxxvi. 3—5. cxix. 75—77. 132. cxliii. 2. Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. d lvii. 4. lviii. 1. Ec. viii. 11. ix. 3. e lxxxii 2. Ex x. 3. Num xiv. 11. Prov. i. 22. f iii. 3. xiv. 6. cvi. 20. Is. xx 5. xlv. 17. Jer. ii. 11. Hos. iv. 7. 1 Cor. i. 31.——g ii. 1. 1 Sam. xii. 21. Is. lix. 4. Jer. ii. 5. Jon. ii. 8.——h v. 6. lviii. 3. lxiii. 11. Jer ix 3. Eph iv. 25.——i Ex. xxxiii. 16. Eph. ii. 10. 2 Thes ii. 13, 14. 2 Tim ii. 19. 1 Pet. ii. 9. 2 Pet. ii. 9.——k Tit. ii. 14. l xxxiv. 15. lv. 16, 17 lvi. 9. xci. 14, 15. John xv. 16——m ii. 11. xxxiii. 8. cxix. 161 Jer. v. 22.——n Job xxviii. 28. Prov. iii. 7. xvi. 6. 17. Eph. iv. 26.

o lxiii. 5. lxxvii. 6. 2 Chr. xiii. 5. p xlvi. 10. Hab. ii. 29. q iii. 2. 4. r i. 14. ii. 19. Deu. xxxiii. 19. Is. i. 11—18. lxi. 8. Mal. i. 8. 11—14. Matt. v. 23, 24. Heb. xiii. 15, 16. s ii. 12. xxvi. 1. xxxvii. 3. lxii. 8. lxxxiv. 11, 12. Is. xxvi. 3, 4. l. 10. 1 Pet. iv. 19. t xxxix. 6. xlix. 16—20. Ec ii. 3, &c. Is. lv. 2. Luke xii. 19. xvi 19. Jam. iv. 13. v 1—5. u xxi. 6. xlii. 5. xliv. 3. lxvii. 1. lxxx. 1—3. 7. 19. cxix. 135. lxxxix. 15. Num. vi. 26.——x xxxvii. 4. xliii. 4 lxiii 2—5. xcii. 4. Cant. i. 4. 1 Pet. i 8.——y Judg. ix. 27. Is. ix. 3. Jer xlviii. 33.——z iii. 5. xvi. 9. Job xi. 18, 19. Prov. iii. 24. 1 Thes. iv. 13, 14. v. 10. Rev. xiv. 13.——a Lev. xxv. 18. Deut. xii. 10. xxxiii. 27—29. Ez. xxxiv. 25. Hos. ii. 18. Rom. viii. 35—39.

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struments with which the psalm was to be sung; or the tune to which it was set. Perhaps this psalm was composed on the same occasion as the foregoing.

V. 1. *Of my*, &c. By this expression the Psalmist acknowledged God as in all respects the Author and source of his righteousness, as being accepted and sanctified; and he appealed to him to do *justice* betwixt him and his unrighteous adversaries.

V. 2. *My glory*, &c. David might have considered his throne as an honour to him, seeing he was called to it by the special choice of God, and as a type of the Messiah: but the Lord himself, and his relation to him, were indeed *his glory*. His enemies derided him for this, and wanted to make him ashamed of it, or turned it into a reproach to him: while the vain grounds of confidence in which they delighted were *deceiving* them; and while they invented *lies* to make him odious.

V. 3—5. The piety of David evinced that he was the object of the Lord's special choice and favour, who having advanced him to the throne, as "the man after his own "heart," would certainly establish his kingdom. His prayers would therefore be surely heard, and that would involve the ruin all his enemies. Of this he solemnly reminded them; and exhorted them to take heed what they did, to repent of their sins, to examine their own hearts, to hearken to the voice of conscience, to court retirement, to pause and reflect on their conduct; to bring the appointed sacrifices, with genuine repentance, faith, and piety, and thus to cast themselves upon the mercy of God for forgiveness and salvation. The Septuagint translates the clause here rendered, "Stand in awe, and sin not," *be angry and sin not*, which St. Paul seems to have quoted from that version. The original word signifies, *being put into vehement commotion.*

V. 6—8. Many inquire after happiness without knowing what it is, or where it may be found. But David had in this respect come to a decision. He could ask the Lord to *smile* on him as a kind Father, and to *shine* on him as a Sun; and this had often before made, and even now did make, him happier, than the greatest confluence of worldly goods could render the ungodly. Thus comforted, he pitied, but he neither envied nor feared, the most prosperous sinner: and could lie down and rise up in peace and confidence, assured of temporal protection and eternal salvation.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The servants of God, whose righteousness is of him, will have increasing experience of his faithfulness, power, and love: having been frequently enlarged when distressed in their souls, or in their circumstances, they call upon him with confidence: and they neither have, nor desire, any other plea, than that of his free mercy. The Lord alloweth them to glory and rejoice in him; nor shall the sons of men ever render them ashamed of their confidence: but all else is vain and fallacious; and the conduct of ungodly men is a mixture of hypocrisy, deceit, flattery, and slander. In proportion as we are conscious of devotedness to God, we have evidence that we are chosen and set apart by him, to show forth his praises and enjoy his love: nor can we ask more than he is ready to grant. Instead of reviling our slanderers, we should then warn them and expostulate with them, and invite them to seek a share in our happiness. This the vilest sinners may hope for, when convinced of their guilt and danger, and afraid to sin any more; when they begin to examine their hearts and to confess their sins; and when they seek opportunities of solitude and silent meditation. In every thing we ought to use means, and attend to the ordinances and commandments of God: but after all we must place our whole dependence on his mercy and grace. Let worldly men know, that the true Christian hath found that good which they are in vain inquiring after; whilst he enjoys peace and communion with God, he envies not their wealth or indulgence: and as he goes to rest at night in confidence of divine protection, so he can look forward to the grave as the bed in which he shall rest, till the joyful morning of the resurrection. But as this salvation is in Christ alone, where will they appear who despise his personal and mediatorial glory, refuse to have him to reign over them, and revile him in his disciples? Oh may they stand in awe, and no longer thus sin against their only remedy: may they come to him, and trust in his atoning sacrifice; and then offer their sacrifices of righteousness, of prayer, praise, and thanksgiving, and every good work, which through him are to the praise and glory of God!

PSALM V.

David prays, and purposes to persist in prayer, 1—3. *He shows that God abhors the wicked,* 4—6. *He professes hope in God's mercy; and entreats his guidance, because of the malice of his enemies,* 7—9. *He prays that the wicked may be destroyed, and the righteous made prosperous and joyful,* 10—12.

To the chief Musician upon Nehiloth, A Psalm of David.

GIVE ear to my words, O LORD, consider [b] my meditation.

2 Hearken unto [c] the voice of my cry, [d] my King, and my God: for [e] unto thee will I pray.

3 [f] My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct *my prayer* unto thee, and will look up.

4 For thou *art* not a God [g] that hath pleasure in wickedness; neither shall [h] evil dwell with thee.

5 [i] The foolish shall not [k] stand * in thy sight: thou [l] hatest all workers of iniquity.

6 Thou shalt [m] destroy them that speak leasing: the LORD will abhor [n] the † bloody and deceitful man.

7 ¶ But [o] as for me, I will come *into* thy house [p] in the multitude of thy mercy: *and* [q] in the fear will I worship [r] toward ‡ thy holy temple.

8 [s] Lead me, O LORD, in thy righteousness, because of § mine enemies; [t] make thy way straight before my face.

9 For [u] *there is* no ‖ faithfulness in *their mouth; [x] their inward part *is* very † wickedness; [y] their throat *is* an open sepulchre; [z] they flatter with their tongue.

10 ‡ Destroy thou them, O God; [a] let them fall § by their own counsels; cast them out in [b] the multitude of their transgressions; for [c] they have rebelled against thee.

11 But [d] let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever [e] shout for joy, because thou ‖ defendest them: let them also that [f] love thy name be joyful in thee.

a xxii. 1. liv. 2. lv. 1, 2. lxiv. 1. lxxx 1. lxxxvi. 1. 1 Pet iii. 12. 1 John v. 14, 15.
b xix. 14. 1 Sam. i. 13. 16. *Marg.* Rom. viii. 26.
c iii. 4.
d x. 16 xxiv. 7, 8. xliv 4. xlvii. 6, 7. lxxiv. 12. xcix. 1—4 cxlv. 1. Is. xxxiii. 22.
e lxv. 2.
f xxii. 2. lv 17. lix. 16. lxxxviii. 13. cxix. 147. cxxx. 6. Is. xxvi. 9. Mark i. 35.
g i. 21. 1 Chr. xxix 17. Hab. i. 13 Mal. ii. 17.
h xciv. 20. ci. 7. cxl. 13. John xiv. 28. Heb. xii. 14. 2 Pet. iii. 13 Rev. xxi. 23. 27.
i xiv. 1. xcii. 6. xciv. 8. Prov. i. 7. 22. viii. 5. Ec. v. 4.
k i. 5. cxxx. 3.
* Heb. *before thine eyes.*
l x. 3. Lev. xx. 23. Prov. vi. 16—19. Hos. x. 15 Zech. xi. 8. Matt. vii. 23. xxv. 41.
m 2. Rev. xxi. 8. xxii. 15.
n xxvi. 9. lv. 23. 2 Sam. xxi. 1. Is. xxv. 21. Rom. i. 29.
† Heb. *man of bloods and deceit.* xxvi. 8—10. xliii. 1. Gen. xxxiv 14. 25, 26.
o lv. 16. Jos. xxiv. 15. Luke vi. 11, 12.
p li. 1 lii. 8. lxix. 13. 16 Is lv. 7. Rom v. 20, 21.
q cxxx. 4 Hos. iii. 5. Acts ix. 31 Heb. xii. 28, 29. 1 Pet. i. 17—19.
r xxviii 2 cxxxii. 7. cxxxviii. 2. 1 Kings viii 29, 30. 35. 38. Dan. vi. 10. Heb. iv. 16.
‡ Heb. *the temple of thy holiness.* Is lxiv. 11.
s xxv. 4, 5. lxxxvi 11 cxix. 10. 64 cxliii. 6—10. Prov iii. 5, 6.
§ Heb. *those which observe me.* xxvii. 11. liv 5. lix. 10. *Marg.* 2 Sam. xii. 14. Prov. iv. 25.
t Matt. iii. 3. Heb. xii. 13.
u xxxvi. 1—4. lii. 2. lviii. 3. lxii. 4. 9 cxl. 1—3. Jer. ix. 3—6. Mic. vi. 12. Rom. i. 29—31. iii 13.——‖ Or, *steadfastness.*——* Heb. *his mouth, that is, the mouth of any of them.*——x li. 6. lviii. 2. lxii 4. *Marg.* lxiv 6. Jer iv. 14 xvii 9. Mark vii. 21, 22. Luke xi. 39——† Heb. *wickedness*——y Luke xi 44. Rom. iii 13.——z xii. 2, 3. Job xxxii. 21, 22 Prov. xxix. 5. 1 Thes. ii. 5.——‡ Or, *make them guilty.* Rom. iii. 19, 20. a vii. 9—15. ix 15, 16. x 15. xvii. 13 xxi 8—10. xxviii 3, 4. xxxi. 18. xxxv. 1—8. 26. lv. 15. lix. 12, 13 lxiv 6—8 lxvi. 7. lxviii. 1, 2. lxix. 22—25. lxxi. 13. lxxix. 12. lxxxiii. 9—18. cix. 6—20. cxxxvii. 7—9. cxl. 9, 10 cxliv. 6, 7. Deut. ii 30. 1 Sam. xxv. 29. 39. 2 Sam. xv. 31. xvii 14. 23 2 Chr. xxv. 16. Esth. vii 10. Job v. 12—14. 1 Cor. iii. 19. 2 Tim iv 14.——§ Or, *from.*——b Lam. i. 5. Hos. ix. 7.——c Is. i. 2. 20. lxiii. 10. Dan ix. 5 9.——d xxxv. 27. xl. 16. lviii 10. lxviii. 3. lxx. 1—4. Judg. v. 31. Is. lxv. 13 Rev xviii 20. xix. 1—7——e xlvii. 1—5. lxv. 13. Job xxxviii. 7. Zech. ix. 9. ‖ Heb. *coverest over, or, protectest.*——f lxix. 36. Rom. viii. 28. 1 Cor. ii. 9. Jam. i. 12. ii. 5.

NOTES.

PSALM V. *Title. Nehiloth* is interpreted by some to denote wind-instruments of music; and *Neginoth*, stringed instruments. Others suppose that *Nehiloth* implies, that the psalm was sung in parts. But the word occurs no where else in Scripture, and the meaning of it is uncertain.

V. 4. It is not certain whether this psalm was composed during Absalom's rebellion, or while David was persecuted by Saul: but the latter seems most probable. The word, rendered *meditation*, seems to denote those inward thoughts, desires, fears, or sorrows, which break forth in earnest prayers, or find relief by complaining unto God.

V. 5. The word rendered *foolish* signifies *insane* or *mad*; denoting the infatuation of sinners, when urged on by their unbridled passions, to venture all consequences for the sake of present gratification. While men continue *impenitent*, their characters are abominable in the sight of God, they abide under his wrath, and if they die in that state, they must be eternally the objects of his abhorrence. The penitent sinner's character and state are changed, and he is reconciled to God: but sin is irreconcileably the object of divine hatred.

V. 8. 'My enemies would gladly see me trip, and 'they watch for my halting; therefore order my goings, 'that I may never fall and give them an advantage against 'me. For with what triumph would they spread abroad 'my real faults, who now stick not to tell all manner of 'lies of me.' (*Bishop Patrick.*)

V. 9. St. Paul quotes this, among other scriptures, to prove the depravity of both Jews and Gentiles in their natural state; (*Notes, Rom.* iii. 10—20.) If the Israelites with all their advantages manifested such vile dispositions, in opposing the man after God's own heart, and afterwards in their conduct towards their promised Messiah; it is plain that the whole race must be corrupt and alienated from God; that nothing except an internal renovation by the Spirit of God can make them holy; and that they can never find acceptance with God, upon the ground of their own obedience to his righteous laws; but must be saved *mercifully*, if at all. The flattery, treachery, and calumny, with which the Israelites behaved towards their anointed king, originated from their hatred to God and holiness; and the profane, polluting, and abominable discourse, springing from the loathsome filthiness of their hearts, resembled the opening of a sepulchre, which would both be very noisome and unwholesome. Some, however, consider the open sepulchre as an emblem of rapacity and sensuality.

V. 10, 11. These verses might be rendered more literally as follows: 'Deal with them as guilty, O God; they shall 'fall by their own counsels. But all those that put their trust 'in thee shall rejoice, they shall shout with joy for ever, 'because thou defendest them. They that love thy name

g i. 1—3. iii. 8. xxix 11. cxii. 1. cxv. 13.
h xxxii. 10.
* Heb. *crown.*
i iii. 3. lxxxiv 11.

12 For thou, LORD, wilt [g] bless the righteous; with favour [h] wilt thou * compass him [i] as *with* a shield.

PSALM VI.

David, being sick, deprecates wrath and entreats mercy, with mournful complaints and earnest pleadings, 1—7. *Confiding in God, he triumphs over his enemies,* 8—10.

a iv. *title.*
* Or, the *eighth.* xii. *title.* 1 Chr. xv. 21. *Marg.*

To the chief Musician on [a] Neginoth upon * Sheminith, A Psalm of David.

O LORD, [b] rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.

b xxxviii 1. Is liv. 9. lvii. 16. Jer. x. 24. xlvi. 28. 1 Cor. xi 31. 32.

2 Have mercy upon me, O LORD; [c] for I *am* weak; [d] O LORD, heal me; for [e] my bones are vexed.

c xxxviii. 7, 8. xli. 4. ciii. 13—17.
d xxx. 2. Gen. xx 17. Ex xv. 26. Num xii. 13. Deut. xxxii 39. Job v. 18. Jer. xvii. 14. Hos. vi. 1. Matt. iv. 24.

3 [f] My soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O LORD, [g] how long?

e xxxii. 3. xxxviii. 3. li 8. Job xix. 20. xxxii. 19—21.

4 [h] Return, O LORD, [i] deliver my soul: oh save me [k] for thy mercies sake.

f xxii. 14. xxxix. 9, 10. xxxviii. 8. xlii. 5. 11. lxxvii. 2, 3.

Prov. xviii 14. Mat. xxvi 38.——g xiii. 1, 2. lxxvii. 7. Luke xviii. 7.——h lxxx. 14. xc 13. Mal. iii. 7.——i xvii. 13. xxii. 20. lxxxvi. 13. cxvi. 4. 8. cxx. 2. cxxi. 7. Is. xxxviii. 17.——k xxv. 7. lxix. 13. lxxix. 8, 9. Dan. ix. 18. Eph. i. 6.

'shall be joyful in thee.' The future tense is indeed often used in the Hebrew for the imperative or the optative mood: and there is not that precision in it, as to tenses and moods, which prevails in modern languages. But where the literal rendering contains simply a prediction, and changing the future for the imperative or optative implies an imprecation or a wish, the literal version is certainly preferable. Yet it cannot be denied, that the form of imprecation is often used, as implying that the impenitent enemies of God and his Christ will perish, with the approbation of all holy creatures; and that the very prayers of believers for themselves and the church, will be answered, in the destruction of their enemies. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Before we offer our prayers unto the Lord, we should seriously meditate on his prefections and promises, and on our own character and wants; that our words may be spoken with recollection, from a full heart, in a due sense of our indigence, dependence, and unworthiness, and with fervency and expectation. If we willingly submit to him as our King, and worship him as our God, we may expect every thing from his almighty favour. Whilst many are eagerly presenting their petitions to earthly princes, let us make our requests known to our God and King. It is our privilege that we may come before him as often, and ask as much, as we will: and it must be our sin and folly, if we do not avail ourselves of his condescension and bounty. We should take care, that he may hear our voice every morning, as the first and best employment of the day; in order that we may find help and comfort from him in the various events of it: and let us not forget Him, "who arose a great while before day, and departed into a "solitary place, and there prayed;" lest we should yield to sloth, or admit carnal excuses for our negligence. In this sacred exercise, our affections should be directed to the Lord, and we should look up to him for help; expecting an answer from him, as we do to a letter which we have directed to a kind friend. Such prayer will determine the heart against every sin: for though the Lord pities sinners, yet he has no pleasure in iniquity; nor can we walk or dwell with him, whilst any sin reigns in our hearts. How great then is the folly and madness of the wicked! and how will they endure to be driven from his presence, as the objects of his unchangeable and eternal detestation! Indeed we none of us could come before God, if it were not for his abounding mercy: humility and reverence then become us in all our worship; and we must always look unto Jesus Christ, the true temple, in whom God dwelleth as reconciled to the believing sinner. His true worshippers will have many enemies and *observers,* which will increase their temptations, and render their path more perplexed: but if this excite them to greater watchfulness, and render them more fervent in prayer to be led in the straight way of righteousness, it will be of great service to them. We need not wonder at the cruelty, treachery, hypocrisy, or flattery of *our* enemies; when we consider how David and how Christ was treated: but we should remember that we are by nature as depraved as they: that we may renewedly repent of the sinful thoughts, words, and actions of our past lives: that we may still watch over our own hearts, and against all polluting or dissembling conversation; and that we may bless God for restraining or converting grace, and for Jesus Christ and his salvation. We must by no means desire and pray for the destruction of our enemies; but we may predict the ruin of God's enemies, who will fall by their own counsels, and in the multitude of their iniquities; and their enmity to his people will be proved to have sprung from their rebellion against him. But we should earnestly pray for, and help the joy of, the righteous: they trust in the Lord's mercy, grace, and providence, and desire to love his name and walk in his ways: he is their Shield and Salvation; and his favour shall protect and bless them for ever.—Neither their former sins, nor their present defects, temptations, conflicts, or troubles, should be allowed to silence their praises, or prevent their rejoicing. Joy is their privilege, their duty, and their strength; and they should be exhorted to "rejoice in the Lord always."

NOTES.

PSALM VI. *Sheminith.* This word signifies the eighth, and some suppose that the psalm or tune was adapted to a harp with eight strings. This is the first of the *penitential psalms:* but it is not known on what occasion it was penned.

V. 1, 2. 'Though I deserve destruction, yet let thy 'mercy pity my frailty.'

V. 4. 'Return, O Lord, in mercy to my soul, and 'relieve and comfort me.'

l xxx. 9. lxxxviii. 10 — 12 cxv. 17. cxviii. 17. Is. xxxviii. 18, 19.
m Ec. ix. 10. John ix. 4.
n xxxviii. 8, 9. lxix. 3. lxxvii 2—9. lxxxviii. 9. cii. 3 — 5. cxliii. 4—7. Job x. 1. xxiii. 2.
* Or, *every night.*
o xxxix 12. xlii. 3. Job xvi 20 Jer. xiv. 17. Lam. i. 2. 16. ii. 11. 18, 19. iii. 48—50. Luke vii. 38.
p xxxi. 9, 10. lxxxviii. 10. lxxxviii. 9. Job xvii. 7. Lam. v. 17.
q xxxii. 3.
r cxix. 115. cxxxix. 19. Mat vii. 23. xxv. 41. Luke xiii. 27
s lvi 8 cxvi. 8. Is. xxx. 19 xxxviii 3. 5 Heb. v. 7.——t iii. 4. xxxi 22. xl. 1, 2. lxvi. 19, 20. cxviii 5. cxx. 1. cxxxviii. 3. Jon. ii. 2. 7. 2 Cor. xii. 8—10.——u cxvi. 1, 2. 2 Cor. i 10, 11——x v 10. vii. 6. xxv. 3. xxxv. 26. xl. 14, 15. lxxi. 13. lxxxiii. 16, 17. lxxxvi 17. cix. 28, 29. cxii. 10. cxxxii. 18 Is xxvi. 11. Jer xx. 11.

5 For [l] in death *there is* no remembrance of thee: [m] in the grave who shall give thee thanks?

6 [n] I am weary with my groaning; * all the night make I my bed to swim; [o] I water my couch with my tears.

7 [p] Mine eye is consumed because of grief; [q] it waxeth old because of all mine enemies.

8 [r] Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for [s] the LORD hath heard the voice of my weeping.

9 The LORD hath heard my supplications; [u] the LORD will receive my prayer.

10 [x] Let all mine enemies be ashamed and [y] sore vexed; let them [z] return *and* [a] be ashamed suddenly.

y ii 5. xxi. 8, 9.
z Job vi 29. Mal iii. 18.
a Prov. xxix. 1. 1 Thes. v. 3.

PSALM VII.

David, protesting his innocence of the crimes charged on him, entreats God to protect him from his enemies, and to plead his cause for the sake of the people, 1—9 *He expresses his confidence in God, predicts the destruction of persecutors, and determines to praise the Lord,* 10—17.

[a] Shiggaion of David, which he sang unto the LORD, concerning the † words of Cush the Benjamite.

a Hab. iii. 1.
† Or, *business.*

V. 5. The Psalmist pleaded, that if God cut him off in his wrath, it would terminate all his opportunities of serving and glorifying him on earth; and if left finally to perish, he should never remember God with gratitude and praise any more to eternity. The word rendered *grave*, is often translated *hell*, and it seems generally to mean the place of separate spirits, happy or unhappy, according to the context: yet it sometimes must be understood of the grave, and that seems the sense in this place.

V. 6, 7. Bowed down by most distressing sickness and sufferings of various kinds, and conscious of deep repentance; which, concurring with his corrections, caused him, every night, to water his couch with copious tears, and made him waste, become dull-sighted, and grow old prematurely; David earnestly pleaded with God to visit him in mercy, without further delay.

V. 8—10. The Psalmist, having deeply humbled himself before God, at length found his peace and hope revive. As he trusted that the Lord would not leave him to perish in another world with the workers of iniquity, he resolved not to associate with them in this: and he warned them to repent and cease from their enmity to him; otherwise he was assured that shame and vexation would suddenly and irrevocably seize upon them. Many mournful psalms end thus triumphantly, for the encouragement of other mourners to hope and pray. The old version, more literally, thus renders the last verse: 'all my enemies shall 'be confounded and sore vexed; they shall be turned back, 'and put to shame suddenly.'

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Infidels, profligates, and hypocrites, have always more noticed David's sins than his mourning for them: for the former serve for an objection to the truths they hate, and an excuse for the sins they love; but they are not disposed to imitate him in the latter. Great tenderness of conscience, and a disposition to mourn for sin with brokenness of heart, distinguish the believer from all other men; he may be overtaken in a fault, nay, he may fall into grievous transgression: but recollection fills him with anguish; or, if for a space he be, as it were, stupified, rebukes and corrections will bring him to himself: and while conscience performs its salutary, but painful office, and he is suffering under the rod of his offended Father, he not unfrequently becomes afraid of his hot displeasure. Ashamed and trembling, he then deprecates eternal misery. Pains and enfeebling diseases, which vex his bones, may excite his prayers for deliverance: but the sense of divine wrath, which vexes his soul, renders him most earnest in crying out, "O LORD, how long?" How long will it be ere thou givest me some token of thy pardoning love; ere thou returnest to glorify thy mercy in saving my soul? Such a penitent desires to live on earth to remember and give thanks to his God: and he seeks the deliverance of his soul from hell, and the resurrection of his body from the grave, for the same purpose. To enjoy the favour, and celebrate the praises of his God and Saviour, form that happiness on earth and in heaven which he desires: but he cannot endure the thought of ceasing for ever to love and praise him. His sorrow for sin is inward, and flows most in retirement: groans and tears express the compunction of his heart; and when his crimes have dishonoured God, and caused his enemies to exult and triumph; and when returning comforts are withheld, his spirits are exhausted, his eye is dimmed, and he seems to wax old before his time. But such mourning will issue in rejoicing: the Lord will not number the weeping penitent with the workers of iniquity; for he will separate from them, and rebuke and warn them. His very tears have a prevailing voice with God, who hath heard and will hear his prayers: and all they who rejoice in the falls and sorrows of the Lord's devoted servants, will be "put to shame, vexed, and "perish suddenly," unless they repent. Sinners of every rank have sorrowed and wept for their transgressions: but Jesus alone was a sinless sufferer; and through his sufferings, and in no other way, can the penitent find mercy. But at length HE will bid the impenitent workers of iniquity to depart from him; then will all his enemies be confounded, vexed, and perish with an everlasting destruction.

B. C. 1458.

[b] O LORD my God; [c] in thee do I put my trust: [d] save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me:

2 Lest [e] he tear my soul [f] like a lion, [g] rending *it* in pieces, [h] while *there is* * none to deliver.

3 O LORD my God, [i] if I have done this; [k] if there be iniquity in my hands;

4 [l] If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me: (yea, [m] I have delivered him that [n] without cause is mine enemy:)

5 [o] Let the enemy persecute my soul, and take *it;* yea, let him [p] tread down my life upon the earth, and [q] lay mine honour in the dust. [r] Selah.

6 [s] Arise, O LORD in thine anger, [t] lift up thyself because of the rage of mine enemies; and [u] awake for me *to* [x] the judgment *that* thou hast commanded.

7 [y] So shall the congregation of the people compass thee about: for their sakes therefore [z] return thou on high.

8 [a] The LORD shall judge the people: [b] judge me, O LORD, [c] according to my righteousness, and according [d] to mine integrity *that is* in me.

9 Oh [e] let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but [f] establish the just: [g] for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins.

10 † My defence *is* of God, [h] which saveth the upright in heart.

11 ‡ God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry *with the wicked* every day.

12 If [i] he turn not, [k] he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready.

13 He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; [l] he ordaineth his arrows against the [m] persecutors.

14 Behold, [n] he travaileth with ini-

b xiii. 3 5. xviii. 28. xxx. 2. 12. xliii. 4. lxxxix. 26. Josh. xiv. 8. Jer. xxxi. 18. Dan. ix. 4. 19, 20 Zech. xiv. 5.
c xi. 1 xviii. 2. xxv 2. xxvi. 1. xxxi. 1. xxxii. 10. cxlvi. 3—6. Is. l. 10. 1 Pet. i. 21.
d iii. 7. xvii. 7—9. xxxi. 15. xxxv. 1—3 Jer. xv. 15. xx. 11. 1 Pet iv. 19.
e xxxv. 15. Is. xxxviii. 13.
f x. 9. xvii. 12 xxii. 13. Deut xxxiii 20. Pro. xix 12. 2 Tim. iv. 17 1 Pet. v 8. 1.22 Hos. xiii. 7,8.
g Judg. xviii 28 2 Sam xiv. 6. *Marg.* Job x. 7.
* Heb *not* (. *deliverer*
i lix. 3. Josh xxii. 22. 1 Sam. xx. 8. xxii. 8. 13. xxiv. 9. xxvi. 18, 19. 2 Sam. xvi. 7, 8. Job xvi. 17—19.
k lxvi. 18. 1 Sam. xxiv. 11. Job x i. 14.
l iv. 20. cix. 5. Gen. xliv. 4. Prov. xvii. 13. Jer. xviii. 20, 21.
m 1 Sam. xxiv. 7. 10, 11 xxvi. 10—17. 24.
n 1 Sam. xix. 4, 5. xx. 1. xxii. 14. xxiv 11—15. 17—19. xxv. 28, 29. xxvi 21.
o Job xxxi. 5—10. 38—40.
p xliv. 5. lx. 12. Job xl. 12. Is x 6 lxiii. 3. Zech x. 5. Mal. iv. 3
q xlix 12. Job xvi. 15. xl. 13. Jer. xvii. 13.
r iii. 2 Hab. iii 13.
s iii 7. xii 5. xxxv. 1. 23. xliv. 26. lxviii. 1, 2 Is. iii. 13
t lxxiv. 3 xciv. 2 Is. xxxiii. 10. xxxvii. 20.
u xliv. 23. lix. 5 lxxviii. 65. Is. li. 9.
x lxxvi. 8, 9. ciii. 6. 1 Sam. xxvi. 16. 2 Sam. xvii. 14. *Marg.*
y xlviii. 11. lviii. 10, 11. Rev. xi. 17, 18. xvi. 5. 7. xviii. 20. xix. 2.

z xciii. 4. cxiii. 5, 6 cxxxviii. 6. Is. lvii 15.
a ix. 8. xi. 4. lxxxii. 1. xcvi. 13. xcviii. 9. Gen. xviii. 25. Acts xvii. 31. Rom. xiv. 10—12. 1 Cor. iv. 4, 5.
b xxvi. 1. xxxv. 24. xliii. 1. Gen. xxxi. 53. 2 Chr. xx. 12. xvii. 2, 3 xviii. 20—24 xxxv 24—27. 2 Cor. i. 12.
d xxv 21. xxvi. 11. xli. 12. lxxviii. 72 Pro. xix. 1. 1 Thes. ii. 10.
e ix. 5, 6. x. 15. 18. lviii. 6. lxxiv. 10, 11. 22, 23. Is xxxvii. 36—38. Dan. xi. 45. Acts xii. 23.
f xxvii 23. *Marg.* xl. 2. 1 Sam. ii. 9. Rom. xvi. 20. 1 Thes. iii. 13. 1 Pet v. 10. Jude 1.
g xvii 3. xliv. 21. cxxxix. 2. 1 Sam. xvi. 7. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. Jer. xi. 20. xvii. 10. xx. 12. Rev. ii. 23.
† Heb. *my buckler is upon God.* iii. 3. xviii 1, 2. lxxxiv. 11. Gen. xv. 1.
h cxii 2. cxxv. 4. Job. viii. 6. Prov. ii. 21. xi. 20. xxviii. 18.
‡ Or, *God is a righteous Judge* 8. xciv. 15. cxl. 12, 13.
i lxxxv. 4. Is lv. 6, 7. Jer. xxxi. 18, 19 Ez. xviii 30. xxxiii. 11. Acts iii 19.
k Deu. xxxii. 41 Is. xxvii. 1. xxxiv. 5. Ez. xxi. 9—11. 28.
l xi 2. xlv. 5. lxiv. 3. 7. cxliv. 6 Deut. xxxii 23. 41. Job vi. 4. Lam. iii. 12, 13. Hab. iii. 11, 12, 13.
m 2 Thes. i. 6. Rev. vi. 10. xvi. 5.
n Job xv. 20. 35. Is. xxxiii. 11. lix. 4, 5. Jam. i. 15.

NOTES.

PSALM VII. *Title. Shiggaion* signifies *wandering* or *variable;* and, it is probable, denotes the music to which the psalm was set. Many conjectures have been formed concerning Cush: but at last we only know that he was of the same tribe with Saul, and most likely one of his relations and courtiers, who brought some false accusation against David.

V. 1, 2. In extreme danger, the Psalmist, according to his custom, resorted to God by faith and prayer. He had many persecutors: but it is probable that the one whom he distinguishes from the rest, was Saul; who was so enraged against him, and had so much power in his hands, that he both could and would have torn him in pieces, as a lion doth his prey; nor would any have attempted to deliver him, had not God been his Protector.

V. 3—5. David here appealed to God for his innocence, as to the charges brought against him. So far from having risen up, as an enemy or a traitor against his prince, when at peace with him; or even returned evil for the evil requital his eminent services had received; (as some explain the clause;) he had twice preserved the life of his treacherous and implacable persecutor, who had not the smallest cause for his cruel enmity. (*Marg. Ref.*) If this were not the case, and if the accusations of his enemies were true, he was willing to lose his life and reputation, and to be exposed to the deepest ignominy. In the Latin version the word *Selah* is here rendered *maxime,* 'Lay 'mine honour in the dust, *exceedingly.*' It is frequently rendered in the same manner.

V. 6, 7. David was assured that the Lord intended to cut off Saul; (*Marg. Ref.*) This was the judgment which he had commanded, and for which David prayed; not only on his own account, but for the sake of the people. Saul's tyranny and neglect of his duty had crushed and scattered the Israelites: and his persecution and impiety had driven them from the ordinances and worship of God, and seduced them into many crimes. The Psalmist therefore prayed that the righteous Judge would ascend his tribunal, exert his omnipotent authority, and by some visible interposition check the progress of impiety, and give encouragement to his servants; that they might again be collected in his courts, and unite in his holy worship.

V. 8—11. The heart-searching Judge of the world, not only decides on men's conduct towards him, but in all the causes between one and another. To him, therefore, David referred the cause between him and his persecutors, desiring to be judged, *in this respect,* according to his righteousness and integrity, which were known to God. He both prayed that the wickedness of the wicked might cease, and predicted that it would; and that God would establish the righteous. He was assured that *the righteous Judge* and the Preserver of the upright, would defend him as a Buckler, (*Marg.*) and would at length manifest that anger, which was every day excited by the crimes of his enemies. —'How few among Christians seriously and deliberately 'consider whether the sentence of that day,' (the day of judgment,) 'is likely to be in their favour; yet how many 'with the utmost composure and self-complacency, repeat 'continually the words of this psalm, as well as those in 'the *Te Deum,* "We believe that thou shalt come to be "our Judge." (*Horne.*)

V. 12, 13. 'Vengeance will certainly come, though 'it stay long, and not fail to do execution; for it is de-

quity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood.

15 He * made a pit, and digged it, [o] and is fallen into the ditch *which* he made.

16 [p] His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate.

17 I will praise the LORD [q] according to his righteousness: and will sing praise to the name of the LORD [r] most high.

* Heb. *hath digged.* xxxv. 7. cxix. 85. Job vi. 27. Jer. xviii. 20. [o] ix. 15, 16. x 2. xxxv. 8. xciv. 13. cxl. 9, 10. cxli. 10. Esth vii. 10. Job iv 8. Prov. v. 22. xxvi 27. Ec. x. 8, 9. [p] xxxvi. 4. 12. xxxvii. 12, 13. 1 Sam. xxiii. 9 xxiv. 12, 13. xxvi. 10 xxviii. 19. xxxi. 3, 4. 1 Kings ii. 32. Esth ix. 35. Mat xxvii. 3—5. [q] xxxv. 28 ii. 14. lxxi 15, 16. xcviii. 2 cxi 3. cxlv. 7.——[r] ix. 2. xcii 1. 8 Dan. iv. 17. 25. 34. Acts vii. 49.

PSALM VIII.

The glory of God displayed in the works of Creation, 1—3. *And in his condescending love to man,* 4—9.

To the chief Musician upon [a] Gittith, A Psalm of David.

O LORD [b] our Lord, [c] how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth! who hast set [d] thy glory above the heavens.

[a] lxxxi. lxxxiv. *title.* [b] 9. ix 1. cxlv. 1. Is. xxvi. 13. Mat. xxii. 45. John xx. 28. Phil ii 11. iii. 8. Rev. xix. 16. [c] lxxii. 17—19. cxiii. 2—4. cxlviii. 14. Ex. xv. 11. xxxiv. 5, 6 Deut. xxviii. 58 Cant. v. 16. [d] xxxvi. 5. lvii. 10, 11. lxviii. 4. cviii 4, 5. 1 Kings viii. 27. Hab. iii. 3. Eph. iv. 10. Phil. ii. 9. 10. Heb. vii. 26.

'creed in heaven, (if they do not repent,) and will pierce 'through the heart of Saul, and the rest of my fierce and 'outrageous persecutors.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 14—16. 'When an evil thought is instilled into 'the heart of a man, the seed of the wicked one is sown; 'by cherishing the diabolical suggestion "he conceiveth" 'a purpose of mischief;' then "he travaileth with iniquity," 'and at length, by carrying it into action he "bringeth forth falsehood." (*Horne.*) The persecutor especially being determined upon iniquity, is restless and in torment, till he can effect his purpose by any method of deceit and violence. But, with vast expense and trouble, he only digs a pit for himself, and the ruin he aimed at others, falls on the crown of his own head, and gives him a mortal wound. 'Thus Saul was killed by the Philis-'tines,' whom he wanted to employ in cutting off David; and the Jews, who excited the Romans to crucify Christ, were destroyed by them, and even crucified in great numbers. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The servants of God must expect the persecution of the tongue, as a preparation for further injuries; and to the ingenuous mind it is very formidable. But no slanderers or persecuting tyrants can do real harm to them who trust in the Lord their God: when there is none else to deliver, he will take care both of their persons and characters, and will preserve them from Satan, that "accuser of "the brethren," and "devouring lion," and "from every evil work unto his heavenly kingdom." Let us then wage our wafare with the weapons of faith and prayer; and instead of injuring our peaceful neighbours, let us persevere in endeavouring to overcome evil with good. This will enable us to rejoice in the testimony of our consciences, when loaded with slander and obloquy, and to appeal to God with confidence. But 'wretched they who persecute 'their benefactor. Happy he who can reflect that he has 'been a benefactor to his persecutors.' (*Horne.*) Indeed the Christian would deem himself worthy of all the injury and ignominy which his foes intend him, were he guilty of the crimes of which they accuse him. But whilst we patiently bear the injuries to which we are exposed, we should be moved to behold "one sinner destroying much "good:" and we ought to pray that the Lord would convert or remove all those who scatter and oppress his people; and effectually interpose to encourage their faith and obedience, and to stop the growth of impiety and infidelity. When earthly judges abuse their power, it is a comfort to reflect that the Lord will reverse their decrees, and plead the cause of his people: he is a Judge who "trieth the "heart and reins:" nor can we stand before him, even according to his new covenant of mercy, without simplicity and godly sincerity, and conscientious integrity in our whole conduct. The Lord is every day provoked by the wicked; and whilst he waiteth to receive the submissions and pardon the sins of those who repent and turn to him, he is preparing to execute judgment on all the impenitent. But persecutors must expect his severest vengeance. Satan suggests, and they welcome, the mischievous imagination; and iniquity and murder are thus conceived, and then effected by lies and treachery. Let them, however, remember, that they are only plotting their own destruction: for the persecuted servants of the Lord will be celebrating his praises, and rejoicing in his favour, whilst their persecutors are cast into the pit of destruction, and enduring the wrath of their righteous Judge: and all their subtle projects will concur in bringing about this final event. Let us then, under all our trials, look unto the Saviour. He alone was perfect in righteousness; yet none was ever reviled, slandered, and hated as he was. He lived and died doing good to and praying for his enemies: but after his exaltation, the welfare of his church required that judgment should be executed upon such as continued impenitent. The Jews first felt the weight of his indignation: and then vast multitudes of gentile converts compassed him about. And wherever anti-christian corrupters or persecutors have been from time to time destroyed, the church has been replenished with numerous real converts to the faith; and when these enemies of the truth shall finally come to an end, the whole earth will be filled with truth and righteousness. Shortly will arrive that final judgment which God hath decreed; then all unbelievers will finally perish: may we at that solemn season, be numbered with his saints in glory everlasting!

NOTES.

PSALM VIII. *Title. Gittith* perhaps is the name of some tune which David had learned when in Gath, or from the Gittites, and to which this and two other psalms were set. Various other conjectures have been formed; and the following may be considered as the most probable. 'I take it to have been composed by David, after he had 'overthrown Goliath of Gath; which is a lively emblem 'of Christ's conquest over our great enemy the devil.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

2 [c] Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou* ordained [f] strength, because of thine enemies, that thou mightest [g] still [h] the enemy and the avenger.

3 When [i] I consider thy heavens, [k] the work of thy fingers, [l] the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

4 [m] What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and [n] the son of man, that thou [o] visitest him?

5 For [p] thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and [q] hast crowned him with glory and honour.

6 Thou [r] madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast [s] put all *things* under his feet:

7 † All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field;

8 [t] The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, *and whatsoever* passeth through the paths of the seas.

9 O LORD our Lord, [u] how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth!

c Matt xi. 25. xi. 16. Luke x. 21. 1 Cor. i. 27
* Heb. *founded*
f lxxxiv 5—7. Is. xl. 34. Am. v. 9 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10.
g iv. 4. xlvi. 10. Ex. xi. 7. xv 16. Josh ii 9—11. 1 Sam. ii. 9 Is. xxxvii 20—29. 36—38. Hab. ii. 20.
h xliv. 16.
i xix. 1. cxi. 2. Job xxii 12. xxxvi 24 Rom i. 20
k xxxiii. 6 Gen. i. 1. Ex viii 19. xxxi. 18. Luke xi 20.——l civ. 19 cxxxvi 7—9 cxlviii. 3. Gen. i. 16—18. Deut iv. 19 Job xxv. 3. 5.——m cxliv 3 2 Chr. vi. 18. Job vii. 17. xxv. 6. Is. xl. 17. Heb. ii. 6, 7.——n iv. 2. lxxx 17. cxlvi 3. Is. li. 12. Ez. viii. 15. Matt. viii. 20.
o cvi. 4. Gen. xxi. 1. Ex. iv. 31. Luke i. 68. xix. 44 1 Pet. ii. 12.

p cliii 20 Gen. i. 26, 27 ii. 7. 2 Sam xiv. 20. Job iv 18—20. Phil. ii 7, 8. Heb. ii. 7. 9. 16.
q xxi 3—5. xlv 1—3. 6. John xiii. 31, 32. Eph. i. 21. Phil. ii. 9—11 Heb. ii. 8 1 Pet. i. 20, 21.
r Gen i. 26 28 ix. 2. Matt. xxviii. 18 Heb. i. 2.
s cx 1 1 Cor. xv 24—27. Eph. i 22 Heb. ii. 8. 1 Pet. iii. 22.
† Heb *Flocks and oxen, all of them.* Gen ii 20.
t cxlviii. 10 Gen. i. 20—25. Job xxxviii. 39—41. xxxix 1, &c. xl. 15—24. xli. 1, &c.——u 1. civ. 24. Deut. xxxiii 26. Job xi. 7.

V. 1. The eternal JEHOVAH, the universal Creator and Benefactor, is that Lord and Governor, whom all ought entirely to obey and serve: and to him believers render willing obedience as their Redeemer. He infinitely excels all creatures, in every thing which can excite love and adoration. The earth is full of the discoveries of his perfections: and his glory fills the highest heavens, and is exalted far above them.

V. 2. God hath often magnified his own perfections, through the simplicity and weakness of the instruments by which he accomplished his grand designs. The new-born infant is such a display of his power, skill, and goodness, as unanswerably to confute the cavils of Atheism. Even little children have been taught so to love and serve him, that their praises and confessions have baffled and silenced the rage and malice of persecutors: and thus a victorious *strength* has been manifested by them; while the wise, learned, and mighty, have either joined the enemy, or timidly and feebly crouched before him. The meanest and most despised persons have often been made successful in their attempts to promote his cause. Thus David overcame Goliath, though but as a babe in comparison of that insulting champion: and the despised Nazarene, with his obscure and unlettered apostles, prevailed against the combined wisdom, learning, and power of the world and the sagacity and influence of Satan, the god of the world. And by successive instruments whom man disdains, the same cause shall still more fully prevail, till every avenger and enemy is finally stilled, and all the wicked are silent in darkness. The Septuagint renders the clause which is here translated, according to the Hebrew, *ordained strength, perfected praise;* and the Evangelist, recording our Lord's words, gives them according to that version. The above interpretation is intended to show the coincidence of it with the literal rendering.

V. 3. The Psalmist appears to have composed this sacred hymn while his attention was fixed, during the silence of the evening, on "the moon walking in brightness," and "the glittering stars of light:" but instead of being tempted to worship the heavenly host, he contemplated the magnificent scene, and the immensity of the creation, till he was filled with adoring admiration of the Creator's incomprehensible majesty; which naturally suggested the subsequent reflections.

V. 4—9. Adam, even when created in the image of God, was *infinitely* beneath his Maker, and it was an unspeakable favour for him to be placed at the head of this lower world, in a state of honour and dominion. After the fall, it was still more wonderful that his children should be permitted to retain any authority over, or derive any benefit from, the different orders of creatures. But the apostle teaches us that the Holy Spirit, who spake by David, especially intended Christ, the eternal Son of God, who by his incarnation became the Son of man. Thus he was "made a little lower than the angels," by assuming and dwelling in a nature inferior to their's, "for the suffering of death;" which object having been accomplished, he arose from the dead, and was "crowned with glory and honour;" and in human nature exercises universal dominion, even an authority infinitely more extensive and absolute than ever the first Adam possessed, or could possibly have administered. In so wonderful a manner did the God of glory show himself mindful of mean, feeble, mortal, sinful man! and thus has he visited and honoured one of our fallen race, for the common benefit of all who believe in him. (*Marg. Ref.*)—The word, rendered *angels* is the same which is generally translated *God* or *gods:* yet the apostle from the Septuagint renders it *angels;* which shows the latitude with which the term is used. But when the true God is meant, it is, though plural, always joined with the singular verb; and the name JEHOVAH is never given but to the true God: for when applied to Christ, it shows who he is, even "the true God and eternal life." (*Notes, Heb.* ii. 5—9.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

No words can express the glorious excellency of JEHOVAH, our Ruler and Lord: nor can Cherubim or Seraphim reach his worthiness by their most exalted adorations: yet he graciously accepts the feeblest efforts of men on earth, and even counts himself honoured by the praises of babes and sucklings! He works by the feeblest instruments, for the greater confusion of his enemies and honour of his name; and all the vengeance and rage of earth and hell shall soon be stilled by the prevalency of his despised gospel. Every creature speaks the Creator's praise to the mind of the devout believer; whose pious contemplations render his solitary walks unspeakably pleasant and profitable. But each display of the divine glory should lead us to reflect

PSALM IX.

David praises God for punishing his enemies, and maintaining his cause 1—6. *He shows that God will preserve his servants, and calls on them to praise his name,* 7—12. *He prays for deliverance from present trials, that he may still praise the Lord; and predicts the ruin of the wicked,* 13—20.

To the chief Musician upon Muth-labben, A Psalm of David.

I WILL praise *thee,* O LORD, [b] with my whole heart; [c] I will shew forth all thy marvellous works.

2 [d] I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, [e] O thou most High.

3 When mine enemies are turned back, [f] they shall fall and perish at thy presence.

4 For [g] thou hast * maintained my right and my cause; thou sattest in the throne judging † right.

5 Thou hast [h] rebuked the heathen, [i] thou hast destroyed the wicked, [k] thou hast put out their name forever and ever.

6 ‡ O [l] thou enemy, [m] destructions are come to a perpetual end: and [n] thou hast destroyed cities; [o] their memorial is perished with them.

B. C. 1021.
a vii. 17 xxxiv. 1-4. cvi 1, 2. cxlv 1—3 cxlvi. 1, 2. 1 Chr. xxix 10—13. Is. xii. 1. Heb xiii. 15. Rev. v 9—14.
b lxxxvi 12. cxi. 1. cxxxviii. 1. Luke x. 27
c 14. li 15. lix. 13. cvi. 2. 1 Chr. xvi. 12. 16. 24.
d Is. xliii 21. lx. 6. Rev xv. 3.
e v. 11. xxvii. 6. xxviii 7. xliii. 4. xcii 4 xcvii. 12. Hab. iii. 17, 18. Phil. iv. 4.
f lxviii. 1, 2. lxxvi 7. lxxx. 16. Is lxiv. 3. 2 Thes i. 9 Rev. vi. 12—17. xx 11.
g xvi. 5 cxl. 12.
* Heb. *made my judgment.*
† Heb. *in righteousness* xlv. 6, 7 xlvii 8. lxxxix. 14. xcvi. 13. xcviii 9 Is. xi. 4. 1 Pet. ii. 23.
h ii. 1. 8, 9. lxxviii. 55 lxxix. 10. cxlix. 7. 1 Sam. xvii. 45—51 2 Sam. v. 6, &c. viii 1—15 x. 6—9. xxi. 15—22. xxii. 44—46. Rev. xix. 15
i v. 6. 1 Sam. xxv 39 xxxi.
e vii. 17. lvi. 2, 3. lxxxiii. 18. xcviii. 9. Dan. v. 18.

4. 2 Sam xvii. 23 Mal. iv. 3——k Deut. ix. 14. Pro. x. 7. xiii. 9.——‡ Or, *The destructions of the enemy are come to a perpetual end, and* their *cities hast thou destroyed,* &c. l vii 5. viii 2. Ex. xv. 6. Mic. vii. 8. 10.——m xlvi. 9. Ex. xiv. 13. Is x. 24, 25. xiv. 6—8 Nah. i. 9—13. 1 Cor. xv. 26. 54—57. Rev. xx 2.——n 1 Sam. xxx. 1. xxxi 7. Is. x. 6, 7. 13, 14. xiv. 17. xxxvii. 26. Jer. li. 25——o Is. xiv. 22, 23. Jer. li. 62—64.

on our own vileness. What indeed is man, that the Lord should still visit, and be mindful of him? What are we but mean, guilty, polluted, ungrateful, rebellious, and apostate creatures? We are unworthy of the least of those manifold advantages, which we derive from the sheep and oxen, the fishes, and the fowls, and the other animals, which are still subjected to us, and subservient to our benefit: nor should we ever partake of these common mercies, without admiration joined with gratitude. But in the person of Emmanuel, every other instance of divine condescension is eclipsed, all our thoughts are swallowed up. His love, his humiliation in assuming our nature; his atoning sufferings unto death; his subsequent glory; and his dominion over all creatures, which shall endure till all enemies are put under his feet, can never sufficiently be admired and adored. Thus our nature, in the second Adam, is infinitely more honoured and exalted, than it could have been in the first Adam. Thus also the true dignity of human nature, even the worth of a rational immortal soul, though ruined by sin, yet capable of recovery and eternal felicity, is clearly shown. And if we trust and submit to Christ as our Saviour and Lord, he will advance us also to glory, honour, and immortality. We had indeed cause to celebrate the excellencies of the Lord our Governor, as displayed in the works of creation: but what words can reach his praises, who is now become our Salvation, and has acquired a new right to our subjection, as our Redeemer, and for filling the earth with those glories, "which angels "desire to look into!"

NOTES.

PSALM IX. *Muth-labben.* This word is translated in various ways by different expositors: but the meaning of it remains doubtful. *Muth* signifies *death:* and some imagine that *labben* may denote Goliath, either in respect of his eminence, or his coming as a champion between the armies of Israel and that of the Philistines: but if this be the meaning, it is very obscurely expressed; and as Zion was not the place of Israel's assembling for public worship, till David had for some time been king of all Israel, the Psalm must have been composed long after Goliath's death. (11—14.) Others suppose *Muth-labben* to mean, *the death of his son,* and refer the occasion of the Psalm to the death of Absalom: and this better suits the real date of it; yet it is not satisfactory. The Psalmist, however, might have some reference to the various deliverances of his past life; and be also led, while praising God for them, to speak as the type of Christ, concerning his conflicts and victories; and those of his church, and of her triumphs over every heathen and anti-christian persecutor; and also of the trials and deliverances of every believer.

V. 1—3. The Psalmist determined, on occasion of some recent deliverance, to praise God with *his whole heart,* not feignedly, not as ascribing any share of the honour to himself, not in a cold and languid manner: but fervently and zealously. He would make the works, which God had wrought for him, known to all around: and thus rejoice in ascribing glory to his name, and in reflecting what a powerful and faithful Patron and Friend he had, and what an honour and benefit this was to him. His enemies hitherto had been turned back, and stumbled and perished, not by his valour, but by the presence and power of God: and this made him confident of continued victories and final triumph. This admits of the most obvious application to the works of God for his church, and for every believer; and no doubt was intended by the Holy Spirit, to be thus used in our worship and meditations.

V. 4—6. God had pleaded David's righteous cause against the wicked persecution of Saul, and had advanced him to the throne of all Israel, with the destruction of almost the whole family of Saul. He had given his king the victory over the surrounding heathen nations, who perished in great numbers, and had finally lost the reputation of their former successes. So that every enemy that had before destroyed the cities of Israel, was deprived perpetually of power to continue these desolations; and most of them soon became so insignificant, that the memorial of them and of their former greatness, perished with them. —The marginal reading here seems to give the proper sense. The destructions caused by the enemy were terminated:

7 But [p] the LORD shall endure for ever: [q] he hath prepared his throne for judgment:

8 And [r] he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.

9 [s] The LORD also will be * a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge [t] in times of trouble.

10 And they that [u] know thy name will [x] put their trust in thee: for [y] thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.

11 [z] Sing praises to the LORD, [a] which dwelleth in Zion: [b] declare among the people his doings.

12 [c] When he maketh inquisition for blood, he remembereth them: [d] he forgetteth not the cry of the † humble.

13 [e] Have mercy upon me, O LORD; [f] consider my trouble *which* I *suffer* of them that hate me, [g] thou that liftest me up from the gates of death:

14 That [h] I may shew forth all thy praise [i] in the gates of [k] the daughter of Zion: [l] I will rejoice in thy salvation.

15 [m] The heathen are sunk down in the pit *that* they made: in the net which they hid is their own foot taken.

16 The LORD is [n] known *by* the judgment *which* he executeth: [o] the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. ‡ Higgaion. Selah.

17 [p] The wicked shall be turned into hell, *and* all the nations that [q] forget God.

p xc. 2. cii. 12. 24—27. Heb. i. 11, 12 xiii. 8. 2 Pet. iii. 8. q i. 3—6. ciii. 19. Rev. xx. 11. r i. 6. xciv. 15. xcvi. 13. xcviii. 9. xcix 4 Gen. xviii. 25 Is. xi 4, 5. Acts xvii. 31 Rom. ii. 5, 6. 16 s xviii. 2. xxxii. 7. xlvi. 1 xlviii 3. lxii. 8 xci. 1, 2. cxlii. 4, 5. Deu. xxxiii. 27 Pro. xviii. 10. Is. iv. 5, 6. viii. 14. xxxii. 2 Nah. i. 7. Luke xiii 34. Heb. vi. 18. * Heb. *an high place.* xx. 1. xlvi. 7. *Marg.* t i 15 lxxvii. 1, 2. cviii 12. u xci. 14. Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. John xvii. 3. 2 Cor iv. 6. 2 Tim. i. 12. 1 John ii. 3, 4. v. 20. x v 11. lvii. 1. cxlvi. 5, 6. Is. xxvi. 3. 4.——y cv. 3, 4. Is xlv. 19. xlvi. 3, 4. lv. 6, 7. Jer. xxix. 13 2 Cor. ii. 9, 10. z xxxiii. 1—3. xlvii. 6, 7. xcvi. 1, 2 cxlviii. 1—5. 13, 14 ——a lxxviii. 68 cxxxii 14 Is. xii 6 xiv. 12. Heb. xii 22. Rev. xiv. 1.——b lxvi 2 5. xcvi. 10. cv. 1, 2. cvii 21. cxviii. 17. Is xii. 4—6. John xvii. 26.——c Gen. ix. 5. 2 Kings xxiv 4. Is xxvi. 21 Matt. xxiii 35. Luke xi. 50, 51. Rev. vi. 9, 10 xvi. 6.——d x. 14. 17. xxii. 24. xxxiv 6 cii 17 Ex. iii. 7 9. Luke xviii. 7, 8.

† Or, *afflicted* Judg. x 16. e li. 1 cxix. 132. f xiii. 3. xxv. 19 cxix. 153. cxlii. 6. Neh ix 32. Lam i 9. 11. g xxx. 3. lvi. 13. lxxxvi. 13 cvii. 18. cxvi. 3, 4 Is. xxxviii. 10. Jon ii. 6. h li. 15 lxxix. 13 cvi 2. cxxxviii. 1. i xxii. 22. 25. xxxv. 18. xlii. 4 cix. 30, 31. cxvi. 18, 19. cxviii. 19, 20. cxlix. 1, 2. k Is xxxvii. 22. lxii. 11. Mic. iv. 13. Mat xxi. 5. l xiii. 5 xx. 5. xxi. 1. xxxv. 9. li. 12. 1 Sam ii. 1. Is. xii. 3. Hab. iii. 18. Luke i. 47. m vii 15, 16 xxxv. 8. xxxvii. 15. lvii. 6. xciv. 23. Pro. v. 22. xxii. 8. xxvi 27. n xlviii. 11 lviii. 10, 11. lxxxiii. 17. 18 Ex. vii. 5 xiv. 4. 31 Deut. xxix. 22—28. Josh. ii. 10, 11. Judg. i. 7 1 Sam. vi. 19, 20 xvii. 46. 2 Kings xix. 19. 34, 35.——o xi. 6. cxl. 9 Prov. vi. 2. xii. 13. Is. viii. 15. xxviii. 13. ‡ *Meditation.* v 1. xix. 14. xcii. 3. *Marg.*——p Prov. xiv 32 Is. iii 11. v 14 Matt. xxv. 41—46. Rom. ii. 8, 9 2 Thes. i. 7—9. Rev. xx. 15. xxi 8.——q xliv. 17. 20. 1 22. cvi. 13 21. Job viii. 13. Jer. ii. 32. iii. 21. xiii. 25. xviii. 15 xxiii. 27. Hos. ii. 13.

God had destroyed their cities; and the remembrance of them had failed from among men. Thus likewise the renowned monarchies, that successively made havoc on earth, and oppressed Israel, are now destroyed and almost forgotten: the first opposers of Christ and christianity have shared the same fate: and all these divine interpositions are earnests of the final ruin of all the enemies of the cause of Christ.

V. 7—12. The reflection on the transient glory of earthly kingdoms and illustrious conquerors, led the Psalmist to reflect on the eternity of JEHOVAH and of his universal kingdom. This eternal Sovereign did not, indeed, immediately inflict vengeance on his enemies; but his throne of judgment was prepared. He would soon judge the whole human race in righteousness; and uprightly, or according to his declarations and promises, decide on the cause of each individual belonging to the people of Israel. In the mean while, He would prove a refuge for the protection and comfort of such as were oppressed or persecuted for his sake, to which they should resort in times of trouble or danger. Indeed all who by believing his word and experiencing his faithfulness and mercy, had obtained the knowledge of his name or perfections, would trust in him entirely and exclusively; for it had never been known, that the Lord had forsaken any that sought him, because of their weakness, or the power of their enemies. But it was only, as dwelling in Zion, through the sacrifices and ordinances which typified the promised Saviour, that He could be sought by sinful men with acceptance; and therefore his people should abound in praising him, as the God of Salvation; and making known his works, that others might learn to seek and serve him. He sometimes indeed let his servants be tried by persecution: but there would be a season of inquisition for blood, when the prayers of the humble would be remembered, and completely answered.

V. 13, 14. David, after all his triumphs, still had enemies, conflicts, and trials: the church, though victorious over all former opposers, is still militant here on earth: and the believer, though rescued from the gates of death and hell, and enabled to bless God for many deliverances, must still encounter with troubles and temptations, and mingle prayers with his thanksgivings. The expression "the daughter of Zion," seems to denote the inhabitants of Zion, with all those who came to worship at the sanctuary now placed there, as one collective body, the visible church, the type of the true church, which God our Saviour has espoused to himself, and which in the true mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, shall show forth all His praises, who hath lifted her up from the gates of death, and raised her to that glorious felicity. The contrast between *the gates of death*, and *the gates of the daughter of Zion*, is remarkable. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 15, 16. The several nations, who had engaged in war against David, had only brought destruction on themselves by all their combinations and stratagems; and given JEHOVAH the occasion of manifesting his power and justice, in the judgments which he executed upon them. To this reflection the Psalmist adds, *Higgaion Selah;* which the Latin version renders, *Rem meditandam summe, a thing to be meditated on with the greatest attention:* and it is probable, that this is the true meaning of the two words thus connected. The example was very instructive, and ought to be deeply considered by the enemies of God for their warning, and by his servants for their encouragement in seasons of trouble and danger.

V. 17. 'All wickedness came originally with the 'wicked one from hell; thither it will be again remitted; 'and they, who hold on its side, must accompany it, on 'its return to that place of torment, there to be shut up 'for ever.' (*Horne.*) This will be the case even with the nations who forget God, and their obligation to him, and that worship and obedience which they owe him: for this forgetfulness is the effect of contempt and aversion, it deserveth his wrath, and it is the source of all other crimes.

18 For [r] the needy shall not always be forgotten: [s] the expectation of the poor shall *not* perish for ever.

19 [t] Arise, O LORD, [u] let not man prevail: [x] let the heathen be judged in thy sight.

20 [y] Put them in fear, O LORD: *that* the nations [z] may know themselves *to be but* men. Selah.

r 12. xii. 5. lxxii. 4. 12—14. cii. 17. 20. cix 31 Luke i. 53. vi. 20. Jam ii 5.
s Prov. xxiii. 18. xxiv. 14. Phil. i. 20.
t iii. 7. vii. 6. x. 12. xliv. 23. 26. lxviii 1,2 lxxiv. 22, 23. lxxvi. 8. 9. lxxx. 2. Is. xlii. 13, 14. li. 9. Zeph. iii. 8.
u Gen xxxii. 28. 1 Sam. ii. 9. 2 Chr xiv. 11. Is xiii. 13
x ii. 1—3. lxxix. 6 cxlix. 7. Jer x. 25. Joel iii. 12. Mic. v. 15. Zech. xiv. 18. Rev. xix. 15.——y lxxvi. 12. lxxxiii. 15. Ex. xv 16. xxiii. 27. Deut ii. 25. Jer. xxxii. 40. Ez. xxx. 13.——z lxxxii. 6, 7 Is. xxxi. 3. Ez. xxviii. 2. 9. Acts xii. 22, 23.

PSALM. X.

The Psalmist complains that the Lord hid his face, amidst the outrages of wicked persecutors, 1—11. *He prays for redress, and professes his confidence in God,* 12—18.

WHY [a] standest thou afar off, O LORD? *why* [b] hidest thou *thyself* in times of trouble?

a xxii. 1. xlvi. 1. lxix. 31. Jer. xiv. 8.
b xiii. 1—3. xxvii. 9. xxx. 7. xliv. 24. lxxxviii 14. Job xiii. 24. xxiii. 9. xxxiv. 29.

The future condemnation of the wicked seems to be intended; for as men go down to the *grave*, the word, rendered *hell*, must in this connexion have a more awful meaning.

V. 20. Many princes have claimed and received divine honours; we know the arrogant titles of infallibility and of *his holiness*, which one chief anti-christ hath assumed: and the proud and impious conduct of multitudes too evidently proves, not only that they forget God, but that they forget themselves to be men, sinful, weak, and dying creatures, who will soon be called to give an account of themselves to God. According to our version, David prayed that these haughty enemies of the Lord and his people, might be so terrified, as to recollect their own weakness, and submit to Omnipotence: but the Septuagint translates the first clause, "Place a lawgiver over them;" indeed the original word seems to mean *a Teacher* or *Lawgiver;* and in this sense the prayer is for their instruction and conversion.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

All our mercies should be acknowledged before God in fervent praises: the whole glory belongs to him; our whole heart should be lifted up to him; in rendering him this tribute; we should delight in showing forth publicly his marvellous works to us and to his church: and our joy must not rest in any of the gifts of our God, but ascend to him, and centre in him as our all-sufficient Portion.—The enemies of Christ and of his people for a time may stand their ground, and seem to prevail: but in due season they will be dismayed; and, beginning to fall, they will perish at his presence. He, who advanced David, and maintained his righteous cause; he that exalted the Saviour to his own right hand in heavenly places, in defiance of his enemies, will shortly bring to an end the wickedness of persecuting tyrants, and they shall perish with eternal infamy: and this almighty Lord will help the Christian in all his conflicts and temptations, and support and comfort him in all his troubles, till he be finally delivered from the body of sin; and till Satan be bruised under his feet, and death itself swallowed up in victory. The eternal God hath already prepared his throne for judgment: He will certainly execute judgment in righteousness and in faithfulness; and then every iniquitous sentence will be reversed, and every oppressor punished. In the mean while all who know his name, will trust him for temporal protection and eternal salvation; and their experience will daily increase their knowledge and confirm their faith; for the Lord never did, and never will, forsake or reject any who seek his favour according to his word. He is "in Christ "reconciling the world unto himself;" he may be found upon a mercy-seat: let saints then sing praises to him, and call upon sinners to come and trust in him. The blood of many martyrs has been shed, and their persecutors have supposed that no inquisition would be made for it: but from time to time the Lord anticipates that day, when "the earth shall disclose her blood, and shall no more "cover her slain." He is ever mindful of the cry of the humble. His consolations more than counterbalance outward afflictions, and if any are cut off by martyrdom, their souls are forwarded to heaven. There the church is triumphant: here it must be militant. Satan, who hates us, will stir up opposition and excite our depravity by his suggestions; but the Lord, who hath lifted us up from the gates of death and hell, considers all our conflicts and temptations; he will give us merciful deliverances on earth, that we may praise him with his people; and in a little time will completely rescue our souls, that in his temple above, we may rejoice in his salvation and triumph in his praise. Then the wicked of every description will sink into the pit of destruction: their own crimes will fall upon them, and they will be caught in their own snare: then especially, will the power and justice of God be made known to all the world, by the judgments that he executeth; and even whole nations of those who forgot and despised him, shall be turned into hell, and for ever shut up in that region of darkness and despair. Many of his people are here permitted to be poor and afflicted, and seem to be forgotten; and they are all poor in spirit, and have nothing to trust to but his mercy and grace. But they shall not always be forgotten: their expectation of help and salvation from God shall not perish in disappointment for ever. Often it hath seemed as if man would prevail against the cause of God: but the church has prayed, and her Advocate has pleaded, and the arm of the Lord has been extended; some of her enemies have been judged and have perished, others have been intimidated, and others humbled in cordial submission: so that the cause of God yet maintains its ground. Yet still we have abundant reason to unite in prayer, and to say, 'Arise, O Lord, 'let not Satan, or man, prevail to confine thy church 'within such narrow limits, to corrupt it by so many 'heresies and scandals, or to distract it with so many divi-'sions and disputes: put those in fear, and to shame, who 'arrogate more to themselves than can belong to fallible, 'sinful mortal man; humble and convert every opposer, 'and destroy every system of superstition and delusion: 'that all the inhabitants of the earth may know them-'selves to be lost, sinful men, gladly welcome the Saviour, 'and become his willing subjects. Higgaion. Selah. Amen.'

2 * The wicked [c] in *his* pride doth persecute the poor: [b] let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined.

3 For the wicked [e] boasteth of his † heart's desire, [f] and ‡ blesseth the covetous [g] *whom* the LORD [h] abhorreth.

4 The wicked, through [i] the pride of his countenance, [k] will not seek *after God:* § God *is* not in all his [l] thoughts.

5 [m] His ways are always grievous: [n] thy judgments *are* far above out of his sight: *as for* all his enemies, [o] he puffeth at them.

6 He hath [p] said in his heart, [q] I shall not be moved: for *I shall* ‖ never *be* in adversity.

7 His mouth is [r] full of cursing, [s] and * deceit, and fraud: [t] under his tongue *is* [u] mischief [x] and † vanity.

8 He sitteth in [y] the lurking places of the villages: in the secret places doth he murder the innocent: [z] his eyes † are privily set against the poor.

9 [a] He lieth in wait § secretly as a lion in his den: he lieth in wait [b] to catch the poor: he doth catch [c] the poor, when he draweth him into his net.

10 He ‖ croucheth, *and* [d] humbleth himself, that the poor may fall * by his strong ones.

11 He hath [e] said in his heart, [f] God hath forgotten; he hideth his face, he will never see *it.*

12 [g] Arise, O LORD: O God, [h] lift up thine hand: [i] forget not the † humble.

13 Wherefore doth the wicked [k] contemn God? he hath said in his heart, Thou wilt not require *it.*

14 [m] Thou hast seen *it;* for [n] thou beholdest mischief and spite, [o] to requite *it* with thy hand: [p] the poor ‡ committeth himself unto thee: thou art [q] the helper of the fatherless.

* Heb. *in the pride of the wicked he doth,* &c
c xxxi 18. xxxvi. 11. lix. 12 cxix. 51. 69. 85. 122. cxxiii. 4. cxl. 5. Ex. ix 27. xviii. 11. Is. x 12, 13. xiv. 13. 16. Jer. xlii. 2. e vii 16 ix 15, 16. Prov. v 22.
* xxxv. 21 xlix. 6. lii 7. lxxiii. 3 9. xciv. 4. Ex. xv 9. Is x. 7—11. xxxvii. 23, 24. Jam. iv. 13. 15.
† Heb. *souls.*
f xlix. 18. 1 Sam. xxxiii. 21. Prov. xxviii. 4. Rom. i. 32.
‡ Or *the covetous blesseth* himself, *he abhorreth the LORD.* xlix. 11—13. Deut. xxix. 19. Job xxxi. 24, 25. Hos. xii. 7, 8. Zech. xi. 5—8 Luke xii. 19. Rom. i. 29, 30. 2 Tim. iii. 2—4. 1 John ii. 15, 16
g Is. lvii. 17. Jer. xxii. 17 Mic. vi. 10—12 Hab ii 9 Matt. xxvi. 15, 16. Luke xii. 15. xvi 14, 15. 1 Cor. vi. 10. Eph v. 5. Col iii 5. 1 Tim. vi 9, 10. 2 Pet. ii 3. 14, 15 ——h v. 6 cvi. 40. Lev. xxvi. 30 Deut. xxxii 19 ——i xviii. 27 ci. 5. Prov vi. 17. xxi 4 xxx. 13. Is. ii. 11. iii. 9. x. 12 ——k xiv 2 xxvii 8. Ex. v. 2 Deut viii. 14 Job xxii. 17 Prov. xxx. 9. Jer ii. 31. Dan. v. 22, 23. Zeph ii 3.——§ Or, *all his thoughts* are, there is *no God.* xiv. 1. liii 1.——l Gen. vi 5 Is. lix 7. lxv 2 Jer. iv. 14. Mark vii. 21. Acts viii. 22. Rom. i. 21. 28 ——m Gen vi. 12 Prov. i. 19 ii 13—15. Is. x. 1. lix. 7, 8. Hos. ix 8. Rom iii. 16 ——n xcii. 5, 6. Prov xv. 24. Is v. 12 xxvi. 11. xxviii. 15 xlii. 25 Hos. xiv 9.——o xii 5 Judg ix. 27, 28. 38. 2 Sam. v. 6 1 Kings xx. 10, 11. 18. 2 Chr. xxxii 15—19 ——p xi. 1. xiv 1. Matt. xxiv. 48.——q xv. 5. xxx. 6. Ec. viii. 11. Is. xlviii. 7. lvi. 12. Nah. i 10 Matt. xxiv. 48 51 1 Thes. v 3. Rev. xviii. 7.——‖ Heb. *unto generation and generation.*——r lix 12. lxii. 4 cix. 17, 18. Rom. iii 14.——s v 9. vii. 14. xxxvi 3. lii. 4 lv 21. lviii. 3. lxiv. 3 Is. lix. 4. Jer. ix 3—6. Rom iii. 13.——* Heb. *deceits* ——t Job xx. 12.——u vii. 14 cxl. 9. Job xv. 35. Matt xii. 34. Jam. iii. 6—8.——x xii 2. xli. 6. cxliv. 8. 11. Prov. xxi. 6. xxx. 8. 2 Pet. ii. 18.——† Or, *iniquity.*

y 1 Sam. xxii. 18 19 xxiii. 23 2 Kings xxi. 16. Prov. i 11, 12. Hab. iii. 14. Lu e viii. 1. x. 1.
z xvii. 11. Prov. vi 12, 13. Jer. xxii. 17.
‡ Heb. *hide themselves.*
a xvii. 12. lix. 3. Mic. vii 2. Acts xxiii. 21.
§ Heb *in the secret places.* Lam. iii. 10. Am iii 4. Nah. ii 11, 12. Zech. xi 3.
b Jer. v. 26. Ez. xix 3—6. Hab. i. 15 John x. 12.
e xii. 5. xiv 6. xxxv 10. xxxvii. 14 cix 31 Job v 15, 16. xx. 19. xxiv 14. Prov. xiv. 31. xxii 16 xxviii. 15. Is iii. 15. xxxii. 7 Ezek xxii. 29. Am. ii 6, 7 iv 1. v. 11, 12 viii. 4. 6. Hab. iii. 14.
‖ Heb. *breaketh himself.* 1 Sam. ii 36
d 1 Sam xviii. 21—26 xxiii. 21, 22. 2 Sam xv 6.
* Or, *into his strong parts.*
e 6 Mark ii. 6. Luke vii 39.
f lxiv. 5 lxxiii. 11 xciv. 7. Job xxii. 13, 14. Ez. viii. 12. ix. 9 ——g iii. 7 vii. 6 ix 19.——h xciv. 2 Is xxvi 11 xxxiii 10 Mic. v. 9. i ix. 12. xiii. 1. xliv 14 lxxiv. 19. lxxvii 9 ——† Or, *afflicted* ——k lxxiv 10. 13. Num. xi 20 2 Sam. xii. 9, 10 Luke x 16 1 Thes iv 8.——l Gen. ix. 5 xlii 22. 2 Chr xxiv. 22. Luke xi 50 51 ——m xxxv. 22. Prov. xv. 3 Jer xvi. 17. xxiii 24. Heb iv. 13.
n Hab i. 13 ——o Judg. i 7. 2 Kings ix 26. 2 Chr vi. 23 Jer li. 56. Joel iii 4.
p lv. 22 2 Tim i. 12 1 Pet. iv. 19 v. 7.——‡ Heb. *leaveth.* Is x 3. Jer xlix. 11
q lxviii. 5. cxlvi. 9. Deut. x. 18. Hos. xiv. 3.

NOTES.

PSALM X. V. 1. Though David's name is not prefixed to this Psalm, it is probable that it was composed by him, with reference to the persecution which he and the church of God, suffered during the reign of Saul: but it is applicable to similar cases in every age. Whilst the trial continues, and comfort and deliverance are withheld, the Lord seems to *hide himself*, or to *stand at a distance*, as regardless of the event: but he only waits to be called upon by importunate prayer to come and deliver his people.

V. 2—11. Several of the psalms seem intentionally to have been written in general terms; that they might serve to direct the devotions of the church in persecution, and those of every believer in his personal troubles and afflictions. Pride and ambition caused Saul to envy and hate David, as one who had eclipsed his glory, and was appointed by God himself to the kingdom as the man after his own heart: and therefore he persecuted him. The Jewish rulers hated Christ and his apostles, because their ignorance and hypocrisy were exposed, and their authority endangered by the light of the Gospel: and the same principle has made way for the persecution of the humble and zealous servants of God in all ages. But the Psalmist *predicted* that his enemies would ruin themselves, instead of him; for the original is in the future tense, "They shall be "taken," &c.—Saul at length avowed and boasted of his desire of murdering David, which at first he concealed: and he *blessed those covetous wretches*, who courted favour by betraying him. But God abhorred such men; as indeed they resembled Judas who sold his Lord. Yet the marginal reading in this place seems most agreeable to the original.—Saul, with evident haughtiness, refused to submit to the decree of God made known by Samuel, or to seek his favour; and in his subsequent conduct, acted as an infidel or an atheist. He became grievously cruel and oppressive in his government, especially when he murdered the priests. God's judgments were out of his sight; he believed nothing about them; and he scorned all those as enemies who opposed his rage, growing more presumptuous by impunity. His conversation became a mixture of profaneness, perjury, violent imprecations, and deceit; and he was continually avowing his vile and mischievous purposes. Personally, and by his agents, he watched for David in every place where he was likely to surprise him; being bent on murdering a poor fugitive who had never injured him, as much as a hungry lion is of seizing his prey. Nay, he even seemed to pay court and humble himself to David and others, as well as to stoop to the meanest practices, that he might get him within his reach, and murder him by one of his captains. This deliberate plan of virulent opposition to one whom God had expressly marked out as the object of his special favour, could be the result of nothing except contempt of God, and practical atheism.

V. 12, 13. The honour of God required, that such impious persons, who despised him and defied his wrath, should be openly rebuked; and his oppressed servants as openly delivered. 'What is it but thy long-suffering, 'that makes the wicked thus insolently despise thee? He 'concludes that thou wilt never punish him, because thou 'art so patient with him.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

15 [s] Break thou the arm of the wicked and the evil *man:* seek out his wickedness *till* thou find none.

16 [u] The LORD *is* King for ever and ever: [x] the heathen are perished out of his land.

17 LORD, [y] thou hast heard the desire of [z] the humble: [a] thou wilt * prepare their heart, [b] thou wilt cause thine ear to hear:

18 [c] To judge the fatherless and the oppressed, that [d] the man of the earth may no more † oppress.

s iii. 7. xxxvii. 17. Job xxxviii. 15. Ez. xxx. 21, 22. Zech. xi. 17.
t vij. 9. Job x. 6. xx. 27. Jer. ii 34. Zeph. i. 12.
u xxix. 10. xciii. 1 cxlv. 13. cxlvi. 10. Is. xxxiii. 22. Jer. x 10. Lam. v. 19. Dan iv. 34. vi. 26. 1 Tim. i. 17. vi. 15 —x ix. 5. 15 xxviii. 43—45. xliv. 2, 3. lxxviii. 55. lxxx. 8.
y ix. 12. 18 xxxvii. 4 cxlv. 19. Prov. x. 24.

z 2 Chr xxxiii. 12, 13 xxxiv. 27. Prov. xv 8. Mat. v. 3. Luke xviii. 13, 14. Jam. iv 6 10. 1 Pet. v 5.
a 1 Chr. xxix. 18. 2 Chr xxix. 36. xxx. 12. Prov. xvi. 1. Rom. viii. 26 Jam. i.

16, 17.——* Or, *establish.* cxii. 7, 8. Eph. ii. 13. iii. 12.——b cii. 17. Is lxv 24 Acts iv. 24—31. xii. 5, &c. 1 Pet iii. 12——c 14. lxxii. 4. xciv 1—6. Luke xviii. 7, 8.
d xvii. 14. Luke xvi. 25. 1 Cor. xv. 47, 48. Phil. iii. 18, 19.——† Or, *terrify.*

V. 14, 15. Though the Lord did not immediately appear to punish the persecutors, the Psalmist was fully assured that he observed with strict attention all the mischief and malice, that was shown; and would by his power openly *requite* his enemies. In confidence of this, his poor and persecuted servants *left themselves in his hands*, as destitute orphans who had no other helper, but who were assured of his compassionate protection. They also prayed against their oppressor, that God would *break his arm*, (or deprive him of power,) and search out, in order to terminate, his wickedness. This verse is in the imperative mood.

V. 16. The Canaanites had been destroyed out of the land by the power of JEHOVAH, the eternal King of Israel; and Saul and his adherents were in reality no less heathen than they: David therefore in faith expected their extirpation from among the people of God. The original words, rendered for ever and ever, appear always strictly to denote *eternity.*

V. 17, 18. The encouragement to be derived from the readiness, which God had ever shown, to answer the prayers of the humble; the reason of this condescension to them in particular, because their prayers sprang from hearts prepared by his special grace; the pleasure, so to speak, which he took in listening to them; and the deliverances in consequence granted to his church by crushing worldly oppressors, are circumstances replete with instruction and encouragement.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

As every believer, and the whole church, in conformity to Christ, must have seasons of trial and humiliation: the tempter and his party for a time succeeds; and the Lord will sometimes seem to stand at a distance when his help is most wanted. But this will lead the believer to humble faith and prayer, and tend to his good; and he should remember that the Saviour once exclaimed, "My God, my God, "why hast thou forsaken me?" For it is far better to be a tempted, persecuted, and deserted saint, than a prosperous persecutor. It is a sad mark of a reprobate mind, when men glory in those desires and practices which are really shameful. Nothing is more hateful to God, more contrary to true religion, or more prolific of other crimes, than covetousness: Yet many who are severe against sins of inferior malignity, favour and speak well of the covetous; too often, it is to be feared, from covetousness in themselves. But persecutors are most liable to this: the tools that they employ, being generally such as sell their souls, and as would, if they had the opportunity, sell Christ himself for filthy lucre's sake. Pride, however, is especially the image of Satan and the root of apostacy; and where it prevails, it will appear even in a man's looks. The proud man scorns dependence, or subjection to any Lord; he feels no want of a Teacher, a Priest, or a Saviour; he excuses or vindicates his transgressions of God's law; he abhors the humbling truths of his gospel; and he is more disposed to rival God, or rob him of his glory, than to render him the worship and obedience which he demands. He therefore banishes from his mind all thoughts of him as much as he can. From such ungodliness, iniquity and fraud must spring of course; except as restrained by the fear of man or by contrary lusts. And when a man of this character obtains power and authority, he is formed for a tyrant and a persecutor. God's judgments are not feared or thought of; human opposition is disdained and derided. Grievous oppressions conducted with perjuries, deceit, lies, and all kinds of abominable words and actions, may be expected, as circumstances arise and occasion requires. From this source a great part of that enmity and contempt, which infidels express against the inoffensive disciples of Christ, without doubt, originates. Full of self-conceit, they affect to be thought wiser, and are ambitious of being greater, than other men. They consider Christianity and its zealous friends as standing in their way; and in opposing them, they bring ruin on themselves. —Alas, how many in all ages have answered this character! And more have shown the disposition, who could not or dared not indulge it. Indeed all our deliberate sins spring from unbelief, forgetfulness, or contempt of God; and our hearts are prone to atheism itself. But the Lord beholds, and will requite the spite and malice, and all other crimes, which elude or out-brave human justice: he will judge in behalf of the fatherless and oppressed, against the worldly oppressor. Let then the poor, afflicted, persecuted, or tempted believer recollect, that Satan is by usurpation and human choice the prince of this world, and the father of all wicked men: and the children of God cannot reasonably expect much kindness, truth, or justice, from such persons as formerly crucified the Lord of glory. But this once-suffering Jesus, now reigns as king over all the earth, for the benefit of his church; and of his dominion there shall be no end. Let us then commit ourselves unto him. Let us humbly trust in his mercy, and beg of him to prepare our hearts for himself; for the desires which he imparts, he will regard and answer. He will rescue the believer from every temptation, and break the arm of every oppressor, and "bruise Satan under our feet shortly." When that enemy shall be chained, and cast into the bottomless pit, every antichrist shall be destroyed; oppression and persecution shall cease, and the nations shall learn war no more; for they shall become the kingdoms of our Lord Jesus, the Prince of peace. But from heaven alone, will all sin and temptation be excluded: no Canaanite shall

PSALM XI.

David professes confidence in God, when advised to flee from his enemies, 1—3. *He shows the Lord's abhorrence of the wicked, and his care of the righteous,* 4—7.

To the chief Musician, *A Psalm* of David.

[a] IN the LORD put I my trust; [b] how say ye to my soul, Flee, *as* a bird to your mountain?

2 For, lo, [d] the wicked bend *their* bow, they [e] make ready their arrow upon the string, [f] that they may * privily shoot at [g] the upright in heart.

3 If [h] the foundations be destroyed, [i] what can the righteous do?

4 [k] The LORD *is* in his holy temple, [l] the LORD's throne *is* in heaven: [m] his eyes behold, his eye-lids try, the children of men.

5 The LORD [n] trieth the righteous: but [o] the wicked, and him that loveth violence, his soul hateth.

6 [p] Upon the wicked he shall rain † snares, fire and brimstone, and ‡ an horrible tempest: *this shall be* [q] the portion of [r] their cup.

7 For [s] the righteous LORD loveth righteousness; [t] his countenance doth behold the upright.

a vii. 1. ix. 10. xvi. 1. xxv. 2. xxxi. 14. lvi. 11. 2 Chr xiv. 11. xvi. 8. Is. xxvi. 3, 4
b 1 Sam. xix 11. xx. 38 xxi. 10—12. xxii. 3. xxiii 14. xxvi. 19, 20. xxvii. 1.
c Iv. 6, 7. Prov. vi. 5. Luke xiii. 31.
d x. 2. xxxvii. 14. lxiv. 3, 4. Jer. ix. 3.
e xxi. 12.
f x. 8, 9. lxiv. 5. cxlii. 3. 1 Sam. xviii. 21. xxiii 9. Mat. xxvi. 4. Acts xxiii. 12—15.
* Heb. *in darkness.*
g vii. 10. xxxii. 11. lxiv. 10. xciv. 15. xcvii. 11. cxxv. 4.
h lxxv. 3. lxxxii. 5. Is. lviii. 12. 2 Tim ii. 19.
i 1 Kings xix. 13—18. xxii. 12—14. 2 Chr xxxii. 13—15. Neh. vi. 10—12 Jer. xxvi. 11—15. Dan. iii. 15—18. vi. 10, &c. John xi. 8—10. Acts iv. 5—12. 24, &c.
k ix. 11. xviii. 6. Ex. xl. 34, 35. 1 Chr. xvii. 5. Hab. ii. 20. Zech. ii. 13. 2 Thes. ii. 4.
l ii. 4. ciii. 19. Is. lxvi. 1 Mat. v. 34. xxiii 21, 22. Acts vii. 49. Rev iv. 2.
m xxxiii. 13. xxxiv. 15, 16. xliv. 21. lxvi. 7. 2 Chr. xvi. 9. Pro. xv 3. Jer. xvii. 10. xxiii. 24. Heb. iv. 13.
n vii. 9. xvii. 3. xxvi. 2. lxvi. 10. cxxxix. 1. 23, 24 Gen. xxii. 1. Zech. xiii 9. Mal. iii. 3. Jam. i. 12. 1 Pet. i. 7. iv 12.—o v 4, 5. x 3. xxi. 8. Pro. vi. 16—19. Jer xii 8. Zech. xi. 8—p cv. 32. Gen. xix. 24. Ex ix. 23, 24. Job xviii. 15. xx 23 Is xxiv 17, 18. Ex. xiii. 14. xxxviii. 22. Luke xvii 29.—† Or, *quick burning coals* xviii. 12, 13.—‡ Or, *a burning tempest*—q xvi 5. Gen xliii. 34 1 Sam. ix. 23. Job xx. 29. xxvii. 13, &c.—r lxxv. 8 Is li. 17. 22. Jer. xxv. 15—17. Hab. ii. 16. John xviii 11.—s xlv. 7. xcix. 4. cxlvi. 8. Is. lxi. 8.—t v. 12. xxi 6. xxxiii. 18. xlii. 5. Job xxxvi 7.

find entrance there; no lust shall then remain in the heart of any inhabitant; no imperfection will be known; but all shall be complete love, purity, and joy.

NOTES.

PSALM XI. V. 1—3. It is probable, that this psalm was composed, when David began to be in danger from the envy and malice of Saul: but after David came to the throne, it was given to the chief musician for the service of the sanctuary. Many suppose these verses to be the language of enemies, who wanted to discourage David's hope in God: but as the unprincipled wickedness of his persecutors is fairly allowed; it is more likely they contain the *prudent* advice of his timid friends; who advised him and his small party to flee from court to *their* mountain, (the pronoun is plural) to some place of safety pointed out to them, as the sparrow escapes from the fowler. They represented that malice and treachery were combined against him, and he would soon be slain, as by an arrow shot from an unknown hand; that all foundations of religion and justice were subverted; that the most upright conduct would rather endanger him, than do him any service; and that there was no good to be done by the most righteous persons in such circumstances: or, *What is the righteous man doing*, who expects safety in such a dangerous situation. But David considered the service of Saul and of Israel as his post of duty; and, trusting in the Lord, he would not listen to temptations at present to desert it.

V. 4, 5. In the subsequent part of the psalm, David shows the reasons of his confidence. JEHOVAH, as dwelling in his sanctuary, and manifesting his glory from the mercy-seat, was the God of Israel; the reconciled Friend of his people: but his throne was fixed in heaven, far above the power and machinations of all earthly potentates. —His omniscience, perfectly viewing the character of every man, and his perfect justice, concurred in detecting and punishing wicked persecutors and oppressors, who were the objects of his holy detestation: and though he tried and proved the righteous, by sharp afflictions; yet the event would certainly be favourable to them.

V. 6. The language of this verse is evidently taken from the awful judgment of God on Sodom and Gomorrah, which were destroyed by fire and brimstone from heaven. Thus at last the wicked, *ensnared* in their own counsels, and driven away by the wrath of God, as a tremendous tempest, will receive their portion in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone. This is the cup of vengeance which will be given them to drink; seeing they have rejected the cup of salvation.

V. 7. 'He who is in himself essential righteousness, 'cannot but love his own resemblance wrought in the 'faithful by his good Spirit: with a countenance full of 'parental affection, he beholds and speaks peace and com-'fort to them, in the midst of their sorrows, until ad-'mitted, through mercy, to that glory from which justice 'excludes the wicked, and beholding that countenance 'which has always beheld them, they shall enter on a life 'of boundless and everlasting felicity.' (*Horne.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The servant of God should abide in his place and at his work, though it expose him to many dangers and difficulties: and the honour of God, the interests of his people, and regard to consistency of character, require eminent persons to expose themselves more in times of persecution, than their inferiors are called to do. But the believer, when not terrified by the power and rage of his enemies; will frequently be tempted to desert his post, or to neglect his work, by the fears of his friends. They will clearly see his danger; but, through want or weakness of faith, they will not perceive his security; and they will often give him counsel that savours of worldly policy rather than of heavenly wisdom. But such dangerous temptations must be rejected with firmness and decision. Let it not be thought that, in times of prevailing iniquity, when all regard to the laws of God and man is discarded, the

PSALM XII.

David, lamenting the decay of godliness, and the prevalency of deceit, craves help from God, 1, 2. He predicts the destruction of flatterers, proud boasters, and oppressors, 3—5. He comforts himself in assurance of divine protection, grounded on the faithful promises of God, notwithstanding the triumph of the wicked, 6—8.

To the chief Musician upon * Sheminith, *A Psalm* of David.

† HELP, LORD; for [a] the godly man ceaseth; for [b] the faithful fail from among the children of men.

2 [c] They speak vanity every one with his neighbour: *with* [d] flattering lips, *and* with ‡ a double heart do they speak.

3 The LORD shall [e] cut off all flattering lips, *and* [f] the tongue that speaketh § proud things:

4 Who have said, [g] With our tongue will we prevail; our lips *are* ‖ our own: [h] who *is* lord over us?

5 [i] For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, [k] now will I arise, saith the LORD; I will set *him* in safety *from him that* * puffeth at him.

6 [l] The words of the LORD *are* pure words; [m] *as* silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.

7 Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, [n] thou shalt preserve † them from [o] this generation for ever.

8 [p] The wicked walk on every side, [q] when the ‡ vilest men are exalted.

* Or, *the eighth.* vi. *title.* 1 Chr. xv. 21
† Or, *Save.* iii. 7. vi. 4 liv. 1. Matt. viii. 25. xiv 30
a Gen vi. 12. Is i. 9 21, 22. lvii. 1. lxiii. 5 Jer v. 1 Mic. vii. 1, 2. Matt xxiv. 12
b Prov xx. 6. Is. lix. 4. 13—15.
c x. 7. xxxvi. 3, 4. xxxviii 12. xli. 6. lii. 1—4. lix. 12. cxliv 8. 11. Jer ix. 2—6. 8.
d v. 9. xxviii 3. lxii. 4 Prov. xx. 19. xxix. 5 Ez. xii. 24. Rom. xvi. 18. 1 Thes. ii. 5.
‡ Heb. *an heart and an heart.* 1 Chr. xii. 33. *Marg.* Jam. i. 8.
e Job xxxii. 22.
f xvii. 10. lxxiii. 8, 9. Ex. xv. 9. 1 Sam. ii. 3. xvii. 43, 44. 2 Kings xix 23, 24 Is. x. 13. Ez xxviii. 2. 9. xxix. 3 Dan. iv. 30, 31. vii 8. 25. Mal. iii. 13. 2 Pet. ii 18. Jude 16. Rev. xiii. 5.
§ Heb. *great* lii. 2. Prov. xviii. 21.
g Jer. xviii. 18. Jam. iii. 5, 6.
‖ Heb. are *with us.*
h Gen. iii. 5. Ex. v. 2. Job xxi. 14, 15. Jer. ii. 31 xliv. 16, 17. Dan. iii 11. xi. 36. 2 Thes. ii. 4.
i x 12. lxxi v. 21, 22. lxxix. 10, 11. cxlvi. 7, 8. Ex. ii. 23, 24. iii. 7—9. Judg. x. 16. Prov. xiv. 31. xxii. 22, 23. Ec. iv 1. v. 8. Is xix. 20. Ez. xviii. 12, 13. 18. Jam v. 4.
k Is. xxxiii. 10. Mic. vii. 8, 9 —* Or, would *ensnare him.* x. 5. Job v 15 21——l xvii. 30. xix 8. cix. 140. Prov. xxx. 5 ——m lxvi. 10.——n xvi 1. xxxvii. 28. 40 cxxi. 8. cxlv. 10. Deut. xxxiii. 3. 1 Sam. ii. 9. Is. xxvii. 3. 1 Pet. i. 5 Jude 1.——† Heb. *him*, that is, *every one of them.*——o x. 18. Mat. iii. 7 ——p Prov. xxix. 12. Hos. v. 11. Mic. vi. 16.——q Judg. ix. 18, &c. 1 Sam. xviii. 17, 18. Esth. iii. 6, &c. Is xxxii. 4—6. Mark xiv. 63—65.——‡ Heb. *vilest of the sons of men.* Job xxx. 8. Dan. xi. 21.

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righteous can do no good. 'All is not over, while there 'is a man left to reprove error, and bear testimony to the 'truth; and a man who does this with a becoming spirit, 'may stop a prince, or senate, when in full career, and re-'cover the day.'—'No place on earth is out of the reach 'of care and trouble. Temptations are every where; and 'so is the grace of God.' (*Horne.*) The upright and zealous servants of God are indeed peculiarly exposed to the malice of wicked persecutors, who commonly have power on their side: but let us not forget the almighty God. Upon his mercy-seat he hears the prayers and defends the cause of his people: but into that holy temple the daring sinner hath no access. On his exalted throne he ruleth over all the kings of the earth; he notices all the devices of his enemies, and the perils of his friends: he will permit the persecutor to proceed as far as is requisite, to prove and increase the faith and holiness of his servants. But he abhorreth those who delight in cruelty and violence, and will shortly assign them their horrible portion in the pit of destruction. He loveth his own image in his people: he beholds them with complacency and paternal care: he protects their lives till their work is done, and then receives them to his heavenly kingdom. And what hath he to fear who hath a righteous cause, an almighty Friend, and a faithful promise on his side?

NOTES.

PSALM XII. V. 1—4. This psalm may be supposed to have been written towards the end of Saul's reign; when his impiety and abuse of authority had given such a sanction to vice and ungodliness, that not only piety, but truth and honesty, seemed about to expire, while every kind of wickedness was practised without fear or shame. Dissimulation, flattery, profane and arrogant boastings, treachery, and calumny, were the general recommendations of the superior people in *Israel*, to the favour of their king and his courtiers; and the infection spread rapidly among all orders of men. Forgetting to whom they were indebted for the gift of speech, and for what purpose it was given, and of their accountableness to God; they considered their tongues as their own, to be employed as they pleased; they thought to carry all before them by their wit, eloquence, or calumnies. But in fact they were only exposing themselves to the judgments of God against flatterers and proud boasters.

V. 5, 6. For the comfort of the remnant of poor and persecuted believers, David addressed them in his prophetical character. The Lord assured them, that he noticed their oppressions, and regarded their sighs and sorrows; and that He was about to arise to punish their enemies, and set them in safety from the power, and the cruel sarcasms and menaces to which they were exposed. And the Psalmist reminded them that they might confidently depend on this assurance; for the words, (or *oracles*,) of God formed a perfect contrast to the deceitful and iniquitous speeches of their neighbours. His testimonies and promises had often been tried by his servants during the sharpest distresses, and had always been found sincere and faithful: and every one of his words was holy, just, good and inestimably precious: like silver, which has been many times refined, in the most perfect manner, from all remaining alloy. The death of Saul, the ruin of his party, and the advancement of David to the throne a short time after this, formed an exact fulfilment of this prediction.

V. 7. The Septuagint renders this verse as follows, 'Thou, Lord, wilt guard us, and preserve us from this 'generation, and for ever.' Not only from this wicked race, but "from every evil work unto thy heavenly king-"dom." (2 *Tim.* iv. 18.)

V. 8. When such vile men as Doeg and his party were advanced to great authority, the wicked were emboldened to show themselves, and encouraged openly to avow their corrupt principles, and practise every kind of iniquity. But when the power should be put into other

PSALM XIII.

David mournfully complains, that God delays to comfort and deliver him; and prays for help, that his enemy might not insult over him, 1—4 Trusting in the mercy of God, he expects to rejoice in singing his praises, 5, 6.

To the * chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

a HOW long wilt thou b forget me, O LORD? for ever? c how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?

2 How long shall I d take counsel in my soul, *having* e sorrow in my heart daily? how long shall f mine enemy g be exalted over me?

3 h Consider *and* hear me, O LORD my God: i lighten mine eyes, k lest I sleep the *sleep of* death;

4 l Lest mine enemy say, m I have prevailed against him; *and* those that trouble me rejoice n when I am moved.

5 But o I have trusted in thy mercy; p my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation.

6 q I will sing unto the LORD, because r he hath dealt bountifully with me.

* Or, *overseer.*

a vi 3 xxxv 17. lxxiv 1 lxxx 4. lxxxv 5. lxxxix 46 xc 13. xciv. 3, 4 b x 12. Lam v 20 c xxii 1, 2 xliv. 23. 24 lxxxviii. 14. Deut xxxi. 17. Job xiii 24. Is. lix 2 d lxxvii. 2—12. xciv. 18, 19. cxiii. 4—7. Job vii. 12—15. ix. 19—21 27, 28. x. 15. xxiii. 8—10. Jer. xv. 18.

e xxxviii. 17. cxvi. 3. Neh ii 2. Prov. xv. 13. Ec v. 17 Jer. viii 18. xlv. 3. Matth. xxvi. 38. John xvi. 6. Rom ix. 2. Phil. ii. 27. f vii. 2. 4, 5 xiii. 2. ix 6. x. 18. xiii. 9 lxxiv. 10. 18. 1 Sam. xviii. 23 xxiv. 19. Psalm vii. 6. Lam. i. 9 Mic vii. 8—10 g xxii. 7, 8. xxxi. 18 xlii. 10. xliv. 14—16. cxxiii. 3, 4 cxliii. 3, 4. Lam. i. 5. Luke xxii. 53 h ix. 13. xxv 19. xxxi 7. cxix. 153 Lam v 1. i xviii. 28. 1 Sam. xiv 27 29. Ezra ix. 8. Luke ii. 32. Rev xxi 23 ——k Jer li 39. 57. Eph v. 14. l x 11. xxv. 2. xxxv. 19 25 xxxviii 16 Ex. xxxii. 12. Deut. xxxii. 27. Josh vii. 9. Ez. xxxv. 12 15.——m ix. 19 Jer i. 19 Lam. iv 16 ——n lv 22. lxii 2 6 cxii 6. cxxi 1-8. Prov. xii. 3 ——o xxxii 10. xxxiii. 18. 21, 22 xxxv 7. lii. 8. cxlvii. 11. Is. xii. 2 Jude 21.——p ix. 14. xx. 5. xxxv. 19. xliii 4, 5. li 12 cxix. 81 1 Sam. ii. 1. Hab. iii. 18. Luke i 47. ii. 20.——q xxi 13 lvii. 9—11. lix. 16 ——r cxvi. 7. cxix 17

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hands, they would be driven away, and the righteous would be countenanced: and this would soon take place. The old translators render this verse—"The wicked walk on "every side; when they are exalted, it is a shame for the "sons of men."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

To the carnal mind increasing taxes, the decay of trade, and such like events, characterize bad times: but the decrease of piety, and the prevalence of iniquity, form the worst times, in the judgment of the spiritually-minded. When pious men are removed by death, and none are raised up in their places; when the authority, influence, and example of the great, embolden men in impiety, and discourage the profession of godliness, and the labours of faithful ministers: when apostacies, superstitions, and damnable heresies corrupt, or when persecutions waste, the church, and when infidels and profligates triumph, the believer thinks the times very bad, however otherwise peaceful and prosperous. But by these very things he will be excited to call upon God, who can and will deliver, when human help is vain. Honesty and sincerity will not long survive piety in any place: they who cast off all regard to God, will dissemble and flatter to serve their own interests with man: and, reciprocally, daring iniquity will increase impiety; till men speak and act as if they had made themselves, could take care of themselves, and need please none but themselves. But He that made man's mouth, will call him to an account for all his proud, dissembling, profane, or even useless words: and he that made our souls and bodies, is proprietor of them, and demands the use of them. He will cut off the flatterer as well as the slanderer, and the proud infidel as well as the covetous oppressor. He waits till his people are sufficiently tried, and till his enemies have filled up their measure: but he hears the sighs and prayers of his afflicted people; and he will defend their cause, and deliver them from the generation of the wicked and from the wicked one, and that for ever. He will also arise to revive his church from the ruins, with greater glory; he hath *promised*, and his word is more pure and precious than the finest silver. Let us rest upon it, and comfort our souls, with it, though we cannot but grieve to see the degeneracy of the times, and the abounding of iniquity and infidelity. And even should we witness the advancement of the vilest of men to the highest dignities in church and state, and the consequent triumphs of error and wickedness over the cause of truth and holiness: still let us wait and pray; for the Lord will yet make his cause triumphant: and the prayers of the remnant of his people are an appointed mean of ushering in those better and more glorious days, which cannot now be very far distant.

NOTES.

PSALM XIII. V. 1—4. 'David was in great distress 'when he indited this psalm, either by the persecution of 'Saul or of Absalom. Theodoret thinks the latter; be-'cause the trouble which Saul gave him was before his great 'sin, and he was full of confidence: but that of Absalom 'was after it, which made him cry in this doleful man-'ner.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)—A concurrence of inward and outward troubles made the Psalmist fear, lest God should have forgotten to be gracious towards him, having cast him out of his presence, to be no more regarded. But could the Lord really intend thus finally and eternally to reject him, and to hide his face from him? Would he always leave him, to perplex himself with vain contrivances, and to be oppressed with melancholy thoughts, without inward comfort, or outward relief? Would he permit his cruel enemy, who was also an enemy to religion, to insult over him? He could not suppose this would be the case; and he begged that God would think of his heavy sorrows, so as to direct him in his perplexity, by giving him heavenly wisdom; to cheer him with divine consolations, and to relieve his distresses: lest he should die in darkness and despondency, and thus give cause of exultation to his impious foes.

V. 5, 6. David here owns his unworthiness as well as his misery: but as the salvation of God originated from his rich mercy to sinners, and he was conscious that his whole dependence was placed on that mercy, and not in any claim he could make on divine justice, he took courage from this consideration, and rising above his dis-

PSALM XIV.

David describes the general depravity of mankind, and the enmity of the wicked against the people of God, 1—6. *He longs and prays for his salvation,* 7.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

THE [a] fool hath said in his heart, *There is* [b] no God. [c] They are corrupt, they have done [d] abominable works, [e] *there is* none that doeth good.

2 [f] The LORD looked down from hea-

a lxxiii. 3. xcii. 6. cvii. 17. 1 Sam. xxv. 25. Prov. i. 7 22. xiii. 19. xxvii. 22. Luke xii. 20.
b x. 4. *Marg.* liii. 1—6. Job xxii. 13. Rom. i. 28. Eph. ii. 12.
c xxxvi. 1—4. lxxiii. 8, 9. 11, 12. xciv. 4—8. Gen. vi. 5. 12. Is. i. 4.
d Job xv. 16. Matt. xii. 34. xv. 19. John iii. 19, 20. Rom. i. 21, &c. Tit. i. 16. iii. 8. 1 Pet. iv 3. Rev. xxi 8.——e Rom. iii. 10—12. Eph ii. 1—3 ——f xxxiii. 13, 14. cii. 19, 20. Gen. vi. 12. xi. 5. xviii. 21. Is. lxiii. 15. lxiv. 1. Lam. iii. 50.

tresses, he became confident, that he should soon rejoice in God, as delivered and comforted by him; and celebrate in glad songs of praise the gracious interposition of the Lord in his behalf.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The most eminent believers are sometimes left to great discouragement; either for the chastisement of their sins, or the trial of their faith. When former comforts are suspended, and a sense or fear of divine wrath unites with an accusing conscience; when temptations stir up the corruptions of the heart, and they can find no deliverance from the painful conflict: they may be led to suspect, that their past experience was a delusion, and to fear that the Lord intends to cast them off for ever. At such times their fervent expostulations with God will be tinged by unbelieving fears. They cannot bear that their beloved should seem to forget them; they are tormented at the thought of final separation from him; they are wretched under the suspension of his comforts; and they cannot but anxiously inquire, "how long" this painful trial is to last? And whether it must be for ever? They inwardly take counsel about ascertaining the state of their souls, discovering the cause of their troubles, or devising how to obtain deliverance: but all seems in vain; and every day appears an age, whilst continual sorrow oppresses their hearts: and they are ready to trouble themselves with the idea, how Satan and their other enemies are triumphing in their fallen state. But all this is intended for their humiliation; that they may search out and repent of their sins, renounce every false confidence and worldly idol, and be made more fervent in prayer. They will not then say, "There is no hope;" but after His example, "who being in an agony, prayed more earnestly," they will call upon God to consider their trouble, and to lighten their eyes; to confirm their hope, direct their path, and renew their comforts; that they may not lie down in darkness and despair: they will plead with him the triumphs of the ungodly and of Satan, if they should be left under the power of sin, in despondency, or to perish: and surely it cannot be for his glory, that his worshippers should be insulted over by his enemies! In this way they will pour out their prayers, renouncing all confidence, save in the mercy of their God through the Saviour's blood: and sometimes suddenly, at others gradually, they will find their burdens removed and their comforts restored. Believing, they then rejoice in his salvation, and their doleful complaints are changed for songs of praise and thanksgiving. But even though long delays take place, yet they who trust in the Lord's mercy, shall at length rejoice in his salvation; they shall allow that their fears and complaints were unnecessary; and shall joyfully and gratefully acknowledge, that he hath dealt bountifully with them. And it may be of use to the tempted and discouraged believer to recollect, that the Saviour, soon after his doleful complaint, "My "God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" subjoined, "It is finished," and "Father, into thy hand I "commend my spirit:" and that the depth of his humiliation immediately preceded the dawn of his glorious exaltation.

NOTES.

PSALM XIV. V. 1. This psalm is thought to have been written on occasion of Absalom's rebellion, and the people's defection from their aged and pious king; and the mention of Zion, as the place whence salvation was to come, shows that it was composed some time after David came to the kingdom over all Israel. From the degeneracy of Israel shown in that instance, the Psalmist takes occasion to lament the general depravity of human nature: and the psalm is almost entirely the same as the fifty-third. The word *fool* in Scripture, denotes one who not only is destitute of true wisdom, but hates it, the openly ungodly and wicked man. (*Marg. Ref.*) Persons of this description "like not to retain God in their know-"ledge," and therefore "say in their hearts, no God." Averse to obedience and submission to the authority of any superior, and even to the thoughts of an omnipotent, ever present, heart-searching and righteous Governor and Judge; and disliking his spiritual worship and holy law; they secretly wish that there were no God; they try to hope there is none; they seek for arguments and objections against his existence, perfections, or authority; they try to believe what they wish to be true, and by the aid of Satan, through the just judgment of God, they in a measure succeed. In order, however, to exclude troublesome misgivings, and to strengthen their cause, they propagate these absurdities and endeavour to make proselytes. This is the real history of the rise and progress of atheism, that deepest stigma of human nature. Man having done abominable works, being conscious of guilt, and bent on further transgression, expects nothing but wrath from God, and so runs into atheism for a shelter from terror and alarm: unless idolatry, or some species of false religion, can be rendered equally efficacious in quieting the conscience and giving encouragement in sin. And as speculative atheism is the offspring of a depraved heart and vicious life; it also tends to the increase of wickedness; till the fatal infection spreads, and produces general degeneracy and profligacy.

V. 2, 3. Upon the strictest scrutiny, the all-seeing

ven upon the children of men, to see if there were [g] any that did understand, *and* [h] seek God.

3 They are [i] all gone aside; they are *all* together become * filthy: [k] *there is* none that doeth good, no, not one.

4 [l] Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who [m] eat up my people *as* they eat bread, [n] and call not upon the LORD.

5 There † were they in great fear: for [o] God *is* in [p] the generation of the righteous.

6 [q] Ye have shamed the counsel of the poor, because [r] the LORD *is* his refuge.

7 ‡ Oh that [s] the salvation of Israel *were come* out of Zion! When the LORD [t] bringeth back the captivity of his people, [u] Jacob shall rejoice, *and* Israel shall be glad.

g lxxxii. 5 cvii. 43. Prov. ii 9. viii. 5. ix. 4. 16. Is. xxvii. 11. Jer. iv. 22. Dan. xii. 10. Matt. xiii 15. Rom. iii. 11.
h lxix. 32. lxxxiii. 16. 2 Chr xix. 3. xxx 19. Is. viii. 19 lv. 6. Heb. xi. 6
i cxix. 176 Ec. vii. 29 Is. liii. 6. lix 7, 8. 13—15. Jer. ii. 13 Rom. iii. 12. 23. Eph. ii. 3. 2 Pet. ii. 13—15.
* Heb *stinking.*
xxxviii. 5. Job xv. 16. Is. lxiv. 6. Ez. xxxvi. 25. 2 Cor. vii. 1.——k 1. Ex. viii. 31 xii. 30. Deut. i. 35. Job xiv. 4. Rom. iii. 10 1 Cor vi. 6.——l xciv. 8, 9. Is v. 13. xxvii. 11. xxix. 14. xliv. 19, 20. xlv. 20. Rom. i. 21, 22. 28. 2 Cor. iv 3, 4 Eph iv. 17, 18.——m Jer. x. 25. Am viii. 4. Mic. iii. 2, 3. Gal. v. 15.——n lxxix. 6. Job xxi. 15 xxvii 10. Is. lxiv. 7.

† Heb *they feared a fear* liii 5. Ex xv 16. Esth. viii. 17 Prov. 26. 27. xxviii. 1. Is. vii 2. viii. 12
o xxiv. 5, 6. xlvi. 5. 7. 11. Is. viii. 10. xii 6 xli. 10. xliii. 1, 2. Matt. i. 23.
p xxii 30. lxxiii. 15 cxii. 2. 1 Pet. ii. 9.
q iii. 2. iv. 2. xxii. 7, 8 xlii. 10. Neh. iv 2—4. Is xxxvii 10, 11. Ez xxxv. 10 Dan. iii. 15.
Matt xxvii. 40—43 ——r ix. 9 cxlii. 4, 5. Heb. vi. 18.——‡ Heb. *who will give*, &c. liii 6. cvi. 47 1 Chr xvi. 35.——s xxv. 22 li. 18. Is. xiv. 32. xlv. 17. xlvi 13. lix. 20. lxii. 11. Zech. ix 9. Luke ii. 10, 11. Rom. xi 26 ——t cxxvi. 1, 2. 4 Job xlii. 10. Jer. xxx. 18. xxxi. 23. Ez xxxix 25. Joel iii. 1. Am. ix 14——u xlviii. 11. lxxxv. 6. cxlix. 2. Neh. xii. 43. Jer. xxxiii. 10, 11 Rev. xviii 20. xix. 7.

Judge could not find one of the children of men, who understood his obligations, duty, and interest, or that sought the favour and glory of the Lord. All are turned aside from the right way, into different ways of disobedience: all are become filthy, corrupt, and *putrid* or loathsome, in his sight; not one can be found disposed to do that which is spiritually good.—This must be understood of man left to himself, man as he is by nature without regeneration: and St. Paul quotes the passage to prove the need both Jews and Gentiles have of redemption and salvation by grace, and through faith in Christ. Between this verse and that which follows, three verses are inserted in the version used in the common Prayer Book, which are taken from some copies of the Septuagint: for in other copies they are not found, any more than in the Hebrew, or Syriac. The Apostle in the third chapter of Romans, has the same verses, and it is evident that he selected them from several parts of the Old Testament, especially from the fifth, thirty-sixth, and one hundred and fortieth Psalms, and the fifty-ninth chapter of Isaiah: and it is probable, that some transcriber of the Septuagint inserted those verses from that remarkable passage of the Apostle.

V. 4—6. Every kind of wickedness will in the event be found contrary to common sense and prudence. But they who persecute God's worshippers with greediness and delight, and refuse to ask any mercy or favour from him, do in effect set him at defiance, which is the height of madness and folly. Yet when they would cast off the fear of God, they become slaves to various terrors; and often add one crime to another, for fear of offending their fellow-creatures, or to avoid the consequences of their former misconduct. Whereas God dwelleth amongst the righteous, to protect them from dangers and alarms. The Psalmist having stated these general principles, remonstrates with his insulting enemies, for deriding the counsel of the poor believer, who maketh the Lord his refuge: when their own inward terrors evinced, that they could not find security and comfort elsewhere.

V. 7. The more fully and deeply David experienced and witnessed the depravity of man, and the disposition of Israel to apostatize; the more fervently he longed and prayed for the salvation of Israel by the power and favour of JEHOVAH, who was worshipped on mount Zion: by this it is reasonable to suppose, that he did not merely intend Israel's deliverance from bondage, or subjection to foreign enemies, or to domestic usurpers: or of his own restoration to the throne, and return to the courts of God; but especially of the proposed kingdom and salvation of the Messiah, the deliverance of his people from the bondage of Satan, to the liberty of God's service, with all its glorious and joyful effects.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

All the wickedness of men's words and actions springs from the corrupt fountain of their hearts: and if the thoughts of ungodly men were detected and published, (as they will be at the day of judgment,) how vile would they appear! Infidelity and iniquity have a reciprocal influence on each other; and are progressive, till men's foolish hearts become darkened, and atheism is conceived and promulgated. Men differ in their peculiar propensities and outward characters: but they are all naturally carnal, alienated from God, destitute of true wisdom, incapable of things spiritually good, gone aside from the right way, and corrupt in their desires and imaginations: and therefore all would have gone further and sunk deeper in abominable works continually and eternally, if it had not been for the inestimable redemption of Jesus Christ. We should be thankful, if we have been restrained from the more destructive excesses into which so many are hurried: but we ought not to rest in any thing short of union with Christ, and a new creation unto holiness by his spirit. If we have experienced this blessed change, let us give the Lord all the glory; and let us pity and pray for our fellow-sinners. The enmity of the human heart against God, not only appears from man's proud aversion to call upon his name; but from the delight, which in all ages men have taken in persecuting his inoffensive people: but all who engage in this attempt, will prove their own folly: and the terrors, to which they have often been exposed, evince that they do violence to the light of their own consciences. However the poor believer may be derided for his confidence in God, he has obtained such a refuge from every danger and enemy, as shall never make him ashamed: for God himself dwells among the righteous, and is their protector in every generation. All our acquaintance with the depravity of human nature, should endear to us "salvation out of "Zion:" and whilst we rejoice in the earnests, and are waiting for the completion, of our own salvation, we should

PSALM XV.

The character of the heirs of Heaven, 1—5.

A Psalm of David.

LORD, [a] who shall * abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in [b] thy holy hill?

2 [c] He that walketh uprightly, and [d] worketh righteousness, and [e] speaketh the truth in his heart.

3 *He that* [f] backbiteth not with his tongue, nor [g] doeth evil to his neighbour, nor † taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.

4 In whose eyes [h] a vile person is contemned; [i] but he honoureth them that fear the LORD. *He that* [k] sweareth to *his own* hurt, and changeth not.

5 *He that* [l] putteth not out his money to usury, [m] nor taketh reward against the innocent. [n] He that doeth these *things* shall never be moved.

a i. 1—4. xxiii. 6. xxiv 3—5. xxvii. 4. lxi. 4. lxxxiv. 4. xcii 13. John iii 3—5. xiv 3 xvii. 14 Rev. vii. 14—17. xxi. 3, 4. 23.
* Heb *sojourn.*
b ii. 6. iii. 4 xliii. 3, 4. lxxxvii. 1—3. Heb. xii. 22 Rev xiv. 1.
c lxxxiv. 11. Pro. iii. 7, 8. xxviii. 18. Is xxxiii 15 Mic. ii. 7. Luke i. 6. Gal. ii. 14. 1 John ii. 6.
d Acts x. 35 Rom. ii. 10 Eph. ii. 10. Heb. xi. 33. 1 John ii 29. iii. 7. Rev. xxii. 14, 15
e xxxiv. 12, 13. Is. lxxiii. 8. Zech. viii. 16, 17. Eph. iv. 25. Col. iii 9. Rev. xxi. 8.
f ci. 5—8. Ex. xxiii. 1. Lev. xix. 16 Jer. ix. 4—9. Rom. i. 30. Tit. iii 2. Jam. iv. 11. 1 Pet ii. 1 2.
g 1 Sam. xxiv. 11. Is lvi 2 Matt. vii. 12. Rom. xii. 17. xiii. 10. 3 John 11.
† Or, *receiveth,* or, *endureth.* Prov xxii. 10. xxv. 23.
h ci. 4. 2 Kings iii. 13, 14. Esth. iii 2 Job xxxii. 21, 22 Is. xxxii. 5, 6. Dan. v. 17, &c. Acts xxiv. 2, 3. 25. Jam. ii. 1—9.
i xvi 3. ci. 6. cxix. 63. Matt. xii. 49, 50. 1 John iii. 14.——k Josh. ix. 18—20. Judg. xi. 35 2 Sam. xxi 1, 2 Mat. v. 33. 1 Ex xxii. 25. Lev. xxv. 35—37. Deut. xxiii. 19, 20. Neh. v. 2—5. 7—13 Ez. xviii. 8. 17. xxii. 12.——m Ex. xxiii. 7, 8. Deut xvi 19 Is. xxxiii 15. Mic vii. 3 Mat. xxvi. 15. xxvii. 3—5.——n Iv 22. cvi 3 cxii. 6. Prov. xii. 3. Ez. xviii. 27. Matt. vii. 21—25. John xiii. 17. Jam. i. 22—25. 2 Pet. i. 10, 11.

long and pray for the enlargement and prosperity of the church. When that expected season shall arrive, that the Jews shall be readmitted into the church, then indeed "will "Jacob rejoice, and Israel be glad," and the event shall prove as life from the dead to the whole race of men. But in heaven alone shall the whole company of the redeemed rejoice without alloy or interruption, for evermore.

NOTES.

PSALM XV. V. 1. It is probable, that as soon as the ark was stationed on mount Zion, the Psalmist addressed himself to God, desirous of being taught who would be the accepted and persevering worshipper at his tabernacle. This was typical of the true church of God on earth; all the members of which are heirs also of heaven. The inquiry, therefore, is virtually, Who is he that so worshippeth God in this world, as to have a well grounded hope of eternal life hereafter? It is not inquired, what are the grounds of a sinner's acceptance with God? On this subject we are fully instructed in other parts of Scripture. But what are the characteristic marks of those who are thus accepted, by which they may be distinguished from all other persons? And the answer evidently is, (in perfect consistency with the New Testament, and especially with St. John's first epistle;) 'They may be distinguished by 'their sanctification.' Thus believers are conformed in their measure to Christ, their perfect exemplar: and the character here given of them forms a beautiful contrast to that of ungodly men, as delineated in the preceding psalm. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 2, 3. "The fruits meet for repentance;" "the work "of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope," "the "fruits of the Spirit," and "the things which accompany "salvation," are here compendiously enumerated, or rather pointed out, in some of the most striking and observable particulars.

V. 4. "The vile person" is an openly wicked and ungodly man. Persons of this description may be exalted in station, and abound in wealth, and many will pay court to them: but the true servant of God will form a juster estimate of their character and state. He will neither envy their prosperity, nor give any sanction to their impiety. If they be magistrates, he will honour them, as the ministers of God in this official character; in other respects, he will express compassion for their misery, but a marked disapprobation of their wickedness. (*Marg. Ref.*) In the common prayer-book, this clause is rendered 'He that sitteth not by himself, but is lowly in his own 'eyes:' and this sense may be implied, though not the immediate meaning of the passage. The Septuagint render the last clause, "He that sweareth to his neighbour, "and changeth not;" and this in fact seems the most obvious meaning of the words. The doctrine of our translation is undoubtedly implied; yet it is not easily made out from the original.

V. 5. The concluding clause of this verse, in the original, is emphatical. "He that doeth these things shall "not be moved for ever," or to eternity. The formal, nay, plausible, worshippers at the tabernacle; the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and the most zealous contenders for the law, might be moved from their steadfastness, and perish: but none would be moved for ever, or come short of eternal life, who really bore the character here delineated. (1 *John* ii. 19.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We should all, with hearts devoutly lifted up to God in prayer, inquire who they are that so walk with him in his ordinances and commandments, as to possess a well-grounded assurance of dwelling with him in heaven for ever. If we would ascend after our risen Saviour to that holy habitation, we must copy his example; for "with-"out holiness no man shall see the Lord." This will both *evidence* our title to the inheritance of the saints in light, and prepare us for that blessed inheritance. If we are born again, and led by the Spirit of Christ, we shall bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, in all goodness, righteousness, and truth. Unfeigned piety; constant and conscientious integrity in all our dealings; sincerity and fidelity in all our professions and engagements; an abhorrence of slander in all its hateful forms; a carefulness not to injure any man, in body or soul, in his connexions, property, reputation, or peace; a mind deeply humbled before God in self-abasement for sin, yet superior to flattering or fawning on wicked men from selfish motives, and disposed to love and honour God's image in the poorest and meanest of his people; a willingness to recede from

PSALM XVI.

David seeks protection from God, disclaims all merit; and avows his love to the saints, and his hatred of idolatry, 1—4. *He rejoices in God as his portion, and thanks him for giving him counsel,* 5—7. *He speaks prophetically of the resurrection and glory of Christ, and of his people,* 8—11.

* Michtam of David.

a PRESERVE me, O God: b for in thee do I put my trust.

2 *O my soul,* c thou hast said unto the LORD, Thou *art* my Lord: d my goodness *extendeth* not to thee;

3 e *But* to f the saints that *are* in the earth, and *to* g the excellent, h in whom *is* all my delight.

4 i Their sorrows shall be multiplied † *that* hasten *after* another *god:* k their drink-offerings of blood will I not offer, nor l take up their names into my lips.

5 m The LORD *is* the portion of mine ‡ inheritance and n of my cup: o thou maintainest my lot.

6 p The lines are fallen unto me q in pleasant *places;* yea, r I have a goodly heritage.

7 I will bless the LORD, s who hath

* Or, *a golden* Psalm *of David.* lvi—lx. *titles.*
a xvii. 5. 8. xxxi. 23. xxxvii. 28. xcvii. 10. cxvi. 6 Prov. ii 8.
b ix. 10. xxii 8. xxv. 20 lxxxiv. 12. cxxv. 1. cxlvi. 5. Is. xxvi. 3, 4. Jer. xvii. 7, 8 2 Cor. i. 9.
c viii. 1. xxvii 9. xxxi. 14. lxxxix. 26. xci. 2. Is. xxvi. 13. xliv. 5. Zech. xiii. 9. John xx 28.
d 1. 9, 10. Job xxii. 2, 3. xxxv. 7 Luke xvii 10. Rom. xi. 35.
e Gal. vi. 10 Tit. iii 8 Heb. vi. 10.
f xxx. 4 cxvi. 15. 2 Chr. vi. 41. Acts ix. 13. Eph. i. 1.
g Prov. xii. 26. Cant. iv 1, &c. vi. 1, &c. vii. 1, &c.
h cxix. 63. Prov. viii. 31. xiii. 20. Cant. vii 10. Is. lxii. 4. Eph. v. 25—27. 1 John iii. 14. 17.
i xxxii. 10 xcvii. 7. Jon ii, 8. Rev. xiv. 9—11. xviii. 4, 5.
† Or, *give gifts to another.*
k Gen xxxv. 14 Lev. xxiii. 13. Is. lvii. 6. lxv. 11. lxvi 3. Jer. vii. 18.
l Ex. xxiii. 13. Josh. xxiii. 7. Hos. ii. 16, 17.——m lxxiii. 26 cxix. 57. cxlii. 5. Jer x 16. Lam iii. 24.
‡ Heb. *part* ——n xi 6. xxiii 5. cxvi. 13 Eph v. 18 ——o ii. 6. ix 4. xxi 7—12. xi. 6, 7. lxxxix 4 20—37. cx. 1, 2. cxxxii. 11. 17, 18. Is. xlii. 1. liii. 12. Acts ii. 32. v. 31. 1 Cor. xv. 25.——p lxxviii 55. Am. vii. 17.——q xxi 1—3. Heb xii. 2.
r Jer. iii. 19. John xx. 17. Rom. viii. 17 1 Cor iii. 21—23. Eph. i. 18. Phil. ii 9—11 2 Tim. ii 12. Rev. iii. 21.——s lxxiii. 24. cxix. 7. Pro. viii. 14. Is. xi. 2—4. xlviii. 17 l. 4.

every personal advantage rather than seem to do evil, with a determination to adhere scrupulously to duty and conscience; a disposition to keep at the utmost distance from oppression and injustice, and to cultivate humanity and benevolence to the poor and afflicted; an union of all these tempers and this habitual conduct, can only spring from repentance of sin, faith in the Saviour, and love to his name and cause; and therefore they form an unequivocal proof of our acceptance in him. The man who bears this character cannot be induced to apostacy; he cannot come short of glory. "He that doeth these things shall not be "moved to eternity." In these respects let us examine and prove our own selves: knowing that the image of Christ is thus, in some measure, *formed* in us, except we be reprobates.

NOTES.

PSALM XVI. *Michtam.* This word signifies golden; and this title is supposed to intimate, that the psalm is upon a most precious subject: accordingly it is quoted by two apostles as a prophecy of Christ; and the language of it towards the close can suit no other person. (*Marg. Ref.*) Yet it is probable that David began his meditation with reference to his own case: but he was carried out beyond himself to use expressions prophetical of the Messiah; and indeed he seems to have known, that the holy Spirit intended much greater things than any of his personal concerns.

V. 2, 3. While the Psalmist most solemnly avouched JEHOVAH for his God, and owned him as his Governor and Judge; he disclaimed all merit in his services, and ascribed all his goodness and the honour of it to God. His good works could not profit the Source of all happiness: yet they might be useful to the saints, in whom, as the most excellent persons on earth, and as especially beloved by the Lord, the psalmist delighted. 'If thou wilt protect 'me I will employ all my power, when I come to the 'throne, to protect the pious; worthy men shall be preferred and honoured; for they are persons who are most 'dear to me, and in whose company I delight.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) Even the perfect righteousness of the Saviour can add nothing to the *essential* glory and happiness of the Father; but it is the meritorious cause of the acceptance and sanctification and eternal felicity of his people, in whom he greatly delighteth.

V. 4. It is the opinion of learned men, that this psalm was composed when David lived among the Philistines: and when, perhaps, some of his associates were strongly tempted to join the idolatrous worship which they continually witnessed. But he showed them, that this would certainly bring on them additional miseries by the just judgment of God. And, (perhaps adverting to Joshua's resolution; "As for me and my house we will serve the "LORD;") he avowed his determination to have no communion in such abominations, and not so much as to mention the names of their detestable idols. We do not read of *drink-offerings of blood* in any other place. Either it was customary among the idolaters to taste the blood of the victims, (which were often human victims) before it was poured out in honour of the idol; or they poured the blood, as the Israelites did wine, for a libation, on the sacrifice when burning on the altar: or else the wine used in idolatrous sacrifices was as abominable to God, as if the blood itself had been drunk; which being the atonement for sin, was expressly prohibited to be tasted by the Israelites. Even the sacrifices at the sanctuary of God at length became an abomination to those who rejected Christ, and hastened after others who professed to be the promised Messiah.

V. 5, 6. The Lord was David's present comfort, a source of exultation and refreshment, as the cup of water to the thirsty, or of wine to the intemperate: he was also his future inheritance; and he who allotted him his portion would maintain him in it, and never leave him to forfeit it. As Canaan was divided by lot and line, these metaphors are used to represent his joy in the favour of God: but the Saviour himself has obtained the most goodly heritage; and his people are admitted to partake of it.

V. 7. The Psalmist's meditation, experience, and chastisement; and the immediate communications of wisdom and knowledge which he received, during his midnight reflections and devotions, concurred with outward instruc-

given me counsel; [t] my reins also instruct me [u] in the night-seasons.

8 [x] I have set the LORD always before me: because [y] *he is* at my right hand, [z] I shall not be moved.

9 Therefore [a] my heart is glad, and [b] my glory rejoiceth: [c] my flesh also shall * rest in hope.

10 For thou wilt not leave [d] my soul in hell; [e] neither wilt thou suffer [f] thine Holy One to see corruption.

11 Thou wilt shew me [g] the path of life: [h] in thy presence, *is* fulness of joy; [i] at thy right hand *there are* [k] pleasures for evermore.

t lxxiii. 21. Jer. xii. 2. xvii. 10. Rev. ii. 23.
u xvii. 3. xxii. 2. xlii. 8. lxiii. 6. lxxvii. 2. 6 cxix. 55. 148 Is. xxvi. 9. Luke vi. 12.
x cxxxix. 18 Acts ii. 25—28. Heb. xi. 25.
y lxxiii. 23 cix 31. cx. 5 cxxi. 5.
z xv. 5. lxii. 6.
a Matt. xi. 25, 26.
b xxx. 12. lvii. 8. Acts ii 26. Jam. iii. 5—9.——c Job xiv. 14. 15 xix. 26, 27. Prov. xiv. 32. Is. xxvi. 19. 1 Thes. iv. 13, 14.——* Heb. *dwell confidently.*

d ix. 17. xlix 15. *Marg.* cxxxix. 8 Deut. xxxii. 22. Job xi. 8. Prov xv. 11. xxvii. 20. Is. v. 14. xiv. 9. Am ix. 2. Luke xvi 23. 1 Cor. xv. 55. *Marg.* Rev. i. 13. xx. 13, 14.
e Acts ii. 27—31. xiii. 35—38. 1 Cor. xv. 42.
50—54.——f Dan ix. 24. Luke i. 35 iv. 34 Acts iii. 14.——g xxi. 4. Prov. ii. 19. iv 18. v. 6. xii. 28. Is. ii. 3. Mat vii 14. Rom. viii 11. 1 Pet i 21 ——h xvii. 15. xxi 5, 6. Mat v. 8. Acts ii. 28. 1 Cor. xiii. 12. 2 Cor. iv. 17 Eph. iii 19 1 John iii. 2. Rev. vii. 15—17. xxii. 5.——i Mark xvi. 19. Acts vii. 56 1 Pet. iii. 22 ——k xxxvi. 8. Matt. xxv. 46.

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tions, in counselling him, and teaching him to act with prudence and caution in his difficult circumstances. They likewise combined in confirming him to choose God for his Portion. In the dark season of adversity and affliction, and when chastened with painful sickness; as well as in the silent hours of the night, heavenly wisdom was communicated to him.—The *reins* or *kidneys*, were considered by the Israelites, as especially affected by whatever caused uneasiness or satisfaction; nay, they are often spoken of as if the seat of reflection and the secret purposes of the soul. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 8—11. David might perhaps have some regard to his own hope and experience in these verses: but doubtless Christ was especially intended.—As man, he relied on the power, truth, love, and promise of the Father: therefore he was not moved in his deepest sufferings; but "for the "joy that was set before him endured the cross, and despised "the shame." He willingly yielded to death, assured that his human soul should not be left in the place of separate spirits, nor his body in the grave till it began to corrupt: but that he should arise on the third day, and afterwards ascend to heaven, as the First-fruits of the Resurrection, and the fore-runner of his people. Thus was he shown, and showed to them, the path of life; and the way into the presence of God, where is fulness of joy: and he is seated at the right hand of the Father, where are pleasures, for him and for his people, for evermore.—Many learned men interpret the two clauses of the tenth verse to mean exactly the same thing, referring both of them to the body of Christ, laid in the grave, and raised before it saw corruption: but as the article in the very ancient form called the Apostles' creed, (though doubtless of something later date;) grounds on this expression, and the application of it, the article concerning Christ's *descending into hell;* it is evident, that the compilers of it supposed something further than being *buried* to be intended. And the original (as well as the Greek translation, quoted *verbatim* in the Acts of the Apostles,) favours the idea of a distinct meaning in each clause. The Hebrew word *Sheol* and the Greek *Hades*, by which it is constantly rendered, both seem to denote the state of man when no longer seen on earth. 'When spoken of 'the body, they signify the grave—when of the soul they 'refer to that state in which the soul is without the body, 'whether *Paradise* or *Hell*,' (properly so called.) (*Grotius, Usher.*) The human nature of Christ consisted of body and soul; his soul was, during the space between his death and his resurrection, as certainly in the place of separate spirits, as his body was in the grave: but when he arose, they were both called forth and reunited. These words are never used, but with respect to men between death and the resurrection: and never concerning angels, or the state of men after the resurrection. But they are applied, both with respect to the grave and the place of separation to good and to bad men, without much discrimination: and the representation given in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, seems to place Lazarus as well as the rich man, in *Hades;* but in another division of it. Thus the pagans placed their Elysium adjacent to Tartarus, as two parts in the same region of the dead.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Our Lord and Saviour hath shown us by his example how to overcome temptations, and to be preserved through trials: we must trust in God and pour out our prayers before him, as in Christ reconciled to every believer. But we must also remember continually, that all good comes from God, to whom the whole glory appertains: and that the most perfect obedience of his noblest creatures cannot render him their debtor, or add to his felicity. What then are our defective and polluted services! Yet when from our heart we avouch the God of heaven for our Lord, we should for his sake do good to his people: and if we account them to be, as they really are, the excellent of the earth, and delight in them and in their prosperity; we may, after his example in a subordinate degree, be very useful to them. And as our righteousness and salvation were the purchase of his blood; we should not be reluctant to deny ourselves, to labour, or to suffer for that purpose. Not only they who seek after other gods, but they who worship other mediators, and invent other methods of salvation than that revealed in the Scripture, are hastening to multiply their own sorrows: God abhors their most pompous and expensive superstition and services; our great High Priest will not present such sacrifices, nor mention the names of such worshippers in his continual intercession: and Christians should carefully avoid all fellowship with anti-christian delusions. They need not have recourse to these vain expedients, any more than to worldly vanities: for the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is their God and Father in him: their present Comforter and their all-sufficient and eternal Portion; and he will maintain their lot, as well as that of their Surety, in defiance of the united power and policy of earth and hell. The poorest believer may therefore triumphantly say, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage." (*Rom.* viii.) What thanks then are due to Him, who hath counselled us to make this happy choice; who hath taught us to profit

PSALM XVII.

David appeals to God for his integrity, 1—4. *He prays to be upheld and saved from his proud, malicious, and prosperous enemies,* 5—14. *He chooses the path of righteousness, and expects satisfaction when he shall awake in the likeness of God,* 15.

[a] A Prayer of David.

[b] HEAR * the right, O LORD, [c] attend unto my cry, give ear unto my prayer, *that goeth* † not out of feigned lips.

2 [d] Let my sentence come forth from thy presence; let thine eyes behold [e] the things that are equal.

3 [f] Thou hast proved mine heart; [g] thou hast visited *me* in the night; thou hast tried me, *and* [h] shalt find nothing: [i] I am purposed *that* my mouth shall not transgress.

4 Concerning [k] the works of men, [l] by the word of thy lips, I have kept *me from* the paths of [m] the destroyer.

5 [n] Hold up my goings in thy paths, [o] *that* my footsteps ‡ slip not.

6 [p] I have called upon thee; for thou wilt hear me, O God: [q] incline thine ear unto me, *and* hear my speech.

7 Shew [r] thy marvellous loving kindness, O thou that § savest [s] by thy right hand them which put their trust *in thee,* from those that rise up *against them.*

a lxxxvi. cxlii. *titles.* b vii. 6. xviii. 20. xliii. 1 cxl. 12. 1 John iii. 21. * Heb. *justice.* c v. 2 lv. 2, 3. lxi. 1 lxvi. 19. cxlii. 6. 2 Chr. vii 15 Neh i. 6. Dan. ix. 18, 19. † Heb. *without lips of deceit.* xviii. 44. *Marg.* cxlv. 18. Jer. iii. 10. Matt xv. 8. John i. 47. d xxxvii 6. 33. 2 Thes. i. 6—9. Jude 24 e Ez. xviii. 25.29. xxxiii 17. 20.

f xi. 5. xxvi. 2. lxvi. 10 cxxxix. 1—4 Job xxiii. 10. Zech. xiii. 9. Mal. iii 2, 3. 1 Cor. iv. 4. g xvi. 7. Job xxiv. 14, 15. Hos vii 6. Mic. ii. 1. Acts xvi. 9. xviii. 9, 10. h vii 4 xliv. 17—21 1 Sam. xxiv. 10. 12. xxvi. 11. 23 2 Cor i. 12. i xxxix 1 cxix. 106 Acts xi. 23. Jam. iii. 2 k xiv 1—3 Gen. vi 5 11. Job xv. 16. xxxi. 33. 1 Cor. iii. 3. 1. Pet. iv. 2, 3. l cxix. 9—11. Matt. iv. 4—7. 10. John xvii. 17. Eph. vi. 17. Jam. i. 18. Rev. xii 11. m 1 Pet. v. 8. Rev. ix. 11. *Marg.* n cxix. 116, 117. 133 cxxi. 3. 7. 1 Sam. ii 9.

Jer x. 23——o xviii. 36. xxxviii. 16. xciv. 18 ——‡ Heb. *be not moved.*——p lv. 16. lxvi. 19,20 cxvi. 2 ——q xiii. 3, 4. Is. xxxvii 17. 20. Dan ix. 17—19.——r xxxi 21. lxxviii. 12 Rom. v 20, 21 Rev. xv. 3.——§ Or, *savest them which trust* in thee, *from those that rise up against thy right hand.* v. 11, 12. x. 12—16. 1 Sam. xvii. 45—47. xxv. 28, 29. 2 Kings xix. 22. 34. 2 Chr. xvi. 9.——s xx. 6. xliv. 3. lx. 5. Ex. xv. 6.

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by our daily experience, and to find comfort in him in the hours of solitude, and in seasons of affliction! He who has learned to set God before him, to act as in his presence, and to rely on his watchful care and protection, may be sharply tried and tempted; but he cannot be moved; for the power, which upheld the Saviour, is engaged on his side. Whilst our hearts rejoice in such blessings, let us use our tongues, as indeed the *glory* of our nature, in celebrating the praises of our God: whilst too many are proving their tongues to be "unruly evils full of deadly poison." And as the Saviour, the Holy One of God, saw not corruption, but arose the First-fruits of them that slept, and ascended into heaven to open the paths of life and salvation: so the believer need neither fear, lest his soul should be left to perish, nor his body in the grave: but his flesh too may rest in hope; for though it see corruption, it shall be raised again incorruptible; and both body and soul shall be shown the path of life, and admitted into God's presence, where there is fulness of joy, and to his right hand, where there are pleasures for evermore. Wherefore let us comfort ourselves and each other, with these words.

NOTES.

PSALM XVII. *Title.* The inscription often found at the beginning of these sacred hymns, (*viz.* "A psalm of "David,") may literally be rendered "A psalm *to* David," and thence some have been led to think that he did not write all, or even most, of them. But at the head of this psalm the same mode of expression is used; and consequently, if those psalms were not *composed by* him, but only addressed *to* him, this psalm would be entitled "A prayer *to* David." This shows that our version is so far right; that the translation is of the same import with the original, and means *A Psalm,* ascribed *to David,* as its author; though in a few instances, perhaps, without sufficient reason.

V. 1—3. We shall not fully enter into the spirit of this psalm, unless we place ourselves in the circumstances of David. The whole tenour of it shows that he has given us his earnest meditation and prayer, at the most interesting crisis, when Saul, instigated by groundless suspicions and false accusations, and pursuing him as a traitor, had surrounded him with his troops, and must have seized on him, had not God most wonderfully interposed. (*Marg. Ref.*) The persecuted and slandered servant of God, in this extremity, appealed to his omnipotent Lord: and conscious that he had in no respect deserved ill of his cruel enemy, he called upon God to *hear justice,* and to accept his prayer, which was not the language of deceit respecting men, or hypocrisy towards God. He besought him to pronounce sentence between him and Saul, according to his intimate acquaintance with the cause; as he knew that equity was on his side: for the Lord had long proved the heart of his servant; he had seen his conduct and thoughts, even at midnight, when traitors either meet to form their plans, or meditate how to carry them into execution. Indeed circumstances had served to *try him as by fire;* seeing he had had several opportunities of avenging himself. Yet God was witness, that nothing of this kind had been thought of by him: nay, the Psalmist had avoided every disrespectful word concerning Saul, the Lord's anointed; lest he should excite his followers to attempt aught against him.

V. 4, 5. "The works of men," (of Adam, or his fallen nature in all his descendants,) are those works to which they are propense; and among others, they have a strong propensity to "render evil for evil:" but David had so studied the oracles of God, that by regarding his promises and precepts, he had resisted every temptation to this conduct. The word rendered *destroyer,* signifies *a robber* or *murderer:* but the Psalmist seems not so much to have intended, that he had kept himself out of the reach of those who wished to murder him, or from the ways of Satan, the destroyer; as that he had been kept from embracing any of the inviting opportunities afforded him of killing Saul. And he still prayed that he might be upheld, and not left to fall into so great a crime, however

8 Keep me as [t] the apple of the eye,
[u] hide me under the shadow of thy wings,
9 From the wicked that * oppress me,
from my † deadly enemies *who* compass me about.
10 [x] They are enclosed in their own fat: [y] with their mouth they speak proudly.
11 They have now [z] compassed us in our steps: they have [a] set their eyes bowing down to the earth;
12 ‡ Like as a lion *that* is greedy of his prey, and as it were a young lion ◊ lurking in secret places.

[t] Deu. xxxii. 10. Prov. vii. 2. Zech. ii. 8 [u] xxxvi. 7. lvii. 1. lxi. 4. lxiii. 7. xci. 1. 4 Ruth. ii. 12. Matt. xxiii 37 Luke xiii. 34. * Heb. *waste.* † Chr. xvii. 9. ‡ Heb. *enemies against the soul* vii. 5. xxxv 4. 7. 12. 1 Sam. xxiv. 11 [x] lxxiii. 7—9. cxix 70. Deut. xxxii. 15. Job xv. 27. Is. vi 10 Matt. xiii. 15. Acts xxviii. 27. [y] xii 3, 4 xxxi. 18. cxxiii. 4. Ex. v. 2 xv. 9. 1 Sam. ii. 3. 2 Pet ii. 18. Rev. xiii. 5, 6. [z] 1 Sam. xxiii 26. xxiv 2, 3. xxvi 2, 3.——a x 8—10 Pro. vi 13, 14.——† Heb. *the likeness of him,* (that is, *of every one of them*) *is as a lion* that *desireth to raven.* vii. 2. xxii. 13. 2 Tim. iv. 17. 1 Pet. v. 8.——◊ Heb *sitting.*

13 [b] Arise, O Lord, ‖ disappoint him, cast him down: deliver my soul from the wicked, * *which is* [c] thy sword;
14 From men † *which are* thy hand, O Lord, from [d] men of the world [e] *which have* their portion in *this* life, [f] and whose belly thou fillest with thy [g] hid *treasure:* ‡ they are full of children, [h] and leave the rest of their *substance* to their babes.
15 [i] As for me, [k] I will behold thy face in righteousness; [l] I shall be satisfied, when [m] I awake [n] with thy likeness.

b iii 6. vii 6. xliv 23 26. cxix 126 Is. li 9. ‖ Heb *prevent his face.* * Or, *by thy sword.* vii. 11—13. c Is x. 5 15. xiii. 5 xxxvii 26. Hab. i 12 Acts iv. 28. † Or, by *thine hand* d Luke xvi. 8. John viii. 23. xv. 19 xvii. 14. 1 John iv. 4, 5. e xlix. 17—19. lxxiii 12 Luke xii. 19—21. xvi. 25. Jam. v 5. f Job xii. 6 9. xxi. 7—15 xxii. 18. g Pro. ii. 4 Mat. xiii. 44.

‡ Or, their *children are full* —— h xxxix 6 Job xxi 21 xxvii, 14—17. Luke xvi 27, 28. i v. 7. Josh xxiv 15 ——k iv 6 cxix 11 Job xix. 26, 27. 2 Cor iii. 18.——l xiv. 12. xxxvi 8, 9. lxv 4. Mat v 6 Rev. vi 16, 17 xxi. 3, 4. 23.——m xlix. 14. Job xiv. 12. Is. xxvi. 19. Matt. xxvii. 52, 53.——n Gen. i 26, 27. 1 John iii. 2, 3.

injured and tempted. In the present circumstances of human nature, the ways of godliness are become slippery paths, through the artifices of Satan, and the snares of the world. In some of these things David may be considered as a type of Christ; who alone was universally and perfectly free from sin, and could say in the fullest sense, that a heart-searching God could find nothing wrong in him.

V. 8. *Apple.* The singular precaution with which the Creator has secured the pupil of the eye, and by which every creature instinctively guards it from injury; forms a striking illustration of the Lord's watchful care over his people, amidst the peculiar dangers to which they are on every side exposed. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 10. David's persecutors were prosperous, self-indulgent, and luxurious; and thus they grew arrogant, impious, unfeeling, and presumptuous.

V. 11, 12. 'Indeed they have now gotten me and my 'followers into a very great strait, and which way soever 'we turn ourselves, we are in danger to fall into the hands 'of those who have steadfastly resolved on our utter ruin.' —'No lion can be more desirous to tear a lamb in pieces, 'than Saul is to make a prey of me.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) He and his associates likewise acted with dark subtlety, and seemed to be thinking of something else, when they were watching their opportunity of mischief and murder.

V. 13—15. In this extremity, unless the Lord speedily interposed, (as one who had delayed till no more time could be lost,) to prevent Saul from accomplishing his wicked design, and to disappoint him of his prey by some humiliating event; he would certainly take away David's life, and so render the promises of God of no effect. Saul and his men had been as the *sword* and *hand* of God, by which he executed vengeance on many, and corrected others, in Israel: but they were mere mortal men of a worldly spirit, who preferred an earthly portion to the favour of God, and consequently had their good things in this life. God indeed gave them abundance of those treasures, which are commonly *hidden* for security and spent in self-indulgence: *their children* also *were full*, or *had enough*, and left their superfluity to their descendants. But would God suffer his servant to be destroyed by such profane selfish men? The Psalmist, however, determined, whatever might be the event, to act as in the immediate presence of God, to maintain a good conscience, and to walk before God in righteousness; and then, whether he died soon, or lived many years, he should certainly at last obtain full satisfaction, when he awaked in the eternal world, or at the general resurrection, perfectly renewed to the divine image in righteousness and true holiness. The former clause of the last verse, is here interpreted of David's purpose, and only the latter of his *prospect.* Some explain both to mean his expectation of happiness in the eternal world; yet not excluding his hope of deliverance from his urgent dangers. —The Septuagint render the last clause, "I shall be sa-"tisfied in beholding thy glory."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Believers must follow their Saviour in the way, by which he passed through this world to glory; and such men as were his enemies will be their's also; but he was more hated, insulted, and cruelly entreated, than any of his followers ever were. They cannot, like Jesus, plead sinless perfection in any part or action of their lives: but through his merits and grace they may rejoice in the testimony of their conscience to their simplicity and godly sincerity. They have therefore right on their side, when oppressed or tempted: their own hearts do not condemn them of hypocrisy, and therefore they have confidence before a just and merciful God; their prayers are not the language of dissembling lips, but the fervent desires of their hearts, and they may expect that he will give sentence in their behalf, when they are slandered and injured; even such an equal sentence as must proceed from the presence of a holy God. Unallowed evil, felt and mourned over, should in no wise weaken this confidence: but without conscious integrity in our conduct towards God and man, such appeals would be the most impious presumption. The Lord seeth us in secret, visiteth us in the night, and witnesseth our conduct in our most secret retirement, when solitude tempts the hypocrite to sin, and when the imagination is apt to roam after forbidden objects: and if he find one indulged and allowed iniquity, he will abhor our feigned devotions. We should therefore purpose not

PSALM XVIII.

David's psalm of thanksgiving, for his manifold deliverances, and singular prosperity, 1—50.

To the chief Musician, A *Psalm* of David, [a] the servant of the LORD, who spake unto the LORD the words of this song, [b] in the day *that* the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul; And he said,

[c] I WILL love thee, O LORD, [d] my strength.

2 [e] The LORD *is* my Rock, and [f] my Fortress, and my Deliverer; my God, my * Strength in whom I will trust; [g] my Buckler, and [h] the Horn of my salvation, *and* [i] my high tower.

3 [k] I will call upon the LORD, [l] *who is worthy* to be praised: [m] so shall I be saved from mine enemies.

4 [n] The sorrows of death compassed me, and [o] the floods of † ungodly men made me afraid.

5 [p] The ‡ sorrows of hell compassed me about: [q] the snares of death prevented me.

a xxxvi. *title.* cxvi. 16. Acts xiii. 36. Heb. iii. 5.
b xxxiv. 19 Ex. xv. 2, &c. Judg. v. 1, &c. 1 Sam. ii. 1—10. Is. xii. 1—6.
c cxvi. 1—6. cxliv. 1, 2. 1 John iv. 19.
d 32. xxviii. 7, 8. cxviii. 14. Is. xii. 2. Phil. iv. 13. Col. i. 11.
e xxviii. 1. lxii. 2. 7. Is. xxxii. 2.
f xci. 2. cxliv. 2. Jer. xvi. 19.
* Heb. *rock*
g xci. 4. Prov. ii. 7.
h cxxxii. 17. 2 Sam. xxii. 3
i Prov. xviii. 10.
k v. 2, 3. xxviii. 1, 2. lv. 16. lxii. 8. 2 Sam. xxii. 4. Phil. iv. 6, 7.
l lxv. 1, 2. Neh. ix. 5. Rev. iv. 11. v. 12—14.
m xci. 15. Luke i. 71 Acts ii 21. Rom. viii. 31—39.
n cxvi. 3. 2 Sam. xxii. 5, 6. Is. xiii. 8. liii. 3, 4. Matt. xxvi. 38, 39, Mark xiv. 33, 34. 2 Cor. i. 9.
o xxii. 12, 13. 16 Jon. ii 2—7. Matt. xxvi. 47. 55. xxvii. 24, 25. 39—44. Acts xxi. 30.
† Heb *Belial.*——p lxxxvi. 13. lxxxviii. 3—8. 15—17. Acts ii. 24.——‡ Or, *cords.*
q Ec. ix. 12.

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to offend with our lips, or even in our hearts. We must not conform to the works of men, if we would escape the paths of the destroyer; "for broad is the way that leadeth "to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat." We must treasure up the precepts and promises of God's word in our hearts, for our direction and encouragement; and pray continually to be upheld by his grace, if we would walk in the paths of holiness; for our way through this evil world is very slippery, and we are weak, and apt to be heedless; and our own watchfulness or resolutions, and former upright and consistent behaviour, cannot safely be depended on. But the Lord will incline his ear to those who call upon him: he hath always shown marvellous loving-kindness to such as have trusted in him; upholding and defending them by his right hand from all their enemies; keeping them safer by his grace, than the pupil of the eye is kept by his providence; and with greater tenderness, than the hen gathereth her chickens under her wings. The profane, the sensual, and the proud, indeed, are at all times their enemies; yet they are not always left to take an active part against them: but Satan is their most deadly foe: he is destitute of fear and compassion, hardened in malice, and replete with subtlety; and concerning him we may pray in assured faith, "Arise, O "Lord, disappoint him, and cast him down; deliver my "soul from this wicked one." He is indeed *the sword*, by which the Lord punishes his enemies, and scourges a guilty world; but his children shall not be given over to be a prey to him, nor to his instruments. The most afflicted Christian need not envy the most prosperous "men of the "world, who have their portion in this life." They indeed receive from the Lord that abundant treasure which they love to lay up securely for themselves; to spend in varied kinds of gratification, or hoard to aggrandize their families: and frequently the desires of their hearts in these matters are granted them. Yet they must die, and leave *their* good things behind them to enter another world, where they have no portion, but darkness and despair. But the believer walks here in the light of God's countenance, in a delightful attendance on his ordinances and obedience to his commands: he rejoices in the hope of glory: when he dies, his soul departs hence "to be with Christ which "is far better;" and at the resurrection his body shall be raised incorruptible and glorious; and being completely changed into the image of his God and Saviour, he shall be eternally and perfectly satisfied with a happiness, large as his desires and capacities. Lord, teach us to "choose "this good part, which shall never be taken from us."

NOTES.

PSALM XVIII. V. 1. This introductory verse is not found in the parallel passage in the second book of Samuel: (*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* xxii.) The variations between the two copies seem to have been principally poetical improvements of the style, as few of them materially alter the sense, and several evidently render the composition more elegant. Indeed the whole Psalm seems one of the most finished poetical compositions, extant in any language. The word, here rendered, *I will love thee*, is peculiarly emphatical; '*I will love thee with my inmost soul*, 'with the most tender and fervent affections of my heart, 'and all that is within me.' The experience which the aged Psalmist had acquired, of the Lord's faithfulness, power, and love, no doubt excited the lively exercises of admiring and adoring love, as well as gratitude. Some think that David spake, as in the person of the risen Redeemer, taking a retrospect of his sufferings and triumphs; and the words, in that view, convey a most interesting and animating reflection to the mind of true Christians.

V. 3. 'As the psalm so evidently throughout is a 'thanksgiving for past deliverances, the verbs in this verse 'seem to require the same rendering, as that which is 'given to them below.' (*Horne.*) That is, they should be rendered in the past and not the future tense. But perhaps the Psalmist meant to give the feelings and purposes of his heart, while struggling with his difficulties and overcoming them by faith, to which the event corresponded: for the words are plainly future; and a total disregard to the tense should not be supposed without evident necessity.

V. 4, 5. The word rendered *sorrows* in these verses, signifies *cords* or *pangs*, especially those of women in travail; and it is translated pangs in the Septuagint. And as St. Luke in recording the apostle Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, uses the same word concerning Christ, in respect of his resurrection, where it does not

6 [r] In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried unto my God: [s] he heard my voice out of his temple, and [t] my cry came before him, *even* into his ears.

7 Then [u] the earth shook and trembled; [x] the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken, because he was wroth.

8 There [y] went up a smoke * out of his nostrils, and [z] fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it.

9 [a] He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and [b] darkness *was* under his feet.

10 And [c] he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind.

11 He made darkness [d] his secret place; his pavilion round about him *were* dark waters, [e] *and* thick clouds of the skies.

12 [f] At the brightness *that was* before him his thick clouds passed, [g] hail-*stones* and coals of fire.

13 The LORD also [h] thundered in the heavens, and [i] the Highest gave his voice; hail-*stones* and [k] coals of fire.

14 Yea, [l] he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; and [m] he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them.

15 Then [n] the channels of waters were seen, [o] and the foundations of the world were discovered, at thy rebuke, O LORD, [p] at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils.

16 [q] He sent from above, he took me, [r] he drew me out of † many waters:

17 He delivered me from [s] my strong enemy, and from [t] them which hated me: for [u] they were too strong for me.

18 They prevented me [x] in the day of my calamity, [y] but the LORD was my stay.

19 He brought me forth also [z] into a large place: he delivered me, [a] because he delighted in me.

20 The LORD [b] rewarded me according to my righteousness; [c] according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me.

21 For [d] I have kept the ways of the LORD, [e] and have not wickedly departed from my God.

22 For [f] all his judgments *were* before me, [g] and I did not put away his statutes from me.

23 I was also [h] upright ‡ before him, and [i] I kept myself from mine iniquity.

24 Therefore hath [k] the LORD recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands § in his eye-sight.

25 [l] With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with an upright man [m] thou wilt show thyself upright;

26 With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and [n] with the froward thou wilt ‖ shew thyself froward.

27 For thou wilt [o] save the afflicted people: but wilt [p] bring down high looks.

r xviii. 3, 4. l. 15. cxxx 1, 2. Mark xiv. 36. Acts xii. 5.
s v. 7. xi. 4. xxvii. 4, 5. 2 Sam. xxii. 7. Hab. ii. 20. Rev. xi. 19.
t 1 Kings viii. 27—30. Ex. ii. 23. 2 Chr. xxx. 27.
u cxiv. 4—7. Matt. xxviii. 2. Acts xvi. 25, 26.
x xlvi. 2. Deut. xxxii. 22. Jer iv. 24. Ez xxxviii. 19, 20. Hab. iii. 6. 10. Zech. xiv. 4. 1 Cor. xiii 2
y xi. 6. xxi. 9 lxxiv 1. civ. 32. cxliv. 5, 6. Gen. xix. 28. Lev. x. 2. Num xi 1 xvi. 35. Deut. xxix. 20. 23, 24. 2 Thes. i. 8.
* Heb. *by his.*
z Dan vii. 10. Am iv 11. Nah. i. 5, 6. Rev. xi. 5.
a lxviii 4. Deut. xxxiii. 26 2 Sam. xxii. 10. Is. li 6. Joel iii. 16. Matt. xxiv. 29. Heb xii. 26. 2 Pet. iii 10. Rev. xx 11.
b Deut. v 22, 23. Mark xv. 33. John xiii. 7.
c 2 Sam xxii. 11, 12. Ez i. 5—14. x. 20—22.
d xxvii 5. lxxxi. 7. xci 1.
e Deut. iv. 11. Joel ii 2.
f xcvii. 3, 4 Hab. iii. 4, 5. Matt xvii. 2. 5.
g Ex. ix. 23, 24. Josh. x. 11. 2 Sam xxii. 13—15 Rev. xvi. 21.
h lxxviii 48. civ. 7. Ex. xx. 18. Job xl. 9 John xii 29. Rev iv. 5. viii 5. xix. 6.
i xxix 4. Ez. x. 5.
k cxx. 3, 4 cxl. 10. Deut. xxxii. 24. *Marg.* Hab. iii. 5.
l xxi. 12. lxxvii. 17. Num xxiv. 8. Deut xxii. 23. 42. Job vi. 4. lxxiv. 15 Josh. iii. 13—16. 2 Sam. xxii 16.——e civ. 5. Job xxxviii. 4—6. Jer xxxi. 37. Jon. ii. 6. Mic. vi. 2.——p 2 Kings xix. 7. Job iv. 9. Is. xi. 4. xxx. 27, 28. 33.

q lvii. 3. cxliv. 7
r 43 xl. 1—3. Ex ii. 10 2 Sam. xxii. 17.
† Or, *great water* Jon ii. 5, 6. Rev. xvii. 15
s xxxviii. 19. 2 Sam. xxii 1. Heb. ii. 14, 15.
t 40, 41. ix. 15. xxv. 19 lxix. 4—14 cxviii 7. Job xvi. 9. Luke xix. 14.
u xxxv. 10. Eph vi. 10—12.
x Deut. xxxii 35. 2 Sam. xxii. 19. Jer. xviii. 17. Ob 10—14. Zech. i 15
y xlvi. 1, 2. 11.
z 36. xl 2. Job xxxvi. 16.
a xxxvii 23. 2 Sam xxii 18—27. 1 Kings x. 9.
b lviii. 11. Prov. xviii 10. Is xlix 4. lxiii 11. Mat. vi. 4. 1 Cor. iii. 8
c 24. vii. 3. xxiv. 4. xxvi. 6. 1 Sam xxiv. 11—13. Heb. vii. 26.
d xvii. 4. xxvi. 1. cxix. 10, 11. Acts xxiv. 16. 1 Thes. ii 10.
e cxix. 102. 1 Sam xv. 11. 1 John ii. 19.
f cxix. 13. 128. John xv. 14.
g cxix. 112. 117.
h vii. 8. xi. 7. xvii. 3 1 Sam. xxvi 23 1 Chr. xxix. 17.
‡ Heb *with.*
i Matt. v. 29, 30. xviii. 8, 9.
k Ruth ii. 12. Matt. x. 41, 42. 2 Thes. i 6, 7. Heb. vi 10.
§ Heb. *before his eyes.*
l xii. 1—4. cxii. 4—6. 1 Kings viii. 32. Is. lvii. 1, 2. lviii. 7, 8. Matt xviii 33—35. Luke vi. 35—38.
m Is. xxvi. 7. Ez. xviii. 25—30. Rom. ix. 14.
n cix. 17—19 Pro. iii. 34. Rom. ii. 4—6. 9. Jam. ii. 13.——‖ Heb. *wrestle.*——o ix. 18. xxxiv. 6. 19 xl. 17. 2 Sam. xxii. 27. Is. lvii. 15 lxvi. 2. Luke i 52, 53. 2 Cor viii 9. Jam ii. 5.——p x. 4. xvii. 10. 13. ci 5. Prov. vi 16, 17. xxx. 12. Is. iii. 9. x. 12. Luke xviii. 14.

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seem so apposite as *cords* or *bonds* would have been; it is supposed, that he refers to the Septuagint version of this psalm; and that this is an additional proof that it should be considered chiefly as prophetical of his conflicts and triumphs. (*Acts* ii. 24.)

V. 6. This verse also is future in the original, (*Note* 3.) It varies from the parallel verse in Samuel, by using two nearly synonymous words for *called* and *cried*, while in the other copy the latter is merely a repetition of the former.

V. 7. The words "foundations of heaven," used in Samuel, are here changed for "foundations of the *hills*," or mountains. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 10. Two letters in the original, nearly alike, one used in Samuel, the other here, make the variation between the two copies: and probably it was originally a trivial error of a transcriber. In Samuel it is "He was seen upon the "wings of the wind."

V. 12. The brightness of JEHOVAH's appearance dispersed the *thick clouds*, which preceded it. This clause is additional. The words "coals of fire kindled," are here changed for "hail-stones and coals of fire," which are also repeated in the next verse; and the marginal references show the propriety of the allusion contained in them.

V. 15. (*Note*, 2 *Sam.* xxii. 7—16.) As the grand imagery of this passage more aptly suits the resurrection and ascension of Christ, than any of David's deliverances; so it naturally leads the pious mind to reflect on the awful descriptions given us of the Saviour's last coming to judge the world.

V. 26. *Shew thyself froward*, or *wrestle*. The singular translation of this clause in Samuel, (to which no precise idea can well be affixed,) seems to have arisen from the translator's mistaking a contraction of a word signifying to *struggle* or *wrestle*, for a word derived from a root signifying *insipid*.

V. 27. The contrast between *afflicted people* and *high*

28 For [q] thou wilt light my * candle: the LORD [r] my God will enlighten my darkness.

29 For [s] by thee I have † run through a troop; and [t] by my God have I leaped over a wall.

30 *As for* God, [u] his way *is* perfect: the word of the LORD is ‡ tried: [x] he *is* a Buckler to all those that trust in him.

31 For [y] who *is* God save the LORD? or who *is* a rock save our God?

32 *It is* God that [z] girdeth me with strength, [a] and maketh my way perfect.

33 He maketh my feet like hinds' *feet*, and setteth me upon [b] my high places.

34 [c] He teacheth my hands to war, [d] so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.

35 Thou hast also given me [e] the shield of thy salvation: and [f] thy right hand hath holden me up, and § thy gentleness hath made me great.

36 Thou hast [g] enlarged my steps under me, that my ‖ feet did not slip.

37 I have [h] pursued mine enemies, and overtaken them: neither did I turn again till they were consumed.

38 I have [i] wounded them that they were not able to rise: they are fallen under my feet.

39 For thou hast [k] girded me with strength unto battle: [l] thou hast * subdued under me those that rose up against me.

q cxii. 4. Job xviii. 6. xxix. 3.
* Or, *lamp* cxxxii 17. 2 Sam xxii. 29 1 Kings xi. 36. Is. lxii. 1.
r Is. xlii.16. Mat. iv. 16. Luke i. 79. 1 Pet ii. 9.
s xliv. 6, 7. cxliv. 1 10. 1 Sam xvii. 49. xxiii 2 xxx. 8. 2 Sam. v. 19, 20. 25 Eph. vi 10—13. Col ii. 15 Rev. iii. 21
† Heb. *broken*
t 2 Sam. xxii. 30. 1 Cor. xv 10. 2 Cor. xii 9. 10.
u xix. 7 xxv 10. 2 Sam. xxii. 31. Rom. xii. 2.
‡ Or, *refined*. xix. 8—10.
x 2. xvii. 7. lxxxiv. 11, 12.
y lxxxvi 8 2Sam. xxii. 32. Is. xlv. 21, 22
z xxviii 7. xciii. 1. Is xlv. 5.
a 2 Sam. xxii. 33.
b Deu. xxxiii. 29. 2 Sam. xxii 34 Hab iii 19.
c 2 Sam. xxii 35 Is xxviii 6. xlv. 1.
d xlvi. 9 Jer. xlix 35. Hos. i 5.
e v. 12 xxviii 7 Deu. xxxiii 29 2 Sam xxii. 36.
f xvii. 7 xliv. 3.
§ Or, *with thy meekness thou hast multiplied me*. xlv. 4. Is. xl. 11. xlii. 3. 2 Cor x 1. Gal. v. 22. Jam. iii. 17, 18.
g iv. 1. Job xviii. 7. xxxvi. 16. Luke xii. 50. xxiv. 46—48.
‖ Heb. *ankles*. 2 Sam. xxii. 37.
h iii. 7. ix. 3. xxxv. 2—5. cxviii. 11, 12. Num. xxiv 17—19 Is. liii. 10—12. lxii. 1—6. Rev. vi. 2. xix. 19, 20.
i 1 Sam. xvii 49—51. xxiii. 5. xxx. 17 2 Sam. v. viii x. xviii 7, 8. xxi. 15—22. xxii 39 ——k 32. Ez xxx. 24. 25 ——l 1 Chr xxii. 18. 1 Cor. xv. 25—28. Eph. i. 22. Phil. iii. 21.——* Heb. *caused to bow*. lxvi. 3. 2 Sam. xxii. 40. Is. xlv. 14.

40 Thou hast also given me [m] the necks of mine enemies; [n] that I might destroy them that hate me.

41 They cried, [o] but *there was* none to save *them; even* unto the LORD, but he answered them not.

42 Then did [p] I beat them small as the dust before the wind: [q] I did cast them out as the dirt in the streets.

43 Thou hast delivered me [r] from the strivings of the people: *and* [s] thou hast made me the head of the heathen: [t] a people *whom* I have not known shall serve me.

44 * As soon as they hear of me they shall obey me: the † strangers shall ‡ submit themselves unto me.

45 The strangers shall [u] fade away, and [x] be afraid out of their close places.

46 [y] The Lord liveth; and [z] blessed *be* my rock; and let [a] the God of my salvation be [b] exalted.

47 *It is* God that § avengeth me, and ‖ subdueth the people under me.

48 He delivereth me from mine enemies: yea, [c] thou liftest me up above those that rise up against me: thou hast delivered me from the * violent man.

49 Therefore [d] will I † give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen, [e] and sing praises unto thy name.

50 Great deliverance giveth he [f] to his king; and sheweth mercy [g] to his anointed, to David, and to his Seed for evermore.

m Lam. v. 5.
n xxxiv 21. 2 Sam. xxii. 41. Prov. viii. 36. John xv. 23.
o 2 Sam. xxii. 42, 43 Job xxxv. 12, 13. Is. lix. 1, 2. Jer xi. 11. xiv. 12. Ez viii. 18. Hos. vii. 14. Zech vii. 13. Luke xiii. 25.
p 1 22. 2 Kings xiii. 7. Is. xli. 2. 15, 16.
q Is x. 6 xxv. 10. Zech x. 5. Mal. iv 3.
r 2 Sam. ii. 9, 10. v. 1—7. Acts v. 31.
s xxii. 27, 28. cviii. 9. 2 Sam. v. viii. x. xxii. 44—46. Is. xlix. 6. 22—23. lii. 15. Rom xv. 12. 18. Eph. i. 22.
t Hos. i. 10. Rom. xvi. 26. 1 Pet. ii 10. Rev. xi. 15.
* Heb. *At the hearing of the ear*. Rom. x. 16, 17.
† Heb. *sons of the stranger*. 2 Sam. i. 13. Is lxii. 8. Ez. xliv. 7. *Marg.*
‡ Or, *yield feigned obedience*. Heb. *lie*. lxviii. 30. 2 Sam. xxii. 44—46.
u Is xxiv. 4. Jam. i 11.
x Rev. vi. 16.
y 2 Sam. xxii. 47. Jer x. 10. John xiv. 19 Rev. i. 18.
z 2. xlii. 9
a xxv. 5. lxviii. 20 lxxix 9. Ex. xv 2. Is. xii. 2. Luke i. 47.
b xxi 13. lvii. 5. 11. xcix. 9.
§ Heb *giveth avengements for me*. Deu. xxxii. 35. 2 Sam xxii. 48. Nah. i. 2. Rom xii. 19.
‖ Or, *destroyeth*. xlvii. 3.
c xxii 27—30 lix. 1, 2. lxxxix. 13. Phil. ii 9.
* Heb *man of violence* vii 16.
lxxxvi 14. cxl. 1. 4. 11.——d xiv. 7. xxx. 12. lxxii. 18, 19. cxxxviii. 4.——† Or, *confess*. 2 Sam. xxii. 50, 51. 1 Tim. vi. 13.——e cviii 3. Matt xxvi. 30 Rom xv. 9.
f ii 6. lxxviii 71, 72. lxxxix 3, 4. 1 Sam. ii. 10. xvi. 1. Acts ii. 34—36. Phil ii. 9—11.
g lxxxix. 20—38. cxxxii. 10. 1 Chr. xvii. 11—14 27. Is. ix. 6, 7. Luke i. 31—33. 69. Rom. i. 3. Gal. iii. 16.

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looks, shows that *humility* rather than *suffering* was intended, or rather *humble sufferers*.

V. 28, 29. Some apply the expression "Thou wilt," or dost, "light my candle," which had been extinguished, to the restoration of the Saviour from death, in which his body had lain as an extinguished taper: and the next verse to his bursting the barriers of the tomb.

V. 46—48. 'Thus we learn to trust in JEHOVAH 'without fear, when our enemies are victorious, and to 'glorify him without reserve, when we are so.' (*Horne.*)

V. 49. St. Paul quotes this verse as the language of the Messiah, to prove that the Gentiles would glorify God for his mercy. (*Rom.* xv. 9.) And this shows, beyond a doubt, that he considered the Psalm as prophetical of Christ: though it is not advisable to apply every clause to him, so as to overlook his ancestor and type, who seems to have been led by the Holy Spirit, from speaking of his own conflicts and deliverances, to use language which could never have its full accomplishment, but in his promised seed.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In David the type, we may here behold Jesus our Redeemer, conflicting with enemies, compassed with sorrows and with floods of ungodly men, enduring not only the pains of death, but the wrath of God for us: yet calling upon the Father with strong cries and tears; rescued from the grave with a tremendous earthquake and various convulsions of nature: advanced to the mediatorial throne, and made head of the heathen, as a recompense of his most perfect obedience even unto death; executing vengeance on the Jewish nation, beating them as small as the dust before the wind, and casting them out, as the dirt in

PSALM XIX.

The heavens, and especially the sun, proclaim the Creator's glory to all lands, 1—6. *The manifold excellence and usefulness of God's word,* 7—11. *David prays to be delivered from his sins, and accepted in his services,* 12—14.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

1 [a] THE heavens declare the glory of God; and [b] the firmament sheweth his handy-work.

2 [c] Day unto day uttereth speech, and [d] night unto night sheweth knowledge.

3 [e] *There is* no speech nor language, * *where* their voice is not heard.

4 [f] Their † line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. [g] In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun;

5 Which *is* [h] as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, *and* [i] rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.

6 [k] His going forth *is* from the end of the heaven, [l] and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

7 ¶ The ‡ law of the LORD *is* [m] perfect, ∮ converting the soul: [n] the testimony of the LORD *is* [o] sure, [p] making wise the simple.

8 The [q] statutes of the LORD *are* [r] right, [s] rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD [t] *is* pure, [u] enlightening the eyes.

a viii. 3 xxxiii 6. cxv. 16. cxlviii. 3, 4. Is. xl. 22—26. Jer. x. 11, 12. Rom. i 19, 20.
b cl. 1, 2. Gen i. 6—8 14, 15. Dan. xii. 3.
c xxiv. 7—10. lxxviii. 3—6. cxxxiv. 1—3. cxlviii. 12 Ex. xv. 20, 21. Is. xxxviii. 19.
d lxxiv. 16. cxxxvi. 8, 9. Gen. i. 17, 18. viii. 22.
e Deut. iv. 19.
* Or, *without* those *their voice is heard.* Heb. *without their voice heard.*
f xcviii. 3. Is. xlix. 6 Rom. x. 18. 2 Cor. x. 13—16.
† Or, *rule* or *direction.*
g Gen i 14—18.
h Is lxi. 10. lxii. 5. Mal. iv. 2. John iii 29.
i 1 Cor. ix. 24—26. Phil. iii. 13, 14. Heb. xii. 1, 2
k cxxxix. 9. Job xxv 3 Ec. i. 5 Col. i. 23.
l Job xxii 14.
‡ Or, *doctrine.* lxxviii. 1—7. cxix 72. 96, 97. 98—100. 105. 127. 128. cxlvii. 19. 20. Deut. vi. 6—9. xvii. 18—20. Josh i. 8. Job xxiii. 12. Rom. iii 2. xv. 4.
m xviii. 30. Deu. xxxii 4. Rom. xii 2. Jam. i. 17.
∮ Or, *restoring.* xxiii. 3. cxix. 3. Jam. i. 21—25.
n xciii. 5. cxix. 14. 24. 111. 152. Is. viii. 16 20. John iii. 32. 33.
v. 39. Acts x. 43. 2 Tim. i. 8. 1 John v. 9—12. Rev. xix. 10.——o cxi. 7. 2 Sam. xxii. 5. 2 Tim ii. 19 Heb. vi 18, 19——p cxix. 130 Prov. i. 4. 22, 23. Col. iii 16. 2 Tim. iii. 15—17.——q cv. 45. cxix 12 16 80 171. Gen. xxvi. 5 Ex. xviii 16 Deut. iv. 5, 6. Ez. xxxvi. 27——r cxix. 128. Neh ix. 13.——s xl 8. cxix. 14. 24. 54. 92. 111. 143 Deut xii. 11, 12. xvi. 11. 14 Neh viii 12. Is lxiv. 5. Jer. xv. 16. Rom. vii 22.——t xii. 6 cxix. 140. Prov. xxx. 5 Rom. vii. 12—14.——u Ps. cxix. 98—100 105. 130. Pro. ii. 6. vi. 23 Rom. ii. 17—20 iii. 20. vii. 7. Gal. ii 19. iii. 10—13. 21.

the streets; and proceeding either to reconcile, or to put under his feet all other enemies, till death the last enemy shall be destroyed. In the full assurance of these truths, and expectation of his appearing and his glory, we should hasten to submit willingly to his authority, and to embrace his salvation: we should trust in his merits, rejoice in his triumphs, and imitate his example. We too should most fervently love the Lord our Strength and our Salvation; we should call on him in every trouble, and praise him for every deliverance; we should aim to walk with him in all righteousness and true holiness, approving our hearts unto him, and keeping ourselves from our own iniquities. May he arm us for every conflict, and aid us in all: may we make no league with sin, nor give quarter to any lust. By his strength may we leap over every interposing wall of difficulty; by his light may we pass through every dark valley; till at length we share the Saviour's resurrection and ascension into heaven: for if we belong unto him, he conquered and reigns *for* us, and we shall conquer and reign *through* him; and partake of the mercy of our anointed King, which is entailed on all his seed for evermore.

NOTES.

PSALM XIX. V. 1. This Psalm seems especially to have been intended to prove, that the idolatry and irreligion of mankind were wholly inexcusable. Even the Gentiles, to the remotest regions of the earth, were shown the glory of God by the heavens and the heavenly orbs, the benefit of which they received; though they forgot the Creator: but Israel had fuller instructions from the sacred oracles.

V. 2. The day and night, in constant rotation, instruct mankind in the knowledge of the glorious Creator: and each day and night transmits this task to its successor; or answer to each other, as when men sing in parts, alternately.

V. 3—6. Though the luminaries of heaven are not capable of articulate discourse, as man is, (which seems to be intimated by the abruptness of the original, "*no speech, "no language, their voice is not heard;*") yet their instructions may be understood by every nation under heaven: and whilst other teachers are confined to some particular district, they preach to the whole human race. Especially the glorious sun, who hath as it were his tabernacle pitched in the centre of the heavens. Thence every morning he issues forth, in all the vigour, alacrity, and beautiful adorning, with which a bridegroom would leave his chamber to go to his nuptials; and rejoices like an active racer, who glories in his strength, and anticipates the victory when about to start for the prize. Thus he daily diffuses through the whole earth light, warmth, and fertility; and communicates or preserves, every kind of animal and vegetable life, and even penetrates by his piercing beams into the heart of the earth. The sun in the firmament may be considered as an emblem of the Sun of righteousness, diffusing divine light and salvation by his Gospel to the nations of the earth. He delighteth in communicating blessings to his church, which as a Bridegroom he hath espoused to himself: and his course will be unwearied as that of the sun, till the whole earth be filled with his light and salvation. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 7—11. The word here translated *law*, may be rendered *doctrine*, and be understood as a general name for divine revelation, as then extant, the law of Moses being the principal part of it. The whole of this is perfect, and is intended to convert the soul from sin and the world, to God and to holiness, or to restore man from his fallen state. By it the Lord *testifies* to us all those truths which relate to the mysteries and perfections of his nature, to our own state and character, to the way of salvation, and to the eternal world, with the invitations and promises connected

9 [a] The fear of the LORD *is* clean, [y] enduring for ever: [z] the judgments of the LORD *are* * true *and* righteous altogether.

10 More to be desired *are they* [a] than gold, yea, than much fine gold: [b] sweeter also than honey, and † the honey-comb.

11 [c] Moreover by them is thy servant warned: *and* [d] in keeping of them *there is* great reward.

12 ¶ Who [e] can understand *his* errors? [f] cleanse thou me from [g] secret *faults*.

13 [h] Keep back thy servant also from [i] presumptuous *sins;* [k] let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be [l] upright, and [m] I shall be innocent from the ‡ great transgression.

14 [n] Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my ◊ Strength, and [o] my Redeemer.

a xxxiv. 11—14. xxxvi. 1. cxv 13. Gen xxii.12. xiii. 18. 1 Sam. xii. 24 1 Kings xviii. 3, 4. 12 Neb. v. 15. Pro. viii. 13. Acts x. 22 Rom. iii. 19—18

y cxi. 10. cxii. 1—6

z x 5. xxxvi. 6. lxxii. 1, 2 cxix. 7 39. 62. 75. 106. 137, 138 142. 160. 164. cxlvii 19. Ex. xxi 1 Deu. iv. 8 [illegible] 6 Rom. ii. 2. xi. 22 Rev. xv 3. xvi 7. xix 2.———* Heb. *truth*———a cxix. 72. [illegible] 15—17 Prov. iii 13—15 viii 10, 11 19 xvi. 16 ———b Ps lxiii 5. cxix. 103. Job xxiii. 12. Pro xxiv. 13, 14 ———† Heb. *the droppings of honey combs.* 1 [illegible] xiv 27—29 ———c cxix 11. 2 Chr xix. 10 Prov. vi. 22, 23. Ez. iii. 17—21. xxxiii. [illegible] Matt iii. 7 Acts xx. 31. 1 Cor. iv. 14. 1 Thes. v. 4. Heb xi. 7.———d Prov. iii. [illegible] 18 xxix 18. Is. iii. 10, 11 Matt. vi. 4. 6 18. Heb. xi 6 26 Jam. i. 25 2 John 8 Rev. xiv. 13.

e xl. 12. Job vi. 24. Is. lxiv. 6. 1 Cor. iv 4. Heb. ix. 7

f li. 5—10. lxv. 3. 1 John i. 7.

g xc. 8. cxxxix. 2. 23, 24. Lev. iv. 2, &c. Jer. xvii. 9.

h Gen xx. 6.

i Ex xxi. 14. Num. xv. 30, 31. Deut. xvii. 12, 13. 2 Pet. ii 10.

k cxix. 133. Rom. vi. 12—14. 16—22

l vii 10 xi. 7. lxxxiv. 11. Acts xxiv. 16

m xviii. 23 1 Chr. x. 13, 14.———‡ Heb *much.*———n v. 1. 2. li. 15. lxvi 18—20. cxix 108. Gen. iv. 4, 5. Prov xv. 8 Rom xv 16. Heb. xi 4 xiii. 15 1 Pet ii 5.———◊ Heb. *Rock.* xviii. 1. o Job xix. 25. Is. xliii 14. xliv. 6. xlvii. 4 liv 5. Tit. ii. 10. 1 Pet i. 18, 19 Rev. v 9

with them. This *testimony is sure*, and entirely to be depended on; and the most ignorant and unlearned, who seem most exposed to delusion, by unreservedly and simply crediting the word of God, become wise to salvation, and learn to live a holy, useful, and happy life, in this evil world: whilst human reasonings on these subjects commonly bewilder men in error and uncertainty. 'This sure testi-'mony preserves ignorant souls from being seduced to 'worship the sun; for it makes them at the first word so 'wise as to understand that the LORD "created the hea-"vens and the earth." (*Bp. Patrick.*) *The statutes* frequently mean the *ordinances* of God, by which Israel maintained communion with him, and received all blessings from him. These, though burdensome in themselves, were entirely suited to that dispensation; and proved a source of joy to the believing worshipper. (*Marg. Ref.*) But some explain the word in this place, to signify the laws given to regulate the conduct of magistrates in administering justice; which were peculiarly equitable, and tended to render the nation happy. *The commandment*, or the moral law, is "holy, "just, and good," and spiritual, enlightening the mind to perceive what men should be and do, and how far they are from that holiness which it demands. Thus they learn their true character, and are shut up under sin and condemnation, and are brought to welcome the divine Saviour, as well as to walk in newness of life. "The fear of the "Lord, is clean," as it sets the soul against all sin, and leads to holy watchfulness and diligence; and being once truly implanted in the soul, it will endure for ever. The term also may include the worship rendered to God, according to his word; which was at that time free from all profane mixtures of superstition and idolatry, and from the vile immoralities attending the religion of the surrounding nations. The obligation to this holy worship is perpetual: but the external form was varied, when the old dispensation was superseded by the new, and a more spiritual worship appointed. *The judgments* commonly in the books of Moses, denote the *judicial law:* but the term is used in various senses in other parts of Scripture; and may include warnings, counsels, threatenings, and the instances given of divine wrath executed on sinners in different ways. In every sense "the judgments of God were true and right-"eous altogether," without the least exception in any one particular. (*Marg. Ref.*) Indeed the sacred word, (even as David had it,) was in his judgment more valuable, because more useful, than much fine gold: and he found it more pleasant than honey to his taste. He loved the Scriptures, especially because they warned him to avoid sins and temptations: nay, the observance of them was its own abundant recompense; though it likewise entitled him to a gracious reward which he had richly experienced.

V. 12—14. From the consideration of the word of God, David's thoughts recurred to himself. Viewed in this glass, his *errors*, or deviations, appeared innumerable: and he not only desired to be pardoned and cleansed from those sins which he had discovered and confessed, but also from such as he had forgotten or overlooked: for, by *secret faults*, he evidently meant the transgressions which had escaped his own notice, or vanished from his memory; and not those that he had kept secret from human observation. The treachery of his heart likewise appeared to him so great, that he feared being drawn aside into deliberate and presumptuous sins, and being brought under the dominion of some powerful lust: and this dictated a fervent prayer to be kept back by divine grace from such dreadful crimes and consequences. In this way he hoped to be preserved upright and innocent from the great offence of rebellion, idolatry, or apostacy: and he earnestly entreated that the words of his mouth and the meditation of his heart might, by divine grace, be rendered such as it behooved God to accept, and as might obtain a merciful acceptance in his sight, whom he entitled "his Strength and Redeemer." His dependence therefore was entirely the same with that of every Christian who says, "Surely in the Lord Jesus "have I righteousness and strength."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The heavens so declare the glory of God, and proclaim his wisdom, power, and goodness, that atheists, infidels, idolaters, and all ungodly men, will be for ever left without excuse. Indeed, we may all learn profitable lessons from these constant teachers, who instruct by day and night, men in every clime, and of every tongue. By considering these inanimate servants of our Creator, we may learn to adore his magnificence and liberality; and we may be stirred up to cheerfulness, constancy, and diligence in doing good; and to use our nobler gifts of reason and speech to proclaim his praise. The transition is thence easy and natural to the contemplation of the Sun of righteousness, the Bridegroom of the church, and the Light of the world. Whilst we walk in his holy light and consola-

PSALM XX.

Israel prays that her king may be defended, accepted, and prospered, 1 — 4. *Rejoices in confidence of being answered and succeeded,* 5—9.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

THE LORD [a] hear thee in the day of trouble: [b] the name of [c] the God of Jacob * defend thee.

2 Send † thee help [d] from the sanctuary, and ‡ strengthen thee [e] out of Zion.

2 [f] Remember all thy offerings, and § accept thy burnt-sacrifice. Selah.

4 [g] Grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy counsel.

5 [h] We will rejoice in thy salvation, and [i] in the name of our God we will set up *our* banners: the LORD fulfil all thy petitions.

6 Now [k] know I that the LORD saveth his anointed; [l] he will hear him ‖ from his holy heaven, * with the saving strength of his right hand.

7 [m] Some *trust* in chariots, and some in horses: [n] but we will remember the name of the LORD our God

8 [o] They are brought down and fallen: [p] but we are risen, and stand upright.

a xli. 1. xlvi. 1. l. 15. lx. 11. xci. 15. cxxxvii i.7. Jer. xxx.7. Mat. xxvi. 38, 39. Heb v 7
b ix.10.lxxviii.18. Ex. xxxiv 5-7 Prov. xviii. 10. Is. l. 10
c xlvi.7 11. Gen. xxxii. 27—29. xlviii. 15.16. Ex. iii. 13—15.
* Heb. *set thee on an high place.* xviii 2. xci. 14. cxliv. 2.
† Heb *to help.*
d lxviii.17.1 Kings viii 44.45. 2 Chr. xx 8, 9
‡ Heb. *support.*
e 2 Sam. v. 7 vi. 17. Is. xii. 6. xix. 32 xxxvii. 34, 35.
f Gen. iv. 4. Is. lx. 7 Eph. v 2 1 Pet. ii. 5
§ Heb. *turn to ashes* or *make fat.* Lev. ix. 24. 1 Chr. xxi. 26. 2 Chr vii. 1.
g xxi. 2 xxxvii. 4. cxiv 19. Prov xi. 23. Matt. xxi. 22. John xi 42 xvi. 23 Rom viii. 27, 28. 1 John v. 14. 15.
h xiii 5. xxi 1. xxxv. 9 cxviii. 15 Is. xii 1—3. xxv. 9 lxi. 10. Hab iii. 18. Luke i. 47.
i lx. 4 Ex. xvii. 15 *Marg* Num. x 35, 36. 1 Sam. xvii. 45 Is. xi. 10. Mic iv. 5.
k ii. 2. xviii. 50. xxviii. 8. lxxxix. 20—23 Acts ii. 36. iv. 10.
l 1 Kings viii 30. 43. Matt. vi. 9.
‖ Heb. *the heaven of his holiness.* Is lvii.15. lxiii. 15.
* Heb. *by the strength of the salvation of his right hand* xvii. 7. xviii. 35 Acts ii 33 v. 31 ——m xxxiii. 16, 17. 1 Sam. xiii. 5. 2 Sam. viii. 4 x. 18 Prov. xxi. 21. Is. xxx. 16. xxxi. 1. Jer. xvii. 5.
n xlv 17. 2 Chr. xiii 10—12 16. xiv. 11. xx. 12. 20. xxxii 8.——o xxxiv. 21, 22. Judg. v. 31.——p cxxv. 1 cxlvi. 5. 9. Jer xvii. 7, 8.

tions, and are made fruitful in good works by his genial influence; we should long and pray for that time, when he shall enlighten, cheer, and fructify every nation on earth with his blessed salvation. He shines upon us through his word; may he send forth numbers to publish it! Where that is truly received, it converteth the soul from sin to God. May we heartily believe his *sure testimony*, and imbibe heavenly wisdom from this pure and inexhaustible fountain: may we rejoice in attending on all his ordinances; and thus receive communications of light, grace, strength, and consolation from the fulness of Christ, and render to the Lord the glory due unto his name: may we study and understand his enlightening commandments; examining ourselves by them, and walking with delight according to their holy instructions, whilst we embrace and daily plead the precious promises before our God: may his pure and purifying fear, which endureth for ever, be deeply grafted in our hearts; that we may stand in awe of his righteous judgments, and be warned from every evil way; that we may flee for refuge to his gracious salvation, and have our consciences directed, and our hearts encouraged by every part of his sacred word. Then shall we prize our Bibles more than all manner of riches, and find more delight in them than in all the pleasures of sense: being guided by them into that happy path which leads to still more complete felicity in the eternal world. But let it be observed, that the more any man studies and understands the holy Scriptures, the more deeply will he be convinced of his own sinfulness, in thought, word, and deed: serious and frequent self-examination by this faithful mirror, will discover to him innumerable deviations from his perfect rule; and convince him that those, which have escaped his recollection or observation, are equally innumerable. This will induce him to cast himself unreservedly upon the mercy and grace of God, for deliverance from those sins which have been hitherto unnoticed by himself. He will also grow more jealous of his own heart, and afraid of temptation, lest he should be drawn into presumptuous sins, and come under the dominion of them: and whilst he longs, more and more to be preserved from every transgression, and that his thoughts, words, and works, may be acceptable to the Lord: he will feel more sensibly his own insufficiency for every good thing, and learn to depend more entirely upon Christ Jesus, as "made of God unto him, wisdom, righte-"ousness, sanctification, and redemption;" and to rejoice and glory in him alone.

NOTES.

PSALM XX. V. 1, 2. This psalm was doubtless composed, and publicly sung, when David was about to engage in some perilous expedition: it is generally thought, in that against the Ammonites and Syrians. (2 *Sam.* x. 1 *Chr.* xix.) And the congregation of Israel thus prayed for his protection and success, to the God of Jacob, to that God who heard the patriarch in his distress, and was still the God of his posterity. Among them he had fixed his sanctuary and the ark of the covenant, which had lately been removed to mount Zion; and from him, the great object of their worship, as manifesting his glory above the mercy-seat, they sought help and victory. But David was a type of Christ, in his conflicts and victories: and the psalm may be applied as a prayer for his coming, for the completion of his work, and the establishment of his kingdom.

V. 3. The oblations at the sanctuary, when presented in humble faith and love, were graciously accepted, as typical of the Redeemer's atoning sacrifice: and the answer, by fire from heaven consuming the victims, was the most decisive proof of this acceptance. David's burnt-offering, not long after, was thus consumed. (*Marg.*)

V. 4. David earnestly desired to promote the honour of God and the welfare of Israel, in his counsels and undertakings; and it was proper for the people to pray for him in this expressive language: but in respect of the designs of our great Redeemer, the words may be adopted in the most unreserved manner.

V. 5. The king of Israel was their anointed deliverer; and when they went forth to war under his command, they might properly set up their banners in the name of the LORD, as well as rejoice in his salvation. 'In confidence 'of thy help, we will *shout* when we set on our enemies: 'for the Lord will not fail to grant the petitions of our So-'vereign, whose cause is so just, and who has been so insc-'lently treated.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

q cxviii. 25, 26. Matt. xxi 9. 15. r ii. 6—10 v. 2. xxiv. 7. xliv. 4. lxxiv. 12.

9 [q] Save, LORD: [r] let the king hear us when we call.

PSALM XXI.

The king and people rejoicing in God, and blessing him for fully answering their largest prayers, 1—6. *Expressing the strongest assurance of future success, with the ruin of all their enemies,* 7—12. *And calling upon God to exalt himself, that they might more and more sing his praises,* 13.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

[a] ii. 6. xx. 6. 9. lxii. 11. lxxii. 1, 2. Is. ix. 6, 7. Matt. ii. 2.
b xxviii. 7. lxii 7. xcv. 1. xcix. 4.
c xx. 5. lxxi. 17—24. cxviii. 14, 15. Heb. xii. 2.
d ii. 8, 9. xx. 4, 5. xcii. 11. Is. xlix. 6—12. Heb. vii. 25.
e xviii. 18. 1 Sam. xvi. 13. 2 Sam. ii. 4 v. 3. Job xli. 11. Rom. xi. 35.
f xxxi. 19. 2 Chr. vi. 41. Rom. ii. 4. Eph. i. 3.
g 2 Sam. xii. 30. 1 Chr. xx. 2. Heb. ii. 9. Rev. xix. 12.
h xiii. 3. xvi. 10, 11. lxi. 5, 6. cxix. 77. 175.——i lxxii. 17. lxxxix. 29. 36, 37. xci. 16. Rev. i. 18——k iii. 3. lxii. 7. 2 Sam. vii. 8, 9. Is. xlix. 5—7. lxiii. 1. John xiii. 31, 32. xvii. 1. 5. 22. Phil. ii. 9—11. Heb. viii. 1. Rev. v. 8—13.

THE king shall [b] joy in thy strength, O LORD; and [c] in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice!

2 Thou hast given him [d] his heart's desire, and hast not with-holden the request of his lips. Selah.

3 For thou [e] preventest him with [f] the blessings of goodness: [g] thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head.

4 [h] He asked life of thee, *and* thou gavest *it* him, *even* [i] length of days for ever and ever.

5 [k] His glory *is* great in thy salvation:

V. 6—8. David himself seems to speak. His past deliverances and victories, and the loyal zeal of his people, assured him of success, from the power of Israel's God. Comparing the confidence of his enemies in chariots and horses and well-appointed numerous troops, with his own and that of his people on the Almighty; he anticipated the triumph, and exulted as if already victorious.

V. 9. 'Let the King of heaven hear, whilst we pray 'for his anointed on earth.' Or the clause may literally be rendered, "O LORD, save the king; hear us when we "call."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

No rank or character can exempt man from trouble: but the Lord will hear the prayers of the afflicted, and will support and deliver them. They who pray most fervently for themselves, put the greatest value on the prayers of others; and are encouraged by them in further calling upon God. His *name*, his glorious perfections, will be a sure defence to all who, like Jacob, trust and apply to him in their distress; but we should observe, that all our help comes out of Zion, from the mercy-seat, and through the accepted sacrifice of our Emmanuel, which all the legal burnt-offerings shadowed forth. As far as our desires are spiritual and our counsels holy, we may hope to have them granted and fulfilled; but it would be ruinous to have our sinful inclinations indulged. Fervent united prayers tend much to the joyful assurance of faith and hope; and the first step to victory in our spiritual warfare is, to renounce all carnal confidences, and to trust only in the mercy and grace of God: thus we shall arise from our depth of misery, and obtain establishment; whilst all who trust in themselves will soon be brought down. Happy is it for that people whose rulers are influenced in all their measures by the faith and fear of God, aiming at his glory and the public good: when they value the prayers of true Christians, and act with such justice, that pious men can unreservedly pray for their success: when they set up their banners in the name of God; and place their confidence, not in fleets and armies, but in his powerful protection. From his holy heaven he will save with the strength of his right hand, such as thus trust in him. It is our duty to pray for our rulers, that they may be like David: and we have great cause for thankfulness for our peculiar advantages in this respect; and we should continually entreat the Lord, that they who are or shall be placed over us, may be directed and prospered in every undertaking, for the honour of God, the peace and welfare of the land, and the common benefit of mankind. In answer to the hopes and prayers of the old testament-church, the anointed King of God's people came in the appointed season: he was heard in the day of his trouble; his sacrifice was accepted; his intercessions have greatly prevailed; his kingdom hath been set up, and we are called to partake of its blessings. Thanksgivings for these benefits should be constantly rendered. In his salvation let us rejoice; under him let us enlist, and in his name set up our banners. But we should recollect, that we belong to a large army; and we should not only seek and rejoice in hope of personal triumphs; but pray for the success of the common cause; and look for the accomplishment of the Redeemer's whole counsel, when his dominion over willing subjects shall be extended throughout the earth.

NOTES.

PSALM XXI. V. 1. The former psalm was the prayer of Israel for David, and of the church for the Messiah; and this is a song of praise to God, who had answered those prayers. Several circumstances of the psalm may be accommodated to the case of David. Yet the whole seems more immediately intended for Christ and his kingdom. 'Many 'of the Hebrews themselves apply it to the Messiah. So 'that it may be called a psalm of triumph after the victories 'which David got over his enemies, which were a type of 'Christ's victory over death, and of the triumph that en-'sued. And truly there are some things in it which are 'more literally fulfilled in Christ than in David.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) David had risen to great authority: but he exulted and rejoiced in the strength and power of God, which had wrought many and great deliverances for him; made him the deliverer of Israel from all their enemies, and was engaged for his eternal salvation. Thus our Lord, being raised from the dead, entered on the "joy set before him;" which includes the salvation of his people, to the glory of God the Father, as well as his own exaltation to the mediatorial throne.

l cx. 1. 1 Chr. xvii. 11–15. 27. Mat. xxviii. 18. Eph. i. 21, 22. 1 Pet. iii. 22

l honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him.

6 For thou hast * made him most blessed for ever: m thou hast † made him exceeding glad with thy countenance.

* Heb. *set him to be blessings.* lxxii. 17–19. Gen. xii. 2. Luke ii. 10, 11. 30–32. Acts ii. 26. Gal. iii. 9. 14. Eph. i. 3.

m iv. 6, 7. xvi. 11. xlv. 3. 7. lxiii. 2–5. Acts ii 28.

† Heb. *gladded him with joy.*

7 n For the king trusteth in the Lord, and, through the mercy of o the most High, p he shall not be moved.

n xiii. 5. xviii. 2. xx. 7, 8. lxi 4. 6, 7. xci. 2. 9, 10. Matt. xxvii. 43. Heb. ii. 13.

o ix. 2. Deut. xxxii. 8, 9.

p xvi. 8. Dan. vii. 14

8 q Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies: thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee.

q ii. 9. xviii. *title.* lxxii. 9. lxxxix. 22, 23. cx. 1, 2. x. 28, 29 Rev. xix. 15.

9 r Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: s the Lord shall swallow them up t in his wrath, and u the fire shall devour them.

r Gen xix 28 Dan iii. 20–22. Mal iv. 1. Matt xiii. 42. 50. xxv. 41. 46. 2 Thes. ii. 8. Rev. xx. 14.

s lvi. 1. cvi. 17. Job vi. 3.

10 x Their fruit shalt thou destroy from the earth, and their seed from among the children of men.

11 For they intended evil against thee: they y imagined a mischievous device, *which* z they are not able *to perform.*

12 a Therefore shalt thou ‡ make them turn their ∮ back, *when* b thou shalt make ready *thine arrows* upon thy strings, against the face of them.

13 c Be thou exalted Lord, in thine own strength: d *so* will we sing and praise thy power.

t ii. 5. 12. Matt. xxii 7. 1 Thes. ii. 16. Rev. vi. 16, 17. xix. 15.

u xviii. 3. Deut. xxxii. 22 Is. xxvi. 11 Nah. i 6 Matt. iii. 10. 12

x xxxvii 28 cix. 13. 1 Kings xiii 34. Joo xviii. 16–19. xx 28. Is. xiv. 20. Mal. iv. 1

y ii 1. x. 2. xxxi. 13. xxxv 20. Jer xi 18, 19. Ez. xi. 2 Matt. xxi 46. xxvi 4, 5. Acts v. 27, 28

z lxxxiii. 4. Is. vii. 6 7. viii. 9, 10. Matt. ii. 8. 16. xxvii 63, 64. xxviii 2–6. Acts iv. 17, 18.

a ix. 3. xliv. 10. lvi. 9

‡ Heb. *set them as a butt.* Job vii. 20. xvi 12, 13. Lam. iii. 12

∮ Heb. *shoulder.*

b vii. 13 xviii 14. lxiv 7.

c xviii. 46 xlvi. 10. lvii. 5. 11 lxxii 18. 19. cxiii 5 Marg. 1 Chr. xxix 11 Mat. vi. 10. 13 Rev. xi. 17

d lviii 10, 11. Rev xv. 3, 4. xvi. 5–7. xviii. 20. xix. 1–6.

V. 2—5. God had, on all occasions, answered the prayers of his servant; had *prevented* him by anointing him to be king, before he had thought of such an honour; and had made him successful and distinguished beyond his largest hopes. The Lord had not only very often preserved his life, in answer to his prayers, when in the most imminent danger: but had given him the assurance of continuing the kingdom in his family for many generations, and in Christ, as his descendant, for ever: and he was encouraged personally to expect everlasting life in heaven. Thus his glory was in all respects great in God's salvation. Yet the passage, in its fullest import, can only be accomplished in Christ himself.

V. 6, 7. The marginal rendering, "Thou hast set him "to be blessings for evermore," seems to be the most literal, and to suggest another important thought on the subject. David was *set to be blessings*, not only to his own generation, and to his posterity, and to Israel for many ages; but by these divine poems to the whole church, while the world shall endure; and in Christ his Son, to all eternity; and thus he was placed to be *blessed* or *praised* for evermore, as some render the clause. (*Note, Gen.* xii. 1—3.)—David also enjoyed great felicity in the favour of God; and trusting in his mercy, could not be moved, either in respect of his authority or his personal salvation: and the glory and dominion of Christ, to the praise of the glory of divine grace, are beyond the reach of all his enemies and those of his church.

V. 8—12. These verses indicate, that the opposers of Israel's anointed King were likewise the enemies of God; who would assuredly take vengeance on them and their posterity, in the most awful manner, making them the butt, or mark, of his severest displeasure. But they may be considered as addressed to the Messiah himself; and no doubt they receive their fullest accomplishments in the judgments inflicted on the opposers and despisers of his authority and Gospel. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 13. Both the prosperity of the church, and the ruin of its enemies, tend to *exalt* God, or to render his glory conspicuous to his rational creatures. These effects can only be produced by his Omnipotence; which his people unitedly pray to see displayed, that they may joyfully celebrate his praises. This conclusion greatly resembles the first petitions and closing doxology of the Lord's prayer.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

If David rejoiced greatly in the honour conferred on him, as king of Israel: what is the joy of our Redeemer in his exaltation to the mediatorial throne, and in the salvation of his people! And if Israel, from love to David and his auspicious government, rejoiced, and praised God for him: how great should be our joy and praise, to behold by faith our Brother and Friend thus glorified, and for all the blessings which we may expect from him! The Father was as ready to grant, as his beloved Son to ask, when he desired to be crowned, not with gold, but with glory and honour, and to have all things put under his feet; and to possess an unchangeable kingdom, for the benefit of his church: nay, our God presents us sinners with the blessings of his goodness; and if we ask he will give us "a crown "of glory that fadeth not away," and "long life even "for ever and ever;" and the requests of the Saviour's lips are not withheld, whilst sinners are converted and believers established through his intercession. Words cannot express his glory in God's salvation, the honour and majesty which are laid upon him, and the adoration which is rendered to him by angels and saints above: yet he chiefly delights in his exalted state, as enabling him to confer "an exceeding and eternal weight of glory," on poor sinners, who here trust and love him. For being made most blessed himself for ever, he is constituted to be the source of blessings, and the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him. His kingdom is fixed on an immoveable basis, upheld by the power of God; and the exercise of the mercy of the Most High forms its grand object. But how will they escape, who are enemies to this glorious King and Saviour? The Jewish nation soon experienced the dreadful effects of his slighted love; and the condition of their posterity, from the siege and sack of Jerusalem to this day, awfully warns every one not to entail miseries on his descendants, and bring destruction on himself, by opposing the Redeemer's kingdom, or neglecting his salvation. But the discoveries that will be

PSALM XXII.

David, prophetically speaking of Christ, complains grievously, that he was forsaken by his God, and left to the insulting cruelty of his enemies, 1—21. *He proclaims the name and praise of the Lord, calling on the people to trust and glorify him; and foretels the permanent success of the gospel,* 22—31.

To the chief Musician upon * Aijeleth Shahar, A Psalm of David.

MY God, [a] my God, [b] why hast thou forsaken me? *why art thou so* [c] far from † helping me, *and from* [d] the words of my roaring?

2 O my God, [e] I cry in the day-time, [f] but thou hearest not; and [g] in the night-season, and ‡ am not silent.

3 But [h] thou *art* holy, *O thou* [i] that inhabitest the praises of Israel.

4 [k] Our fathers trusted in thee; they trusted, and thou didst deliver them.

5 They [l] cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, [m] and were not confounded.

6 But [n] I *am* a worm, and no man; [o] a reproach of men, and despised of the people.

* Or, *The hind of the morning.* 16. xlii. 1, 2.
a xxxi. 14—16. xliii. 1—5. Mat. xxvii 46. Mark xv. 34.
b xxvii. 9. xxxvii. 28. lxxi. 11. 1 Sam. xii 22. Heb. xiii. 5.
c 11. xlvi. 1.
† Heb. *my salvation.* Is. xlvi. 13.
d xxxii 3, 4. xxxviii. 8. Job iii. 24. Is. lix. 11. Luke xxii. 44. Heb. v. 7.
e xlii. 3. lv. 16, 17. lxxxviii. 1. Luke xviii. 7. 1 Thes. iii. 10. 2 Tim. i. 3.
f lxxx. 4. Lam. iii. 8. 44
g Luke vi. 12. xviii. 8. xxii. 41—46.
‡ Heb there is *no silence to me.* Matt. xxvi. 44.
h xv. 11. Is. vi. 3. Rev. iv 8.
i 1. 23. lxv. 1. Deut. x. 21.
k xliv. 1—7. Gen. xv. 6. xxxii. 9—12. 28. Ex. xiv. 13, 14. 31. 1 Sam. vii. 9—12. Rom. iv. 18—22. Heb. xi. 8—32.
l xcix 6, 7 cvi. 44. Judg. iv. 3. vi 6. x. 10—16.——m xxv. 2, 3. xxxi. 1. lxix. 6, 7. lxxi. 1. Is. xlv. 17. xlix. 23. Rom. ix 33. x. 11 1 Pet ii 6.———n Job xxv. 6. Is. xli 14.
o xxxi. 11. lxix. 7—12. 19, 20. lxxxviii. 8. Is. xlix. 7 liii. 8. Zech xi. 8. Matt. xi. 19. xii. 24 xxvii. 20—23 John vii. 15. 20. 47—49. viii. 48. Rom xv. 3. Heb xiii. 13.

made, and the vengeance that will be executed, at the day of judgment, on every enemy of Christ, will form the most tremendous comment on this psalm. In that day of his anger, all who hate him will be made as the fiery oven; they will be swallowed up and devoured; their devices will end in everlasting disappointment and despair; and all the arrows of the Almighty will be prepared to execute his righteous vengeance upon them. May he then exalt himself by his efficacious grace in our hearts, destroying all the strong holds of sin and Satan: and may he by his own strength, set up his kingdom upon earth and exalt himself above every antichristian opposer: so will we, so will his whole church, sing and praise his power, which only doeth wondrous things; as an anticipation of the joys and songs of the redeemed, when they shall see the last enemy put under the Redeemer's feet.

NOTES.

PSALM XXII. *Title. Aijeleth Shahar,* signifies *The hind of the morning:* and various conjectures have been made concerning the intention of this singular title. Some think it merely a musical term: and others suppose it refers to the time when it was to be sung, rendering it *the first dawn.* Others apply it to Christ, as the Light of the world, whose rising was predicted: but perhaps it points out the Saviour, marked by Satan from his birth for persecution, as the hind or hart is in the morning for chase; and so hunted down by his enemies, until he was surrounded by them, (as dogs surround the weary hart,) when he hung upon the cross. Of this the persecutions of David in his earlier years were a type.

V. 1. The first clause of this verse is exactly of the same import with the words used by our Lord on the cross. (*Marg. Ref.*) The Hebrew verb indeed is changed in this exclamation for one supposed to be Syriac: but the Evangelist's interpretation is given in the very words of the Septuagint. No reasonable doubt can be made, but that he should be considered as the speaker, throughout this whole prophetical psalm. It may even be questioned whether David had any reference to his own case in it; as every thing is applicable to Christ, and most things utterly inapplicable to David.—Whilst the man Jesus, without any personal transgression or defilement, but bearing our sins in their guilt and punishment, was wholly deprived of all sensible comfort, and felt that horror in his soul which is the effect of the divine wrath; whilst the powers of darkness were permitted to assail him with every dreadful temptation, and whilst wicked men unrestrainedly exercised their cruel malice towards him; his God and Father seemed to have forsaken him, and to stand at a distance from his salvation as regardless of his agonies and prayers. Yet still he used the language of vigorous faith, conflicting with, and prevailing against, all despondency and impatience.

V. 2. The Lord Jesus continued whole nights in prayer, he arose a great while before day for that purpose; and in the cold dark night he prostrated himself in the garden, and "prayed most earnestly;" yet did not the cup of his sufferings for sinners pass from him. He felt a natural reluctancy to such tremendous sorrows; but his zeal and love prevailed, and when he added, "not my will but "thine be done," he, as it were, retracted his former petition. The prophecy expresses the feelings of his soul in the extremity of his suffering: yet his supplications were heard, as it soon appeared in his resurrection.

V. 3. This verse seems to be admirably expressive of perfect resignation under the severest sufferings, which peculiarly accords with the prophetical meaning. 'Thou 'hearest not.'—'Shall I then murmur, or impeach thy 'faithfulness? Far from it! Thou, nevertheless, continuest 'holy, &c.' Thus our Lord, on the cross, declared the holiness of God in his sharpest sufferings: nay, he declared them to be a demonstration of it; for which he would be continually praised by Israel, more than for all the other deliverances, that they had received in answer to their faith and prayer: and he considered all those as types and earnests of his own deliverance, when he had completed his expiation. In Israel, in the church, exclusively, the works and perfections of God are celebrated.

V. 6. The Saviour here spake of the extremely abject state to which he was reduced; in which he was treated as a worm, and patiently submitted to it; being humble, silent, and harmless, when oppressed and trodden under foot.

7 All they that see me [p] laugh me to scorn: they * shoot out the lip, [q] they shake the head, *saying*,

8 [r] He † trusted on the LORD, *that* he would deliver him: [s] let him deliver him, ‡ seeing he delighted in him.

9 But thou *art* he [t] that took me out of the womb: [u] thou didst § make me hope *when I was* upon my mother's breasts.

10 I was [x] cast upon thee from the womb: [y] thou *art* my God [z] from my mother's belly.

11 [a] Be not far from me; for trouble *is* near; for *there is* ‖ none to help.

12 [b] Many bulls have compassed me: [c] strong *bulls* of Bashan have beset me round.

13 They * gaped upon me *with* their mouths, [d] as a ravening and a roaring lion.

14 [e] I am poured out like water, and [f] all my bones are † out of joint: [g] my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.

15 [h] My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and [i] my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me [k] into the dust of death.

16 For [l] dogs have [m] compassed me: [n] the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: [o] they pierced my hands and my feet.

17 [p] I may tell all my bones: [q] they look *and* stare upon me.

18 They [r] part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

p xxxv. 15, 16. Matt. ix. 24. xxvii. 29. Mark xv. 20. Luke xvi. 14. xxiii. 11. 35—39.
* Heb. *open.* xxxi. 18. Job xvi. 4. 10. xxx. 9—11. Is. lvii. 4. Mat. xxvi. 66—68.
q xliv. 14. cix. 25. Is. xxxvii. 22, 23. Matt. xxvii. 39, 40. Mark xv. 29—32.
r Mat. xxvii. 42, 43.
† Heb. *rolled* himself *on.* xxxvii. 5. lv. 22. Prov. xvi. 3. *Marg.*
s iii. 1, 2. xlii. 10. lxxi. 11. Mark xv. 30—32.
‡ Or, *if he delight.* xviii. 19. Is. xlii. 1. Matt. iii. 17. xii. 1. xvii. 5. Luke xxiii. 35.
t lxxi. 6. cxxxix. 15, 16. Is. xlix. 1, 2.
u lxxi. 17. Is. vii. 14. ix. 6.
§ Or, *keep me in safety.* Mat. ii. 13—15. Rev. xii. 4, 5.——x Is. xlvi. 3, 4. Luke ii. 40. 52.——y John xx. 17.——z Jer. i. 5. Gal. i. 15.——a x. 1. xiii. 1—3. xxxv. 22. xxxviii. 21. lxix. 1, 2. 18. lxxi. 12. John xvi. 32. Heb. v. 7.——‖ Heb. *not a helper.* lxxii. 12. cxlii 4—6. Deut. xxxii 36. Matt. xxvi 56. 72—74.——b lxviii. 30. Jer. l. 11.——c Deut. xxxii. 14, 15. Is. xxxiv. 7. Ez. xxxix. 18. Am. iv. 1—3. Matt. xxvii. 1. Acts iv. 27.

* Heb. *opened their mouths against me.* 7. xxxv. 21. Job xvi. 10. Lam. ii. 16. iii. 46. Matt. xxvi. 3, 4. 59—65.
d 21. vii. 2. xvii. 12. xxxv. 17. Ez. xxii. 27, 28. 1 Pet. v. 8.
e Josh. vii. 5. Matt. xxvi. 38. Luke xxii. 41. John xii. 27.
f 17. Dan. v. 6.
† Or, *sundered.*
g lxviii. 2. Job xxiii. 16. Mark xiv. 33, 34.
h xxxii. 3, 4. Prov. xvii. 22.
i lxix. 3. 21. Job xxix. 10. Lam. iv. 4. John xix. 28.
k xxx. 9. civ. 29. Gen. iii. 19. xviii. 27. Job vii. 21. x. 9. xxxiv. 15. Is. liii. 12. Dan. xii. 2. Matt. xxvii. 50. 1 Cor. xv. 3.
l *Title.* 20. lix. 6. 14. Matt. vii. 6. Phil. iii. 2. Rev. xxii. 15.
m Luke xi. 53, 54.
n lxxxvi. 1. Jer. xii. 6. Mat. xxvi. 57. Mark xv. 16—20. Luke xxii. 63—71. xxiii. 4, 5. 10, 11. 23.——o Zech. xii. 10. Mat. xxvii. 35. Mark xv. 24. Luke xxiii. 33. John xx. 25.——p cii. 3—5. Job xxxiii. 21.——q Mat. xxvii. 36. 39—41. Mark xv. 29—32. Luke xxiii. 27—35.——r Matt. xxvii. 35. Mark xv. 24. Luke xxiii. 34. John xix. 24.

—The language is highly expressive of the contempt, with which he was treated by all ranks and orders of men, whether Jews or Gentiles.

V. 7, 8. The history of Christ's sufferings is the best comment on this part of the prophecy; the language of the former verse might be thought *historical* of the insults attending his crucifixion; and that of the latter was adopted, without any variation at all affecting the sense, by the chief priests and rulers, to express their contempt of him, when hanging upon the cross. Little did they think that the Spirit of prophecy, a thousand years before, had foretold that the murderers of the Messiah would speak of him in this insulting and impious manner. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 9, 10. David seems early to have devoted himself to God: but Jesus alone was a *holy child*, born without sin. He was not only the peculiar care of Providence from his birth; but from his earliest infancy he exercised the most perfect faith, hope, and love, towards his God and Father.

V. 11—13. A helpless infant or a harmless lamb, surrounded by furious bulls and hungry fierce lions, aptly represented the Saviour surrounded with his insulting and bloody persecutors; and in his extreme distress forsaken even by his disciples. The bulls, which fed in the fertile pastures of Bashan, were remarkably fat, and strong, and furious; and they represented the Jewish rulers, who were rendered insolent by prosperity.

V. 14, 15. The dissolution of nature, and the unresisting sufferings of Christ when "crucified in weakness," are expressed, by his being poured out as water; the stretching of his body on the cross, and the violent motion with which it was erected, shook his body even to the dislocation of his bones. His sense of the divine wrath against our sins, then laid upon him, and his inward anguish made his heart faint and melt within him, as wax by the fire. Thus the vigour and moisture of his body were dried up, as with intense heat: his extreme thirst caused his tongue to cleave to his jaws; and he was brought down into the dust, by his death and burial.

V. 16—18. The rulers of the Jews were as strong bulls: the multitudes and soldiers were as so many ravenous dogs, who had enclosed this hunted hind, in order to glut themselves with his sufferings and his blood. 'Our Lord 'here setteth himself forth, under the image of an hart, 'or hind, roused early in the morning of his mortal life; 'hunted and chased all the day, and in the evening pulled 'down to the ground.' (*Horne.*)—In nailing him to the cross, they pierced his hands and his feet: and when, emaciated by his labours and sufferings, he was stretched out almost naked on the cross, he might have numbered all his bones. The insulting multitudes stood around, and gratified their malice and curiosity by staring upon him: and the unfeeling soldiers having shared his other garments, amused themselves by casting lots for his vesture. The manner in which his clothes were disposed of, being very remarkable, and occasioned by the peculiar texture of his coat, was thus circumstantially predicted!—Crucifixion, or nailing men to two transverse pieces of wood, by spikes driven through their hands and feet, seems to have been originally a Roman punishment; and not known in Judea, till many ages after this prophecy was delivered. Nothing, at all answering to the literal meaning of these terms, befel David, as far as we know; nothing could have been previously more unlikely, than that the promised and glorious Son of David should be treated in this cruel and ignominious manner: yet the fulfilment was so exact, that the verses seem more like a narrative than a prediction!—The clause, indeed, rendered, "They *pierced* my hands and my "feet," 'stands in the original at present,' "*As a lion* "my hands and my feet." But this contains no clear sense at all. The change of one letter for another, very little different from it, gives the reading of our version. The Septuagint, which is certainly more ancient than the

19 But [s] be not thou far from me, O LORD: [t] O my strength, haste thee to help me.

20 Deliver [u] my soul from the sword; * my darling from the power of [x] the dog.

21 Save me [y] from [z] the lion's mouth: for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns.

22 ¶ [a] I will declare thy name unto my brethren: [b] [c] in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.

23 [d] Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; [e] all ye the seed of Jacob, [f] glorify him; and fear him, [g] all ye the seed of Israel.

24 For [h] he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; [i] neither hath he hid his face from him; but [k] when he cried unto him, he heard.

25 [l] My praise *shall be* of thee in the great congregation: [m] I will pay my vows before them that fear him.

26 [n] The meek shall eat and be satisfied: [o] they shall praise the LORD that seek him: [p] your heart shall live for ever.

27 [q] All the ends of the world shall remember and [r] turn unto the LORD: and [s] all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.

28 For [t] the kingdom *is* the LORD's: and he *is* the Governor among the nations.

29 All *they* [u] *that be* fat upon earth

s 11. x. 1.
t xviii. 1. xxi. 1. xl. 13. 17. lxix. 13—13.
u xvii. 13. Zech. xiii. 7.
* Heb. *my only one from the hand.* xxxv. 17. x. 16.
x Luke xxii. 53. John xiv. 30. 2 Tim. iv. 17. 1 Pet. v. 8.
y Num. xxiii. 22. Deu. xxxiii. 17. Job xxxix. 9, 10. John viii. 59. Acts v. 30—32.
z lxxi. 18, 19. John xvii. 25, 26. Heb. ii. 11, 12.
a Mat. xii. 48, 49. xxv. 40. xxviii. 10. John xx. 17. Rom. viii. 29.
b 25. xl. 9, 10.
c cxv. 11. 13. 1 Chr. xvi. 8—13. Luke i. 50.
e cv. 3—7. cvi. 5. cvii. 1, 2. cxxxv. 19, 20.
f 1. 23. Is. xxv. 3. Luke ii. 20. 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. x. 31. Rev. xv. 4. Is. l. 6—9.——g 30. 1 Chr. xvi. 13.——h 6. xxxv. 10. lix. 29—34.
i Luke xxiii. 46.
k 2. xxxiv. 6. cxvi. 3—6. cxviii. 5. Heb. v. 7.
l 22. xxxv. 13. cxi. 1.
m lvi. 12. lxv. 1. lxvi. 13. 16. cxvi. 14—19. cxviii. 19, 20. Ec. v. 4.
n lxix. 32. Lev. vii. 11—17. Is. xxv. 6. lxv. 13. John vi. 48—58.
o cv. 3, 4.
p lxix. 32. John iv. 14. vi. 51.
q ii. 8. lxxii. 8. 11. lxxxvi. 9. xcviii. 3. Is. xlv. 22. xlvi. 8, 9. xlix. 6. 12.
r Acts xiv. 15. xx. 21. xxvi. 18—20. Rom. xvi. 26. 1 Thes. i. 9.
s xcvi. 7. cii. 22. cxvii. 1. Rev. vii. 9—12. xv. 4.
t xlvii. 7, 8. Dan. vii. 14. Ob. 21. Zech. xiv. 9.
u lxxiii. 7. lxxviii. 31. Is. x. 16.

Christian æra, renders it as we do; and there seems scarcely the shadow of a doubt, but this is the genuine reading: though the general exactness of the Jews in preserving their Scriptures, precludes the charge of an intentional alteration. Let any thinking man recollect, that the Jews, the greatest opposers of Christianity ever since its promulgation, have unanimously allowed, that David wrote this psalm above a thousand years before the birth of Christ: then let him compare it with the history of his crucifixion, and determine, whether it doth not stand as an irrefragable argument of the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, and for the divine original of the Christian religion.

V. 19—21. In these verses, the Psalmist, (personating the suffering Redeemer,) having stated the extremity of his case, renews his supplications; and earnestly prays to be delivered from the sword of divine justice, stretched forth against him, as our Surety; from Satan, the chief of those blood-hounds or roaring lions, that pursued him; and from the enraged enemies, who like the fiercest wild beasts surrounded him, as if they aimed at his entire and final destruction. The word rendered *my darling*, signifies *my united one*, or *my desolate one*. It is the feminine of the noun, rendered elsewhere *only* son, or *only begotten* son; and thus the Septuagint translate it. Some think it refers to the human nature of Christ, as united to the Deity.

V. 22. This verse is expressly applied to our Lord by the Apostle. (*Heb.* ii. 11.) And the subsequent part of the psalm is as evidently prophetical of his glory and the success of his Gospel, as the foregoing part is of his sufferings. The transition from the one part to the other, and indeed the whole, is allowed to be highly poetical. For here the scene at once changes and brightens. The Saviour turns his eyes from his sufferings to the glory which followed; and anticipating the extensive and permanently blessed effects of his passion and exaltation, he breaks forth into exulting predictions and praises at the prospect. So that what follows seems descriptive of his feelings when he cried "It is finished," and "Father into thy hands I commend my spirit."

V. 23, 24. Some expositors think that these verses are the song of praise, which the Messiah declares he will lead in the midst of the congregation. Israel is especially addressed, but all who are favoured with the Gospel are equally concerned in the exhortation; as the resurrection and consequent glory of Christ are the common benefit of all that fear and seek God: for had he despised and rejected the Surety's sufferings, and left him in the grave, all the hopes of sinners would have been for ever buried with him. But, though man despised and abhorred him, and the Father for a time seemed to disregard his sufferings and prayers; and though the character of those, whom he represented, was abominable in the sight of God: God yet accepted the Saviour's atoning sacrifice, raised him from the dead, and made him "the author of eternal salvation to all them that "obey him."

V. 25. *Vows*, &c. That is, the Saviour will publicly fulfil all the engagements of his exaltation, for the glory of God, and the benefit of his church; even as the Psalmist offered the various sacrifices which he had vowed in his distresses.

V. 26. The death of Christ was the great sacrifice for sin: his "flesh is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed;" the poor in spirit feed on this provision in their hearts by faith, and are satisfied: thus whilst they seek the Lord, they praise him also, and their hearts or souls are preserved unto eternal life.—The sacred feasts on the peace-offerings and vows, at the sanctuary, furnished this allusion.

V. 27, 28. The fallen race of Adam in general, all over the world, had *forgotten*, through alienation of heart, the one living and true God, and their relations and obligations to him, as their Creator, Governor, and Judge: but through the sufferings of Christ and the glory that followed, vast multitudes in the most distant nations, *remembered* God; and forsaking their idols and iniquities, turned to him, as his worshippers and subjects. Thus the kingdom of God, which always was his by right, began in fact to be established among the nations: but this part of the prophecy has by no means yet received its grand accomplishment.

shall [x] eat and worship: [y] all they that go down to the dust shall [z] bow before him: and [a] none can keep alive his own soul.

30 [b] A seed shall serve him; [c] it shall be accounted to the LORD for a generation.

31 [d] They shall come, and shall declare [e] his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done *this*.

x xlv. 12. lxxii. 10. 11. Is. lx. 3—5. 16. Rev xxi 24.
y cxiii. 7. Is. xxvi. 19. xxix. 4. Phil. ii. 10. Rev. xx. 12—15.
z Is. xiv. 23. Rom. xiv. 10—12
a xlix. 6, 7. Hos. xiii. 9 John iii. 36. xi. 25, 26.——b Is. liii. 10 Heb ii 13——c xiv. 5. xxiv. 6. lxxiii. 15. lxxxvii. 6. Matt. iii 9. Gal iii. 26—29. 1 Pet ii. 9.

d lxxviii. 6 lxxxvi 9. cii. 18. cxlv. 4—7. Is. xliv. 3—5. xlix. 21—23. liv. 1. lx. 4. lxvi. 1—9.
e Rom. i. 17. iii. 21—25 v. 19—21. 2 Cor. v. 21.

V. 29. Even the rich and powerful on earth are invited to this feast, and must feed on this spiritual provision, or they must starve: they must worship and submit to the exalted Saviour, or perish: they, that persist in their rebellion, must bow as condemned criminals before his tribunal. The most exalted and the most abased, in this respect, are precisely in the same situation; none can preserve his body from death, or raise it again from the dust; none can quicken his own soul, or save it from final condemnation. In both respects Christ alone is "the Resur-"rection and the Life;" and at length all that sleep in the dust must *bow* before his tribunal, and all his believing subjects will enter into his joy.

V. 30, 31. Some in every age will be the servants of Christ: they shall be accounted or registered a chosen generation to the Lord; and shall supplant the Jewish nation, though not descended from one common stock, being the children of God by a spiritual birth. They shall come from every quarter to enlarge the church; one generation shall declare to another his righteouspess and salvation; and his atoning death and consequent glory shall be their favourite topics.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—21.

The stupendous scene here exhibited should attract our most serious and affectionate attention. Let us therefore step aside from worldly trifles, to "behold the Lamb of "God, that taketh away the sin of the world." Let us contemplate the depth of the Saviour's humiliation in connexion with his personal dignity; and his intense sufferings, contrasted with the infinite delight that the Father had in him, and the combination of all excellencies in his character. Let us hearken to his complaints and groans; let us attend to his strong crying and tears; his agony and temptations, and the cruelty and contempt with which he was treated by Jews and Gentiles, priests, rulers, people, and soldiers; till ingenuity was exhausted, and malice itself fatigued with mocking and tormenting him. Let us view this holy Saviour surrounded by bulls, lions, and ravenous dogs; in the palace of the high priest, in Herod's, and Pilate's, judgment hall. Let us next look to him as nailed to the cross, pouring out his blood like water; inquiring in doleful accents "My God, My God, why hast "thou forsaken me?" and complaining, "All my bones "are out of joint, my heart is as wax, it is melted in the "midst of my bowels;" till at length his death closed the awful scene, whilst nature also seemed expiring in convulsions. What then do we learn from these astonishing events, and this extraordinary prediction of them? Here we behold the eternal justice and holiness of our God; the immutable excellency and obligation of his law; the inconceivable odiousness and guilt of sin; the inestimable worth of our souls; the ruined state of man; the insufficiency of all other expedients for magnifying the law, or satisfying the justice of God; the vanity of the world, and the misery of its deluded inhabitants; the dire malignity of the human heart, which naturally conceived and expressed such cruel hatred and contempt of him, who was "the Brightness of the Father's glory, and the express "Image of his person;" the infinitely free love and compassion of God the Father and of our Lord Jesus Christ, for us wretched sinners; the foundation of every human hope; the source of all grace and consolation; the exemplar to which we are to be conformed, the treatment we are to expect from man, and the conduct under it, which, as Christians, we are to adopt. In short, the whole system of true religion is here viewed in its central point; and every lesson is learned, with peculiar advantage, by the enlightened and humbled soul.

V. 22—31.

In this part of the psalm, viewed in connexion with the former, we behold the ransom accepted, the Saviour heard, and raised and exalted to his glorious throne: we view him at the right hand of the Father, receiving inestimable gifts to bestow on sinful man, and not ashamed to call his poor disciples brethren; declaring among them, and by them to the world, the name and truths of God; fulfilling in his exaltation the design of all his sufferings; and calling on all, that fear and seek the Lord, to rejoice in, to praise, and glorify him. He now gives us his flesh and blood, to be the life-giving and preserving food of our souls: on this the meek and humble feed with delight, praise the Lord for it, and live for ever: and all, however powerful or honourable, who refuse this provision, and will not worship the exalted Saviour, must perish: for the kingdom is the Lord's, and the once crucified Jesus is the Governor among the nations: and no man can by any means keep alive his own soul. Whilst numbers despise, and wonder, and perish; from age to age a seed is raised up to serve the Redeemer, who are accounted to the Lord for a chosen generation; and who declare his righteousness and works of love, to those who surround, and those that shall succeed them. Thus the Gentiles have been brought into his church, which is preserved in the midst of opposition: and ere long "All the ends of the earth shall re-"member, and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds "of the nations shall worship before him." Let the infidel then study this psalm with serious attention, and no longer object his futile cavils in opposition to demonstration. Let those, who go about to establish their own righteousness, inquire why the beloved Son of God thus suffered, if *their* performances could atone for sin, or recommend a

PSALM XXIII.

David rejoices in the compassionate care of the Lord his Shepherd, 1—3. *He exults in the assurance of being supported by him through life and death; and of spending eternity in his presence,* 4—6.

A Psalm of David.

THE LORD *is* [a] my Shepherd: [b] I shall not want.

2 He [c] maketh me to lie down in * green pastures: he [d] leadeth me beside the † still waters.

3 He [e] restoreth my soul: [f] he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

4 Yea, though I walk [h] through the valley of the shadow of death, [i] I will fear no evil: [k] for thou *art* with me; [l] thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.

5 Thou [m] preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou ‡ anointest my head with oil; [n] my cup runneth over.

6 Surely [o] goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: [p] and I will dwell in the house of the LORD § for ever.

a lxxxix 13. lxxx. 1. Is xl. 11. Jer. xxxii. 3, 4. Ez. xxxiv. 11, 12. 23, 24. Mic. v. 2 4. John x. 11. 14. 27—30 Heb. xiii. 20. 1 Pet ii 25. v 4. b xxxiv. 9, 10. lxxxiv 11 Mat vi. 33. Luke xii. 30—32 Rom viii 32 Phil. iv. 19 Heb. xiii. 5, 6.
c Is. xxx 23. Ez. xxxiv 13, 14.
* Heb. *pastures of tender grass.*
d xlvi. 4. Is xlix. 9. 10 Rev vii. 17. xxi 6 xxii 1 17
† Heb *waters of quietness.* Job xxxiv. 29 Is viii 6
e xix. 7. *Marg.* li 10—12. lxxxv. 4 7 cxix. 176 Job xxxiii. 30. Jer xxxii. 37—42. Hos. xiv. 4—9. Mic vii. 8, 9 18, 19. Luke xxii. 31. 32. Rev. iii. 19.——f v. 8. xxxi 3. cxliii 8—10. Prov viii. 20 Is. xlii. 16. Jer. xxxi. 8, 9.
g lxxix. 9. Ez xx. 14. Eph. ii. 7.
h xliv. 19. Job iii. 5 x 21, 22. xx. v. 17 Jer. ii 6 Luke i. 79.
i iii. 6. xxvii 1—4. xlvi. 1—3. cxviii 6. cxxxviii 7. Is. xli. 10 1 Cor. xv 55—57.
k xiv 5 xlvi 11. Is. viii 9, 10. xliii 1, 2 Zech. viii. 23 Matt. i. 23. xxviii 20. Acts xviii. 9, 10. 2 Tim. iv 22.
l cx 2 Mic. vii. 14 Zech xi 10. 14.
m xxii. 26. 29. xxxi. 19, 20. civ. 15 Job xxxvi 16. Is. xxv. 6 John vi. 53—56. x. 9. 10. xvi. 22. Col iii. 3.
1 John ii 20. 27.
n xvi. 5 cxvi. 13. 1 Cor x. 16 Eph iii. 19.——o xxx. 11, 12 xxxvi. 7—10. ciii. 17. 2 Cor. i. 10. 2 Tim. iv 18.——p xvi. 11. xvii. 15. lxxiii. 24—26. 2 Cor v. 1. Phil i. 23.
‡ Heb. *makest fat.* xlv 7 xcii 10 Am. vi. 6. Matt. vi. 17. 2 Cor i. 21
§ Heb *to length of days* xxi. 4.

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sinner to his offended God? Let the antinomian consider, whether the Saviour thus honoured the divine law, to purchase him the liberty of despising it? Let the careless take warning to flee from the wrath to come, and the trembling be encouraged, and rest their hopes upon this merciful Redeemer. The tempted and distressed believer should contemplate this scene, and learn to imitate the faith, patience, meekness, constancy, persevering prayers, fervent zeal, and love of the suffering Saviour; and cheerfully expect a happy event of every trial. Finally, let us never be ashamed to profess our faith in him and obligations to him, who condescends to own us as his brethren: but instruct our families in the important truths of his Gospel, desiring above all things, and praying continually, that they may be a seed to serve him; and that all the ends of the earth may hear and receive his Gospel, and become his believing and accepted servants and worshippers.

NOTES.

PSALM XXIII. V. 1—3. The preceding psalm represented "the good Shepherd laying down his life for "the sheep," and assuming his pastoral charge: this describes *their* safety and felicity under his tender care. For as Christ is the good, the great, the *chief* Shepherd; we cannot doubt, but he is JEHOVAH, and is especially intended. (*Marg. Ref.*) A flock of sheep, gentle, harmless, and valuable, feeding in verdant pastures, or reclining, cheerful and satisfied, by gentle rivulets, under the care of a skilful, vigilant, and tender shepherd, forms the emblem of believers, brought back to the Shepherd of their souls, and by him guarded and provided for. He is JEHOVAH, the omnipresent, omniscient, almighty God, One with the Father, and every way able and willing to take care of them. His ordinances are their plenteous pastures, the consolations of his Holy Spirit are their refreshing waters. They are thus guided by their Shepherd into communion with God, and find rest in their souls. If they wander, he restores them by his kind rebukes, and his effectual grace; when their souls are diseased, He, as their physician, recovers their health and vigour; and for the honour of his Gospel, and the glory of his name, he leads them in the paths of righteousness.

V. 4. Betwixt that part of the flock which is on earth and that which is gone to heaven, death lies, like a deep valley, that must be passed in going from the one to the other. But this valley cannot hurt believers, and should not alarm them. It is indeed deep and dark, but fruitful. The good Shepherd will accompany his sheep through it, by his gracious presence: his rod, the token of his power, will defend them from the assaults of their enemies; his pastoral staff, his word of promise and Spirit of grace, will support them with inward strength; and thus he will render death safe and comfortable to them.

V. 5, 6. The people of God feast at his table upon the provisions of his love; nor can Satan and wicked men, who hate and envy them, destroy their comforts, whilst they are anointed with the unction of the Holy Spirit, and drink of the cup of salvation, ever full and running over. Past experience teaches them to trust, "that the goodness "and mercy of God will follow them all the days of their "life." It is their desire, expectation, and determination to seek their happiness in the service of God here, and they hope to enjoy his love, without enemy or interruption, for length of days, even for ever in heaven hereafter. The images in these verses are taken from feasts, and the general customs of anointing the guests, and distinguishing such as were most favoured by the largest portions. (*Gen.* xliii. 34.) Under these images both temporal provisions and spiritual comforts seem to be included.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Experimental piety is the source of the purest, strongest comforts, and the most unshaken confidence: and cheerfulness greatly adorns and recommends it. What can they want, who have JEHOVAH for their Shepherd? What will he withhold from his friends, who shed his blood for them when enemies, that he might reconcile them to himself? Will not he, who ransomed our souls, provide for

PSALM XXIV.

The Creator's dominion over the whole earth, 1, 2 The subjects of the Redeemer's kingdom, 3—6 Entrance demanded for the King of glory into his temple, 7—10.

A Psalm of David.

THE [a] earth *is* the LORD's, and the fulness thereof: [b] the world, and they that dwell therein.

2 For [c] he hath founded it upon the seas, and [d] established it upon the floods.

3 [e] Who shall ascend into [f] the hill of the LORD? [g] and who shall stand in his holy place?

4 * He that hath [h] clean hands, and [i] a pure heart; who hath not [k] lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor [l] sworn deceitfully.

5 He shall [m] receive the blessing from the LORD, and [n] righteousness from [o] the God of his salvation.

6 This *is* [p] the generation of them that seek him, [q] that seek thy face, † O Jacob. Selah.

7 [r] Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and [s] the King of glory [t] shall come in.

8 Who *is* this King of glory? [u] The

a Ex. ix. 29. xi. 5. Deut. x. 14. 1 Chr. xxix. 11. Job xli. 11. Dan. iv. 25. 1 Cor. x. 26. 28.
b lxxxix. 11. xcviii. 7. Nah. i. 5.
c xxxiii. 7, 8. xcv. 4, 5. civ. 5, 6. cxxxvi. 6. Gen. i. 9, 10. Job xxxviii. 3. Jer. x. 11. 16. 2 Pet. iii. 5—7.
d xciii. 1. xcvi. 10. Gen. viii. 22. Job xxxviii. 8—12. Jer. v. 22.
e xv. 1. lxvii. 19. John xiii. 36. xx. 17. Eph. iv. 8—10.
f lxviii. 15, 16. lxxviii. 68, 69. cxxxii. 13, 14. 2 Sam. vi. 12—17. 1 Chr. xv. 1. 25—28. Heb. xii. 22—24.
g Lev. x. 3. Mal. iii. 1, 2. Heb. xii. 28, 29.
* Heb. *The clean of hands.* xviii. 20.
h xxvi. 6. Job ix. 30. xvii. 9. Is. i. 15, 16. xxxiii. 15. 1 Tim. ii. 8. Jam. iv. 8.
i li. 10. lxxiii. 1. Gen. vi. 5. Prov. xx. 9. Jer. iv. 14. Matt. v. 8. Acts xv. 9. 2 Cor. vii. 1. Rev. xxi. 1—4. 27. xxii. 14, 15.
k xxv. 1. cxliii. 8. Deu. iv. 19. Ez. xviii. 6. 15. Acts xiv. 15.
l xv. 4. Jer. v. 2. vii. 9. 10. Zech. v. 3, 4. Mal. iii. 5. 1 Tim. i. 10.
m i. 23. lxvii. 6, 7. lxxii. 17. cxv. 12, 13. cxxviii. 1—5. Num. vi. 24—27. Matt. v. 3—12. John vii. 17.

Rom. iv. 6—9. Gal. iii. 9. 14. Eph. i. 3. 1 Pet. iii. 9. —— n Is. xlvi. 13. li. 5, 6. 8. liv. 17. lxi. 10. Rom. iii. 22. v. 17, 18. 1 Cor. i. 30. 2 Cor. v. 21. Gal. v. 5. Phil. iii. 9. o lxviii. 19, 20. lxxxvi. 1. 1 Is. ii. 2. xlv. 17. Tit. ii. 10—14. iii. 4—6. —— p xxii. 30. lxxiii. 15. Is. liii. 10. Rom. iv. 16. 1 Pet. ii. 9. —— q xxvii. 8. cv. 4. John i. 47—49. † Or, O God of *Jacob*. —— r cxviii. 19, 20. Is. xxvi. 2. —— s xxi. 1. 4. xcvii. 6. Hag. ii. 7, 9. Mal. iii. 1. 1 Cor. ii. 8. Jam. ii. 1. 2 Pet. iii. 18. Rev. iv. 11. —— t lxviii. 16—18. cxxxii. 8. Num. x. 35. 36. 2 Sam. vi. 17. 1 Kings viii. 6. 11. Mark xvi. 19. Eph. iv. 8—10. 1 Pet. iii. 22. —— u xlv. 3—6. l. 1. xciii. 1. Is. ix. 6. xlix. 24—26. lxiii. 1—6. Col. ii. 15. Rev. vi. 2. xix. 11—21.

our bodies? Alas, our discontent and disconsolation spring from unbelief, and from a consequent unsteady walk, which darkens our prospects and weakens our evidence. Let us give diligence to make our calling and election sure: let us simply trust our Shepherd's care, and listen to his voice; let us cultivate the gentle and amiable dispositions which these emblems suggest: let us keep close to his ordinances, as the pasture of our souls; and draw the waters of life with joy from the wells of salvation, seeking no other consolations; and let us earnestly desire to be kept from wandering, or speedily to be restored from every devious step; for peace and safety can be found only in the paths of righteousness. Thus walking with God and trusting in him, we may think of death, as our appointed passage to eternal life, without fearing any evil: the outward protection and inward supports of our gracious Friend will prevent all harm, and he will receive our souls to the mansion which he hath prepared for them. Whilst he pleases that we should continue here, he can make any situation pleasant, by the unction of his Spirit and the joys of his salvation, in defiance of all our enemies: and the lively Christian, will thankfully acknowledge the Lord's exuberant kindness, and declare his satisfaction in his care and love. Let us then thank him for the past and present, and trust him for the future: let us keep close to his service now; and simply repose our confidence in him, that his goodness will supply our every want, his mercy pardon all our sins, and relieve all our sorrows: that these shall follow us all the days of our life; and that we shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever; "in his presence, "where is fulness of joy, and at his right hand, where are "pleasures for evermore."

NOTES.

PSALM XXIV. V. 1, 2. This psalm is supposed to have been written and sung, with some others, when David removed the ark to Jerusalem; perhaps it might also be used when the ark was removed into Solomon's temple. But the ascension of Christ into heaven seems to have been sublimely prefigured under those typical events. The Psalmist introduced his subject, by declaring the sovereignty of God over the whole world. He had formed both the earth and its inhabitants, and separated the dry land from the waters, by which it arose out of the floods, and seemed to have its foundation upon them. The whole belonged to the great Creator, to be disposed of as he pleased. And he might most justly have cut off all the apostate race; or he might have taken another part of it instead of Israel. This introduction, therefore, seems to have been intended to excite the people's admiring gratitude for the Lord's distinguishing kindness to them.

V. 3—6. External privileges were granted to Israel: but the character of the true Israelite was here inquired after. (*Notes*, &c. *Psalm* xv.) A holy life, springing from a sanctified heart, free from external and mental idolatry, and all corrupt affections and carnal confidences, united with watchfulness against all hypocrisy and dissimulation; and an exact punctuality and fidelity to every vow, profession, or engagement to God or man, distinguished the acceptable worshippers from the rest of the congregation at the sanctuary; as they do real from nominal Christians. This character originates from regeneration; and is gradually formed by the divine Spirit, through faith: and while others derive no benefit from divine ordinances, persons of this description receive blessings from the LORD continually; even "righteousness from the God of salva-"tion." For "by the Spirit they wait for the hope of "righteousness through faith." (*Marg. Ref.*) Thus, it is very clearly stated, that while separation from sin and a pious conscientious conduct, prepare a man's heart for receiving divine blessings, and evidence his interest in them; yet they do not constitute his justifying righteousness, or merit the favour of God; in whom he must trust as the God of his salvation, and from whom he must receive the gift of righteousness by faith. They who thus trust and serve God, constitute the generation of those who

LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle.

9 Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift *them* up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

10 Who is this King of glory? [x] The LORD of hosts, [y] he *is* the King of glory. Selah.

x Is. vi 3—5. liv. 5. Hos xii. 3—5. Zech ii. 8—11. John xii. 40, 41. xiv. 9.
y ii. 6—12. Matt xxv 31. 34. Luke ix. 26. Tit ii. 13.

PSALM XXV.

David, trusting in God and waiting on him, prays for protection and guidance, 1—5. Pleading the mercy of God and the honour of his name, he entreats forgiveness; and shows the Lord's readiness to teach the meek and upright, 6—11. He shows the privileges of the godly, and blends his complaints with earnest prayers for himself and Israel, 12—22.

A Psalm of David.

UNTO thee, O LORD, [a] do I lift up my soul.

a xxiv. 4. lxxxvi. 4. cxliii. 8. 1 Sam i. 15. Lam. iii. 41.

seek him, as Jacob did, and thus enjoy his favour. The last clause is thus rendered in the old translation, "*This* "*is* Jacob:" the true seed of Abraham, the true Israel.

V. 7—10. It is supposed, that the priests that bare the ark, and the Levites who attended them, demanded entrance into the tabernacle from those who kept the gates. The expression "Lift up your heads, O ye gates," may allude to the form in which the gates were made, the upper part lifting up, to render the entrance more spacious: the gates might be called everlasting, because the ark was to have an abiding residence on mount Zion, where a durable temple was about to be erected. To this demand the porters within answered in solemn strains, "Who is this King of glory?" and were again answered, that it was "the LORD, strong, and mighty, the LORD, "mighty in battle;" that is, Israel's Protector and Friend, by whose power they were victorious over all their enemies. The demand being then repeated, and a similar answer returned, the gates we may suppose, were thrown open, and the symbol of the divine presence was carried into the holy of holies. This is supposed to represent the Saviour, at his ascension, demanding by his attendant angels admission into heaven, as Man and Mediator; yet at the same time as "the King of glory, and the LORD strong "and mighty." In human nature, and even on the cross, he had overcome, and triumphed over the powers of darkness; and ascending up on high, he led them captive at his chariot-wheels. To him the everlasting portals were lifted up, who was at the same time a Man and the LORD of hosts: and as our forerunner he entered heaven amidst the admiring acclamations of the whole angelic choir. And thus the gates of the heavenly happiness were opened to every sinner, who receives Christ as his Lord and Saviour, assured that indeed he is the Lord of hosts and the King of glory.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

As the earth, with its fulness and inhabitants, belongs to the great Creator, whose glorious wisdom, power, and goodness appear on every side, we should continually remember our obligations to love and serve him with all our powers; to receive all our comforts as his gifts, and to employ all according to his will. This must also remind us of our need of his mercy, and lead us to continual humiliation before him: for which of his gifts have we not abused? Which of our powers have we not employed in rebellion? If we had done all that was commanded us, we ought to have said, we are unprofitable servants. How absurd then for sinners to boast of their scanty and defective services! It is of the Lord's mercy, that we any of us worship with acceptance, or may hope to enter into heaven. We should be thankful for outward privileges: yet let us be careful not to trust in them, but seriously inquire whether his word and ordinances have indeed been sanctifying to our hearts, and have taught us to walk in newness of life? Whether we are weaned from the vanities of the world, and delivered from hypocrisy and deceit in our professions and engagements? The generation of them who seek and serve the God of Jacob, are formed to a peculiar character; the blessings of salvation and the crown of righteousness must be waited for in the way of conscientious obedience; and they who expect them in any other way will find themselves awfully deluded. The incarnate Word and Son of God, having completed his obedience and sufferings on earth as our Surety, hath, in human nature, ascended up on high, as a triumphant conqueror. The everlasting portals have been thrown open to receive him. He alone in human nature ascended thither by the merit of his own righteousness: but it is of infinite value, and merit for us also if we believe in him. Whilst angels adore, in the man Christ Jesus, the King of glory and the LORD of hosts, and welcome him as Head over all things to his church: surely *we* cannot refuse him our thankful acclamations, or neglect to honour him, as we ought to honour the Father that sent him. Let all remember that he is able to save and to destroy: "the LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle." If we refuse now to open our hearts to welcome him, he will at length refuse to open the gates of heaven to us; both at the hour of death, and when after the final judgment, he shall re-enter the heavenly palace with all the millions of his redeemed people. Then all unbelievers shall go away into everlasting punishment. Lord, open the doors of our souls by thy grace, that we may now receive thee, and be willingly and wholly thine; and that at length we may be numbered with thy saints in glory everlasting!

NOTES.

PSALM XXV V. 1. The repeated and deep confessions of sin, which are blended with the petitions and

2 [b] O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be ashamed, [c] let not mine enemies triumph over me.

3 Yea, let none that [d] wait on thee [e] be ashamed: [f] let them be ashamed which transgress [g] without cause.

4 [h] Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths.

5 [i] Lead me in thy truth, and [k] teach me: for thou *art* [l] the God of my salvation; [m] on thee do I wait all the day.

6 [n] Remember, O LORD, [o] thy * tender mercies and thy loving kindnesses; [p] for they *have been* ever of old.

7 [q] Remember not [r] the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions; [s] according to thy mercy remember thou me [t] for thy goodness' sake, O LORD.

8 ¶ [u] Good and [x] upright *is* the LORD: therefore will he [y] teach sinners in the way.

9 [z] The meek will he [a] guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach [b] his way.

10 All [c] the paths of the LORD *are* [d] mercy and truth, unto such as [e] keep his covenant and his testimonies.

b vii 1. xviii. 2. xxii. 1. 5. 8. xxxi 1. xxxiv. 8 xxxvii. 40. lxxi. 1. Is. xxvi. 3, 4. xxviii. 16 xli. 16, 17. Rom. v. 5 x. 11. 1 Pet. ii. 6.
c xiii. 2—4 xxxv. 19—25. xli. 11. lvi 1, 2. xciv 3, 4. cxlii. 6. Is. xxxvi. 14—20. xxxvii. 10. 20 35.
d xxvii 14 xxxiii. 20. xxxvii. 34. xl. 1—3. lxii. 1—5. cxxiii. 2. cxxx. 5 Gen. xlix. 18. Is. xxv. 9. xl. 31. Lam. iii 25, 26. Mic. vii. 7. Rom. viii. 25.
e lxix. 6.
f vi. 10 xxxi. 17. xxxv. 26. xl. 14, 15. lxx. 2, 3. lxxi 13. cxxxii. 18. Jer. xx. 11.
g vii. 4, 5 lix 2—5. lxix. 4. cix. 3 5 cxix 78. John xv. 25.——h v. 8—10. xxvii. 11. lxxxvi 11. cxix. 27. 135. cxliii. 8. 10 Ex. xxxiii 13. Prov. viii. 20. Is ii 3. Jer. vi. 16. l. 5 ——i 8. 10. xliii. 3, 4. cvii. 7. Is. xxxv. 8. xlii. 16. xlix. 10. Jer. xxxi. 9. John viii. 31, 32. xiv 26. xvi 13. Rom. viii. 14 Eph iv. 21. 1 John ii. 27 Rev vii. 17——k cxix 26 33. 66. Neh ix 20. Job xxxvi 22. Is. liv. 13 Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. John vi 45. Eph. iv. 20, 21.——l xxiv 5. lxviii 20. lxxix. 9. lxxxviii. 1 ——m xxii 2 lxxxvi 3. lxxxviii. 2. cxix 97 Prov. viii. 34. xxiii. 17. Is. xxx 18. Luke xviii. 7.
n xcviii. 3. cvi. 45 cxxxvi. 23 2 Chr vi 42. Luke i. 54. 71, 72.——o xl. 11. lxix. 13. 16. ciii. 4 cxix. 77. 156. Is. lv. 7. lxiii. 7 2 Cor. i 3.——* Heb. *bowels*. Is. lxiii. 15. Jer. xxxi. 20. Luke i. 78. *Marg.* Phil. i. 8. ii. 1. Col iii. 12. 1 John iii. 17.
p lxxvii. 7—12. ciii. 17 cvi. 1. cxxxvi. 11, &c. Gen. xxiv. 27. xxxii. 9, 10. Ex. xv. 12. xxxiv. 6, 7. Neh. ix. 19. 27, 28 Jer. xxxiii. 11. Mic. vii 18—20. Luke i. 50.
q lxxix. 8 cix. 14. 16. Is. xxxviii. 17. xliii. 25. lxiv. 9. Heb. viii. 12. x. 16—18.
r Job xiii. 26. xx. 11. Prov. v. 7—14 Jer. iii 25. John v. 5. 14
s li 1. cix. 26. cxix. 124.
t vi. 4. xxxi. 16. Eph i. 6, 7. ii. 4—8.
u cxix. 68.
x xcii. 15. Is. xxvi. 7.——y Prov. i. 20—23 ii. 1—6 ix. 4—6 Mic. iv. 2 Matt. ix. 13 xi. 29, 30. Luke xi. 13 John vi. 44, 45. 2 Cor. iv. 6 Eph. i. 17, 18. Jam. i. 5 ——z xxii. 26. lxxvi. 9. cxlvii. 6 cxlix. 4. Is. xi. 4 lxi 1 Zeph. ii. 3 Mat v. 5. Gal v. 23 Jam. i 21. 1 Pet. iii 4. 15 ——a xxiii 3 xxxii 8. 9 lxxiii. 24. cxix. 66 cxliii 10. Pro. iii. 5, 6. viii. 20 Is. xlii. 1—3 Ez. xi. 12. xxxvi. 27.——b cxix. 35 John xiv. 6 Acts ix. 2. xiii. 10. Heb. x 20.——c xviii 25, 26. xxiii 4—6. xxxvii 23, 24. xci. 14 cxix. 75, 76. cxxxviii. 7 Gen v 24. xvii. 1 xlviii. 15, 16. Is xliii 2. Rom viii. 28.——d xxxiii 4. lvii. 3 lxxxv. 10 lxxxix. 14. xcviii. 3. Gen. xxix. 27. 2 Sam. xv 20 Is. xxv. 1 John i 14. 17. Jam. v 11.——e xxiv. 4, 5 l. 23. ciii 17. 18 Is. lvi. 1, 2—6. Zeph. ii. 3. Acts x 35 Rom. ii. 73. Heb. viii. 8—12. xii. 14. xiii. 20, 21.

complaints throughout this psalm, favour the opinion of those who think it was written during Absalom's rebellion, by which David's atrocious crimes in the matter of Uriah, as well as the sins of his youth, were brought to his remembrance. The expression, "unto thee do I lift up "my soul," emphatically describes the nature of fervent prayer, when all dependence on creatures and expectation from them, are sensibly renounced; and the earnest desires of the soul accompany the voice, but are indeed too large for utterance.

V. 2, 3. These verses are rendered in most versions, as a prayer, which they certainly imply: but the future tense being used, and not the imperative, as in the following verses, they may be rendered more literally, "O my "God, I trust in thee: I shall not be ashamed: my enemies "shall not triumph over me. Yea, none that wait on "thee shall be ashamed: they shall be ashamed who *act* "*perfidiously* without cause." David had given Saul and his adherents no just cause to hate and persecute him; nor had Absalom or the rebellious Israelites any cause for their treason and perfidy. Their hatred was not only unmerited, but directly contrary to his deserts. It was wholly *free* or *gratuitous*. Thus the Jews hated Christ without a cause, or *freely*: the same word being employed, which the apostle uses in respect of a sinner's justification before God, "Being "justified freely." (*John* xv. 25. *Rom.* iii. 24. *Greek.*)

V. 4, 5. 'It is hard to know what to do in these 'difficult times, especially in this great agitation of my 'thoughts, wherein my troubled mind is tossed up and 'down. Therefore, do thou be pleased, O Lord, to show 'me the course thou wouldest have me to take, and govern 'my actions so, that they may be pleasing unto thee. I 'have as much need of thy guidance, as a little child has 'of its parent's, and I cry as earnestly unto thee, that 'thou wilt direct me at every step.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) To be guided in the path of faithfulness to men and faith in God, inviolable adherence to truth and duty in such circumstances, was peculiarly desirable. For this blessing, more than for victory, David waited continually, all the day, and every day, on God his Saviour, (so the Septuagint reads it.) The term, *wait*, implies a simple, dependent, expecting, attentive state of heart; which leads to frequency and constancy in the use of proper means, perseveringly, notwithstanding delays and discouragements, with a resolute rejection of all other confidences and all inconsistent measures.

V. 6, 7. The contrast between the Lord's remembering his tender mercies and loving kindnesses, which had always been exercised to his worshippers, and sprang from everlasting love, and his not remembering the Psalmist's transgressions, is very expressive. When God thus remembers his mercies, he ceases to remember our sins; that is, he does not punish us for them. The language also is peculiarly emphatical. The distinction between the sins of youth, thus brought afresh to remembrance, and later transgressions, of which David was conscious, seems to fix the occasion of the psalm to have been as above stated. He could find no reason, in himself, why God should remember him in mercy; but he pleads with him to do it for his own goodness' sake. (*Marg. Ref.*)—Most of the verses in this psalm begin with the Hebrew letters, in alphabetical order; (of which there are several instances in the psalms:) but a few omissions and variations are found, which some ascribe to the perturbation of David's mind.

V. 8, 9. The goodness and mercy of God dispose him to be kind even to sinners, and instead of inflicting immediate vengeance, to use various methods of bringing them to repentance. He is *upright* and sincere in all his declarations and invitations, and he loveth truth and justice: he is therefore ever ready to teach his ways of peace and holiness to all those, however sinful, who are humbly willing to learn them, that they may enter and walk in them. But the proud and obstinate, who feel no want of such instructions, or desires after them, and are not disposed to practise what they know, do not properly apply for divine teaching. And as the Master in this school is "meek, and lowly in heart," and teaches with gentleness and wisdom, the scholars should surely be teachable, and learn in meeknes and humility.

11 For [f] thy name's sake, O LORD, pardon mine iniquity; [g] for it *is* great.

12 ¶ [h] What man *is* he that feareth the LORD? [i] him shall he teach in the way *that* he shall choose.

13 [k] His soul shall * dwell at ease; and [l] his seed shall [m] inherit the earth.

14 The [n] secret of the LORD *is* with them that fear him; and † he will shew them his covenant.

15 [o] Mine eyes *are* ever toward the LORD; for he shall ‡ pluck my feet [p] out of the net.

16 [q] Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me; [r] for I *am* desolate and afflicted.

17 The troubles of my heart are enlarged; O bring thou me out of my distresses.

18 [t] Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and [u] forgive all my sins.

19 [x] Consider mine enemies; for they are many; and they hate me with § cruel hatred.

20 [y] O keep my soul, and deliver me: [z] let me not be ashamed; for I put my trust in thee.

21 [a] Let integrity and uprightness, preserve me; for I wait on thee.

22 [b] Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.

f xxxi 3 lxxix. 9. cxliii. 11 Is. xliii. 25. xlviii.9 Ez. xx 9 xxxvi 31, 32. g Num xiv. 17-19 Rom v 20, 21. h cxi 10. Pro i. 7 ii.5. xv. 33 xvi. 6. Ec. xii. 13. Is 1. 10. Acts x. 2 22 xi. 14. xiii. 26. i xxxvii. 23. Is. xxxv. 8 John iii. 20, 21. vii. 17 viii. 31, 32 2 Thes. ii 10—12 1 John ii 27. k Deu xxxiii.12. 26-29. Prov. i. 33 xxix. 25 Ez xxxiv. 25—28. Matt. xi. 28, 29 * Heb. *lodge in goodness.* xxxi. 19. xxxvi. 8. lxiii 5. Is. lxvi. 10—14. Jer. xxxi. 12—14. Zeph. iii. 17 Zech. ix. 17. Phil iv 19 ——l xxxvii. 26. lxix. 36. cxii. 2. Gen xvii. 7—10. Prov. xx. 7. Is. lxv. 23. Jer. xxxii. 39. Acts ii. 39. m xxxvii.,11.22.29. Ez. xxxiii. 24—26. Mat. v. 5. 1 Pet. iii. 10 2 Pet iii. 13 ——n Gen. xviii. 17—19. Judg. xiii 18. Pro. iii. 32. Mat xiii. 12, 13. John xiv. 17 21—23 xv 15 xvii. 6. 1 Cor. ii 14 Col iii. 3. Rev. ii. 17.——† Or, *his covenant to make them know* it Gen. xvii. 13. Deu. iv 13. Jer. xxxi. 31—34. Rom. ix 26, 27.——o cxxi. 1, 2. cxxiii. 2. cxli. 3 ——‡ Heb. *bring forth.*——p xxxi. 4. cxxiv. 7. Jer. v. 27. 2 Tim. ii. 25, 26. q lx. 1. lxix. 16. lxxxvi 16. Mic. vii. 19.

r lxix. 14—20. lxxxviii 15—18. cxliii 4 Dan. ix. 17. Mark xv. 33 35 s xxxiv. 19. xxxviii. 1—8. xlii. 7 lxxvii. 2—4. 1 Cor. iv. 11—13. 2 Cor. i. 9, 10. iv. 8, 9. t cxix. 132. 153. 1 Sam. i. 11. 2 Sam. xvi. 12. Lam. v. 1. Luke i. 25 u xxxii 1—5 li. 8, 9 Matt. ix. 2. x iii. 1, 2 xxvii. 2. 12 cxviii. 19 lvi. 2 lvii. 4. cxxxviii 7. cxliii. 2. 2 Sam. xvi. 11. xvii. 2—4. Luke xxii 2. xxiii. 5 21—23. § Heb. *hatred of violence.* xi. 5. xviii. 48. *Marg.* lii. 2 lxxxvi. 14. cxl. 1. 4. 11 y xvii. 8. xxii.20, 21 cxxi. 7. Luke xxiii. 46. Acts vii. 59.——z lxxi. 1, 2. Joel ii. 26, 27 ——a vii. 8. xviii. 20—24. xxvi. 1 11. xli. 12 1 Sam. xxiv. 11—13. xxvi 23. Prov xi 3. xx. 7. Dan. vi 22. Acts xxiv. 16. xxv. 10, 11.——b xiv. 7. li 18, 19. cxxii. 6. cxxx. 8. cxxxvii. 5, 6.

V. 10. All the dealings of God with those that accept of his new covenant salvation, and *walk with him*, by faith in his truths and promises, and in obedience to his commandments, are the result of his wisdom, and consistent with his mercy and faithfulness; and therefore they will all eventually do them good, whatever present appearances may be. Or, all the commands and counsels of God, the paths in which he calls his people to walk with him, are good in themselves, and do good to the upright; and lead them to experience the fulfilment of his merciful and faithful promises.

V. 11. Had David's iniquity been great, and had he thought it but little, this plea would have been inadmissible: but his argument was, that "where sin had abounded, grace might much more abound." Thus the *name* or perfections of God would be displayed and glorified: and on this ground he hoped for pardon of his most atrocious sins, and on this alone; so that, if this plea did not prevail, he must sink in hopeless misery.

V. 12, 13. It is said of all unconverted men, that "There is no fear of God before their eyes:" but "the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom." Where then is that man, in this evil world, who truly reverences the authority of God, who fears his displeasure, and seeks his favour, as the main concern of his life? However disadvantageously he may be circumstanced; how great soever his past guilt, or his present darkness and discouragement; the God of all grace, who has excited this fear of him by preventing grace, will assuredly afford him the means of instruction, and enable him to profit by them: so that eventually, he *shall dwell at ease*, or *lodge in goodness;* and shall find a never-failing source of comfort in the divine love, whilst he expects the complete felicity of heaven at last. The inheritance of Canaan was a type of heaven; but indeed that man inherits the earth as far as it can profit him, who has food and raiment, and lives contented, and in peace: and the godly man may hope for these blessings in behalf of his children, when about to leave them.

V. 14. The knowledge of the glory and harmony of the divine perfections, which encourages a sinner to trust and love a holy God; that sweet communion, which the believer enjoys with his Saviour; and that peace and those joys, which spring from the earnest of the Spirit, may be well called "The secret of the LORD;" and they lead the soul into a conciliating and satisfactory acquaintance with his purposes, and the wisdom and equity of them; and with the security and blessings of the new covenant, and the assurance of an interest in it. But none, except those who fear God, can possibly enjoy this satisfaction, which must still remain a *secret* to all ungodly men. —Several other discoveries of the secret plan and purposes of God may also be intended, which none but the pious Christian can receive. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 16. The word rendered *desolate* is the masculine of the noun, which, being feminine, is translated *my darling.* (xxii. 20.) The Septuagint here render it, *only begotten;* as it certainly means in some places: but in this connexion it seems rather to imply the destitute condition of the Psalmist, when left *alone*, or forsaken by his former adherents and friends: and a fit type of Christ, as deserted by his disciples, and surrounded by his insulting enemies.

V. 17—20. Every occurrence during Absalom's rebellion tended to augment the distress of David, especially as reminding him of his sins, which were thus visited on him, as Nathan had foretold. (2 *Sam.* xii. 10, 11.) He therefore united reiterated prayers for pardon, with his earnest requests for deliverance. He was aware, that even his own son and his bosom counsellor, and a vast multitude of the nation, thirsted for his blood; and would decline no violence, treachery, or cruelty, to destroy him: so that his *life* could only be preserved by the same divine power and mercy, in which he trusted for the salvation of his soul.

V. 21. In the sight of God, David pleaded guilty of many and great sins: but he had acted an upright part towards his unnatural son and treacherous subjects. As a penitent likewise, he was without guile; was determined to adopt no sinful measures for his preservation: and thus waiting on God, he trusted that he should be preserved.

PSALM XXVI.

David professes his integrity, and delight in the people and ordinances of God, with a solemn appeal to him, 1—8. He deprecates the doom of the wicked, and unites earnest prayers with pious purposes and believing confidence in God, 9—12.

A Psalm of David.

[a] JUDGE me, O LORD; [b] for I have walked in mine integrity: [c] I have trusted also in the LORD; *therefore* [d] I shall not slide.

a vii. 8 xxxv. 21. xliii. 1 liv. 1. 1 Sam xxiv. 15. *Marg.* 1 Cor. iv. 3—6
b 11. xv. 2. xxv. 21. 2 Kings xx. 3. Prov. xx 7. 2 Cor. i 12.
c iv. 5. xxv. 21. xxviii. 7 xxxi. 14 Prov. xxix. 25.
d xxi. 7. xxxvii. 31. lxii. 2. 6. xciv. 18 cxxi. 3. 7, 8. 1 Sam ii. 9. 1 Pet. i. 5. 2 Pet. i 10.

V. 22. The cause of the royal sufferer was that of the nation, and of true religion. While he was banished from Jerusalem, the people were oppressed, the wicked triumphed, and piety languished: and if the traitors succeeded, the event would exceedingly tend to obstruct the best interests of Israel. David, therefore, in this prayer for the redemption of Israel from oppression, was a type of Christ interceding, amidst his personal sufferings, for his church; and for his own exaltation, as indispensably necessary to her interests, and to the salvation of his elect people.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

In vain will our *voice* be lifted up in prayer, unless our *souls* be lifted up to God in fervent desires, and believing expectations. They who trust in the Lord, will never be ashamed of their hope: nor shall any boasting or menacing enemies triumph over them. They will wait continually upon the Lord with their humble desires, and wait his time of granting them: and whilst others have the benefit of their prayers, thousands are praying for them, by character, if not by name; their heavenly Advocate also presents his effectual intercessions; and a cause so pleaded cannot but prevail; as they who injure or hate them, without cause or provocation, will at length experience to their unspeakable shame and confusion. But we must be careful not to give our enemies so much as a plausible pretext for their malice: and for that reason should above all things be instant in praying to be guided in the ways of truth and holiness. The most wise and experienced feel most their need of this continual teaching, and are most desirous of it: not only lest they should be wholly deceived, but lest they should be seduced into any paths of error or iniquity. They will therefore wait *all the day* on the God of their salvation. And his tender mercies, and his love to his people of old, will encourage them to come to him, that they may be remembered in the same gracious manner.—Recent transgressions or chastisements, if they had a proper effect, must lead most of us to recollect, and with shame confess, the sins of our youth, which are thus remembered against us; and thus we may humbly hope that the Lord will remember us according to his mercy, and blot them out for his goodness' sake.

V. 8—22.

The most ignorant or atrocious sinner may properly be encouraged to trust in our gracious God, who in perfect sincerity invites all who hear to come to him. He delights in directing the sinner in the way of acceptance, and the believer in the paths of holiness: and when the heart is humbled, and the rebellious will subdued, the understanding shall be further enlightened to perceive the truths of God. The sinner, who has learned, in meek and humble teachableness, to sit at the Saviour's feet and hear his word, shall soon be made acquainted with the secret comforts of true godliness, and shown the nature and excellency of his everlasting covenant: and having acceded to it, and learned to walk with him in faith and obedience, according to its tenour, he shall find every one of the Lord's dispensations towards him to be unmingled truth and mercy, not excepting his sharpest trials and severest corrections. The sudden recollection of the greatness of his iniquity may often assail his confidence; but faith in the Lord's more abundant mercy can even convert that into an argument why he should pardon. Pride, obstinacy, and the love of sin, dictate all the complaints which are heard of difficulty and uncertainty, in discovering the truth and will of God: for wherever there is a man who truly fears the Lord, he shall certainly be taught by the Holy Spirit the safe and happy way. He will surely be directed to the Saviour, and there find rest to his soul; and reposing his care and confidence upon his reconciled God, he will cheerfully wait for more complete joys in heaven; and commit his children to the Lord, desiring his blessing for their inheritance. That we come short of this serene and happy life, is the effect of remaining unbelief and disobedience, and because we are so often heedlessly running into the snares of the world, and are thus caught by Satan's wiles. Let us then look more entirely to God, that he would pluck our feet out of every net, and preserve us from every entangling care. Let us pray most earnestly when we are most desolate of earthly comforts and comforters, or oppressed with sorrows: for the Lord is able to support and deliver us. He considers the number and cruel hatred of our enemies; and if either the malice of man or the temptations of Satan render our prayers more frequent and fervent, they will be of great service to us. Let us especially pray for integrity and uprightness of heart, which will be our best preservative from dangers, delusions, and temptations; and secure to us purer comforts and more solid advantages than the friendship, or even the possession, of the whole world. And whilst we wait on the Lord about our own concerns, let us remember our brethren in tribulation, and pray for them also, that they may be redeemed from all their sins, enemies, temptations, and troubles; and that the Church of God may be enlarged and prospered, and fill the whole earth.

NOTES.

PSALM XXVI. V. 1. It is the general opinion,

2 [e] Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.

3 For [f] thy loving kindness *is* before mine eyes; and [g] I have walked in thy truth.

4 I have not [h] sat with vain persons, neither will I go in with dissemblers.

5 I have [i] hated the congregation of evil doers; and [k] will not sit with the wicked.

6 I will [l] wash mine hands in innocency: [m] so will I compass thine altar, O LORD:

7 [n] That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and [o] tell of all thy wondrous works.

8 LORD, [p] I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place * where thine honour dwelleth.

9 † Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with ‡ bloody men:

10 [q] In whose hands *is* mischief, and their right hand is § full of [r] bribes.

11 But as for me, [s] I will walk in mine integrity: [t] redeem me, [u] and be merciful unto me.

12 [x] My foot standeth in an even place: [y] in the congregations will I bless the LORD.

e vii. 9. xvii. 3. lxvi. 10. cxxxix. 23, 24 Job xiii. 23. xxxi. 4—6. Jer. xx. 12. Zech xiii. 9.
f lii. 1. lxxxv. 10—13 Matt. v. 44—48 Luke vi 36. 2 Cor. iii. 18. v 14, 15. viii 9, Eph. iv. 32. v. 1, 2 Col iii. 12, 13. 1 John iv. 7—12. 19—21. 3 John 11.
g xxv. 5 ci 2. cxix. 142 Is ii. 5. viii. 20 John xiv 6 Eph. iv. 20—25. 1 John i. 7. 2 John 4. 3 John 3, 4.
h i. 1 cxix. 63. 115 cxli. 4. Pro ix. 6. xii 11. xiii 20. Jer. xv. 17. 1 Cor xv. 33. 2 Cor. vi. 17.
i v. 5. xv. 4. xxxi. 6. ci. 3—8. cxxxix. 21, 22.——k Mat. ix. 11, 12. 1 Cor. v. 9—11. l xxiv. 4 lxxiii. 13. Ex. xxx. 19, 20. Is i. 16—18. Tit iii 5. Heb. x 19-22——m xliii 4. Mal ii 11—13. Matt v. 23, 24 1 Cor. xi. 28, 29. 1 Tim ii. 8——n ix 14 lxvi. 13—15. xcv 2 c. 4, 5 cxvi 12-14. 16, 19. cxviii. 19. 27. cxxxiv. 2. Deut. xxvi. 1—10. 1 Sam. i. 24—27. 2 Chr. xx. 26—29.

o lxxi 17—19. lxxii. 18. cv. 2. cxix. 27. cxxxvi. 4, 5. cxiv 5. Luke xix. 37—40.
p xxvii. 4—6. xlii. 4. lxxxiv. 1, 2. 10. cxxii. 1—4. 9 1 Sam. xv. 25 1 Chr xxix. 3. Is. xxxviii. 20 22. Luke ii. 46. 49. xix. 45—47 John ii 14—17.
* Heb. *of the tabernacle of thine honour.* lxiii 2, 3. Ex. xxv. 21, 22. xl 34, 35. 2 Chr. v. 14. vi. 1, 2
† Or, *Take not away.* xxviii. 1—3. 1 Sam xxv. 29 Mal. iii. 18. Matt xxiv. 51. xxv. 32 41 46. Rev. xxii. 14, 15.
‡ Heb. *men of blood.* li. 14. lv. 23. cxxxix. 19. 1 Sam xxii. 18, 19. 2 Sam. xvi 7. xxi. 1.——q x. 14 xi 2. xxxvi. 4. lii. 2. lv. 9—11. Pro i. 16 iv 16. Mic. ii. 1—3 Mat. xxvi. 3, 4. Acts xxiii. 12.
§ Heb. *filled with.*——r Ex. xxiii 8. Deut xvi. 19. 1 Sam. viii 3. Is. xxxiii 15 Ez. xxii. 12, 13 Am. v. 12. Mic. vii 3——s 1 Sam xii. 2—5. 2 Chr. xxxi. 20, 21 Neh. v. 15. Job i. 1 Is. xxxviii. 3 Luke i. 6 1 Thes. ii 10.——t xlix. 7. 15 lxix. 18. Tit. ii. 14. 1 Pet i 18, 19.——u cxxx 3, 4 7. 8. Neh. xiii 14 22 31.——x xxvii 11 xl. 2. 1 Sam. ii. 9. Prov. x. 9.——y 7. xxii. 22—25. cvii. 32. cxi. 1. cxxii. 4 Heb. ii. 12.

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and indeed it seems very probable that this psalm was written by David, in Philistia.—Exposed to envenomed slanders and cruel persecutions, he had been driven from the ordinances of God, into the society of idolaters: but he appealed to Him who searcheth all hearts, to judge betwixt him and his enemies. He was conscious of having uniformly and perseveringly acted uprightly towards Saul, and in all other respects: and he had also trusted in God alone. He therefore was confident he should not be left to fall into any of the snares which were laid for him. Or, he trusted in the Lord to keep him from falling, in any subsequent season of temptation.

V. 2. *Try.* This word, in the original, is derived from the *fire*, with which metals are tried and purified: and it shows the earnest desire of the Psalmist, even by sharp trials, to have his character ascertained, and his holiness improved.

V. 3. By meditating on the kindness, mercy, and faithfulness of God, David had learned to copy them in his habitual conduct. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 4. *Dissemblers* here denotes hypocrites, or those who under specious pretences cloaked their unjust and malicious designs.

V. 5. Evil doers meet together for various purposes; but whether treacherous policy, or malignant enmity, or a sensual and festive indulgence, formed the bond of their union, David hated their company, and shunned their assemblies.

V. 6—8. By repentance and conscientious obedience, as well as by faith, expressed in attending on the typical purifications, the Psalmist purposed to prepare for offering those sacrifices which prefigured the atonement of Christ; and especially for presenting his thank-offerings for deliverance, which he anticipated with cheerful hope. He trusted, that he should soon be restored to the land of Israel, and to the courts of God, in which he greatly delighted: and while the worshippers compassed the altar, he purposed to celebrate the wonderful works of God in his behalf.—The glory of God was manifested at the sanctuary, from above the mercy-seat; and in those ordinances which typified the Redeemer. Thus the *tent*, where the ark was placed, might be considered as *the house* of God, in which his honour dwelt; where he met his worshippers and blessed them, and was glorified by them.

V. 9—11. As the Psalmist thus had by choice separated from the wicked, he trusted that God would distinguish between him and them; especially referring to Saul, Doeg, and others, who gave or received bribes, in order to murder him and his pious adherents; and who were a kind of prefiguration of Caiaphas, Judas, and the false witnesses and wicked priests, who combined to murder the Prince of life. But though conscious of integrity, and determined to persist in it, David trusted only in the redeeming mercy and grace of God.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

According to that covenant which Jesus mediated, the man who "walketh in his integrity," yet wholly trusts in mercy and grace, is evidenced to be in a state of acceptance: the Lord may be appealed to, to plead his cause, and he shall not slide, but "be kept by the power of God "through faith unto salvation." This man desires to have his inmost soul searched and proved to the uttermost. He is aware of the deceitfulness of his own heart; and desires to detect and mortify every sin; and he longs to be fully satisfied that he is a true believer. He examines himself; and is willing to be examined by the penetrating and distinguishing word of truth: but, lest after all he should be deceived, he appeals to the great Searcher of hearts; and, in his better judgment, welcomes even those fiery trials by which his graces may be manifested and improved, as gold and silver in the furnace. Whilst he hopes in the loving-kindness and faithfulness of God, he sets them before him as his example, and desires to be conformed to the holy truths which he believes. He is conscious that the society of profane, licentious, deceitful, or dissipated persons is become irksome to him. He does not frequent the haunts of evil-doers; and will stay no longer in worldly company than he can help. But he rejoices in the opportunity of

PSALM XXVII.

David by strong faith rises above the fear of his enemies, 1—3. *He chooses the courts and service of God as his felicity,* 4—6. *He prays for guidance and assistance, and encourages his brethren,* 7—14.

A Psalm of David.

THE LORD *is* [a] my Light and [b] my Salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD *is* [c] the Strength of my life; [d] of whom shall I be afraid?

2 When [e] the wicked, *even* mine enemies and my foes, * came upon me [f] to eat up my flesh, [g] they stumbled and fell.

3 Though [h] an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though [i] war should rise against me, [k] in this *will* I *be* confident.

4 [l] One *thing* have I desired of the LORD, [m] that will I seek after; [a] that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, [o] to behold the † beauty of the LORD, and to [p] inquire in his temple.

5 For [q] in the time of trouble [r] he shall hide me in his pavilion: [s] in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall [t] set me upon a rock.

6 And [u] now shall mine head be lifted up [x] above mine enemies round about me: [y] therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of ‡ joy: [z] I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD.

7 ¶ [a] Hear, O LORD, *when* I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me.

8 § *When thou saidst,* [b] Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, [c] Thy face, LORD, will I seek.

a xviii 28. lxxxiv. 11. Job xxix. 3. Is. li. 5. lx. 1—3. 19, 20. Mic. vii. 8. Mal. iv. 2. John i. 1—4. 9. viii. 12. Rev. xxi. 23. xxii. 5.
b iii. 8. xviii. 2. lxii. 2. 6. lxviii. 19, 20 cxviii. 14, 15. Ex. xv. 2. Is. xii. 2. li. 6—8. lxi. 10. Luke ii. 30. iii. 6. Rev. vii. 10.
c xviii. 1, 2. 46. xix. 14. xxviii. 7, 8. xliii. 2 Is. xliv. 24. 2 Cor. xii. 9. Phil. iv. 13.
d xi. 1. xlvi. 1, 2. lvi. 2—4. cxviii. 6. Matt. viii 26. Rom. viii. 31. Heb. xiii. 6.
e iii. 7. xviii. 4. xxii. 16. lxii. 3, 4.
* Heb. *approached against me.*
f xiv. 4. liii. 4. Job xix. 22. xxxi 31.
g xviii. 38—42. cxviii. 12. Is. viii. 9. 15. John xviii. 3—6.
h iii. 6. 2 Kings vi. 15—17. 2 Chr. xx. 15. Phil. i. 28. 1 Pet. iii. 14.
i 1 Sam. xxviii. 15, 16. Is. xli. 11, 12. liv 16, 17. Rom. viii. 35—37. Rev. ii. 10. xii. 7—11.
k 2 Cor. v. 6—8.
l Luke x. 42. Phil. iii 13.
m 8. Jer. xxix. 13. Dan ix. 3. Matt. vi. 33. vii. 7, 8. Luke xi 9, 10. xiii. 24 xviii. 1. Heb. xi. 6.
n xxiii. 6 xxvi. 6. lxv 4 lxxxiv. 4. 10. 1 Sam. i. 11. Luke ii 37. 1 Tim. v. 5.
o 1. 2. lxiii. 2. xc. 17 Zech. ix. 17. 2 Cor. iii. 18. iv. 7.
† Or, *delight* lxiii. 2—5.
p 1 Sam. xxii. 10. xxx. 8. 2 Sam. xxi. 1. 1 Chr. x. 13, 14.
q x. 1 xxxii 6, 7. xlvi. 1. 1. 15. lxxvii 2 xci. 15. cxxxviii 7. Prov. i. 24—28. Is. xxvi. 16. Jer. ii. 27, 28.
r lvii. 1 lxxxiii. 3. cxix. 114. Prov. xviii. 10. Is iv 6. xxvi. 20. xxxii. 2. Matt. xxiii. 37. Col. iii. 3.
s xxxi. 20. xci. 1. 2 Chr. xxii. 12. Neh. vi 10, 11.
t xviii 33. xl. 2. lxi. 2. Hab. iii. 18, 19. Matt vii. 24, 25. xvi. 16.

18.—u iii. 3. cx. 7. Gen xl. 13. 30. 2 Kings xxxv. 27.—x 2 Sam. vii. 9. xxii. 1 49. 1 Chr xxii. 18.—y xxii. 22—25. xxvi 6, 7. xliii. 3, 4 lxvi. 13—16. cvii. 22. cxvi. 17—19. 2 Chr. xxx. 21—26. Jer xxxiii. 11 Heb. xiii 15 1 Pet. ii. 5. ‡ Heb. *shouting.* xlvii. 1. Ezra iii. 10—13. Is. xii. 6. Jer. xxxi 7. Zeph. iii. 14, 15. Zech. ix. 9. Luke xix. 37, 38.—z xxi. 1 13. lxxxi. 1 xcv. 1. c. 1, 2 cxxxviii 5. Eph v. 19, 20. Rev. v. 9. xv. 3 ——a iv. 1. v. 2. cxxx. 2—4. cxliii. 1, 2.——§ Or, *My heart said unto thee, Let my face seek thy face,* &c.——b xxiv. 6. cv. 4. Is xlv. 19. lv. 6, 7. Hos. v. 15.——c lxiii. 1, 2 cxix. 58. *Marg.* Jer. xxix. 12, 13.

attending on the ordinances of God, and meeting with his people. With serious preparation of heart, and in the exercise of repentance, faith, and a good conscience, he approaches the table of the Lord, to enjoy fellowship with him and his disciples; and to publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and to tell of all the wonders of redeeming love. Having loved the courts of the Lord, and every place and company, where his praises were displayed, and his glorious truths discoursed on: he would dread above all things the doom at last of wicked men. A few hours with the covetous, malicious, and deceitful, are very painful: eternity in such company would form a hell to him. This antipathy gives just confidence that his soul shall never be gathered with them, and animates him still to walk in his integrity, and to cry for mercy and complete redemption. Thus he feels his ground firm under him: and as he delights in blessing God with his congregations on earth, he trusts that shortly he shall join the great assembly in heaven, in singing praises to God and to the Lamb for evermore.

NOTES.

PSALM XXVII. V. 1—3. It is probable that this psalm was composed by David, in the extremity of his danger from Saul, in order to silence the fears of his companions, by showing them the strength and reasonableness of his confidence: though some think it relates to his subsequent conflicts and dangers. However that were, JEHOVAH himself was his "*Light*," his Teacher, Guide, Comforter; "and his *Salvation*," both from temporal dangers and eternal misery: he was "*the Strength of his life*," his powerful Protector and Upholder: and therefore he had no reason to fear any enemies. When in former instances his wicked persecutors had come against him in force and rage, as if they meant to devour him, they stumbled and fell; and he was assured they would do so again: and being confident that God was on his side, was determined that he would not yield to fear, even if a whole army should march in battle array, to wage the most desperate war against him. (Compare this with the complaint of Saul. 1 *Sam.* xxviii. 15.) When the wicked enemies of Christ came to seize him in his deepest humiliation, at one word of his they went backward and fell to the ground.

V. 4—6. David was conscious that the service of God was his choice, and, as it were, his element. Though a brave soldier, a renowned commander and conqueror, and an anointed king; yet his one desire above all others, and constant prayer and persevering endeavour was, to dwell *in*, or *at*, the tabernacle of the Lord, where his ordinances were administered, which were typical of the promised Messiah and his salvation, means of grace to believers, and acts of worship to God. If he might choose for himself, he would spend all the days of his life in the courts of the Lord; that he might meditate with joy upon the *beauty* and glory of the divine perfections there displayed, and have constant opportunity of inquiring the will of God, by the high-priest, and from his word; and that he might take shelter as in the pavilion of his heavenly King, where no enemy could find him, or would dare to approach him. Thus he hoped to be fixed as on a rock, immoveable by changes or assaults. Indeed, though now driven from the courts of God, he was assured that he should at length be exalted above all his enemies; and be brought back again to the Sanctuary, when he would offer sacrifices of joy and thanksgiving, with animated and triumphant songs of praises and gratitude.

9 [d] Hide not thy face *far* from me; [e] put not thy servant away in anger: [f] thou hast been my help; [g] leave me not, neither forsake me, [h] O God of my salvation.

10 When [i] my father and my mother forsake me, then [k] the LORD will * take me up.

11 [l] Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in † a plain path, because of ‡ mine enemies.

12 Deliver me not over unto [m] the will of mine enemies: for [n] false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as [o] breathe out cruelty.

13 *I had fainted,* [p] unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD [q] in the land of the living.

14 [r] Wait on the LORD: [s] be of good courage, and [t] he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.

d xiii 1. xliv. 24. lxix. 17. cii. 2. cxliii. 7. Is lii. 2. e li 1. Is. i 1. f lxxi. 5, 6 17, 18. g 1 Sam vii. 12. Is xlvi 3, 4. 2 Cor. i. 9, 10 2 Tim. iv. 17, 18 h xxxviii. 21 cxix. 121. 1 Chr xxviii. 9. Jer xxxii. 40 Heb. xiii 5 i xxiv. 5 xxxviii. 21, 22. lxxxviii 1 k lxix. 8 2 Sam. xvi. 11 Is xlix 15. Matt. x. 21, 22 36 l John ix. 35. xviii 32 2 Tim v. 16, 17. ——* Heb *gather.* ——l xxv. 4, 5 9. 12. lxxxvi. 11. cxix. 10. cxliii 8—10. Prov. iii. 6—9. Is. xxx. 20, 21 ——† Heb. *a way of plainness.* xxvi. 12. Prov. viii 9 xv. 19 Is. xxxv 8. Luke iii. 4—6 ——‡ Heb. *observers of me.* v. 8. liv. 5. *Marg.* lvi. 5, 6. lxiv. 6. Jer. xx. 10. Dan. vi. 4, 5 Luke xx 20.

m xxxi. 8 xxxv. 25. xxxviii. 16. xci. 11 cxl 8. n xxxv 11 Ex. xx. 16 1 Sam. xxii. 9, 10 xxvi. 19 2 Sam. xvi. 7, 8 Matt. xxvi. 59, 60 Acts vi. 11—13. o xxv. 19. Acts ix. 1 xxvi. 11. p xiii. 5 lvi. 3, cxvi. 9—13. 2 Cor iv. 1. 3—14. 16 q lii 5 lvi. 13. cxlii. 5. Job. xxxiii. 30. Is. xxxviii. 11 19. Jer xi 19 Ez. Is viii 17. xxv. xxvi. 20. ——r xxv. 3 21. xxxiii 20. lxii 1. 5. cxxx. 5. Gen xlix. 18 s viii 25 ——s xxxi 9. xxvi. 8 xxx. 18 Lam. iii 26 Hab ii. 3. Luke ii. 25. 38 Rom viii 24. Acts xxviii. 15. 1 Cor. xvi 13 2 Tim iv. 5—7 ——t cxxxviii. 3. Is. xl. 31. 2 Cor xii 9, 10. Eph. iii 16. vi 10. Phil iv. 13 Col. i. 11.

V. 8. This verse may be literally rendered, "My heart "said unto thee, Seek ye my face. Thy face, LORD, will I "seek." In retired meditation, the exhortations of God to the sons of men to seek his face or favour, were recollected by the Psalmist: and his heart answered, 'Dost 'thou deign thus to invite us? Then without delay, or 'hesitation, I will seek thy face.'

V. 9. 'Do not in anger reject my suit, because I am 'a sinner, but accept it because I am thy servant, whom 'in former times thou hast so often relieved, that I am 'emboldened to beseech thee not to desert me,—but to give 'me deliverance and safety.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) David expected eternal salvation from the tried mercy and truth of the God of his salvation; and this gave him confidence as to temporal deliverances.

V. 10. Perhaps David's parents died about this time, or he was deprived of the solace of their company. Perhaps he meant, in general, that the favour of God would compensate the loss of all earthly friends; that the Lord would surely prove faithful, though his nearest relatives should prove cruel and treacherous; and that he was determined to stay his mind on God alone.

V. 11, 12. The Psalmist knew himself to be constantly beset with spies and false witnesses, who pried into all his actions, in order to find some handle against him; that they might gratify their cruel malice under the pretence of justice: and all this led him to pray frequently for heavenly wisdom, and that God would lead him in the path of uprightness, and at a distance from the appearance of evil; that so his observers might be disappointed. Thus the Son of David, also, was continually watched, that some accusation might be found against him: but his perfect holiness and wisdom completely frustrated and confounded his implacable foes, who thirsted for his blood.

V. 13. This verse may be rendered, "Assuredly, I "trust to see the goodness of the LORD," &c. Perhaps some person had asked David, How he kept up his spirits under his manifold trials and dangers? and he gave him this answer, as comprising the whole secret of his cheerful confidence. "The land of the living," in this connexion, seems to imply a prospect beyond this present dying world.

V. 14. Some understand this verse as the Psalmist's apostrophe to his own soul: but perhaps it was chiefly intended as an exhortation to his discouraged companions in tribulation; and also as a pious counsel to every believer who might read this admirable psalm.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

He who is "the Light of the world" is the eternal JEHOVAH: and whosoever followeth him shall not abide in darkness, but shall have the light of life. He will guide every believer into the knowledge of his truth and the comforts of his salvation; and into an acquaintance with the dangers, snares, and enemies, which beset his path, and the manner in which they are to be avoided and overcome. He will uphold and protect their souls, and their lives also, as long as that is good for them; and he will keep them by his power through faith unto complete salvation. Happy are they whose faith and hope are as vigorous as their security is valid. They need not fear armies of hostile assailants, or legions of infernal spirits, united for their destruction with rage equal to their force. In this they may be confident; for the eternal God is their refuge. The temporary success of the wicked is only an introduction to their deeper disgrace and misery; they shall soon stumble, and fall, and rise no more: and the trials of believers will terminate in everlasting honour and felicity. Let us then entreat the Lord to give us faith, and to increase our faith; that we may be delivered from tormenting fears; and honour our Protector by cheerful composure, when the hearts of others are shaken, as the trees of the wood are moved by the tempestuous wind. But the believer's confidence is distinguishable from the hypocrite's presumption. Whatever be the Christian's rank, expectations, reputation, or employment, he considers the favour and service of God as his "one thing needful." This he prays for and seeks after: (for what is heartily desired will be diligently sought.) He devises, if he can, to dwell near the ordinances of God, that he may have constant access to them; for they are the rest of his soul, to which he returns with pleasure when he hath necessarily been called from them. He delights in contemplating the beauty and glory of the Lord, in the person of Jesus Christ; and he inquires his will, by studying his word and praying for his teaching Spirit: and he hides himself from cares, and fears, and foes, in the presence-chamber of his King and Father, where no pursuer can discover him, or will venture to assault him: and whilst he drinks the waters which flow from the Rock of ages, he fixes his hope and soul upon the Rock itself, for stability and support. With such desires and experiences, we may triumph amidst conflicts, and rejoice in tribulation. The Saviour, who suffered and conquered for us, will conquer by us: and in hope of rest-

PSALM XXVIII.

David earnestly prays for deliverance, and denounces the righteous doom of the wicked, 1—5. *He exults in God, and prays for his people,* 6—9.

A Psalm of David.

UNTO thee [a] will I cry, [b] O LORD my Rock, [c] be not silent * to me: lest, *if* thou be silent to me, [d] I become like them that go down into the pit.

2 Hear the voice of my supplications, when I cry unto thee; [e] when I lift up my hands toward † thy holy oracle.

3 [f] Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity, which [g] speak peace to their neighbours, but [h] mischief *is* in their hearts.

4 [i] Give them according to their deeds, and [k] according to the wickedness of their endeavours: [l] give them after the work of their hands; [m] render to them their desert.

5 Because [n] they regard not the works of the LORD, nor [o] the operation of his hands, he shall destroy them, and [p] not build them up.

6 [q] Blessed *be* the LORD, because he hath heard the voice of my supplications.

7 The LORD *is* [r] my Strength and [s] my Shield; [t] my heart trusted in him, and I am helped; [u] therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and [x] with my song will I praise him.

a lii. 4 v. 2. xxii. 2. lxxvii. 1. cxlii 1.
b xviii 2. xlii. 9. Is. xxvi. 4. *Marg*
c xxxv.22 lxxxiii. 1.
* Heb *from me.*
d xxx. 9 lxix 15. lxxxviii. 4—6. cxliii. 7. Job xxxiii. 28 Pro. i. 12 Is xxxviii. 18 Rev xx. 3.
e lxiii. 4 cxxxiv. 2. cxli. 2 cxliii. 6. 2 Chr vi. 13. 1 Tim ii 8.
† Or, *the oracle of thy sanctuary.* v 7. cxxxviii 2 1 Kings vi. 19 viii. 6—8 30 39. Dan. vi. 10.
f xxvi. 9 Num. xvi. 26. Matt vii. 23 xxv 41 46 2 Cor. vi 17
g xii 2 lv. 21. lxii 4. Jer ix 8, 9 Mic. iii. 5. Matt. xxii. 15—18.
h vii. 14. x. 7.14. xxxvi. 4. lii. 1 Pro. xxvi. 23—26.
i v. 10 lix.12, 13. lxix 22—24. Jer xviii 21—23. 2 Tim iv. 14. Rev. xviii.6.
k ii. 1—5. xxi. 10, 11 Ez. xxxviii. 10.
l lxii 12. ciii 10. cix. 17—21. cxxx 3, 4. Rom. ii 6—8. xi 22. Jam ii. 13
m Ezra ix 13. Job xi. 6
n x 5. xcii 4—6. civ 24 cxi. 2—4 Job xxxiv 26, 27 Is. v 12. xxii. 11. xxvi. 9—11 Hos xiv. 9. John xii. 47. Rom. i. 20, 28.
o viii. 3. xix 1, 2. Num xxiii. 23. Is xl. 26. xlv. 8. 12, 13. Jer. x. 12, 13 Eph. i. 19—21.
p 2 Sam. vii 15. 27 1 Kings xi. 38. Jer. xxxi. 4. xxxiii 20 21.
q xxxi 21, 22. lxvi.19, 20. lxix. 3, 34 cvii. 19—22. cxvi 1, 2. cxviii 2.——r 8. xviii. 1, 2 xix 14. xlvi 1 Is. xii. 2. xlv 24 Eph vi 10.——s lxxxiv. 11. xci 4. Gen xv. 1.——t xiii 5 xxii. 4. lvi. 3, 4. cxviii 6—9 13—15.——u xvi 9—11 xxi. 1. xxx 11. 12 xxxiii. 21 lxviii. 3, 4 Is lxi. 10——x xcvi. 1—3. Ex. xv. 1, &c. Judg. v. 1, &c. 1 Sam. ii. 1, &c. 2 Sam. xxii 1, &c Rev. v 9. xv. 3.

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dering eternal songs of praise in the temple above, we may now celebrate every mercy with sacrifices of exulting joy and thanksgiving here on earth. But we should all be far more joyful and thankful, if we were more instant and fervent in prayer. To the blessings of salvation the word of God invites sinners at large: yet instead of attending to this call to seek his face, men turn their backs on him and his ways: for the heart of him alone, who *is born of God*, echoes to the invitation: he fears nothing so much as the hiding of his face, and being excluded from his service, or left to come short of his salvation: every token of his displeasure grieves him; and this renders him watchful and jealous of his own heart, and animates his supplications. The loss of earthly friends, or their unkindness, or anxiety about them, leads him more diligently to seek, or more highly to value, a relation to his heavenly Friend: and should his attachment to the Lord forfeit the favour of all his relatives, that loss would prove his richest gain. Let then the destitute, the orphans, and the widows, seek to the Lord, who is "a Father of the fatherless," and he will take them up; let us all seek to be taught and led in his ways, and in a plain path, that we may neither wander nor stumble, nor cause our enemies to rejoice: and if we meet with the envenomed tongue of slander, or with cruel persecutions, let us remember the man after God's own heart; or rather, let us look unto the suffering Saviour, and pray in faith not to be delivered up into the hands of our enemies. Having found the supports and comforts of the Lord's favour in times past; let us not faint, but "verily hope to see his goodness in the land of the living." Let us encourage others to wait for the Lord, and not to yield to fear in the midst of dangers and enemies; for his grace will be sufficient for their support and deliverance. And whatever we may meet with in this dying world, he will strengthen our hearts; and we shall see and enjoy his goodness in the land of the living; in heaven, where sin and death never entered. Let us then, I say, encourage each other to wait on the Lord with patient expectation, and with fervent prayer.

NOTES.

PSALM XXVIII. V. 1. It is not agreed, whether this psalm was written during David's persecutions from Saul; or at a later period of his life.—The words rendered *the pit*, generally mean *the grave*, when used in this manner: yet when the death of the wicked is thus expressed, it seems also to denote the place of future punishment: for all men go down into the grave; but the wicked into "the pit of destruction." (lv. 23.)—If God did not show, by some visible interposition, that he heard and answered David's prayers; he must soon be cut off and laid in the grave, never more to glorify God on earth; and it would appear, as if he died under the divine wrath, as the wicked do.—Had Christ continued in the grave, it might have been concluded, that he had been justly put to death: but he was justified and proved to be the Son of God by his resurrection.

V. 2. *Holy Oracle.* The place of the ark of the covenant, and the mercy-seat.

V. 3. *Draw.* Or, *Drag me not away!* as criminals are violently carried to the place of execution. David deprecated the doom which awaited his deceitful persecutors, or that of Saul in particular.

V. 4, 5. The language in the first of these verses is that of *prayer*, in the latter of *prediction*. In the one, the Psalmist calls on God to deliver him, and plead the cause of true religion, by executing deserved punishment on his implacable enemies: in the other, he assigns the reason, why he used this language; namely, because he foresaw this doom coming on them, and because their conduct showed them to be given up to final hardness of heart. In general we may and ought to pray for the just punishment of all impenitent enemies of the church; but with particular application to individuals, such prayers can only be proper for inspired persons. To be dealt with according to his deservings, must be dreadful to every sinner.

V. 6, 7. This sudden transition, from earnest prayers to exulting joy and praise, accords so much to the method

8 The LORD *is* * their Strength, and he *is* the † saving Strength of [y] his anointed.

9 [z] Save thy people, and [a] bless thine inheritance: ‡ feed them also, and [b] lift them up for ever.

* Or, *his.*
† Heb. *strength of salvations.*
y ii. 2. xx. 6. 1 Sam. xvi. 13. Is. lxi. 1.
z xiv. 7 xxv. 22. lxxx. 14.19. Jer. xxxi. 7.
a Deut. ix. 29. 2 Sam. xxi 3 1 Kings viii. 51. 53. Jer. x 16. Eph. i. 18
‡ Or, *rule.* lxxviii. 71. Is. xl 11. Ez. xxxiv. 23, 24. Mic v. 2. 4. Matt. ii 6. *Marg.*
b Ezra i 4 *Marg.*

PSALM. XXIX.

David calls on the mighty to give glory to God, 1, 2. *And shows the majesty and power of his voice,* 3—9. *And that, as the eternal King, he will strengthen and bless his people,* 10, 11.

A Psalm of David.

[a] GIVE unto the LORD, O ye * mighty, give unto the LORD glory and strength.

2 [b] Give unto the LORD the † glory due unto his name; [c] worship the LORD in ‡ the beauty of holiness.

3 [d] The voice of the LORD *is* upon the waters: [e] the God of glory [f] thundereth: the LORD *is* upon § many waters.

4 The voice of the LORD *is* ‖ power-

a ii. 10—12. lxviii. 31—34. xcvi. 7—9. Is. lx. 12. Jer. xiii. 16—18.
* Heb *sons of the mighty.*
b 1 Chr. xvi. 28, 29
† Heb. *honour of his name.* xcvi. 6. 8. xcvii. 9. cxiii. 3—6. cxlv. 3—7
c xxviii. 4. xcvi. 9. 2 Chr. xx. 21.
‡ Or, *his glorious sanctuary.*
d xviii. 13 — 15. lxxvii. 16—19. Matt viii. 26, 27. Rev. xvii. 14, 15.
e xxiv. 7 — 10. Acts vii. 2.
f Ex. ix. 28. 33. xix. 16. 1 Sam. vii. 10 Job xxxvii. 2—5. John xii. 29. Rev. iv. 5. viii. 5. xi. 19. xvi 18. xix. 6. ——§ Or, *great.* xciii. 3, 4 civ 3 ——‖ Heb. *in power.* xxxiii 8. Job xxvi. 11—14. Jer. li. 15, 16 Luke iv. 36. viii. 25.

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of those psalms, which are evidently prophetical of Christ, that some expositors interpret this of him; and suppose these verses to be spoken as an anticipation of the triumphs and glory which followed his deep humiliation and sufferings. David himself, however, seems frequently to have anticipated the answer of his prayers in a similar manner: or, perhaps, after his deliverances, while leading the praises of his people, he contrasted the joyful scene, with the dangers and sorrows, the prayers and tears, which preceded it.

V. 8. Some versions render this, "The LORD is their "Strength: (that is, that of his people,) and his Messiah "is especially the Strength of salvations." The original may bear this construction: and no doubt David had reference to Christ, whom he typified both in his conflicts and victories; and the blessings of God conferred on his people through him.

V. 9. David's prayer for Israel was a kind of type of Christ's intercession for his church. The authority of a good prince resembles the care of a tender shepherd over his flock. The word rendered *feed*, therefore, means also *rule:* and is applied to JEHOVAH, to the Messiah, and to David. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Whilst others are troubling their fellow creatures with unavailing complaints, believers should, under their distresses, cry the more earnestly to the Rock of their salvation: and they should not rest till they have received some satisfactory token that their prayers are heard; for if the Lord could refuse to answer them, their case would resemble that of those who have perished in their sins, to whose agonizing cries no gracious answer will be made for ever. But this can never befal those who come to the mercy-seat of a reconciled God, in the holy place not made with hands; through the intercession of our great High-Priest, sincerely desiring and humbly hoping for those blessings, which he purchased by his meritorious sacrifice, and is now exalted to bestow. They will not, however, merely deprecate the punishment of the wicked, and the effects of their persecuting malice; but likewise earnestly pray that they may not be drawn away by their enticements, to adopt their errors and imitate their sins: for the ungodly are more to be dreaded, when they speak peace to their neighbours, than when they avow the mischief which is in their hearts. We may without hesitation predict, that impenitent sinners will ere long be recompensed according to their endeavours to do evil; and we cannot desire that the obstinate enemies of Christ should escape condign punishment. Indeed, if men duly regarded the works of the Lord, the displays of his power and majesty would intimidate them from rebellion; and his goodness would lead them to repentance: but alienation of heart from God causes men to neglect all his operations, and to despise even his redeeming love. And he will surely destroy such as do; and not build them up, though for a time they prosper. The servant of God is often encouraged to anticipate the answers of his prayers, whilst he is yet asking: when praising him for his goodness, and "rejoicing with joy unspeakable and full of glo-"ry;" it is very profitable to recollect and record our earnest cries in the time of our distress: and whilst our hearts rejoice in the Lord, our Strength and Shield, we should not forget our brethren in tribulation, but pray fervently for them also. In the exaltation of our anointed King, who was once crucified for us, we have the earnest and exemplar of all our deliverances. In his name we may present our supplications in full assurance of hope, that our God would save his people, and bless his inheritance; that he would protect, provide for, and comfort them on earth, and at length lift them up for ever in heaven. But what are all those sudden transitions from deep distress to joyful praises, which take place in the believer's experience here, compared with that, which every one successively finds, when in a moment he exchanges the groans and agonies of death for heavenly joys and uninterrupted hallelujahs!

NOTES.

PSALM XXIX. V. 1, 2. The Psalmist here calls on the mightiest princes of the earth, who demand homage, and sometimes worship, from men, to render glory to the universal Sovereign and Judge; and to come and pay their tribute of adoration at his sanctuary, in which he displays the beauty and excellency of his holy character and perfections.

ful; the voice of the LORD *is* * full of majesty.

5 The voice of the LORD [g] breaketh the cedars; yea, the LORD breaketh the cedars of Lebanon.

6 He maketh them also to [h] skip like a calf; [i] Lebanon and [k] Sirion like a young [l] unicorn.

7 The voice of the LORD † divideth [m] the flames of fire.

8 The voice of the LORD [n] shaketh the wilderness: the Lord shaketh the wilderness of [o] Kadesh.

9 The voice of the LORD [p] maketh the hinds to ‡ calve, and [q] discovereth the forests: and [r] in his temple doth § every one speak of *his* glory.

10 The LORD [s] sitteth upon the flood; yea, the LORD sitteth [t] King for ever.

11 The LORD will [u] give strength unto his people; the LORD will [x] bless his people with peace.

* Heb. *in majesty.* Job xl. 9—12. Is. lxvi. 6. Ez. x. 5.
g Is. ii. 13.
h cxiv 4—7.
i Jer. iv. 23—25. Hab. iii. 6—11. Rev. xx. 11.
k Deut. iii. 9
l xcii. 10. Num. xxiii. 22
† Heb. *cutteth out.*
m lxxvii. 18. cxliv 5, 6. Ex. ix. 23 Lev. x. 2 Num. xvi. 35 2 Kings i. 10—12. Job xxxvii 3 xxxviii. 35
n xviii 7. xlvi. 3. Job ix. 6. Is. xiii. 13 Joel iii. 16. Hag. ii. 6. 21 Heb xii 26.
o Num xiii. 26.
p Job xxxix. 1—3.
‡ Or, *be in pain.*
q Is. ix 18 x 18, 19 Ez. xx 46—48.
r xlvi. 2—5 xlviii. 9 cxxxiv. 1, 2. cxxxv 1. 2.
§ Or, *every whit of it uttereth,* &c
s 3 lxv. 7 civ 6—9. Gen. vi. 17. Job xxxvi i 8—11. 25. Mark iv. 41.
t x. 16. xciii 1. xcix. 1. Dan. ii 44. Mat vi. 13. 1 Tim. i. 17.
u xxviii. 8, 9. lxviii 35 lxxxiv. 7. cxxxviii. 3 Is. xl. 29. 31. xli 10. Zech. x. 6. 12. Eph. iii. 16. 2 Tim iv. 17.
x lxxii. 3. 7. Num. vi. 24—27 Is. ix 6, 7. John xiv. 27. xvi. 33. Rom. xiv. 17. 1 Cor. i. 3. Eph. iv. 7 2 Thes. iii. 16. Rev. i. 4.

V. 3—11. It is probable that this psalm was composed during a violent storm of thunder and lightning, which reminded David, and led him earnestly to remind others, how mean and feeble the most mighty and honourable of the earth were, in comparison of the God of "glory and "strength." 'You,' (ye princes of the earth,) 'think 'there is great power in your words: but as they can be 'heard but a little way, so they are but of little force, in 'comparison with this mighty voice; wherein the Lord 'expresses how potent he is, and strikes a dread and horror 'into all that hear it.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The thunder is often called the voice of God: (*Marg. Ref.*) During a violent storm, he seems in glorious majesty to ride upon the many waters which form the clouds, and he shakes the ocean as well as the earth. The power of the lightning equals the terror of the thunder: enormous cedars are shivered and scattered by it, in a moment: the very mountains shake, and seem to move with agility, like a calf or a young rhinoceros, by the tempest or the earthquakes with which they are sometimes accompanied. The flames of the electrical fire, at the direction of the Almighty, are divided with inconceivable swiftness and irresistible force; and even the wilderness is thrown into a trepidation. The hinds affrighted cast forth their young: and the forests are stripped, and their dark recesses laid open; the trees being shivered, their branches torn off, and the wild beasts affrighted in their dens. The clause rendered, "the hinds "to calve," is by some read, with a small alteration of the text, "the oaks to tremble." But the people who worshipped God at his sanctuary, heard his voice from his word, which, though replete with encouragement, was more majestic and powerful than the thunder and lightning; and being secure under his protection, they spake of his glory, as displayed in all these terrific events. For HE who once directed the rising, continuance, and conclusion of the deluge, in the time of Noah, and who always bounds and directs the boisterous ocean, rules every tempest, and is established King for ever: and he will give protection, support, and peace with every blessing to all his faithful people.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The mighty and honourable of the earth derive all their power and splendour from the eternal JEHOVAH: but, alas, few of them attempt to render to him the honour of his name, or to worship him in the beauty of holiness! They should, however, be reminded, that this is their highest privilege, interest, and happiness. The most exalted creatures indeed cannot render to the infinite God, their Creator and constant Benefactor, all the glory which is due to him, much less can any sinner: but when we come before him, as "in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," adoring his majesty, submitting to his authority and righteousness, in genuine repentance and faith, and offering our spiritual sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, and willing obedience; he will pardon and accept our defective services, though infinitely beneath his majesty and excellency. The majestic terror and destructive effects of thunders, lightnings, hurricanes, and earthquakes, with the consternation which they occasion, while they impress on us a sense of God's omnipotence, and of man's impotency, should lead us to think of the defenceless and desperate condition to which the wicked will be reduced in the day of judgment. —For the voice of the divine law, if duly attended to, would fill the consciences of sinners with more terror and amazement than all the convulsions in nature: and the effects of the word of God, when attended by the operations of his Holy Spirit, are far greater upon the souls of men, than that of thunder in the material world. By its energy the stoutest are made to tremble, the proudest are abased, the secrets of the heart are detected, sinners are converted, and the savage, the sensual, and the unclean, become harmless, gentle, and pure, resembling doves and lambs. If we have heard his voice, and fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us: if we have welcomed Christ as a Saviour, and submitted to him as our King for ever: if, relying on his merits, we are no longer terrified by the ministration of death, yet have learned to love him and keep his commandments: let us remember that it is the same glorious God our Saviour who causeth the thunder; and the children need not fear their Father's voice, when he speaks in anger to his enemies. Whilst they tremble who are exposed without shelter to his vengeance: let us in his temple, his appointed refuge, (safe as Noah in the ark,) thank him for our security, and speak of his honour. "Let us give diligence to the full assurance of "hope unto the end;" and continually plead his promises, expecting that he will give us strength to resist temptation, to bear trials, to conquer enemies, and to perform every duty; and that he will bless us with a quiet conscience, a contented mind, and the "peace of God, which passeth

PSALM XXX.

David praises God for deliverance, and calls on the saints to join him, 1—5. *He shows that undue confidence had preceded his troubles, and fervent prayers his deliverance,* 6—10. *He renews his animated praises,* 11, 12.

A Psalm *and* Song, *at* [a] the dedication of the house of David.

I WILL [b] extol thee, O LORD; [c] for thou hast lifted me up, and [d] hast not made my foes to rejoice over me.

2 O LORD my God, I cried unto thee, [e] and thou hast healed me.

3 O LORD, thou hast [f] brought up my soul from the grave: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go [g] down to the pit.

4 [h] Sing unto the LORD, O ye saints of his, and give thanks * at the remembrance of [i] his holiness.

5 [k] For † his anger *endureth but* a moment: [l] in his favour *is* life: [m] weeping may endure ‡ for a night, but ◊ joy *cometh* [n] in the morning.

6 And [o] in my prosperity I said, [p] I shall never be moved.

7 LORD [q] by thy favour thou hast ‖ made my mountain to stand strong: [r] thou didst hide thy face, *and* I was troubled.

8 I cried to thee, O LORD; and [s] unto the LORD I made supplication.

a Deut. xx. 5. 2 Sam v. 11. vi. 20. vii 2 xx 3. b xxxiv. 3 4. lxvi 17 cxlv. 1. Dan. iv. 37. xxvii. 6 xxviii. d xiii. 4. xxv. 2. xxxv. 19. 25. xli. 11. lxxix. 4 10. lxxxix. 41—46 cxl. 8. Lam. ii. 15 e vi 2, 3 li 8. ciii. 3, 4 cvii. 17—22 cxviii. 18. cxlvii. 3. Gen. xxi. 17. Ex. xv. 26 2 Kings xx 5. Jam v. 14. 15. f xvi. 10. xl. 1, 2. lvi. 13. lxxi 20. lxxxvi. 13 *Marg.* cxvi 8. Job xxxiii. 18—22. 28. Is. xxxviii. 17. 18. Jon. ii 4. 6. g xxviii. 1. h xxxii. 11 xxxiii. 1—3 ciii 20—22. cxxxii. 9. cxxxv 19—21. cxlviii. 14. cxlix. 1 Rev. xix 5, 6. * Or, to the *memorial.* xcvii. 12. *Marg* i Ex. xv. 11 Is. vi. 3. Rev. iv. 8. k ciii. 9. 17. Is. xxvi. 20 liv. 7, 8. lvii 15, 16. Cor. iv 17 † Heb there is but *a moment in his anger.* l xvi. 11 xxxvi. 7—9. lxiii. 3. Rev. xxii. 1. 17. m vi 6—9 lvi. 8—10. cxxvi 5. 6. Is. xxxviii. 3—5 Matt v. 4. John xvi 20. 21. 2 Cor vii. 9. 10. ‡ Heb *in the evening.* ◊ Heb. *singing.* n xlvi. 5 *Marg.* lix 16. cxliii 3. Gen xxxi. 24. *Marg* Hos vi 3. o Job xxix 18—20 Is. xlvii. 7. lvi. 12 Dan iv 30 Luke xii 19. 2 Cor xii. 7. p xv 5. xvi 8 cxix 117 ——q 5. v. 12. xliv 3. lxxxix 17. Heb x 12.——‖ Heb. *settled strength for my mountain* xl 2. 1 Chr xvii 26, 27 ——r xi. 1 xiii 1, 2. cii 10. civ 29 cxliii 7 Job xxx 26—31 Is. xxxviii. 17.——s lxxvii. 1, 2. cxxx. 1, 2. 2 Cor. xii. 8, 9. Phil iv. 6, 7.

"all understanding:" that he will give us sweet composure even in the solemn hour of death, and exulting boldness amidst the dissolution of this visible creation, and in the "day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men:" knowing that our Saviour and King will rule even that flood of vengeance, and those tremendous convulsions; and that he hath prepared for us "new heavens and a new "earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

NOTES.

PSALM XXX. *Title.* This title may be rendered "A Psalm: a song at the dedication of the house for Da-"vid." When advanced at the throne, and possessed of Mount Zion, the Psalmist built himself a house, which no doubt he dedicated to God, by fervent prayer and joyful thanksgivings, and perhaps by making a religious feast for his friends. But there is nothing in this psalm peculiarly appropriate to that occasion: and it was evidently composed either after a dangerous illness, or when he had experienced some extraordinary deliverance.—Many think, that it was used after Absalom's rebellion, when David returned to Jerusalem: and having purified his house from the defilement which had polluted it, he solemnly dedicated both it and himself to God. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 2. *Healed.* If this word be literally understood, a dangerous illness and an unexpected recovery, gave occasion to the psalm. But some think the expression to be used figuratively, (as no doubt it frequently is;) and to denote a forlorn and hopeless condition, like that of a sick man given over by physicians, and unable to help himself. The expectation of David's enemies of his death; and the joy and triumph which that event would have given them, peculiarly suit the state of things during Absalom's rebellion.

V. 3. (*Notes,* xvi. 10. xxviii. 1.)

V. 4. *Saints.* 'This word signifieth them that have 'received mercy, and shew mercy liberally to others.' Several words, varying in meaning, but all implying genuine piety and holiness, are translated *saints* in different parts of Scripture. By persons of this character, the *holiness* of God, (or his moral excellencies, as displayed in his word and by his works,) is reflected on with admiring and grateful love, and celebrated with joyful praises.

V. 5. The concise manner in the original of this verse is very expressive. "For a moment in his anger; life in "his favour; weeping may lodge in the evening; but sing-"ing in the morning." No doubt this is meant exclusively of weeping penitents, or submissive suffering believers; and not of the ungodly or hypocritical. 'See his clemency to 'his faithful servants! whom he may correct sharply for a 'little while: but is soon reconciled, and then extends his 'favour to them without any end; and sends deliverance 'to them so suddenly and unexpectedly, as well as sea-'sonably; that where nothing but lamentations were heard 'over night, there nothing but shouts of joy are heard in 'the morning.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 6—8. When the Psalmist had been delivered from Saul's persecuting malice, and was settled peaceably in his kingdom, and rendered victorious over the enemies of Israel, he seems to have concluded that his trials and dangers were over, and that he should thenceforth have uninterrupted peace. But, while he ascribed his great prosperity, and the firm establishment of his authority, to the faithfulness, power, and love of God, he seems to have given way to unwarranted confidence, and to have remitted his vigilance and activity, and probably the fervency of his devotion. Thus he was gradually drawn into a course of inexpedient indulgence; and at length into most aggravated guilt, in the matter of Uriah, which threatened the final ruin of his comfort, reputation, authority, and family; and actually exposed him to sharp rebukes, anguish of spirit, and overwhelming domestic afflictions; till Absalom's rebellion formed a sort of crisis in his case; and reduced him to such a humble, submissive, believing, and devout state of mind, as prepared him for returning peace and comfort. The Lord "hid his face and he was troubled:" his deepest

t vi 5. lxxxviii. 10—12. cxv. 17, 18. cxviii. 17 Ec. ix. 10. Is. xxxviii 18
u li 1, 2 cxliii 1. 7—9
x xxxviii. 7 liv 4.
y 5 Gen xxxvii. 35 xlv 28. 2 Chr xx. 3 9. 22. 27, 28 Esth ix 22 Is. xxv. 8. xvi 10, 11. John xvi 20 Rev vii. 14—17 xxi. 4.
z cix 13 cl. 4 2 Sam. vi. 14 Ec. iii. 4 Jer. xxxi 4. 13, 14
a Neh viii.10. Is. lxi 3 10. Luke xv. 22.
* That is, my *tongue*. or, my *soul*. xvi 9. lvii. 8. Gen. xlix 6
b Luke xix. 40 Acts iv. 20.——c xiii. 6. lxxi. 14. 23, 24. cxiv. 2 cxlvi. 1, 2. Rev. iv. 8, 9. vii. 12.

9 t What profit *is there* in my blood, when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy truth?

10 u Hear, O LORD, and have mercy upon me: LORD, x be thou my helper.

11 Thou y hast turned for me my mourning into z dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and a girded me with gladness;

12 To the end that * *my* glory may sing praise to thee, b and not be silent. O LORD my God, c I will give thanks unto thee for ever.

PSALM XXXI.

David avows his confidence in God, craves his help, and rejoices in his mercy, 1—8. *He states his various trials, and blends his complaints with prayers,* 9—18. *He admires the goodness of God to those who fear him, and excites the saints to love and trust him,* 19—24.

To the chief Musician, *A Psalm* of David.

a xxii. 4. 5. xxv. 2. lxxi 1. 2. Is. xlix. 23 Rom. v. 5. x 11.
b vii 8. 9 xliii 1. cxliii. 1 11, 12. Dan. ix. 16.

IN a thee, O LORD, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: b deliver me in thy righteousness.

trouble, however, was but for a moment: his weeping, when both sins and sufferings combined to render him inconsolable, continued for a night, and joy came in the morning: God, in answer to his prayers, "restored to him "the joy of his salvation;" and he spent the rest of his days in a degree of prosperity, honour, and comfort, which in so dreadful a case was beyond what could at all have been expected.

V. 9, 10. If God had permitted his offending servant to be slain, or to die of disease, he could no more have served the cause of religion, or glorified him in his church on earth: but if spared, he purposed to celebrate the mercy and truth of God among his people, and hoped thus to do essential service to Israel. The concluding part of the first book of Chronicles, shows that his purposes and expectations were fully established.

V. 11, 12. These verses illustrate the doctrine of the fifth verse by the Psalmist's own experience: whose case seemed as likely to form an exception to the general rule, as any that could well be conceived. The figurative language used on the occasion, is highly descriptive of the most exulting gladness, and most animated, constant, and unmingled praises; such as are found in the six concluding psalms.—The tongue, when thus employed, is the distinguishing honour of our animal frame; and seems to be meant by *my glory*.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We ought to dedicate all our possessions and enjoyments to Him who gave us them; our habitations should be daily intrusted to his care, and consecrated to his service, by the word of God and prayer; and by excluding from them, as far as we can, whatever is displeasing in his sight. And when our comforts have been interrupted, and are again restored, we should renew our dedication of them to the service of our God. But, alas, how many houses, even of men called Christians, are not only destitute of religion, but are also scenes of such impiety and wickedness, that one might almost be led to conclude, that they had been set apart to the service of the devil!—In this militant state it calls for our admiring gratitude, when the Lord lifts us up out of one difficulty after another, and does not suffer our foes to rejoice over us. Returning health, or deliverance from imminent dangers, is peculiarly pleasant, when given in answer to fervent prayers. But the redemption of our souls from the pit of destruction calls for our greatest thankfulness; and he, who heard the Saviour, and raised him from the dead, will thus save and bless all his true disciples. Let us then praise God for that earnest of all our mercies and hopes, and call upon all the saints to join us in our hallelujahs. *They* may rejoice at the remembrance of his holiness: for as the Lord hateth sin, and hath taught them to hate it, his purity assures them, that he will wholly sanctify them, and all his perfections afford security for their eternal salvation. His anger, which is everlasting against the impenitent, endureth but for a moment. He will frown, rebuke, and correct when they offend, and then they will mourn and repent; and this may continue for a night, but joy will speedily return: and the renewed sense of his favour, which is their life and comfort, like the rising sun, makes it morning with their souls.—But let all beware of unwarranted confidence and carnal security: neither outward prosperity nor inward peace are here immoveable: the Lord in his favour hath fixed the believer's *safety* firm as the deep-rooted mountains; but in every thing else he may expect to be shaken, and to meet with temptations and afflictions. When we grow unwatchful, we fall into sin; and the Lord hides his face, our comforts droop, troubles assail, and perhaps our enemies insult over us. And to arise from such depths requires redoubled earnestness and diligence; renewed humble confessions and fervent importunate prayers. We should entreat the Lord, that we may not close our lives under his frown, in a way dishonourable to his name or unprofitable to our brethren; and we may properly pray to have our lives spared, that we may yet praise him on earth and declare his truth. In this way our comforts will be again restored; the penitent's sackcloth will in due time be changed for the robe of salvation, and the garments of praise; and our tongues will be our glory, being employed to the glory of our God. But indeed the continuance of life, and even that of our bodies in the grave, will be but as a moment, compared with eternity; and whatever may befal us by the way, or however we come to the end of our course, if we have learned to love and praise God on earth, we shall exult in his favour, and give him thanks for ever.

2 [c] Bow down thine ear to me; [d] deliver me speedily: be thou * my strong Rock, for [e] an House of defence to save me.

3 For thou *art* my Rock and my Fortress; therefore [f] for thy name's sake [g] lead me, and guide me.

4 [h] Pull me out of the net, that they have laid privily for me: for thou *art* [i] my strength.

5 [k] Into thine hand I commit my spirit: [l] thou hast redeemed me, O LORD [m] God of truth.

6 I have [n] hated them that regard [o] lying vanities: but I trust in the LORD.

7 [p] I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy: for [q] thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast [r] known my soul in adversities;

8 And hast not [s] shut me up into the hand of the enemy: thou hast [t] set my foot in a large room.

9 ¶ Have mercy upon me, O LORD, for I am in trouble: [u] mine eye is consumed with grief, *yea*, [x] my soul and my belly.

c lxxxvi.1.cxxx. 2 Prov. xxii 17. d xl. 17 lxix. 17. lxx. 1. cii. 2. cxliii. 7. Job vii. 21. Luke xviii. 8. * Heb. *to me for a rock of strength.* xviii. 1, 2. lxii. 7. xciv. 22. Deut. xxxii 31 2 Sam xxii. 3. xxiii. 3 e lxxi. 3. xc. 1. xci. 9. Is. xxxiii. 16 John vi. 56. 1 John iv. 12. 15, 16 f xxiii. 2, 3. xxv. 11. lxxix. 9. Josh. vii. 9. Jer. xiv. 7. Ez. xxxvi 21, 22. Eph i. 12. g xxv. 5. 9. xliii. 3. cxxxix. 24. cxliii. 10, 11. Neh. ix. 12. 19. Is. xlix. 10. Luke i. 79. John xvi 13. h xxv. 15. xxxv. 7. lvii 6. cxxiv 7. cxl 5 Prov. xxix. 5. 2 Tim ii. 26.——i xix 14. 2 Cor. xii. 9.——k Luke xxiii. 46. Acts vii. 59. 2 Tim. i 12.——l lxxi. 23. cxxx. 8. Gen xlviii 16. Lev xxv. 43. Is. l. 2. Tit. ii. 14. 1 Pet. i. 19. Rev. v. 9.——m Deut. xxxii. 4. 2 Tim. ii. 13. Tit. i. 2. Heb. vi. 18.

n xxvi. 5 cxxxix. 21. o xxiv. 4 Jer. x. 8 15. Jon. ii. 8. Rom. i. 21. 1 Cor. viii. 4 x 20 p xiii. 5. Is. xlix. 13. Jer. xxxiii. 11 q ix. 13. xxv 18. lxxi. 29 cxix. 153. Neh. ix. 32 Job x. 9. Lam iii. 50. v. 1. r i. 6. Job xxiii. 10 Is. xliii. 2. lxiii. 9. 16 John x. 27 — 30. 1 Cor. viii. 3. Gal. iv. 9. 2 Tim. ii. 19. s lxxxviii. 8. Deu. xxxii. 30. 1 Sam. xvii. 46. xxiv. 18. xxvi. 8. Job xvi. 11. Is. xix. 4. *Marg.*

t iv. 1. xviii. 19. Job xxxvi. 16.——u vi. 7. lxxxviii 9 Job xvii. 7. Lam iv. 17. v. 17.——x vi. 1, 2. xxii. 14, 15. xxxviii 1—10. xliv. 25. lxxiii. 14 26. lxxxviii. 3—5. cii. 3—5. cvii. 18. Job xxxiii. 19—22.

NOTES.

PSALM XXXI. V. 1. It may be supposed that David wrote this psalm, to encourage himself and his friends, during his extreme danger of being seized on by Saul, when he fled from Keilah. (1 *Sam.* xxiii. 23—28:) or that he recollected his prayers, and meditations, and confidence, after his extraordinary deliverance, and thus recorded them, for the honour of God and the encouragement of his people: and we should realize these circumstances, which precluded all hope of escape by ordinary means, if we would enter into the spirit of the Psalmist, and perceive the strength of his faith and confidence in God. But David, in his greatest dangers and trials, expecting deliverance from God, was only a feeble type of the Saviour, in his extreme sufferings, his deep humiliation, and his prospect of the joy set before him.—The clause, rendered "Let me never be ashamed," is literally, "I shall not be "ashamed for ever."

V. 2—4. David and his men had taken shelter in some natural strong hold formed by a rock: but he was fully aware, that this hiding place or house of defence, now it was surrounded by Saul's army, must rather prevent than aid his escape. As, however, he had been used to make "the name of the LORD his strong tower;" and as he considered the honour of the divine power, righteousness, and truth, engaged on his side; he felt a confidence that he should be rescued by some extraordinary interposition of God. Yet the case was urgent; and therefore he earnestly prayed to be answered *speedily:* and to be led and guided out of the intricacy in which he was enclosed by his persecutors. For they had, as it were, caught him in a net by stratagem; and he had neither sagacity nor power sufficient to rescue himself out of their hands.

V. 5. Our blessed Saviour adopted the first clause of this verse when expiring on the cross: and many things in the psalm may be applied to him; yet David evidently perceived himself to be in such constant danger, that he could have no security either to his life or soul, but by thus day by day intrusting them to the powerful and faithful hand of God.—Christ omitted the latter clause of the verse, which more properly relates to the type than to the antitype.—All the deliverances of the church, and of believers of old, were earnests of the redemption made by the death of Christ, and wrought with reference to it: and the merciful deliverances which the Psalmist had received, encouraged him still to confide in "the LORD God of truth."

V. 6. *Lying vanities*, or, *The vainest of vanities*, may denote the idols in which the Gentiles confided, and to which Israel was extremely propense: but the expression seems likewise to mean, all attempts to obtain information or assistance from those who had familiar spirits, or in any way practise sorcery and witchcraft, which in fact was one of the worst sorts of idolatry. Perhaps David observed a disposition among his adherents, in times of extreme danger, to have recourse to expedients of this kind: but he thus expressed his abhorrence of the practice, and his determination to stand aloof from all who were guilty of it, and to admit no trust but in God alone.—Saul, (it is probable,) afterwards hastened and aggravated his own awful doom, by "regarding these lying vanities." (*Note*, 1 *Chr.* x. 13, 14.)

V. 7, 8. The original, in the beginning of these verses, is future; "I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy:" and to conceive of the Psalmist in the crisis of his danger, thus anticipating his deliverance and his joy in the mercy of God in it, gives the passage a peculiar animation. His gracious God had often before this regarded him under his deepest depressions, and so noticed or owned him in trouble and danger, as to permit no enemy to take away his life. He had repeatedly been in the power of the enemy, as to all human probability: yet God had not *shut him* up in it, but had constantly delivered him: and he trusted he would still do the same.—Or this may be the language which David anticipated that he should soon use, concerning his present alarming situation, when confined in a cave and surrounded by his fierce persecutors.—Thus Christ seemed to be left in the power of his enemies: but, in the extremity of his sufferings, he anticipated his resurrection and the joy set before him.

V. 9. The Psalmist's present feelings seem to have interrupted the full exercise of his faith and hope. Such a succession of dangers, and hardships, and provocations, tended to depress his spirits, make his eyes languid, injure his health, and prey upon his vitals.—Some suppose,

10 For [y] my life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing: [z] my strength faileth because of mine iniquity, and [a] my bones are consumed.

11 [b] I was a reproach among all mine enemies, but [c] especially among my neighbours, and [d] a fear to mine acquaintance: they that did see me without fled from me.

12 I am [e] forgotten as a dead man out of mind: I am like * a broken vessel.

13 For [f] I have heard the slander of many: [g] fear *was* on every side: [h] while they took counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life.

14 But I trusted in thee, O LORD: I said, [i] Thou *art* my God.

15 [k] My times *are* in thy hand: [l] deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me.

y lxxviii. 33. lxxxviii 15. Job iii. 24. Rom ix. 2
z lxxi. 9.
a xxxii. 3. 4 cii 3- 5
b xxii. 6 lxix. 19, 20 lxxx x 50, 51 Is xlix 7. liii. 4. 5. Matt. xxvii 39 – 44 Rom. xv 3. Heb xii. 26 xiii. 13. 1 Pet. iv. 14.
c xxxviii 11 xl 8. 9. lxxviii 8 18 Job xix 13, 14 Jer xii 6. Mic vii 6 Mat. x. 21, 22.
d lxiv 8. Job vi. 21 — 23 Matt. xxvi 56. 74 2 Tim. iv. 16.
e lxxxvii. 4, 5. Is xxxviii 11, 12
* Heb *a vessel that perisheth.*
ii. 9. cxix 83. Is xxx 14 Rom. ix. 21, 22 Rev. ii 27.
f lv 10 ci 5 1 Sam xxii 8—10 xxiv. 9 Jer xx 10. Luke xxiii 1, 2 5
g lvi 1—3. lvii 4 Jer vi 25. xx. 3, 4 *marg* Lam ii. 22 ——
h 1 Sam xix. 10—17. xx 33 xxiii. 19, 20. 2 Sam. xvii 1—4 Jer. xi. 19. Mat. xxvi 3, 4. 59. xxvii 1.——
i xvi 1. 2 xviii. 2 xxii. 1, 2. xliii. 5. lvi 3, 4. lxiii. 1 lxxi. 12-22. Mat xxvi. 39. 42 xxvii. 46 John xx. 17 ——
k cxvi. 15. 1 Sam xxvi 10. 2 Sam vii 12 Job xxiv 1 Ec. iii. 1—8. Luke ix. 51 John vii 6 30. xii 27 xiii. 1. xvii. 1. Acts i 7. xxiii 11 xxvii. 24 2 Tim. iv. 6 2 Pet. i. 14.——
l xvii. 8, 9. 13. lxxi. 10—12 cxlii. 6. cxliii. 3. 12 Jer. xv 20, 21.

16 [m] Make thy face to shine upon thy servant: [n] save me for thy mercies' sake.

17 [o] Let me not be ashamed, O LORD; for I have called upon thee: [p] let the wicked be ashamed, *and* [q] let them be † silent in the grave.

18 Let [r] the lying lips be put to silence; which [s] speak ‡ grievous things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous.

19 *Oh* [t] how great *is* thy goodness, [u] which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; [x] *which* thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee, before the sons of men!

20 [y] Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence [z] from the pride of man: thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from [a] the strife of tongues.

m iv. 6 xxx. 3. lxvii. 1. lxxx 3 7 19 Num vi 25, 26. Dan ix 17
n vi 4 li. 1 cvi 45 Dan ix 18 Rom iv 16. 23. Eph i. 6, 7. ii 4 7
o l. xxv. 2 3. xxxiv 5 lxix. 6 7. Is. l. 6, 7. Joel ii. 26 27.
p vi 10. xxxv 4 26 xl 14. 15. lxx. 2, 3. lxxi. 24 lxxxiii. 16, 17. Is xli. 11 12. xlv 16 17 lxv 13, 14. Jer. xx. 11. Dan. xii 2
q cxv. 17 1 Sam ii. 9 Mat xxv. 12, 13.
† Or *cut off for the grave*
r xii. 3. lix 12. lxiii 11 cxl 9—11. Prov. xii 19 Is. liv 17 John viii 44 Rev. xxi. 8. xxii 15.
s lxiv 3, 4. cxxiii. 3, 4 1 Sam ii 3 2 Chr xxxii. 18 Is xxxvii 22—24 Matt. x 25.
xii 24. John viii. 48. Acts xxv 7.——‡ Heb *a hard thing* xciv. 4. Jude 15.——t xxxvi. 7 10 lxxiii. 1 24—26 cxlv 7—9 Is. lxiv. 4 Lam iii 22—25. 1 Cor ii 9 1 John iii 1, 2.
u xciv 11 Is xxxv. 10 Col iii. 2—4. Heb x. 34 Jam ii. 5. 1 Pet i 4. 5.——
x lxviii. 28. cxxvi 2, 3. Num. xxiii 23 Is. xxvi 12 John iii 21 Acts xv. 12. 2 Cor. v 5.
y xxvii. 5. xxxii 7. lxiv 2 xci. 1—3.——
z x 2. xxxvi 11 xl. 4. lxxxvi 14 cxxiv. 5. cxl 5 Ex xviii. 11. Jam iv. 6 ——
a lxxviii 36. cxl. 3. Job v 21. Rom xiii. 13 2 Cor. xii. 20. Gal v 20. 1 Tim. vi. 4. Jam iii. 14—16.

that entire want of provisions was added to the rest of his difficulties; so that he and his men were ready to die with hunger.

V. 10—13. The life of David, while persecuted by Saul, was one continued series of afflictions and sorrows, except as he rose above them by faith and communion with God. It must be supposed, that he felt his sufferings with great sensibility: and while dejected and weakened under them in body and mind, his former sins were brought to remembrance, and he considered himself as visited for them.—Not only did his enemies reproach him, but his neighbours, his friends and relations, eagerly joined the senseless clamour! Every one was afraid of seeing him, and shunned him in the streets or roads, for fear of being involved in his ruin. His case was thought hopeless: and he was no more regarded than a dead corpse, or a broken earthen vessel, which never can be repaired. Numbers, and those principal men, sought favour by slandering him; all from fear declined speaking in his behalf: while his powerful enemies plotted together on the best method of killing him. The marginal references will show how each of these circumstances was still more emphatically observable in the history of the divine Saviour, when he became "a "man of sorrows," and "despised and rejected of men:" One circumstance indeed must be excepted: he was wounded for our transgressions, but had no iniquity of his own. —This passage seems to mark out the crisis before mentioned as the date of the psalm: but as events not wholly dissimilar occurred during Absalom's rebellion, after David had brought great guilt on his conscience, in the matter of Uriah; some expositors apply the several expressions to Shimei's reproaches, Ahithophel's counsel, and the other particulars of that eventful period.

V. 14. "I have said, Thou art my God;" that is, 'I 'have determined to seek all my salvation, my present 'security and comfort, and my eternal happiness, entirely 'from thy omnipotence and all-sufficiency, and in thy mercy, 'truth, and unchangeable love, as revealed in thy word.'

V. 15. The Psalmist well knew, that the times of his troubles and deliverance, and the continuance and period of his life, were entirely at God's disposal: and as he would not attempt to anticipate the Lord's appointed time by killing Saul, he was persuaded that Saul could not succeed in his attempts to slay him; and that infinite wisdom and love would bring about his deliverance and advancement to the throne, when the proper season was arrived. Thus the counsels and decrees of the Jewish rulers against our Lord were continually disappointed for several years, because his time was not yet come.

V. 16. 'Till my time of deliverance, let thy manifested 'presence and favour cheer my heart and protect me, for 'the honour of thine abundant mercies.'

V. 17, 18. These verses also are *future*, 'JEHOVAH, I 'shall not be ashamed, for I have called on thee. The 'wicked shall be ashamed; they shall be silent in the 'grave,' (or in the place of separate spirits.) "Let the "lying lips," &c. This way of expression certainly implies *prayer*, as well as *prediction*: but it is the language of triumphant confidence in God, and assurance, that however urgent dangers or powerful enemies or temptations may be, the event shall be happy and glorious: and thus considered, it is perfectly justified from the charge of malevolent imprecation; unless foreseeing and predicting the destruction of the wicked be malevolence. The word *righteous* is singular; it especially marks David's strict integrity, while slandered with insolent contempt; as typical of the Just and Holy One of God, who was reviled far more haughtily and despitefully.

b xvii. 7. xcviii. 1. cxviii. 23. 1 Pet. ii. 9.
* Or, *fenced city.* 1 Sam xxiii. 7—13. Jer i. 18
c cxvi. 11. 1 Sam. xxiii. 26. xxvii. 1.
d 17. *marg.* lxxxviii. 16. Is. vi. 5. *marg* xxxviii. 10—12. xlix. 14 Lam iii. 54, 55. Ez xxxvii. 11. Jon. ii. 4.——e vi. 9. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11—13. Jon. ii. 7—9. Heb. v. 7.

21 Blessed *be* the LORD: for he hath showed me his [b] marvellous kindness in a * strong city.

22 For [c] I said in my haste, [d] I am cut off from before thine eyes: [e] nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplications when I cried unto thee.

23 [f] O love the LORD, all ye [g] his saints: *for* [h] the LORD preserveth the faithful, and [i] plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.

24 [k] Be of good courage, and [l] he shall strengthen your heart, [m] all ye that hope in the LORD.

f xxxiv. 9. xcvii. 10 Deut x. 12. xxx. 16 Is lvi. 6 Mark xii 33. 1 Thes iv. 1.
g xxx 4. lxxxix. 7. xcvii. 10. cxlv. 10. Rev. xix. 5, 6.
h Deut xxxiii 3. 1 Sam ii. 9. John x 27—29. Jude 1.
i liv. 5 xciv 2. Rev. xviii. 6.
k xxvii. 14 Is. xxxv. 3, 4 Luke xxii 31, 32 Heb. xii. 12, 13. Jam v. 10, 11.——l xxix. 11. cxxxviii. 3. Col. i. 11.——m cxlvi. 5 Rom. xv 12, 13 1 Pet. i. 21.

V. 19, 20. David, in the midst of his troubles and imminent perils, found encouragement in admiring the goodness of God to those whom he had taught to fear and trust in him. Many effects of this goodness are openly shown "before the sons of men," in the deliverances wrought for his servants on earth: immensely more is *laid up* for them in heaven for their eternal happiness. Here the Lord preserves them by his powerful presence from their proud and envious foes, as in a *secret hiding place:* and he will keep them, as in a royal pavilion, from all the effects of those slanderous reproaches which are cast on them by those who contend with them and persecute them.

V. 21. Perhaps David here referred to his deliverance, when Saul intended to have besieged him in Keilah: or he considered God's protection as the strongest fortress.

V. 22. *In my haste.* This seems especially suited to the hurry and agitation of the Psalmist's mind, and the imperfection of his faith, when he found himself environed by his powerful foes in the cave to which he had fled for shelter. Before he had time for reflection and prayer, he hastily gave up all for lost. But meditation on the promises God had made to him, with earnest supplication, calmed his soul: and eventually his prayers were answered.

V. 23, 24. The deliverance of David, so far exceeding all human probability, might well encourage all that had *experienced the mercies of God,* to cleave to him in thankful admiring love; for it was evident, that the Lord preserved believers in every danger, and punished decidedly and awfully, all their proud and ungodly persecutors. No circumstances of danger or temptation, therefore, should deject them, or drive them from the path of duty; and in adhering to God, they would find their hearts supported and comforted with inward strength.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

The consciousness of trusting in God for every thing upon the warrant of his word, inspires confidence in danger, and suggests pleas in prayer: for it would not be honourable for the Lord to leave those who rely on him to be ashamed of their hope. His *justice* induces him to deliver them from their unrighteous persecutors: his *mercy* through the Redeemer's righteousness, will rescue them from final condemnation; and their earnest prayers will draw down promised blessings from their reconciled Father as they stand in need of them. The Lord will protect and support all who flee to him as their Fortress, and build upon him as their Rock of salvation: for the honour of his name he will guide such as desire to be led in his holy ways: and He will extricate from perplexities, and deliver out of temptations those that call upon him, to pluck their feet out of every net and snare, which Satan and wicked men have privily laid in their path. Every true Christian, having learned the worth of his soul, and the dangers to which it is exposed, hath been led to intrust it as a sacred deposit to the care of the Almighty; but considering His holiness and justice, and his own guilt and pollution, he would not dare to do so, did he not behold him as in Christ his Redeemer, ready to forgive, and true to his covenant and promises. Thus encouraged, he continually commits his spirit into his hands, and by daily experience obtains a more firm persuasion of his power and willingness to save: and therefore, when death either seems to be at hand or actually comes, he has confidence in renewing this often repeated transaction, and he desires to die resigning his spirit into the hands of his redeeming God. (2 *Tim.* i. 12.) But they who desire this comfortable assurance, must abhor the fellowship of all such as regard lying vanities, and renounce all idolatrous, superstitious, and carnal confidences, on which so many depend. They must rejoice only in the mercy of God; and in every affliction remember that he considers their trouble. They should treasure up for future use their experiences of his having noticed, supported, and comforted their souls in adversity, and having delivered them, when they thought they had been shut up in the hands of their enemy: for every deliverance is an earnest of the complete enlargement of the heavenly world.

V. 9—24.

In this present world we expect heavy trials: yet it is our infirmity, "if our life be spent with grief, and our "years with sighing." Should pain, sickness, poverty, reproach, contempt, and persecution, come upon us with combined force: should our foes prevail and our friends prove unfaithful, or afraid of owing or regarding us: should any be so degraded from honourable or useful stations, as to be forgotten like a dead man, or thrown aside as a broken vessel: should enmity unite with contempt, and slanderous accusations give countenance to conspiracy against our lives, we ought to remember that we have deserved more than all this, and be thankful for deliverance from the wrath to come. We should also consider the man after God's own heart, and the treatment which he experienced: and especially we should look unto Jesus, who was divinely wise, holy, and merciful; yet was more hated, despised, slandered, and afflicted, than we can be. Let us then follow the example of his resignation; remembering "that our times are in his hand;" and that support, comfort, and deliverance, will be vouchsafed whenever he pleases; nor can any suffering befal us other-

PSALM XXXII.

David shows the happiness of a pardoned sinner, 1, 2. *And that penitent confessions alone can relieve the misery of the guilty conscience, and make way for comfort,* 3—7. *He instructs and warns sinners to repent, and believers to rejoice in God,* 8—11.

* *A Psalm* of David, Maschil.

BLESSED *is he* [b] *whose* transgression *is* forgiven, *whose* sin *is* covered.

2 Blessed *is* the man unto whom [d] the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and [e] in whose spirit *there is* no guile.

3 [f] When I kept silence, [g] my bones waxed old through [h] my roaring all the day long.

4 For day and night [i] thy hand was heavy upon me: [k] my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah.

5 [l] I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity [m] have I not hid. [n] I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and [o] thou forgavest [p] the iniquity of my sin. Selah.

[a] Or, A Psalm of David giving instruction xlii. xlv. lii. liii. lv. titles
[b] i. 1, 2. xl. 4. lxxxiv 12. lxxxix 15 cvi. 3. cxix 1, 2. cxxviii 1 Jer. xvii 7, 8. Matt. v. 3—12 xvi 17. Luke xi. 28. Rev. xxii. 14.
[c] Is. i 18. xliii. 25. xliv. 22 Mic. vii 18, 19. Acts xiii 38, 39. Rom. iv. 6—8.
[d] lxxxv. 2. Neh. iv. 5.
[e] Lev xvii. 4. Rom. v. 13. 2 Cor. v. 19—21.
[f] John i 47. 2 Cor. i. 12. 1 Pet ii 1, 2. Rev xiv. 5.
[g] Gen iii. 8—19. 2 Sam xi 27. xii 1—12 Pro. xxviii. 13 Is. lvii 17 Jer. xxxi. 18, 19. Luke xv. 15, 16
[h] vi. 2. xxxi. 9, 10. xxxviii. 3. li 8 cii. 3—5. Job xxx. 17. 30. Lam i 13. iii 4.
[i] xxii. 1. xxxviii. 8. Job iii. 24. Is. li 20. lix 11. Lam. iii 8 Hos. vii 14.
[k] xxxviii 2—8. xxxix 10, 11. 1 Sam v 6, 7. 9. vi 9. Job xix. 21 xxxii 7 —— [l] xxii. 15. xc 6, 7. cii. 3, 4. Job xxx. 30 Lam. iv. 8. v. 10 —— [m] xxxviii. 18. li. 3—5. Lev. xxvi. 39, 40 Josh vii 19. 2 Sam. xii. 13. xxiv 10 Job xxxiii. 27. Pro. xxviii 13. Jer. iii 13. 1 John i. 8—10. —— [n] Hos. vi. 1 Luke xv. 17—19. —— [o] xxx. 5. lxxxvi 5. 15 ciii 3. 2 Sam xii. 13. Is. lxv 24 Jer xxxi. 20. Luke vii. 47. xv. 20—23. Eph. iv. 32. [p] li. 4. 2 Sam. xii. 9. 14 Mal. iii. 8.

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wise than our Father has appointed. Whilst we therefore give ourselves to meditation and prayer, we may profitably observe how the lying lips of Saul, Doeg, Ahithophel, and Judas, were put to silence in the grave: and thus will all be confounded, who menace, slander, or speak grievous things contemptuously against the righteous. Instead of yielding to impatience or despondency under our troubles, we should turn our thoughts to the surprising goodness of the Lord towards those who fear and trust in him. For whilst their treasure is laid up for them out of the reach of all their enemies, their bodies, souls, reputations, and comforts are under the protection of the Almighty; and they are kept as in a strong city, through faith unto salvation. We should not therefore yield to unbelief, or hastily conclude, under discouraging circumstances, that we are cut off from before the eyes of the Lord: but ask, and he will hear and deliver. He will preserve his faithful people through life; and when they meet the stroke of death, and yield their bodies to the grave, Jesus will receive their souls, and raise their bodies, and bring them to be for ever with him in glory. Let all his saints therefore pray to be enabled patiently to suffer, and courageously to venture for his sake: for he will comfort and strengthen the hearts of all who hope in him; whilst the proud despiser of his Gospel and persecutor of his people, shall meet with an abundant recompense of his evil deeds, and be for ever shut up, without possibility of release, in the hand of his cruel enemy, and in the unquenchable fire. Lord pardon our complaints and fears; and increase our faith, patience, love, and gratitude; and teach us to rejoice in tribulation, and in hope of thine eternal glory!

NOTES.

PSALM XXXII. *Maschil.* This title seems to imply, that the psalm contains peculiarly important instruction: and indeed it teaches the way by which miserable sinners become happy, and the nature and effects of true repentance: but as twelve other psalms have the same title, the subjects of which are very different; some have thought that the word *maschil* showed the music to which the psalm was set. This is one of the seven penitential psalms; and, though the special occasion of it is not mentioned, it is generally supposed to refer to David's sin in the matter of Uriah, and his subsequent repentance. It seems to have been written some time after the fifty-first, and when God had "restored to him the joy of his salvation."

V. 1, 2. Sin is the only cause of misery; and forgiveness is the commencement of a sinner's happiness: as he that had obtained the king's pardon would be allowed to be the happiest, though the poorest, in a company of condemned malefactors. The believer's transgressions of the divine law are all forgiven, being *covered* with the atonement. Christ bare his iniquities; and therefore they are not *imputed* to him, as to any of their *penal* consequences: nay, "righteousness without works" is *imputed*, and as a righteous person the reward is adjudged to him: hence all his present comforts, and hopes of future felicity. (*Note, Rom.* iv. 5—8.) But his character, as well as his privilege, is emphatically marked: "in his spirit there is no guile." His professed repentance, faith, and love are undissembled: he means what he says, when he confesses his sins, and prays to be delivered from them. He is no hypocrite or formalist in his worship, but is indeed the same before God that he appears to be before men; a sinner trusting in his mercy through the atoning blood, and seeking sanctification by the power of the Holy Spirit. He does not profess to repent, with intention to sin again; nor indulge in sin because God is ready to forgive. Others will, but he cannot thus abuse the doctrine of free grace: he is "an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile."—'Happy, thrice happy, is that man, to whom God will 'be pleased, out of his own free grace and mercy, (for 'no man can merit such a favour by any services we can 'do him,) to remit not only his common errors, but also 'his grossest sins.' 'Who doth not only seem by his sorrowful confessions to hate and abhor them; but is unfeignedly resolved to forsake them.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 3—5. It seems that David, before Nathan came to him, had often been exceedingly tortured in his conscience, on account of the atrocious crimes which he had committed; yet reluctancy to humble himself before God, or to be considered as a criminal by men, led him to *keep*

6 [q] For this shall every one that is godly [r] pray unto thee in *a time when thou mayest be found: surely [s] in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him.

7 Thou *art* [t] my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt [x] compass me about with [y] songs of deliverance Selah.

8 ¶ I will [z] instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: † I will guide thee with mine eye.

9 [a] Be ye not as the horse, *or* as the mule, *which* have [b] no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.

10 [c] Many sorrows *shall be* to the wicked: [d] but he that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about.

11 [e] Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous: and [f] shout for joy, all *ye that are* [g] upright in heart.

q xxxiv 2 6. xl. 3 lii. 12. 13. 2 Cor. i 4. 1 Tim i. 16. r iv 3 2 Cor vii. 9. 10 Tit. ii. 12 s Pro i 28. Is xlix. 8. lv 6 Luke xix 42 44 John vii. 34. 2 Cor vi 2 * Heb. *a time of finding* t xiii 7. lxix. 1, 2. 13 15 cxxiv 4. 5. Gen viii 17—22. Is. xliii 2. Mat. vii. 24—27 Rev xii 15, 16 u ix. 9. xxvii. 5. xxxi. 20 cxix. 114 cxliii 9. Jer. xxxvi. 26. Col. iii. 3 ——x 10. v. 12 xviii 5. xl 3 ——y xl. 3 xcviii. 1. Ex xv. 1—3 Judg. v. 1 2 Sam xxii. 1. Rev. vii 10 xv. 3. ——z xxxiv. 11. Prov. iii. 1. lv. 1—13. viii 10, 11. Matt xi. 29.

† Heb. *I will counsel* thee, *mine eye* shall be *upon thee.* xxv. 9. 10 xxxii 19. Prov. iii 5, 6. Is xlix 10 a Prov. xxvi. 8. Jer. xxxi 18. Jam. iii. 3 iv. 7—10 b Job xxxv. 11. Jer. iv 22. viii. 6, 7. c xvi. 4 xxxiv. 19—21 cxl 11. Prov. xiii. 21. Ec viii. 12. 13. Is. iii. 11. lvii. 21 Rom ii 8, 9. d ii 12 v 12. xxxiv 8 xl 4. lxxiv 12. calvi. 1. lxiv 10. lxviii. 4 ——f v. 11.

5. cxlvii. 11 Prov. xvi. 20 Is. xii 2, 3 Jer xvii 7 ——e xxxiii 1. lxiv 10. lxviii. 3 xcvii 12. Deut xii. 12. 1 Sam. ii. 1 Rom. v. 11 Phil iii. 1 3. iv. 4 ——f v. 11. xcvii 1. xcviii. 4. Ezra iii 11—13 Zech. iv 7. ——g 2. cxxv. 4

silence, or only to give vent to his anguish by solitary bemoanings, ('roaring as a lion that has received a deadly 'wound:') and endeavouring, no doubt at the same time, by one sophistical excuse or other, to palliate his guilt to himself, and to be on better terms with his conscience. But this stubborn and rebellious conduct served only to prolong and enhance his misery. His secret remorse and conflict not only preyed on his spirit, but impaired his health, and rendered him infirm in his bones or limbs, as through old age. Neither business nor pleasure during the day, nor his couch by night, could relieve his inward anguish, which was rendered more exquisite by the pains taken to conceal it. Thus the hand of God was heavy upon him: and it is probable, some additional distressing malady was superadded to the natural effects of his inward conflicts; so that he, who was before vigorous and healthy, wasted away, till he resembled the parched land in the drought of summer. But at length, being brought to a more proper frame of mind, he resolved humbly to submit himself to God, and to make full and ingenuous confession of his aggravated crimes, without attempting any excuse or palliation; having done this, the *iniquity* or *injustice* of his sin was pardoned, his burden was speedily removed, and at length his comforts were restored; and he recorded all this with a mark of peculiar emphasis, *Selah*, that others might profit by his painful and his joyful experience; (*Notes*, *Luke* xv. 14—24.)

V. 6, 7. The word rendered *godly* is sometimes translated a *saint*, and seems to mean one whom God favours. All that fear him, and, in humble submission, desire his mercy, show so far that right state of heart which springs from special grace: and such persons, hearing how readily God forgave the heinous guilt of David, when he was brought to ingenuous confession and deep repentance, would be encouraged to copy his example, and learn to pray in faith and hope, "in a time when God might be "found." While his word is brought home to the conscience, and the Holy Spirit strives with the sinner by painful convictions and terrors, or draws him to hope for mercy; it is especially *a time of finding*, "an acceptable "time," "a day of visitation," a critical season in his experience. In some respects, this life is a *time of finding*, except to such as are judicially hardened: but in another world, God will no more be found on a mercy-seat, waiting to be gracious: but as an avenging Judge to all the impenitent. They however who, as David supposed, would by his example be animated to seize the invaluable opportunity, were received into favour; and secure of protection, (like Noah in the ark, during the deluge,) could be approached by no overwhelming troubles, temptations, or enemies; or by those judgments and vengeance which overtook the wicked and hurried them into destruction.—In this happiness the Psalmist rejoiced; and he daily received so many mercies, which he celebrated with songs of deliverance, that he was compassed about with them.

V. 8—11. David in the name of God, here proposed to instruct those who would regard him; and by his experience and attention, to show them the way of happiness; keeping his eye still upon them and consoling them. Or, the Lord himself by his prophet, promises to be the Teacher and watchful Guide of all, who desire to walk in his ways. When horses or mules prove refractory and mischievous, force and skill are used to subdue and restrain them: and they are exposed to much severe discipline, to render them tractable, and to prevent them from doing mischief, instead of service, to their possessors. Thus obstinate sinners, in as irrational a manner, render sharp usage necessary, either to preserve them from ruin, or to restrain them from injuring others. So that their sorrows are multiplied, as the deliverances and praises of the righteous are enhanced.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

All men would be happy: but they vainly expect that riches, pleasures, and worldly honours, can confer satisfaction; and when disappointed, they change one vanity for another: so that he, and he alone, who attends to God's word, seeks felicity successfully. The mercy of God, through the great Redeemer, revealed in the Scriptures, brings the first report of the sinner's happiness; faith receives this report, renounces worldly idols and false confidences, and seeks forgiveness and righteousness in the Saviour's name. But pride and stoutness of heart, aversion to God and his holy character and spiritual worship, and unbelief, either absolutely, or to a considerable degree, prevailing in the heart; keep back from unreserved submission, ingenuous confession, and fervent prayer, numbers who are deeply distressed with a sense of guilt. They *keep silence*, and brood in secret over their terrors and sorrows, which they endeavour to conceal under an assumed and hypocritical cheerfulness; while in solitude they feel and sometimes mourn over their misery with horror and

PSALM XXXIII.

The righteous called on to rejoice in God, and to praise his perfections as displayed in his word and works; and all men, to fear the great Creator and Governor of the world, 1—11. *His providential kindness to his chosen people, in ordering all things for their good,* 12—19. *Their confidence and prayer,* 20—22.

a xxxii. 11. xcvii. 12. 1 Cor. i. 30, 31.
b cxviii. 15. Rom. iii. 10. v. 19.
c 1. 14 — 16 lxxviii. 36, 37. cxxxv 3. cxlvii. 1. Prov. xv. 8.

REJOICE in the LORD, O [b] ye righteous: *for* [c] praise is comely for the upright.

2 [d] Praise the Lord with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery *and* an instrument of ten strings.

3 Sing unto him [e] a new song; [f] play skilfully with a loud noise.

4 For [g] the word of the LORD *is* right; and [h] all his works *are done* in truth.

5 [i] He loveth righteousness and judgment: [k] the earth is full of the * goodness of the LORD.

6 By [l] the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all [m] the host of them by [n] the breath of his mouth.

d lxxxi. 2, 3. xcii. 3 xcviii. 4, 5 cxliv. 9. cxlix. 3. cl. 3—6. Ex. xv. 20. 1 Chr. xv. 16. 28 xxv 3—6. Rev v. 8. xiv 2.
e xcvi 1 xcviii. 1 cxlix 1. Is. xlii. 16 Eph v. 19 Col. iii 16. Rev v. 9. xiv. 3.
f 1 Chr xiii. 8. xv. 22. xxv 7. 2 Chr xxxiv. 12.
g xvii 6. xix. 8. cxix. 75. 128. Prov. xxx. 5. Mic. ii 7. Rom. vii 12.
h xxv. 10 xxxvi. 5, 6. lxxxv. 10, 11. xcvi. 13. Gen. xxiv. 27. Deut. xxxii. 4. Dan. iv. 37.
John xiv 6. Rom. xv. 8, 9. Tit i. 2.——i xi 7 xlv. 7. xcix. 4. Heb i. 9. Rev. xv 3, 4.
k civ. 24 cxix. 64. cxlv 15, 16 Matt. v. 45 Acts xiv. 17.——* Or, *mercy*.——l 9. cxlix. 1—5. Gen i. 1 6, 7. John i. 1—3. 2 Pet. iii 5 ——m cxlviii 2, 3. Gen. ii 1. Deut. iv. 19. Jer. viii. 2. Rom. i. 25.——n civ 30. Gen. ii. 7. Job xxvi. 13 xxxiii. 4. John xx. 22.

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remorse, in the most doleful lamentations and fruitless wishes. In this way some are at length driven to despair and suicide: but far more seek relief from a condemning conscience, by having recourse to infidelity, or some corrupt system, which excuses or explains away the evil of sin; and so enables them to keep up a delusive hope of being happy, or at least of escaping misery, without repentance and works meet for repentance. When, however, God is pleased to visit the soul with his special grace, he sends his word, not only by a Nathan to the outward ear, with "Thou art the man;" but by his Holy Spirit to the inmost soul: and then godly sorrow, unfeigned submission, ingenuous confessions, and believing prayers for mercy and forgiveness through the atoning blood of Christ, soon make way for hope, and peace, and joy: and the justified believer tastes a happiness, of which before he had no conception; while he expatiates in praise of his present consolations, as contrasted with his preceding anguish, in a strain not unlike the encomiums on health of one recovering from a dangerous disease. Now he would have all his fellow-sinners hear of his happiness, that they may come and share it: and therefore he freely declares his own sentiments and experience for their instruction: and his character is equally distant from that of the self-confident Pharisee, and the licentious Antinomian. Yet even this man may relax his vigilance, and fall into grievous sins, and even be led to keep silence, in the same perverse and foolish manner that he did before! So deceitful is the heart of man, and so powerful the influence of temptation operating on human depravity!—But lengthened and multiplied miseries here, or eternal ruin hereafter, must be the inevitable consequence of this mad contest of a worm against Omnipotence. Our God is indeed far more ready to forgive, than we are humbly to seek his mercy; but he will continue to frown, to rebuke, and to correct, till his children kiss the rod, confess their sins, and implore forgiveness. Then he will rejoice in pardoning and comforting them; that they may feel, and so declare to others, the difference betwixt a humble and an unhumbled frame of mind. His "goodness should lead all men to repentance:" but this is by no means the case; for numbers despise the riches of his mercy; and even his offending children are often kept from humble prayer, by unbelieving discouragements. But the examples of those who have found mercy, again excite their hopes. Then they pray, and the Lord hears from his mercy-seat, and they will be safe from the floods of vengeance, which await those who will not "seek the LORD "while he may be found;" but all who come to him in this way, shall be preserved from their enemies and rescued from their troubles; and their tears of godly sorrow shall be turned into abundant songs of joyful praise. Having tasted the bitterness of sin, and the comfort of forgiveness, they can warn and instruct their fellow-sinners, and teach them by their experience: and the Lord himself will guide with his eye every humble penitent. But with his powerful hand will he restrain, and with his heavy hand will he punish, the obstinate and refractory; while all the sorrows that can be endured on earth are as nothing, compared with the misery of the wicked in the world to come. Happy then are they, who trust in the Lord, and uprightly walk with him: mercy surrounds them, and joy is their portion; the ways in which they are called to walk are ways of pleasantness and peace; and the end is eternal life. "This is the heritage of the "servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, "saith the LORD."

NOTES.

PSALM XXXIII. V. 1. Neither the writer, nor the occasion of this psalm, is mentioned: but it is generally ascribed to David, and may perhaps be considered as a continuation of the subject begun in the preceding psalm. —'God and not the world, is the fountain of joy which 'sinners talk of, but the righteous only possess.' (*Horne.*) —Joy and praise are *becoming*, when united with piety and integrity; but the appearance of them, without soundness of character, is inconsistent and disgusting.

V. 2, 3. Instrumental as well as vocal music in the worship of God, preceded the ceremonial law: not being explicitly there appointed, they can be no part of it; and if properly conducted, may be rendered greatly subservient to devotion.—'Let not ancient songs of praise suffice you; 'but endite a new hymn, to testify your singular love and 'gratitude; employ your best skill to make the sweetest 'music; and sing as cheerfully as you are wont to do at 'your solemn feasts.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

7 He [o] gathereth the waters of the sea together [p] as an heap: he layeth up the depth in store-houses.

8 [q] Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world [r] stand in awe of him:

9 For [s] he spake, and it was *done;* he commanded, [t] and it stood fast.

10 [u] The LORD * bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: [x] he maketh the devices of the people of none effect.

11 [y] The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, [z] the thoughts of his heart to † all generations.

12 [a] Blessed *is* the nation whose God *is* the LORD; *and* [b] the people *whom* he hath chosen for [c] his own inheritance.

13 The LORD [d] looketh from heaven; [e] he beholdeth all the sons of men.

14 From [f] the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth.

15 He [g] fashioneth their hearts alike; [h] he considereth all their works.

16 There is [i] no king saved by the multitude of an host: [k] a mighty man is not delivered by much strength.

17 [l] An horse *is* a vain thing for safety: neither shall he deliver *any* by [m] his great strength.

18 Behold, [n] the eye of the LORD *is* upon them that fear him, upon them that [o] hope in his mercy;

19 [p] To deliver their soul from death, and [q] to keep them alive in famine.

20 [r] Our soul waiteth for the Lord; [s] he *is* our Help and our Shield.

21 [t] For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in [u] his holy name.

22 [x] Let thy mercy, O LORD, be upon us, according as we hope in thee.

o civ. 6—9 Gen. i 9, 10 Job. xxv. 10. xxxviii 8—11 Prov viii. 29. Jer. v 22
p Ex xv. 3. Josh iii. 13 16 Hab iii 15
q xxii 28 xcvi. 9, 10. Jer x 7—12. Dan vi. 26. Rev xiv 6, 7. xv 4.
r lxxvi. 7. Heb. xii 29
s 6. cxlviii. 5, 6 Gen i. 3 Heb xi. 3
t xciii. 4. cxix 90, 91 Col. i. 16, 17 Heb. i 3. Rev. iv 11
u ii. 1—4 ix. 15. Ex i. 10—12. 2 Sam. xv. 31. 34 xvii. 14. 23 Job v 12, 13 Prov. xxi. 30. Is. vii 5—7. viii 9, 10 xix 3. 11—14.
* Heb *maketh frustrate.* Is. xliv 25.
x xxi. 11 cxl 8
y Job xxiii. 13 Prov. xix. 21. Is. xiv. 24. 27. xlvi. 10. Lam. iii. 37. Ez. xxxviii 10. &c. Dan. iv. 37 Acts iv. 27, 28 Eph. i. 11.——z xcii 5 Is lv. 8, 9. Jer xxix 11 Mic. iv 12——† Heb. *generation and generation* Acts xv 18——a cxliv. 15. cxlvii. 19, 20. Ex xix 5, 6. Deut. xxxiii 29
b lxv. 4 cxxxy 4 Deut. vii. 6—8. John xv. 16 Eph. i 4. 1 Pet ii. 9——c xxviii 9. Jer x. 16 Tit. ii. 14——d xi. 4. xiv. 2, cii. 19. Gen. vi. 12 2 Chr xvi. 9. Job xxviii 24 Prov xv. 3. Lam. iii. 50.——e liii. 2. Jer. xxiii. 23. 24 Heb. iv 13.——f cxxiii. 1 1 Kings viii 27. 30. Is. lvii. 15. lxvi. 1. Luke xi. 2. 1 Tim. vi. 16.

g Prov. xxii. 2. xxvii. 19 Ec. vii. 29. Is lxiv. 8 Acts xvii. 26.
h xliv 21 Job xi. 11 xxxiv 21, 22 Prov xxiv. 12. Jer. xxxii. 19. Hos vii 2. 1 Cor. iv. 5.
i xliv 6. Ex. xiv. 17, 18 28. Josh. xi 4—8. Judg. vii. 2. 12, &c. 1 Sam xiv. 8—16, &c. 1 Kings xx. 10. 27—29 2 Chr. xiv. 9—13. xx. 12 23 xxxii 8, 9. 21
k Josh xiv. 12. Judg iv. 15. 1 Sam. xvii. 4 45—47 2 Sam xxi 16—22. Jer. ix 23.
l xx. 7. Judg. iv. 15 2 Kings vii. 6, 7. Prov. xxi. 31 Ec ix 11. Is. xxx. 16.
m cxlvii. 10. Job xxxix 19 26.
n xxxiv. 15—20. cxlvii 11 [illegible] xxxvi. 7. 1 Pet. iii. 12.
o xiii 5. lii. 8. Rom iv 4—8. Heb. vi 18
p xci. 3—7. 10. John x 28—30.
q xxxvii 3 19. Job v. 19—22. Prov x. 3. Is. xxxiii. 16. Matt.
v. 31—33——r xxvii. 14. lxii. 1, 2. 5, 6. cxxx. 5. 6. Is. xl. 31.——s cxv. 9—12 cxliv 1, 2 1 Chr. v. 20——t xxviii. 7 xxx. 10—12. xxxii. 10, 11. Zech. x 7. John xvi 22.——u 1 Chr. xvi. 10 35. Luke i. 47—50. Rev. iv. 8.——x v. 11, 12. xiii. 5. xxxii. 10. cxix 49. 76. Matt ix 29.

V. 6. (*Marg. Ref.*) Most of the ancient expositors, by the "Word of the Lord, and the breath," or Spirit, "of "his mouth," understand the Son of God the personal Word, and the Holy Spirit, as proceeding from the Father and the Son, (*Notes, Gen.* i.)

V. 7. The waters, which at first covered the earth, were by the Creator's power confined within their prescribed bounds, as if laid on a heap, or reserved in storehouses, to be dispersed, as required, to supply the want of all that dwell on earth, by various methods of communication.

V. 9. The sublimity of this verse is admirable. "He "spake, and it was; He commanded, and it was establish-"ed." He did but signify his pleasure, and the thing was done, and each of his creatures took the station allotted to it.

V. 10—12. The sovereignty of God, in providence, accomplishing his purposes whether of mercy or judgment, without the least impediment from the politic counsels of blind idolaters or impious persecutors; nay, by overruling their plans to fulfil his designs, which extend through all generations of men, from the creation to the end of the world, shows his omnipotence and omniscience, as much as the first creation of the world did. The 'counsels of 'states and empires are either directed to the accomplish-'ment of the great counsel of heaven; or if they attempt 'to thwart it, are blasted and brought to nothing. His-'tory will force all who read it with this view, to acknow-'ledge thus much. And with this view indeed it should 'always be read.' (*Horne.*) The nation, therefore, which was distinguished as the chosen inheritance of this almighty Creator and universal Sovereign, possessed inestimable advantages above the worshippers of idols; and should rejoice in them and improve them.

V. 13—15. The Lord, who formeth all hearts *as one*, and impartially decides concerning the works of all, is the Witness as well as Judge of every man's conduct, throughout the earth. 'He formed their souls as well as 'their bodies; and therefore must needs see into their 'hearts, and be perfectly acquainted with every one of 'their thoughts.' (*Pp. Patrick.*) He also made the human species originally of the same nature; all are derived from the same stock, and all receive that nature impaired through the fall. The hearts of men, like their faces, have the same grand outlines, which are diversified through a variety of concurring circumstances: and the one heart, (the same views, judgment, disposition, and affections,) is given to all who are renewed by the Holy Spirit, with merely circumstantial differences, in things of smaller consequence.

V. 16, 17. The marginal references to a few scriptural instances, sufficiently explain these verses: and the Almighty can effect the same things by ordinary means, as he formerly did by miracles.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Rejoicing in the Lord as our Father and Friend, is the genuine effect of humiliation and mourning for sin: for being justified by faith, and walking uprightly before him, joy is our privilege and duty. It becomes us to abound in cheerful praises; it is suited to our character, and ornamental to our profession, and honourable to God. But the joy of the hypocrite springs from presumption, and his prayers are an offence and affront to the Lord. Every endowment we possess should be employed with all our skill and earnestness, in the service of the Giver; and

PSALM XXXIV.

David praises God, and exhorts others from his own experience to bless and trust in him, 1—10. *He teaches the fear of God; and contrasts the privileges of the righteous with the misery of the wicked,* 11—22.

A Psalm of David, when he changed his behaviour before * Abimelech; who drove him away, and he departed.

I WILL [a] bless the LORD at all times: his praise *shall* continually *be* in my mouth.

2 My soul shall [b] make her boast in the LORD: [c] the humble shall hear *thereof,* and be glad.

3 [d] O magnify the LORD with me, and [e] let us exalt his name together.

4 [f] I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me [g] from all my fears.

5 [h] They looked unto him, [i] and were † lightened; and [k] their faces were not ashamed.

6 [l] This poor man cried, and the LORD heard *him,* and [m] saved him out of all his troubles.

7 [n] The angel of the LORD [o] encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.

* Or, *Achish.* Gen. xx. 2. xxvi. 1. 1 Sam. xxi. 13—15. Prov. xxix. 25.
a lxxi. 8. 14, 15. cxlv. 1, 2. Is. xxiv. 15, 16. Acts v. 41. xvi. 25. Eph. v. 20. Col. iii. 17. 1 Thes. v. 18. 2 Thes. i. 3. ii. 13.
b xliv. 6. cv. 3. Is. xlv. 25. Jer. ix. 24. 1 Cor. i. 31. 2 Cor. x. 17.
c xxii. 22—24. xxxii. 5, 6. cxix. 74. cxlii. 7. 1 Tim. i. 15, 16.
d xxxv 27. xl. 16. lxix. 30. Luke i. 46. Acts xix. 17. Phil. i. 20.
e xxxiii. 1, 2. lxvi. 8. ciii. 20—22. cxlviii. 1, &c. 1 Chr. xxix. 20. 2 Chr. xxix. 30. Rev. xiv. 7. xix. 5, 6.
f xviii. 6. xxii 24. xxxi. 22. lxxvii. 1, 2 cxvi 1—6. Jon ii. 2. Matt. vii. 7. Luke xi. 9. 2 Cor. xii. 8, 9. Heb. v 7.
g xxvii. 1, 2 xlvi. 2. lvi. 3. 1 Sam. xxvii. 1. Is. xii. 2. 2 Cor. vii. 5, 6. 2 Tim. i. 7.
h cxxiii. 1, 2. Is. xlv. 22. Heb. xii. 2.
i xiii. 3. xviii. 28. xcvii 11. Esth. viii. 16. Job xxxiii 30. Mic. vii. 8, 9. John viii. 12.——† Or, *flowed* unto him.——k lxxxiii. 16. 2 Sam. xix. 5.——l iii. 4. x. 17. xl 17. lxvi. 16—20. m 17—19 Gen. xlviii. 16. Rev. vii. 14—17.——n xci. 11. 2 Kings vi. 17. xix. 35. Dan. vi. 22. Matt. xviii. 10. Luke xvi. 22. Heb. i 14.——o Gen. xxxii. 1, 2. Zech. ix. 8.

we should be avowed in our worship: but well regulated and heavenly affections are most harmonious and acceptable.—Every part of his word is holy, just, and good, and useful to the upright; and all his works are done in *truth,* correspond to the prophecies and promises of the Scripture, and are, one way or other, a fulfilment of them.—Although the Lord delighteth in righteousness and judgment; yet the earth, which is full of man's wickedness, is also filled with his goodness: yea, his most abundant mercy consists perfectly with his most awful justice. The formation of the earth, and the separation of the waters in the ocean as a vast reservoir for the use of man, proclaim the wisdom, power, and goodness of the Creator: and as they encourage the believer to expect the largest blessings from his Almighty Friend, they call on all the inhabitants of the earth to stand in awe of, and to fear his tremendous indignation. For as "He spake, and it was done," when the world was made, his mandate will be equally efficacious, when he shall command the destruction of his enemies: and such are all who will not have the Saviour to reign over them. All human power and policy are ineffectual against his omnipotent will: "his counsel shall "stand, and he will do all his pleasure;" and his vengeance against the ungodly will be everlasting. But blessed are his people, who have him for their Portion, and are his chosen inheritance, who worship and serve him, live under his protection, and enjoy his favour! We possess the outward means of this blessing: may he visit our souls with salvation, and new create us unto holiness! For he, who formed man's heart, cannot be imposed upon by any appearances.—All confidence, except in his mercy, is vain. Powerful armies, personal strength and valour, or the force and speed of a horse, are unavailing for outward safety, without his protection. The event of battles and the fate of kingdoms are determined by his sovereign will, who considereth the works of men, and acteth with perfect wisdom and justice. All human devices are ineffectual for the salvation of our souls: but the Lord's watchful eye is over those who unite the conscientious fear of his name, with a believing hope in his mercy through the great Redeemer. He will preserve their lives, and supply their temporal wants as far as is good for them: and he will feed their souls and preserve them from eternal death. May he teach us to say from our hearts, "Our "soul waiteth for the LORD, he is our Help and Shield." Then shall "we rejoice in him, because we have trusted "in his holy name." For "his mercy will surely be up-"on us, according as we hope in him."

NOTES.

PSALM XXXIV. *Title.* (*Notes,* 1 *Sam.* xxi.) Achish was the name of this king of Gath; and Abimelech, which signifies, *My father the king,* seems to have been a general title given to all the kings of Philistia, as Pharaoh, and afterwards Ptolemy, was of the Egyptian kings.—'This 'psalm is curiously composed, according to the number 'and order of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, in the 'beginning of each verse; which shows that it was con-'trived when he, (David,) reflected on his escape, in some 'place of safety.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 2. Whilst the Psalmist publicly declared the power and goodness of God in delivering him from extreme danger, and gloried in him as his omnipotent Father and Friend, he rejoiced to think, that other pious persons in distress would be raised above discouragement, and filled with cheerful hope by this record of his experience. The event during almost three thousand years, has fully verified this expectation.—The word rendered *humble,* is afterwards translated *poor.* (6.) It seems applicable either to poverty and affliction borne with meek submission; or to the lowly sense which true believers have of their unworthiness, and poverty in spiritual things, which renders them teachable, dependent, and thankful.

V. 4—6. When the Psalmist understood that he was considered, in the court of Achish, as the enemy of the Philistines who was now in their power, his fears were very great, as the method by which he sought to extricate himself clearly shows. He was, however, delivered; and ascribed his escape to a peculiar interposition of God; which the more encouraged his faith and hope. And he realizes to himself the effects of these events on others, who would look to God in distress and danger, or 'flow unto him,' and find comfort and safety; while they conversed together on the case of David.

8 [p] O taste and see that [q] the LORD *is* good: [r] blessed *is* the man *that* trusteth in him.

9 O [s] fear the LORD, ye his saints: [t] for *there is* no want to them that fear him.

10 [u] The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but [x] they that seek the LORD shall not want any good *thing*.

11 ¶ [z] Come, [y] ye children, hearken unto me: [z] I will teach you the fear of the LORD.

12 [a] What man *is he that* desireth life, *and* loveth *many* days, [b] that he may see good?

13 [c] Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from [d] speaking guile.

14 [e] Depart from evil, [f] and do good; [g] seek peace, and pursue it.

15 [h] The eyes of the LORD *are* upon the righteous, [i] and his ears *are open* unto their cry.

16 [k] The face of the LORD *is* against them that do evil, [l] to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

17 *The righteous* [m] cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.

18 The LORD [n] *is* nigh * unto them that are of a broken heart: and saveth † such as be of a contrite spirit.

19 [o] Many *are* the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.

p lxiii. 5. cxix. 103 Cant ii 3. v. 1. Heb. vi 4, 5 1 Pet ii. 2 1 John i. 1—3 q xxxvi 7. 10. lii. 1. Jer. xxxi. 14. Zech. ix 17. 1 John iv 7—10. r ii 12. lxxxiv 12. s xxii. 23 xxxi. 23 lxxxix 7. Gen. xxii 12. Is. viii. 13. 14 Hos iii 5 Rev. xv. 3, 4 t xxiii. 1 Luke xii. 30—32 Rom. viii. 32 1 Cor. iii. 22. 23 Phil. iv. 19. u civ. 21. Job iv. 10, 11 Luke i. 51—53. x lxxxiv 11. Matt. vi. 33. y Prov. iv. 1 vii. 24 viii. 17 32. xx. 6. Eccl. xi. 9, 10. xii 1. Is xxviii 9. Matt xviii 2—4. Mark x 14—16 John xiii 23. 2 Tim. iii. 15 z xxxii. 8. cxi 10 Prov. i 7 ii. 1—9. a xxi. 4 xci. 16 Deut vi 2. xxx 20. 1 Pet. iii 10, 11. b iv. 6 Job vii. 7. Ec ii 3. xii 13 c xxxix 1. Prov. xviii 21. Matt xii 35—37. Jam. i. 19. 26 iii 2. 5—10. d lv. 11. Prov. xii. 17 19 21. xix. 9. Is. lxiii 8. Col. iii. 9. 1 Pet. ii. 1 22. Rev. xiv. 4, 5.

e xxxvii. 27 Job xxviii 28. Prov. iii 7. viii. 13. xiii. 14. xvi 16, 17. Is. i. 16, 17. Rom xii. 9. 1 Pet iii. 11 f Acts x. 38. Gal. vi. 10 Tit. ii. 14 Heb xiii. 16. 3 John 11. g cxx. 7 Matt. v. 9. Rom xii. 18. xiv. 17. 2 Cor xiii. 11 1 Thes iv 11. Heb. xii. 14. Jam iii 17. 18. h xxxiii. 18 Job xxxvi. 7. 1 Pet. iii. 12. i cxxx 2 2 Chr. vi 40. Is. xxxvii 12—21. Dan ix 17—23. k Lev xvii 10. xx. 6. 17 Jer. xliv 11. Ez. xiv. 8. Am ix 4 l x. 6 Job xviii 17 Prov. x 7. Ec viii 10. Jer xvii. 13. m 6. 15. 19 xci. 15. cxlv. 18 20. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 20. 21 24 Acts xii. 5—11 n lxxv 1. lxxxv. 9 cxix. 151. cxlv 18. Is lv. 6 * Heb *to the broken of heart* Ji 17 cxlvii 3 Is lxi 1 Luke iv. 18 † Heb *the contrite of spirit*. 2 Kings xxii. 19. Is. lvii. 15 lxvi 2. Ez. xxxvi. 26 31 o lxxi. 20 Job v 19. xxxi 9, &c xlii 12. Prov. xxiv 16 John xvi 33. Acts xiv 22 2 Cor. iv 7—12. 17. xi 23—27 1 Thes. iii 3 4. 2 Tim. iii 11, 12 Heb. xi 33—38. Jam v 10, 11. 1 Pet. iv. 12, 13. Rev. vii. 14—17.

V. 7. (*Notes, Gen.* xxiv. 2—9.) 'Though God's power be all-sufficient, yet for man's infirmity, he appointeth his angels to watch over us.' (*Marg. Ref.*) The singular number being here used, some think that Christ the great Angel of the covenant was intended. (*Notes, Gen.* xlviii. 16. *Hos.* xii. 4—6.)

V. 8. (*Note,* 1 *Pet.* ii. 1—3.) The experience, which faith makes way for, of the Lord's faithfulness and goodness, may be compared to the evidence received by the senses concerning their respective objects. The believer *tastes* and *sees*, that God is good, as he perceives that honey is sweet, the light pleasant, and the landscape beautiful. This is no longer a matter of reasoning or expectation; but of actual enjoyment, in which he cannot be deceived. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 9, 10. 'God is never wanting to provide for his servants, what he seeth needful and best, in matters temporal; while tyrants and oppressors, who are in the world what lions are in a forest, are often, by the just judgment of heaven, reduced to want that which they have ravished from others.' (*Horne.*)

V. 11—14. The Psalmist, having addressed the *saints*, or such as were established in the way of holiness, next exhorts young persons, or new converts, as children or sons, beloved sons. Though a person of high rank, renowned for military valour and success, anointed to be a king, and eminent in music, poetry, and every accomplishment, he was desirous of teaching *children:* for youth is the learning and remembering season; and what first occupies the mind lasts the longest. He did not, however, attempt to teach them music, poetry, arts, or arms, but "the fear of the LORD," its nature and effects. He had been showing the blessedness of those who feared God, and he wished his young friends to share these blessings.—Many as his engagements, and great as his difficulties and dangers were, he would spare time and find spirits to teach children the fear of the Lord.—The manner in which the apostle quotes this passage, demonstrates that such exhortations are perfectly consistent with evangelical principles. (1 *Pet.* iii. 10—12.) True religion begins in the fear of God, in dread of his anger, and hope and desire of his favour; and hath the promise both of this world and the next. Whether men would live long and happy on earth, or for ever in heaven, the tongue must be bridled; profane, licentious, slanderous, flattering, proud, and deceitful language must be refrained from; all sin must be repented of and renounced; every duty attended to; peace with God, and peace with all men must be pursued: indeed the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, effectually teaches men to attend to these things; and the contrary conduct will ensure temporal and eternal misery: without them faith is dead; by them it is evidenced to be living and justifying.

V. 15—17. The Lord takes special notice of his people's wants, difficulties, and prayers; and watches over them with unremitted vigilance, proportioning the communication of his strength and consolations to their need of them. But he sets himself decidedly against the impenitent: and his frown alone is sufficient to sink them in misery and ignominy. 'The death of martyrs is their deliverance; and the greatest of all deliverances.' (*Horne.*) This is true of the death of every believer, by whatever means effected: then "the LORD delivers him out of all "his troubles."

V. 18. The *broken in heart* and *contrite in spirit*, in the language of Scripture, are not those who, being weighed down by sorrows and sufferings, through impatience and despondency, sink under them: but such as are broken-hearted under a sense of their sins, and led to renounce all self-confidence. Their stout, hard, and unfeeling hearts, are humbled, softened, and made sensibly alive to the feelings of remorse, fear, shame, godly sorrow, and self-abhorrence. Their self-will also is subdued; they submit to God, but without plea or hope, save in his mercy and grace. They are prepared to welcome his Gospel, and exclusively possess its blessings.

p xxxv. 10. xci. 12. Dan vi 22. —24. John xix. 36.
q xxxvii. 30—40. xciv. 23. Is. iii. 11.
r xxxvii. 12—15 xl. 15. lxxxix. 23. 1 Sam. xix. 4, 5. xxxi. 4. 1 Kings xxii. 8. 27. Luke xix. 14 27. 41—44. John vii. 7. xv. 13. 23. 1 Thes. ii. 15, 16. 2 Thes. i. 6—9.
* Or, *guilty* Ex. xx. 7.
s xxxi. 5. lxxi. 23 ciii. 4. cxxx. 8. Gen. xlviii. 16. 2 Sam. iv. 9. 1 Kings i 29. Lam. iii. 58. 1 Pet i. 18, 19. Rev. v. 9
t ix. 9, 10. John x. 27—29. Rom. viii. 31—39. 1 Pet. i. 5.

20 p He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.

21 q Evil shall slay the wicked: and they r that hate the righteous shall be * desolate.

22 The Lord s redeemeth the soul of his servants; and t none of them that trust in him shall be desoltae.

PSALM XXXV.

David prays that God would fight against his enemies; and anticipates their confusion and his triumph over them, 1—10. *He complains of their calumny, malice, and ingratitude, blending supplications and appeals to God,* 11—22. *He renews his prayers and predictions,* 23—28.

A Psalm of David.

a xliii. 1. cxix. 154. 1 Sam. xxiv. 15 Prov. xxi. 23. xxiii. 11. Jer li. 36. Lam iii. 58. Mic. vii. 9
b Ex. xiv. 25. Josh. x. 42 Neh. iv. 20. Acts v 39. xxiii. 9.
c vii. 12, 13. Ex. xv. 3. Deut xxxii 41 42 Is. xiii. 5. xlii. 13
d xxvii 2 lxxvii. 10 1 Sam xxii. 26, 27 Job i. 10 Is. viii. 9, 10. x. 12. Acts iv. 22.
e li. 12. lxii. 7 xci. 16. Gen. xlix. 18. Is xii 2. Luke ii. 30.

a PLEAD *my cause,* O Lord, with them that strive with me; b fight against them that fight against me.

2 c Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for mine help.

3 Draw out also the spear, and d stop *the way* against them that persecute me: e say unto my soul, I *am* thy salvation.

V. 20. God so preserves the believer, in the most perilous circumstances, that not a bone is broken without his Father's wise and merciful appointment; nay, "the hairs "of his head are all numbered," and not "one falleth to the "ground, without God." Every thing subserves his final good; and both soul and body will be preserved and perfected for glory. Not a bone of the Saviour was broken at his crucifixion; though it was customary to break the bones of crucified persons, and the two thieves had their legs broken.

V. 21, 22. *Desolation* means *final destruction*, whether of nations as such, or of individuals. The desolation of the several kingdoms, which have persecuted the church, and that of the Jews who crucified the Saviour, "hating "that righteous one," with the preservation ensured to true Christians, form a striking exposition of these verses.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is our duty to bless the Lord at all times, in pain, sickness, poverty, persecution, and even in the agonies of death: he is always worthy of our love and praise; we are always receiving more good from him than we have deserved; and the viler we are, the more cause have we to adore his condescending goodness to us. It encourages the humble believer, and silences the proud Pharisee, when the servants of God are enabled to rejoice and make their boast in him, in circumstances of extreme danger, and the deepest distress: and if our faith were strong, we might thus call on all around us to magnify and exalt our God with us, extolling his glorious excellences, and celebrating the praises of his mercies. Whilst others consider how one poor tempted soul has been comforted and delivered, they too are encouraged to look unto him, and their hearts grow cheerful, and their faith gathers strength. But we should especially look to Him, "who, though he was rich, for our sakes became "poor;" and remember how he suffered, and how he is glorified, in order to save all that trust in him. They must be safe and happy, who fear the Lord. The holy angels minister to them, yea, the great Angel of the covenant encampeth continually around them, to protect and deliver them. Oh that sinners would but make trial of his love! Their own experience would convince them, that the blessings of salvation are sweeter than all the pleasures upon earth. But even the saints need exhortations to the reverential fear of God: the more humbly and obediently they walk with him, the happier they are: and they who seek first the Lord and his kingdom and righteousness, shall never want any good thing; whilst the covetous and rapacious, who resemble ravenous beasts, shall at length be left utterly destitute. Let then all, who have themselves tasted that the Lord is gracious, take delight in leading others, and especially the young, into these happy ways; not thinking this service beneath them. Let young persons set out in life with learning the fear of the Lord, if they desire true comfort here, and eternal happiness hereafter; for they will be the happiest, who begin the soonest to serve so good a Master. But let them attend to him, who speaketh unto them as unto children, that they may learn the true fear of God, and beware of counterfeits. That religion promises best, which begins with the conscience, and creates a watchfulness over the heart and tongue; a dread and hatred of hypocrisy and all sin, and a love of peace and universal holiness. Such a temper of heart prepares the way for the proper understanding and reception of divine truths; and they who thus receive, will adorn, the doctrine of God our Saviour; he will peculiarly regard them and attend to *their* prayers; whilst he fights against the evil doer, whatever be his profession; and oblivion or infamy will be his present and eternal portion. Nothing is more essential to true godliness, than a *contrite* heart, broken off from every kind of self-confidence and self-preference, and crushed down into the dust of self-abasement: in this soil every grace flourishes; and to this contrite person nothing can give encouragement, but the free mercy of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Such meet with many afflictions for their trial and profit; but the Lord will deliver them out of them all; whilst the ungodly will sink under one trouble after another to rise no more; for evil shall slay the wicked. He that accomplished the prophecies concerning the Saviour, so that not a bone of him was broken by all his furious enemies, will take equal care of all his faithful servants, and destroy all their persecutors. He will redeem his people from hell and from the grave, and will not forsake them who trust in him, till they possess a happiness large as their capacities, durable as their immortality, and surpassing their highest expectations.

4 [f] Let them be confounded and put
to shame [g] that seek after my soul: let
them be [h] turned back and brought to
confusion that devise my hurt.

5 Let them be [i] as chaff before the
wind: [k] and let the angel of the LORD
chase *them.*

6 [l] Let their way be * dark and slip-
pery: and let the angel of the LORD
persecute them.

7 For [m] without cause have they
[n] hid for me their net *in* a pit, *which* with-
out cause they have digged for my soul.

8 [o] Let destruction come upon him at
† unawares; and [p] let his net that he hath
hid catch himself: [q] into that very de-
struction let him fall.

9 And [r] my soul shall be joyful in the
LORD: it shall rejoice in his salvation.

10 [s] All my bones shall say, LORD,
[t] who *is* like unto thee, [u] which deliver-
est the poor from him that is [x] too strong
for him, yea, the poor and the needy
from him that spoileth him?

11 ‡ False witnesses did rise up; they
ϕ laid to my charge *things* that I knew not.

12 [y] They rewarded me evil for good,
to the ‖ spoiling of my soul.

f 26. xxxi. 17, 18. xl 14, 15. lxx. 2, 3.
g xxxviii. 12. 1 Sam xxiii. 23. 1 Kings xix. 10 Ez. xiii. 19. Matt. xxvii. 1.
h cxxix. 5 Is. xxxvii. 29. Jer. xlvi. 5 John xviii. 6.
i i. 4 lxxxiii 13—17. Job xxi. 18. Is.xvii.13 xxix. 5 Hos xiii. 3.
k Ex xiv 19. Is. xxxvii 36. Acts xii 23. Heb. xi 28.
l lxxiii. 18 Prov iv. 19. Jer. xiii. 16. xxiii. 12.
* Heb. *darkness andslipperiness.*
m vii. 3—5. xxv. 3. lxiv. 4. John xvr 25.
n ix. 15 cxix. 85. cxl 5. Job xviii. 8.
o lxiv. 7. lxxiii. 18—20. Prov. xxix. 1. Luke xxi. 34. 1 Thes. v 3.——† Heb. which *he knoweth not of.*——p vii. 15, 16. lvii. 6 cxii. 9, 10. Prov. v. 22.
q 1 Sam xviii.17. xxxi. 2—4. 2 Sam. xvii. 2—4. 23 xviii. 15, 16. Esth. vii. 10. Matt. xxvii. 3—5
r xiii. 5. xxi. 1. xxxiii 21 xlviii. 11. lviii 10, 11. lxviii. 1—3. 1 Sam. ii 1 Is. lxi. 10. Hab. iii. 18. Luke i 46, 47 Gal. v. 22. Phil. iii. 1—3.
s xxii. 14 xxxii. 3. xxxiv. 20. xxxviii. 3. li. 8. cii 3. Job xxxiii. 19—25.
t lxxi.19. lxxxvi. 8. lxxxix. 6—8. Ex. xv. 11. Is. xl. 18. 25. Jer. x 7.
u x. 14. xxii. 21. xxxiv. 6 lxix. 33. cii 17—20. cix 31. cxl. 12. Job v. 15, 16 Prov. xxii. 22, 23. xxviii. 17.——‡ Heb. *Witnesses of wrong.* xxvii. 12. 1 Sam xxiv. 9. xxv. 10. Matt xxvi. 59, 60. Acts vi 13. xxiv. 5, 6. 12, 13.——§ Heb. *asked me.*——y xxxviii. 20. cix. 4, 5. 1 Sam xix 4, 5. 15 xxii. 13, 14. Prov. xvii 13. Jer. xviii. 20. John x. 32.——‖ Heb. *depriving.* 1 Sam. xx. 31-33. Luke xxiii. 21—23.

NOTES.

PSALM XXXV. V. 1—3. 'This psalm, we are suf-
'ficiently informed by the matter of it, was penned by Da-
'vid, when he was fiercely persecuted by Saul, whose
'forces, which were unjustly raised against him, he be-
'seeches the Lord to dissipate; and especially to stop the
'mouth of his false accusers, such as Doeg and the Ziph-
'ites.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) 'So long as Saul was an enemy
'to David, all that had any authority under him, to flatter
'their king, (as is the course of the world,) did also most
'cruelly persecute David.' It is likewise evident, that the Psalmist was led by the Holy Spirit to speak of his own case in language which was more emphatically applicable to the divine Saviour and to his sufferings. 'Albeit God
'can with his breath destroy all the wicked; yet the Holy
'Ghost attributeth to him all these outward weapons, to
'assure us of his present power.'

Say, &c. 'Assure me against these temptations, that
'thou art the Author of my salvation.'

V. 4—9. These verses in the original run entirely in the *future tense,* as *a prediction:* though they stand in most translations and paraphrases, ancient and modern, in the *imperative mood,* as *an imprecation.* No doubt there are many instances in which such denunciations stand in the form of petitions; and, considered as the language of inspired men, respecting the inveterate enemies of God and Christ, and religion, no reasonable objection can be made against them. It does not, however, seem desirable, to understand any passages in this strong sense, which naturally express one of more general application. The verses under consideration are simply a prediction, that David's enemies would, by their unprovoked, assiduous, and crafty devices to take away his life, bring on themselves the deepest infamy, along with unexpected and inevitable ruin: and that his trials would terminate in thanksgiving and rejoicing. As light chaff cannot resist the force of the wind; so the Psalmist's persecutors would not be able to withstand the power and justice of God; whose angels encamped around the righteous to protect them, and would drive their dismayed and bewildered assailants headlong into the pit of destruction. One in particular, (probably Saul,) would perish in that very destruction which he had intended for David. He took counsel to take off David in battle against the Philistines, and he died in battle against them; which made way for the Psalmist's complete deliverance. In like manner, Ahithophel and Absalom brought ruin on themselves, by their counsel against David; and so did Judas, and the Jewish rulers, and the nation, by opposing Christ; of whom David, in this psalm especially, seems to have spoken, as a type or representative. Indeed the whole Scripture predicts the final ruin of all the impenitent enemies of God and religion, and that of Satan, their great leader: and the intercession of Christ, the prayers of his church, and the ministration of angels; while they tend to complete the salvation and joy of his people, concur in accomplishing the prophecies on his enemies. 'A traveller, benighted in a bad road, is an
'expressive emblem of a sinner walking in the slippery
'and dangerous ways of temptation; whilst an enemy is
'in pursuit of him, whom he can neither resist nor avoid.' (*Horne.*)

V. 10. The Psalmist frequently complains, under his trials and chastisements, of broken bones, that his bones waxed old, &c. (*Marg. Ref.*) because his whole frame was sensibly affected. In like manner, he considers himself, in body as well as in soul, so revived by his deliverance, that every bone would concur in admiring his Deliverer and his unrivalled excellence. Christ was raised from the dead, so that not one of his bones was broken: every member of his mystical body, shall be forth-coming at the general resurrection: and every believer now has, and shall then have, cause to praise the Lord for taking care of his soul and body, in every part and in all respects. Saul was too powerful for poor David; Christ was made poor and a man of sorrows, and had no armed force to oppose to the power of the Jews and Romans; and Satan and other enemies are too strong for the believer.

V. 11, 12. The very persons, whom David had befriended when he was in prosperity, after he had been proscribed by Saul, bore *cruel* witness against him, and *demanded* that punishment should be inflicted on him for alleged acts of treason, of which he had not the least consciousness. This was still more emphatically accomplished in the great Antitype. (*Marg. Ref.*)

13 But as for me, [z] when they were sick, my clothing *was* sackcloth: I *humbled my soul with fasting; and [a] my prayer returned into mine own bosom.

14 I † behaved myself as though *he had been* my friend *or* brother: [b] I bowed down heavily, [c] as one that mourneth *for his* mother.

15 But [d] in mine ‡ adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together: *yea,* [e] the abjects gathered themselves together against me, and [f] I knew *it* not; [g] they did tear *me,* and ceased not:

16 With [h] hypocritical mockers in feasts, they [i] gnashed upon me with their teeth.

17 LORD, [k] how long wilt thou [l] look on? [m] rescue my soul from their destructions, my § darling from the lions.

18 [n] I will give thee thanks in the great congregation: [o] I will praise thee among ‖ much people.

19 [p] Let not them that are mine enemies * wrongfully rejoice over me; *neither* let them [q] wink with the eye, [r] that hate me without a cause.

20 For [s] they speak not peace: but [t] they devise deceitful matters against *them that are* [u] quiet in the land.

21 Yea, [x] they opened their mouth wide against me; *and* said, [y] Aha, aha, our eye hath seen *it.*

22 *This* [z] thou hast seen, O LORD: [a] keep not silence: O LORD, [b] be not far from me.

23 [c] Stir up thyself, and awake to my judgment, *even* unto my cause, [d] my God, and my LORD.

24 [e] Judge me, O LORD my God, according to thy righteousness; [f] and let them not rejoice over me.

25 Let them not [g] say in their hearts, † Ah, [h] so would we have it: let them not say, [i] We have swallowed him up.

a lxix. 10, 11. Job xxx. 25. Matt. v. 44. Rom xii. 14, 15.
* Or, *afflicted.* Lev. xvi 29. 31. 1. Kings xxi. 27—29. Is. lviii 3. 5. Matt. ix. 14, 15.
a Matt. x. 13. Luke x. 6.
† Heb *walked, as a friend as a brother to me.*
b 2 Sam. i. 11,12 17, &c. Luke xix. 41, 42.
c Gen. xxiv. 67
d 25, 26. xli. 8 lxxi. 10, 11 Jo. xxxi. 29 Prov xvii. 5. xxiv.17, 18.
‡ Heb. *halting.* xxxviii 17. Jer. xx. 10. 1 Cor. xiii. 6.
e xxii. 16. lxix 12. Job xxx. 1—11. Matt. xxvii. 27 30. 39—44. Mark xiv. 65. Acts xvii 5.
f 8. *Marg.*
g vii. 2. lvii. 4
h 1 Sam. xx. 24, &c. Is i 14, 15. John xviii. 28.
i 1 Cor. v. 8.
i xxxvii. 12 Job xvi. 9. Lam. ii. 16. Acts vii. 54.
k vi. 3. xiii. 1, 2 lxxiv. 9, 10. lxxxix.46. xciv. 3, 4.——l x. 14. Hab. i. 13 ——m xxii 20. 21. lvii. 4. lxix. 14, 15 cxlii. 6, 7.——§ Heb. *only one.*——n xxii. 22—25. xl 9, 10 lxix. 30—34. cxi 1. cxvi. 14. 18. Heb. ii. 12.
o lxvii. 1—4. cxvii. cxxxviii. 4, 5. Rom xv. 9.——‖ Heb. *strong.* Is. xxv. 3.

p 15 xiii. 4. xxxviii. 16. John xvi. 20—22. Rev xi 7 10.
* Heb *falsely.* xxxviii 19.
q Job xv. 12 Prov. vi. 13. x. 10
r lxix 4. cix. 3. cxix. 161. 1 Sam. xxiv 11, 12. Lam iii. 52. John xv 25.
s cxx. 5—7.
t xxxi 13 xxxvi. 3, 4. xxxviii. 12. lii. 2 lxiv 4—6. cxl 2—5. Jer xi. 19. Dan. vi 5. Matt xxvi 4. Acts xxiii. 15. xxv. 3.
u Matt xii. 19. 1 Pet ii 22, 23.
x xxii 13. Is ix. 12. Luke xi. 53, 54.
y xl 15. lxx 3
z Ex. iii. 7. Acts vii. 34.
a xxviii. 1. xxxix. 12 lxxxiii. 1.
b x. 1. xxii. 11. 19 xxxviii. 21. lxxi. 12.
c vii. 6 xliv. 23. lxxx. 2. Is. li. 9.
d lxxxix 26. cxlii. 5. John xx 28.
e vii. 8. xviii. 20—24 xxvi. 1. xliii. 1. 2 Thes. i. 6.
f 18 Job xx. 5.
g xxviii. 3 lxxiv. 8 Job i 5. Mark ii. 6. 8.——† Heb. *Ah, ah, our soul.*——h cxli. 8. Ex. xv. 9. Matt xxvii. 43.——i lvi. 1, 2. lvii. 3. cxxiv. 3. 2 Sam xx. 19. Lam. ii. 16. 1 Cor. xv. 54.

V. 13, 14. The Psalmist here contrasts his conduct, in respect of his persecutors, with that towards him of the very persons to whom he had rendered the most important services.—The nature of *fasting,* as an occasional voluntary act of self-abasement, submission to God under adverse dispensations, sorrow for sin as the cause of sufferings, and self-discipline in order to self-government, is illustrated by the expression, "I humbled," or afflicted, or chastened, "myself with fasting."—The conduct of the Psalmist's foes showed, as he feared, that his prayers for them had not been answered; but he was satisfied, that at length they would return into his own bosom. The original is *future:* and as he was still conflicting with trials, and anticipating deliverance, the future best suits his case.—David thus mourned over the afflictions of Saul and of Israel, with fasting and prayer: and Christ wept over Jerusalem, and fasted, prayed, and suffered for sinners, as for a friend, a brother, or a parent; and he prayed for his crucifiers, when about to expire amidst their cruelty and contempt. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 15, 16. When David was persecuted by Saul, they that before envied him rejoiced; the most abject persons, from whom he had least expected it, or who were too obscure to be known by him, conspired to do him mischief, (as if the lame should ridicule a man for halting:) his name was torn with incessant reproaches and false accusations: he was their sport at feasts; whilst they who were maintained by diverting the company, and personating and turning to ridicule the characters of their neighbours, made him their constant subject: yet their contempt was united with most cruel and desperate rage.—All this was more emphatically true of Christ, and the treatment with which he met from the hypocritical Jews, and from the most abject persons, not excepting the crucified malefactors who reviled him on the cross.

V. 17—19. (*Note,* xxii. 21, 22.) The exact agreement of the language used in these verses with that of the passage referred to, favours the opinion that this psalm also is a direct prophecy of the Messiah. The Psalmist, however, seems evidently to have spoken of his own concerns, though carried beyond himself by the Spirit of prophecy, to use language applicable to far more important transactions.—Translating the nineteenth verse in connexion with the context, gives it additional force. "I will "praise thee among much people.—Mine enemies shall not "wrongfully rejoice over me, or they wink with the eye "who hate me without a cause." It is the language of assured faith and hope, rather than of either prediction or imprecation.—The original is *future.*

V. 20. 'They are men of a turbulent spirit, that give 'not their sovereign peaceable counsels, but devise false 'stories, to incense him against such as would gladly serve 'God quietly, under his government, without doing the 'least harm to any body.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) 'David would 'have lived quietly under the government of Saul; our 'Lord did not aim at temporal government;—nor did the 'primitive Christians intermeddle with the politics of the 'world; yet all were betrayed, mocked, and persecuted, 'as rebels, and usurpers, and pests of society.' (*Horne.*)

V. 21, 22. They boldly accuse me as a traitor,—'saying, so, so, we have found him out, his treasonable 'practices are discovered, we ourselves are eye-witnesses 'of it.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The appeal of David to God, the ever-present witness of his conduct, and the prayer grounded on it, have a peculiar energy, when viewed in this connexion. (*Marg. Ref.*)

k 4. xl. 14, 15. lxxi. 13. cxxix. 6. Is. xli. 11. lxv. 13—15.
l cix. 23, 29 cxxxii 18. Job viii. 22 1 Pet. v. 5.
m xxxviii. 16. lv. 12 Job xix. 5. Jer. xlviii. 26. Dan xi. 36
n xl. 16. lxviii. 3. cxxxii. 9. 16. cxlii. 7. Is. lxvi 10, 11. John xvi 22. 1 Cor, xii. 26.

26 k Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion together that rejoice at mine hurt: l let them be clothed with shame and dishonour m that magnify *themselves* against me.

27 n Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my * righteous cause; yea, o let them say continually, Let the LORD be magnified, p which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.

28 And q my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness *and* of thy praise all the day long.

* Heb *righteousness.*
o lxx 4.
p cxlix. 4. Jer. xxxii. 40, 41. Zeph. iii. 14. 17.
q l. 15. li. 14, 15. lxxi. 24 civ. 33. 34. cxlv. 1, 2. 5 21.

V. 25—28. All these verses are in the future tense, and in my opinion, (which I offer with very great diffidence and hesitation on such a subject, and in opposition to almost all versions, ancient and modern,) are more expressive, and lie less open to objection, when thus translated. No doubt the other rendering accords to the idiom of the language; yet it is by no means necessary, and what is lost by thus rendering the original most literally? "Judge me, O LORD my God, in thy righteousness; and "they will not rejoice over me. They will not say in their "hearts, so would we have it:" (it is as our souls desired;) "They will not say, We have swallowed him up. They "will be ashamed and confounded together, that rejoice "in my shame. They will be clothed with shame and "dishonour, that magnify themselves against me. They "will shout for joy and be glad, that favour my righteous "cause," &c. The twenty-eighth verse is literally rendered; and the others might with equal propriety, and I think with more energy, be translated in the same manner: and though the clamours against David, as cursing his enemies, when considered as an objection to the Scriptures, is irrational; for it assumes the point in question, and determines that he spake in his own spirit, and not as moved by the Holy Spirit: yet it is not desirable to give occasion even to irrational and impious objectors. (*Marg. Ref.*) —How applicable is the whole passage to the Saviour's sufferings and triumphs, and to the consequences of them!

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The believer is admitted into a covenant of friendship with his God: and they who strive with him fight against his omnipotent Ally; whose presence and assistance will more effectually defend his servants, and annoy their persecutors, than the most powerful hosts of well-armed valiant men. If he say to our souls that he is our Salvation; if he show us that our sins are pardoned and subdued, we have nothing to fear, but may confidently predict the confusion and ruin of every seducer, or persecutor, who seeks to destroy our lives or souls, or in any way to do us hurt. We must not desire the ruin of any enemies, except our lusts, and those evil spirits who would compass our destruction: yet we ought fervently and constantly to pray for the desolation of all the inveterate enemies of Christ our anointed King. Assuredly they will at length be thrown as chaff into the fire, and driven in a dark and slippery path by the angels of God into the bottomless pit; and their crafty and unwearied enmity against the holy Jesus and his harmless followers, will involve them in unexpected and inevitable misery. Let then the persecuted and afflicted believer rejoice in the salvation of the Lord. His preservation is ensured by the Saviour's resurrection and exaltation; who will shortly change our vile bodies, and make them like his own glorious body by his Almighty power: then all our bones shall, as it were, praise our deliverer, who hath rescued us poor and needy sinners from sin, Satan, and death; enemies far too strong for us. Whilst in faith we anticipate this glorious event of our trials, let us prepare for the cross in this world. When we consider the ingratitude, contempt, and hatred, with which the holy Jesus was treated in return for his unspeakable love; when we remember how the multitudes, who had witnessed or even shared his benign miracles, rejoiced in his adversity; how the very abjects collected round his cross, insulted him, and even gnashed their teeth at him; and how the Scribes and Pharisees treated his sacred person with blasphemous ridicule and mockery, whilst they were hypocritically observing the feast of the passover, as if zealous for the honour of God and religion; when we meditate on those scenes, we shall not marvel if the world hate us; if we be despised, abused, reviled, falsely accused, and treated with indignity and ingratitude by those whom we have most loved, and could not have suspected, and who even profess to serve God. Let us then learn to possess our souls in patience and meekness; like the Saviour, let us persevere in praying for and doing good to our enemies: and acting towards them with compassion and affection, in hopes of overcoming evil with good. If this have not the desired effect, our prayer will bring down blessings on our own souls; and if that mind were in us, which was in him, we could not but be grieved to think of the tremendous ruin that hangs over the heads of our impenitent injurers. —He who hath exalted the once suffering Redeemer, will in due time appear for all his people: the roaring lion shall not destroy their souls, which they have intrusted to the hands of their Surety; they are one with him, and precious in his sight, and shall be rescued from every peril and destruction; that with him they may give thanks in the great congregation above. Let us then give ourselves unto prayer, and study to be quiet in the land, however injured or deceived. Thus our enemies shall never triumph in our destruction; and their rejoicing over our temporal calamities shall be short-lived, as was that of the Jewish rulers over the crucified Redeemer. But let us chiefly fear lest they should rejoice at beholding us betrayed into sin, and disgracing our profession. This would please them more than seeing us cast into a fiery furnace, and they would exclaim, "Aha, aha, our eye hath seen it, so "would we have it!" Then indeed, they that hate us without cause, would wink with their eyes, encouraging each other's blasphemies; and open wide their mouths to proclaim our infamy, to the reproach of our religion. This the Lord knoweth, and as his glory is concerned, let us call upon him, that he would not be far from us; but constantly uphold us, that Satan and his servants may not

PSALM XXXVI.

The corrupt principles and practices of wicked men, 1—4. An admiring view of the mercy and justice of God, and of the felicity of his people, 5—9. David prays for his brethren and himself; and triumphs in faith over the workers of iniquity, 10—12.

To the chief Musician, *A Psalm* of David, [a] the servant of the LORD.

THE transgression of the wicked [b] saith within my heart, *that there is* [c] no fear of God before his eyes.

2 For [d] he flattereth himself in his own eyes, * until his iniquity be found to be hateful.

3 [e] The words of his mouth *are* iniquity and deceit: [f] he hath left off to be wise, *and* to do good.

4 [g] He deviseth † mischief upon his bed; [h] he setteth himself in a way *that is* not good: he [i] abhorreth not evil.

5 [k] Thy mercy, O LORD, *is* in the heavens, *and* [l] thy faithfulness *reacheth* unto the clouds.

6 [m] Thy righteousness *is* like the ‡ great mountains; [n] thy judgments *are* a great deep: O LORD, [o] thou preservest man and beast.

7 [p] How § excellent *is* thy loving-kindness, O God! therefore the children of men [q] put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

8 They shall be [r] abundantly ‖ satisfied with the fatness of thy house; [s] and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.

9 For [t] with thee *is* the fountain of life: [u] in thy light shall we see light.

a xviii. xc *titles.* cxliii 12. Deut. xxxiv. 5 2 Tim. ii. 24 Tit. i 1. Jam i. 1. 2 Pet. i 1 Jude 1. Rev i. 1
b 1 Sam. xv. 13, 14. 1 Pro. xx. 11. Matt. vii. 16—20. xii. 33, 34. Tit i. 16.
c cxii 1 Gen. xx. 11 Prov. viii. 13. xvi 6 Ec. xii. 13 Rom iii. 18.
d x 3. xlix 18 Deut. xxix. 19. Jer ii. 23. 34, 35. xvii 9. Hos. xii 7, 8. Luke x. 29. xvi. 14, 15 Rom vii. 9. x. 3.
* Heb. *to find his iniquity to hate.* 1 Sam xv. 18—24. 1 Chr x 13, 14. Rom. iii 19.
e v. 9. xii. 2, 3. lv. 21 lviii. 3. cxl 3. 1 Sam. xviii 21. xix 6, 7. xxvi 21. Matt. xxii 15—18. 35
f cxxv. 5. 1 Sam. xi. 6. 13 xiii. 13. 14. xv. 26. xvi 14. Jer. iv. 22 Zeph. i. 6 Heb. x. 39. 1 John ii. 19.
g xxxviii 12 1 Sam xix 11. Esth v 14. vi. 4 Prov. iv. 16 Hos vii 6. 7. Mic ii 1. Matt. xxvii. 1. Acts xxiii 12.——† Or, *vanity.*
h Pro. xxiv 29. Is lxv. 2 Jer. vi 16. viii 6. ix. 2-9 Mic. vi. 8
i Job xv. 16. Am. v 15 Rom i. 32 xii. 9. Rev. ii 2.
k lii. 1—4 lvii. 10. ciii 11 cviii 4. Is iv. 7-9
l lxxxix. 2. xcii. 2 c 5 Matt xxiv 35. Heb. vi. 18—20.
m lxxi. 19. xcvii 2. cxiv 17 Gen xviii. 25. Deut. xxxii 4 Is. xlv. 19. 21—24 Rom. iii. 25.
‡ Heb. *mountains of God.* Ex ix. 28 1 Sam xiv. 15. *Marg*
n lxxvii. 19 xcii. 5. Job xi. 7 8. xxxvii 23. Is. xl. 28 Jer xii. 1. Matt xi. 25, 26. Rom xi. 33.
o civ. 14, &c. cxlv 9 cxlvii. 9. Job vii. 20. Jon iv 11. Matt x 29, 30. 1 Tim iv. 10.
p xxxi. 19. lxxxvi. 5 15 cxlv 7, 8. Ex xxxiv 6.
q xvii 8 lvii. 1. lxiii. 7 xci 4 Ruth ii 12. Luke xiii 34.
r xvi 11 xvii 15 lxiii 5 Cant v 1 Is. xxv. 6 lv 1, 2. Jer. xxxi. 12—14. Zech ix 17. Matt. v 6. John vi 35.——‖ Heb. *watered* Is lviii 11 ——s xlvi. 4. Is xliii 20. xlviii. 21 Rev. xxii. 1 ——t Is. xii 3. Jer. ii 13. John iv 10. 14. vii 37—39 Rev xxi. 6 xxii 17 ——u xxvii. 1 Job xxix. 3 Prov iv 18. Is. ii 5. lx 1, 2. 19 Mal iv. 2. John i. 8, 9. viii. 12. Jam. i. 17. 1 Pet. ii. 9. 1 John i. 7. Rev. xxi. 23
§ Heb *precious.* cxxxix. 17 1 Pet. ii 6. 7. 2 Pet. i. 4 ——q xvii 8 lvii. 1. lxiii. 7 xci 4 Ruth ii 12. Luke xiii 34.

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thus magnify themselves against us. In all things let us act conscientiously, and leave our cause with God. And whilst we expect to see the opposers of Christ clothed with shame and dishonour, let us pray that all who favour his righteous cause, may rejoice, and be continually praising God: and let us remember, that he hath pleasure in the prosperity of all his servants; that we may be speaking of his righteousness and praise all the day long.

NOTES.

PSALM XXXVI. V. 1. David was as much convinced by the conduct of wicked men, that they were not habitually possessed by the fear of God, as if it had been immediately spoken to his heart. If the terrors of God for a moment affrighted them, they soon cast them behind their backs, or they could not have gone on in their daring crimes. It is probable that Saul was especially meant as the wicked man who persecuted "David the servant of "the LORD," with persevering enmity; yet frequently cloaked his malice with professions of friendship, and still kept up an outward regard to religion. The psalm seems to have been written soon after Saul began to show his hatred of David.

V. 2. The wicked man not only disguises his crimes or intentions from others; but through the excess of self-love he becomes his own flatterer, calls his vices by soft names, or mistakes them for virtues; and deems his conduct justifiable, perhaps meritorious, when in fact it is a hateful compound of impiety, injustice, and malevolence, and will very soon be proved to be so.—Thus Saul's self-flattery kept him from being aware of the malignity of his conduct, till he became odious in the open view of mankind.

V. 3, 4. Saul, in the beginning of his reign, behaved wisely, and performed good service to his people: but he soon began to act foolishly, and to disobey God, and at length he entirely ceased to use his understanding to do good. He became a treacherous and cruel persecutor of David: and while he perhaps ascribed his conduct in throwing his javelin at him, to a sudden paroxysm of disease, David was aware that he most deliberately, and in his retired hours, plotted his destruction; and had no aversion in his heart to any wickedness, however abominable, though he tried to cloak his malice by plausible professions.

V. 5—9. The Psalmist here contrasted the divine perfections and government with the conduct of wicked men, especially when in power. The mercy of God is immensely large; and having filled the earth with its effects, it fills the heavens also, by the admission of redeemed sinners to that blessed state. His faithfulness reaches far *above* the shifting clouds, and is liable to no mutability or failure. His justice is placed on an immoveable basis, and he never varies from it: yet his judgments or decrees are unfathomably deep, to be adored and not comprehended by us. The Creator's care sustains and *preserves* both man and beast: and his immeasurable loving-kindness, in its varied exercises, encourages even the guilty and polluted sons of Adam to trust in his mercy, and to confide in his protection. (*Note, Ruth* ii. 11, 12.) In this refuge, and in this service, believers find abundant consolation, and drink "pleasures as from a river" flowing from the Fountain of life and felicity: and in the knowledge and favour of God they see light and glory inexpressible. (*Marg. Ref.*)—The word rendered *pleasures*, (8,) is the

10 O * continue thy loving-kindness
unto them [x] that know thee; [y] and
thy righteousness to the upright in
heart.

11 [z] Let not the foot of pride come
against me, and [a] let not the hand of
the wicked remove me.

12 [b] There are the workers of iniquity
fallen: they are cast down, [c] and shall
not be able to rise.

* Heb. *draw out at length.* cin. 17 Jer xxxi 3. John xv. 9, 10. 1 Pet i 5.
x ix. 10. Jer xxii. 16. xxiv. 7 John xvii. 3. Heb. viii 11.
y vii. 8—10. xviii. 24, 25. xciv. 14, 15 xcvii. 10, 11. cxliii. 1, 2. 18. li. 6—8. 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.
z x. 2. xii 3—5. cxix. 51. 69. 85. 122. cxxiii 3, 4 Job xl. 11, 12. Is. li 23. Dan. iv. 37.
a xvi. 8. xvii. 8—14. xxi. 7, 8. lxii. 6. cxxv. 1—3 Rom. viii 35—39 ——b ix 16 lv. 23 lviii. 10, 11 lxiv. 7—9. Judg. v. 31 2 Thes. i. 8, 9. Rev. xv. 4. xix. 1—6.——c i. 5 xviii. 38. Jer li. 64.

PSALM XXXVII.

Miscellaneous cautions against envy, anger, and discontent; descriptions of the characters, situations, and end of the righteous and the wicked; exhortations to faith, hope, patience, and obedience; and promises to believers under the trials of this evil world, 1—40.

A Psalm of David.

[a] FRET not thyself because of evil-
doers, [b] neither be thou envious
against the workers of iniquity.

a 7. 1 Sam. i. 6—8 Prov. xix 3 xxiv. 1. 19.
b lxxiii. 3. Prov. iii. 31 xxiii 17. Gal. v. 21. Jam. iv 5, 6.

plural of *Eden.* 'In heaven alone the thirst of an immortal 'soul after happiness can be satisfied. There the streams 'of Eden will flow again.' (*Horne.*)

V. 10, 11. David was conscious of integrity, and had been favoured with much experience of the Lord's faithful and merciful care: but his dangers and troubles were multiplied, and all who knew God and uprightly served him, were in a measure involved in his difficulties. He therefore prayed, that the favour shown to him and them, might be prolonged according to the faithful promises of God; and that He would judge in righteousness between his persecuted servants and their unrighteous persecutors. Then, says he, "The foot of pride shall not come against me; "and the hand of the wicked shall not cast me down." 'I shall be preserved from the scornful oppression, and 'iniquitous power, of every enemy.'

V. 12. 'Faith calleth things that are not, as though they 'were; it carries us forward to the end of time; it shows 'us the Lord sitting on the throne of judgment, the righte-'ous caught up to meet him in the air; the world in flames 'under his feet, and the empire of sin fallen to rise no 'more.' (*Horne.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

To be the servant of the Lord is the highest privilege and honour to which we can aspire; and they who are advanced to eminent stations in society, should glory to fill them up, as serving God and his church in them.—All the wickedness of men springs from contempt and forgetfulness of God: their actions speak more plainly than their words; and when they commit atrocious crimes without remorse, or habitually live in the practice of any sin, we may be sure that there is no fear of God before their eyes, but that they habitually despise his favour and defy his wrath. But proud and ignorant men deceive themselves, and verily think their conduct excusable, when it is indeed most hateful: let us then daily beg of God to preserve us from self-flattery, and to bring us acquainted with our own character, that we may judge and condemn ourselves, and not finally be condemned at his tribunal.—When such as have appeared to be religious, leave off to behave wisely and to do good, they will soon be drawn into grosser crimes; and the deceitful and corrupt language of their lips will betray the desperate wickedness of their hearts.—If we willingly banish holy meditations in our solitary hours, Satan will soon occupy our minds with polluting and mischievous imaginations: and when we yield frequently to sudden temptations, we shall at length deliberately devise mischief upon our beds.—Whatever be a man's outward conduct, if he do not *abhor* evil, he is no true penitent: and if he do not set himself heartily to walk in the ways of godliness, he will soon return unto the more direct road to temporal and eternal destruction.—The servants of God must expect much trouble from apostates and wicked men: but they may comfort themselves by contemplating the perfections of their Almighty Friend. His merciful promises engage to every believer the enjoyment of heavenly happiness: his unfailing faithfulness guarantees the engagement: his immoveable justice harmonizes with his truth and love: and his most mysterious appointments are the result of his infinite wisdom and goodness. Whilst all his creatures share his bounty and protection; his compassion and mercy, and the provisions of his redeeming love are so immense, that the chief of sinners may come to him and receive pardon and peace, and put their trust under the shadow of his wings. Thither the alarmed and penitent flee for *safety,* perhaps imagining that they are thus renouncing all enjoyment in this present world: but they soon find, if decided and diligent, true happiness in the favour and service of God; the provisions of his house are rich and plenteous; and the consolations of his Spirit, communicated through his ordinances, are an earnest of heavenly joys. This river of the water of life proceedeth from the throne of God and of the Lamb; and they must be happy who have access to the *Fountain of life.* Indeed God is the Source of felicity: but fallen man has forsaken him and is miserable. In Christ, however, this Fountain is accessible; wells of salvation are opened for us by the Gospel; and sinners returning to God according to it, see and enjoy light and felicity, in their source and perfection. —May we then know, and love, and uprightly serve the Lord! Then shall we be interested in the prayers of all his people, and learn to love and pray for them: and his loving-kindness will be continued to us through the intercession of our heavenly Advocate. Then shall no proud enemy on earth or from hell come against us to trample upon us, or to separate us from his love; but we shall be established in felicity, when all the workers of iniquity are cast down to rise no more for ever.

35, 36. lxxiii. 17—20. xc. 5, 6. xcii. 7. cxxix. 5—7. Job xx. 5—9. Jam. i. 10, 11. 1 Pet. i. 24.
d iv. 5. xxvi. 1. Is. i. 16—19. 1. 10. Jer. xvii. 7, 8. 1 Cor. xv. 57, 58. Heb vi. 10—12.
e Gen. xxvi. 2. 1 Sam. xxvi 19. Heb. xi 13—16.
* Heb. *in truth*, or, *stableness*.
f xxxiii. 19. xxxiv. 9, 10. Matt. vi. 31 — 33. Luke xxii. 35.
g xliii. 4. civ. 34. Job xxvii. 10. xxxiv. 9. Cant. ii. 3. Is. lviii. 14. 1 Pet. i. 8.
h xxi 1, 2. cxlv. 19. John xv. 7. 16. 1 John v. 14, 15.
† Heb. *Roll thy way upon.* Iv. 22 Pro. xvi 3. *Marg.* Mat. vi. 25. Luke xii. 29, 30. Phil. iv. 6, 7. 1 Pet. v. 7.——i Job xxii. 28. Ec. ix. 1. Lam iii. 37 Jam. iv. 15 ——k xxxi. 20. Is. liv. 17. Mic. vii. 8, 9. 1 Cor iv. 5.——l Job xi. 17. Mal. iii. 18. Matt. xiii. 43.——‡ Heb. *be silent to.* lxii. 1. Josh. x. 12. Jon. i. 11 *Marg.*——m xxvii. 14. xl. 1. Is. viii. 17. xxx. 15. Lam. iii. 25, 26. Hab. ii. 3 Gal. vi. 9. Heb. x. 36, 37. James v. 7—11.

2 For [c] they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb.

3 [d] Trust in the LORD, and do good; *so* [e] shalt thou dwell in the land, and * verily [f] thou shalt be fed.

4 [g] Delight thyself also in the LORD, and [h] he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

5 † Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him, [i] and he shall bring *it* to pass.

6 And [k] he shall bring forth thy righteousness [l] as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day.

7 ‡ Rest in the LORD, and [m] wait patiently for him: [n] fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, [o] because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.

8 [p] Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: [q] fret not thyself in any wise to do evil.

9 For [r] evil doers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall [s] inherit the earth.

10 For [t] yet a little while, and the wicked [u] *shall* not *be*: yea, [x] thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it *shall* not *be*.

11 But [y] the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall [z] delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

n 1. 8. lxxiii. 3—14. Jer. xii. 1.
o Job xxi 7. &c. Ec. v. 8 Is x. 13, 14. Dan xi. 26. Rev. xiii 3—10.
p Job v. 2. xviii. 4. Pro. xiv. 29. xvi. 32. Eph. iv. 26. 31. Jam. i. 19, 20. iii. 14—18.
q xxxi. 22. lxxiii. 15. cxvi. 11. 1 Sam. xxv 21, 22. 33. Jer. xx. 14, 15. Jon. iv. 1. 9. Luke ix. 54, 55.
r 38. lv. 23. Job xx. 23 — 29. xxvii. 13, &c.
s 11. 22. 29. xxv. 13. Is. lviii. 13 lx. 21. Heb. xi 16. Rev v. 10.
t lxxiii. 18—20. Job xxiv. 24. Heb. x 37 1 Pet. iv. 7. Rev. vi 10, 11.
u 35, 36. xlix. 10. ciii. 16. Job vii. 10. 21. xiv. 10. xx. 8, 9. Luke xii. 20. 21. xvi. 27, 28 ——x lii. 5—7. lviii. 10, 11. cvii. 42, 43. 1 Sam. xxv. 38, 39. 2 Kings ix. 25 34—37. Esth vii. 10. viii. 1. Is. xiv. 16—19.——y Matt v. 5. Gal. v. 22, 23. 1 Tim. vi. 11. Jam. i 21. iii. 13 ——z xxxvi. 8. lxxii. 7. cxix. 165 Is xxvi. 3. xlviii. 18. lvii. 18—21. John xiv. 27. Phil. iv. 7.

NOTES.

PSALM XXXVII. V. 1, 2. It is probable that this psalm was written towards the close of David's life, as the result of his long experience and observation, for the instruction and encouragement of others, who might be called to pass through trying scenes, such as he had been conversant with. Every other verse, in the original, begins with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet, nearly in regular order: and this arrangement, which, with some variations, is frequently adopted, might be intended as a help to those who desired to commit to memory these sacred poems, for their comfort and benefit in silence and solitude. The Mosaic dispensation engaged peculiar temporal blessings to *the nation* of Israel, whilst they were obedient: yet individuals frequently prospered in wickedness, whilst the righteous were afflicted and persecuted. This seemed to imply an inconsistency betwixt the word and the providence of God, and formed a great trial to ancient believers. To this difficulty the Psalmist here gives a copious solution, with many excellent cautions and counsels, which at the same time are equally suited, by varying a few expressions, to the case of Christians in this evil world. (*Notes*, &c. *Psalm* lxxiii.)

V. 3. This verse may be rendered: "Trust in the "LORD, and do good; dwell in the land; and feed thou "verily." All the verbs are imperative. The union between entire dependence on God, and doing good, as the way to be comfortable and happy, is peculiarly to be noticed. The land of Canaan was considered as the sum of earthly, and the type of heavenly, felicity: to dwell, and be provided for, in the Lord's land, under his protection, near his ordinances, and among his people, was all that the genuine Israelite could desire. But the words may be considered as an exhortation to the people to dwell in the land, and not to remove on every difficulty among the surrounding Gentiles; with a promise that verily God would feed them there.

V. 4. To *delight*, not in earthly possessions, enjoyments, and distinctions, but in God, in knowing, loving, and worshipping him, and enjoying his love; and to delight in contemplation, devotion, and admiring praise, is to be spiritually-minded, like the inhabitants of heaven, and qualified for their felicity. He that seeks delight in worldly objects very seldom obtains the wishes of his heart: but all the spiritual desires and requests of those that delight in God will be granted, nay, far exceeded. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 5—8. 'When thou hast any difficult business in 'hand, or when thou knowest not what course to take 'for accomplishing thy honest designs, leave all to the 'Lord, and trust to him, in pious and upright causes, that 'he will direct and assist thee, and bring things to a good 'issue.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The original is 'Roll thy way, '&c.' The Septuagint renders it, "Reveal thy way," &c: which is very expressive of the relief that the believer, when burdened with trouble and anxiety, obtains by opening his case, and pouring out his soul before God in fervent prayers. This may especially be hoped for under unmerited calumnies, which for a while darken the reputation: as mists and clouds obscure the sun: but God will in due time clear up the character of the upright, and make it as bright as noon-day. Silent waiting on God, in patience and confidence, is therefore recommended; without giving way to that uneasiness and agitation, which are generally felt, when the ungodly for a while prosper, and run down the conscientious, or to eagerness in self-vindication; and especially a caution is given against anger and bitterness, and an imitation of the vile tempers and unjust measures of those that are the objects of indignation and of envy. (*Note* v. 9.)

V. 9. *The earth.* Or the land. He has all that the earth itself can supply, who has food and raiment, and things suited to his station, with peace, contentment, and a thankful heart.

V. 10, 11. 'The whole duration of the world itself 'is but "a little while," in the sight of him, whose hope 'is full of immortality. But the calamities and death of 'princes, the tragical fate of empires "swept with the

12 [a] The wicked * plotteth against the just, and [b] gnasheth upon him with his teeth.

13 The LORD [c] shall laugh at him: for he seeth that [d] his day is coming.

14 The wicked [e] have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, *and* [f] to slay † such as be of upright conversation.

15 [g] Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and [h] their bows shall be broken.

16 [i] A little that a righteous man hath *is* better than the riches of many wicked.

17 For [k] the arms of the wicked shall be broken: but [l] the LORD upholdeth the righteous.

18 The LORD [m] knoweth [n] the days of the upright: and [o] their inheritance shall be for ever.

19 They shall not be ashamed [p] in the evil time: and [q] in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.

20 But [r] the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the LORD *shall be* as the ‡ fat of lambs: they shall consume; [s] into smoke shall they consume away.

21 The wicked [t] borroweth, and payeth not again: [u] but the righteous showeth mercy, and giveth.

22 For *such as be* [x] blessed of him shall inherit the earth; and *they that be* [y] cursed of him shall be [z] cut off.

23 [a] The steps of a *good* man are ϕ ordered by the LORD: and [b] he delighteth in his way.

24 [c] Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: [d] for the LORD upholdeth *him with* his hand.

a 32. 1 Sam. xviii. 21 xxiii 7—9. 2 Sam xv. 10—12. Esth iii. 6 Matt. xxvi. 4. 16
* Or, *practiseth.* Dan viii. 12. 24. Mic. ii 1.
b xxxv. 16.
c ii 4 Pro i. 26.
d 1 Sam. xxvi 10. Jer 1 27. Ez. xxi 25. 29. Dan. v. 26
e lxiv 2—6. Acts xii. 2, 3. 11. 23.
f 1 Sam. xxiv. 11. 17. Prov. xxix. 10. 27. Hab. i. 13. Matt. xxiii. 30—34. Acts vii. 52. 1 John iii 12.
† Heb. *the upright of way.*
g vii. 14, 15. xxxv. 8. 1 Sam. xxxi. 4. 2 Sam. xvii. 23 Esth vii 9, 10 Is. xxxvii. 38. Matt. xxvii. 4, 5.
h xlvi 9 lxxvi. 3—6. Jer li. 56. Hos i 5. ii 18.
i Pro. iii. 33 xiii. 25 xv. 16, 17. xvi. 8. xxx. 9 Ec. ii. 26. iv. 6. vi. 12. Mat vi. 11. 1 Tim. vi 6.
k x 15. Job xxxviii 15. Ez. xxx. 21—25.——l 24. xli. 12 li. 12 lxiii 8. cxix. 116, 117. cxlv. 14 Is xli 10 xlii 1 Jude 24.——m i 6. xxxi. 7. Mat vi. 32. 2 Tim. ii. 19 —— n 13. xxxi. 15. xlix 5 Deut xxxiii 25 Mat. xxiv 21—24. 2 Tim iii. 1—5. iv. 2—4 Rev. xi 3—5.——o xvi. 11. xxi 4. lxxiii. 24. ciii 17 Is. lx 21. Rom v. 21 vi. 23. 1 Pet i 4. 5. 1 John ii 25
p Ec ix. 12 Am. v. 13. Mic. ii. 3. Eph. v. 16.
q xxxiii. 19. Job v 20—22. Prov. x. 3. Is. xxxiii 16.
r lxviii. 2 xcii 9. Judg. v. 31. Luke xiii 3—5. 2 Pet. ii 12
‡ Heb *preciousness.* Deut. xxxii 14 16. cii 3. Gen xix. 26. Lev iii. 2—11 16 Deut. xxix. 20 Heb. xii 29
t Deu xxviii. 12, 43 44. 2 Kings iv. 1—5. Neh. v. 1—5. Pro xxii. 7.
u cxii. 5. 9. Deut. xv. 9—11 Job xxxi 16—20 Is. xxxii. 8 lviii. 7—10 Luke vi. 30 Acts xi. 29. xx. 35. 2 Cor. viii. 9 ix. 6, &c. Heb. vi 10 xiii. 16.
x 11. 18 xxxii. 1. cxv 15. cxxviii. 1.
y cxix 21 Matt. xxv. 41 1 Cor. xvi 22 Gal iii. 10 13.
z 9. 28 Zech v. 3, 4.
a xvii 5. lxxxv. 13. cxix 133.
c xxi. 3. 8 1 Sam ii 9. Job xxiii. 11 12. Prov xvi. 9. Jer x. 23 ——ϕ Or, *is established.* xi 2. Pro. iv 26 ——b cxlvii. 10. Pro. xi 1 20. Jer ix 24. Heb xiii 16 —— c xci. 12. xciv. 18. cxlv. 14. Prov xxiv. 16. Mic. vii 7, 8. Luke ii 34 xxii. 31, 32. 60—62. d 17 cxlvi. 14. John x. 27—30

"besom of destruction;" 'the overthrow of cities, whose 'place is now no where to be found by the most curious 'and diligent inquirer; and the desolations of the chosen 'city of Jerusalem—are sufficient to draw forth the tear of 'commiseration, and to extinguish the kindling spark of 'envy, in every considerate mind. The meek bear their 'own adversities and the prosperity of their enemies, 'without envy, anger, or complaint. They, and they 'only, possess the earth, as they go towards the kingdom 'of heaven, by being humble and cheerful, and content 'with what their good God has allotted them. They have 'no turbulent repining thoughts that they deserve better; '——but they possess such a quietness, as makes their 'very dreams pleasing.' (*Horne*, and *Walton in Horne.*)—The meek, here spoken of, are not those of naturally easy, quiet, and indolent tempers; but such as are rendered humble, teachable, submissive, and gentle by the special grace of God: and the abundant inward peace which he bestows, and which passes all understanding, fills their souls with vast delight.

V. 12—15. The holiness and happiness of the righteous, and the special favour which God shows them, excite the enmity and envy of the wicked. Thus Cain hated and envied Abel; thus Saul, from a similar spirit, plotted against David, and gnashed on him with his teeth; and thus the Jewish rulers persecuted the holy Jesus and his disciples. For a while they seem to prosper; but the Lord despises their impotent malice, and foresees the day, when they will suffer the just punishment of their crimes; and when all their policy and violence will only serve to enhance their own misery. This is the certain doom of all persecutors, in proportion to their deliberate enmity to the cause of God, and his image in his humble, afflicted, and upright servants.

V. 16, 17. The little, which is allotted to the righteous, comes from special covenanted love, in answer to their prayers, and in the use of lawful means; it is received with thankfulness, and used with temperance and charity; and being attended with a blessing, it subserves the salvation of their souls: and in all these, and many other respects, it is far more comfortable and profitable, than the ill-gotten or abused riches of ungodly men: for their prosperity and power will soon become useless as a broken arm; while God himself protects and supports the righteous. 'The great question then is, whether he be with us, 'or against us; and the great misfortune is, that this 'question is so seldom asked.' (*Horne.*)

V. 18, 19. God knoweth what things his children need, what dangers and enemies await them, and what sorrows they endure: and, as he is omnipotent and all-sufficient, and it is 'his good pleasure to give them the 'kingdom,' the eternal inheritance; he will never leave them to want any thing really good for them by the way, however distressing the times may be in which they live; or to be ashamed of their confidence in him.

V. 20. *Fat of Lambs*, &c. As the fat of the sacrifices was consumed on the altar by the fire, (which was a type of God's righteous vengeance upon sinners,) till it vanished into smoke: so the wicked will be sacrifices to God's justice, and be destroyed by the fire of his indignation.

V. 21, 22. The wicked, though for a while prosperous, would soon be reduced by the secret curse of God on his affairs, to borrow, and disabled from paying, as well as careless about it: but the righteous would be rendered able to gratify their inclination in acts of liberal mercy, through the divine blessing, and the promise which secured to them the inheritance of the land. This more especially referred to the Israelites in Canaan: yet the same blessing and curse, even in temporal things, are still often experienced and observed.

25 [e] I have been young, and *now* am old; [f] yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, [g] nor his seed begging bread.

26 *He is* * ever [h] merciful, and lendeth; and [i] his seed *is* blessed.

27 [k] Depart from evil [l] and do good; and dwell for evermore.

28 For the LORD [m] loveth judgment, and [n] forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: [o] but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.

29 [p] The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever.

30 [q] The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment.

31 [r] The law of his God *is* in his heart; [s] none of his † steps shall slide.

32 The wicked [t] watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him.

33 The LORD [u] will not leave him in his hand, [x] nor condemn him when he is judged.

34 [y] Wait on the LORD, and [z] keep his way, and he shall [a] exalt thee to inherit the land: [b] when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see *it*.

35 [c] I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like ‡ a green bay-tree.

36 Yet [d] he passed away, and, lo, he *was* not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.

e lxxi. 9. 18. Job xxxii. 6, 7. Acts xxi. 16. Philemon 8. 9.
f 28 xciv 14 Josh. i. 5. 1 Sam. xii. 23 2 Cor. iv 9 Heb xiii. 5.
g xxv 13. cix 10 cxii 2 Gen. xvii 7. Prov. xiii 22 Luke i. 53—55
* Heb. *all the day*
h 21 cxii 9. Deut. xv. 9. Matt. v 7. Luke vi. 35—38.
i Prov. xx 7. Jer xxxii 39.
k xxxiv. 14 Job xxviii 28 Prov. xvi. 17 Is i. 16, 17 2 Tim. ii. 19. Tit. ii 11—13. 1 3 1 Thes. v 15. Tit. iii 8 14 Heb xiii. 16 21. 1 John ii. 16 17.
m xi 7. xlv 6, 7. xcix 4 Is. lxi 8. Jer. ix 24
n 25. 40. xcii. 13—15 Is lix. 21 Jer xxxii 40, 41. John v. 24. vi. 39, 40. xv 9 1 John ii 19. Jude 1 —— o xxi. 10 Ex xx 5. Job xviii. 19. xxvii. 14 Prov ii 22 Is xiv 20 —— p 9 11. 18. 27. Deut. xxx. 20. Prov ii. 21. 2 Pet iii. 13 Rev. xxi. 3, 4 —— q lxxi. 15. 24 Deut. vi 7—9 Prov. x. 21 31. xv. 7. xxv. 11—13 xxvii 9. Matt xii 35. Eph iv. 20. Col. iv. 6.

r i. 2. xl 8. cxix. 11. Deut xi 18—20 Prov iv. 4. Is li. 7 Jer. xxxi. 33
s 23. cxxi. 3.
† Or, *goings*. xl. 2.
t 12. x 8—10. Jer xx 10. Luke vi 7. xi. 54. xiv 1. xix. 47, 48 xx. 20. Acts ix 24.
u xxxi 8, 9. cxxiv 6, 7. 1 Sam. xxiii. 26—28. 2 Tim. iv. 17. 2 Pet ii 9.
x cix 31 Rom. viii. 1. 33. 34.
y 3 9. xxvii. 14. Prov. xx 22.
z Job xvii 9. xxiii. 10—12. Prov. iv. 25—27. xvi. 17 Matt xxiv. 13.
a xcii. 10. cxii 9. Luke xiv. 11. 1 Pet i. 7.
b lii. 5 6. xci 8. xcii. 11.
c lxxiii 3—11. Esth. iii. 11, &c. Job v 3 xxi 7—Ez xxxi. 3—10. Acts xii. 22 23.
17.— † Or, *a green tree that groweth in his own soil* Job viii. 16—19.
13. Dan iv. 20, &c —— d 10. Ex. xv. 9, 10. 19. Is x. 15—19. 33, 34.

V. 23, 24. Our translators here insert the word *good*, and no doubt the believer is meant. God directs, counsels, and supports his steps: and *delights* in his holy conversation, and the fruits of his own Spirit, which are through Christ well-pleasing to him. A good man may fall through temptation, as David did, in a most deplorable manner: but he shall not be cast down to rise no more, as hypocrites are; because God himself upholds him by his mighty power. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 25, 26. There is not an absolute promise in Scripture that no righteous man shall ever want bread, or his seed become beggars. But the Psalmist had never, during a long course of observation, known an instance of the kind. It is indeed a very rare case in any age, but was peculiarly so under the Mosaic dispensation. Yet times of persecution seem excepted from general rules concerning temporal things, having so many particular promises relating to them: and we cannot tell how it may please our wise and righteous God for our good, to try our faith and patience, or to remove us out of this world; or how he may see good to dispose of our posterity. But in general the godly man will best secure himself and his children from want; and that genuine liberality to the poor, which men think will impoverish their families, is the best way of laying up a provision for them.

V. 27, 28. This general counsel for present and future happiness is here again inculcated, in a manner which shows, that none but the *saints*, the regenerate and believing who have obtained mercy, do thus depart from evil and do good: and the final perseverance of the saints is most expressly maintained, and grounded on the Lord's love of judgment and faithfulness to his promises. Some think this doctrine is to be found no where, except in St. Paul's epistles; and then they endeavour to explain away his language: but not one sentence in his writings is more explicit than this declaration of the inspired Psalmist.

V. 30, 31. "The righteous man, whose mouth speak-"eth wisdom, whose tongue talketh of judgment, and "in whose heart is the law of his God, shall not slide "in any of his steps." Thus some render these verses, which strongly mark the character of those saints, "which "are preserved for ever." Wise and pious conversation, when it comes from the abundance of the heart, and is enforced by a holy example, is one grand means of communicating the savour of divine truth around, in families and neighbourhoods, and of transmitting it to posterity. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 32, 33. In general God will defend his servants against the designs of wicked men, when, under colour of law, they seek to murder them by a judicial process: and in those cases in which he, for wise reasons, allows persecutors to prosper; he will finally rescue the persecuted from their malice, and openly reverse their unrighteous decisions. The wicked one, "the accuser of the "brethren," will in like manner be baffled and silenced. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 34. 'The apostle, writing to the Hebrew converts, 'under affliction and persecution, thus expresseth the sen-'timent contained in this verse;' "Cast not away your "confidence, which hath great recompense of reward: "for ye have need of patience, that after ye have done "the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For "yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come and "will not tarry." (*Horne.*)

V. 35, 36. Our translation gives, as the emblem of a wicked man's prosperity, an *ever-green*, flourishing and beautiful to look upon, but bearing no fruit, or only such as is poisonous. But most expositors suppose that a tree, growing in its native soil, and never transplanted, is meant: and in these circumstances, trees acquire their largest and most luxuriant growth. Thus Saul, Doeg, and Ahithophel, in David's time, had flourished; and thus they had vanished. The vision of Nebuchadnezzar, and Daniel's interpretation, forms a striking illustration of these verses. 'I looked to see what was become of him, and whether 'he was not removed, (as a tree sometimes is,) to another 'place, but there was no such man to be found.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

e Job i. 1 xlii. 12 —17. Is. xxxii 17. lxii. 2. Luke ii. 25. 29. Acts. vii. 59, 60. 2 Tim. iv. 6—8. 2 Pet. i 14.
f i. 4—6. ix. 17. lii. 5. Prov. xiv. 32. Matt. xiii. 49, 50 xxv. 46. 2 Thes. i. 8, 9.
g iii. 8. Is. xii. 2. Jon. ii. 9. Eph. ii. 8.

37 [e] Mark the perfect *man*, and behold the upright: for the end of *that* man *is* peace.

38 But [f] the transgressors shall be destroyed together; the end of the wicked shall be cut off.

39 But [g] the salvation of the righteous *is* of the LORD, *he is* [h] their strength in the time of trouble.

h ix. 9. xlvi. 1. xci. 15. Is xxviii. 2. Col. i. 11. 2 Tim. iv. 17.
i Is. xxxi. 5. xlvi. 4.
k xvii. 13. xxvii. 2, 1 John ii. 13, 14. v. 18.
l xxii. 4, 5. 1 Chr. v. 20.

40 And [i] the LORD shall help them, and deliver them; he shall deliver them [k] from the wicked, and save them, [l] because they trust in him.

V. 37, 38. He that patiently and accurately observes the dealings of God with his upright, consistent, and faithful servants, will find, that whatever trials and disquietudes they have during a great part of their lives, their closing scene is tranquil and comfortable; and that there are very few exceptions to this general rule. But a contrary and dreadful end, sooner or later, awaits all the ungodly.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is of vast importance to understand the present and future condition of the righteous and the wicked; that we may know what to choose and to expect. The workers of iniquity, who cast off the fear of God to follow their own corrupt inclinations: and who are fraudulent, covetous, sensual, and profane; who plot against the righteous, gnashing upon them with their teeth, and using their power and subtlety to oppress, ruin, and murder the poor; even such monsters of wickedness often prosper for a time, succeed in their projects, flourish in wealth, pomp, and mirth, and seem to enjoy happiness. But their flourishing resembles that of the grass, and they will soon be cut down and wither: shortly they will be no more found on earth, into heaven they cannot enter; hell alone remains for them, where they will for ever be sacrifices to the righteous vengeance of their offended God. Then their power of doing mischief will be at an end, and their injurious words will pierce their own souls with inexpressible anguish. As they are *now* under the wrath and curse of the Almighty, their plenty and prosperity only pamper them for their destruction; and the wealth which they leave behind them proves a snare to their posterity; whilst terrors of conscience, dread of death, and furious passions, mar their precarious enjoyments, and give them a sad foretaste of the wrath to come. Who that believes these things, can envy them, or fret themselves at beholding their success and magnificence: whilst, like the heathen sacrifices, they are led to the slaughter, adorned with gaudy ribbands, and accompanied with the viol, the song, and the dance? —But the righteous bear another character, meet with other treatment, have other supports, and will experience a contrary end. They trust in the Lord, walk in his ordinances and commandments, and imitate Him who went about doing good to the bodies and souls of men. They delight in the favour and service of God, and expect their happiness from him: the leading desires of their hearts are after communion with and conformity to him, and to be instrumental to his glory: they follow after meekness, humility, and a blameless conversation: they are upright and sincere; and though often poor and needy, they spare from other expenses a portion to lend and give, as occasion requires. Their mouth will be speaking of wisdom, and their tongue will be talking of judgment: and this springs from the abundance of the heart, in which the law of God is written, and comports with the actions of their lives, which are ordered in his ways. Their salvation is from the Lord, and reigns within; and it appears that they are accepted through the merits, because they are partakers of the Spirit of Christ, and bring forth the fruits of the Spirit. Yet must such Christians expect tribulation in the world. They are not exempted from the common afflictions of life, or pampered with worldly prosperity: their heavenly Father does not withhold from them salutary correction; the world hates and despises them; calumnies, reproaches, and persecutions, are their usual portion: whilst some have been constrained to wander in dens and caves, others, ("of whom the world was not worthy,") have been immured in prisons and tortured to death. In general they are a poor and afflicted people, and Satan distresses, as much as he can, those whom he is not able to deceive, defile, or destroy; their endeavours to do good are often unsuccessful, and ingratitude proves their only recompense. They therefore have need of faith and patience, of hope and love: but observing the directions, and pleading the promises of God, they find inward comfort to counterbalance their outward trials. He will maintain their lot, and supply their wants: whatever they lose for conscience sake, "verily they shall be fed;" and food and raiment here, with heaven at last, is a goodly portion. The Lord will also vindicate their characters, and give them peace of conscience; when he sees good, their enemies shall be at peace with them, and they shall enjoy more content, than if they actually inherited the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace; for their little shall be better than the riches of many wicked. The Lord himself will uphold and protect them; he knows their days, and will proportion their strength and comfort, and in no evil time shall they be ashamed of their confidence, for they are the blessed of the Lord, and their children with them. He ordereth their steps and delighteth in their way; if they fall under temptation, they shall not be utterly cast down; if into trouble, he will not leave them to sink under it. Their work of faith, and labour and liberality of love, instead of impoverishing them, shall lay up an inheritance for their children: and few accurate observers of mankind have known the consistent believer or his children reduced to abject friendless penury. In short, the Lord having separated his people from the world, and taught them to love righteousness and judgment, will preserve them for ever; and, however they may be slandered, tempted, or persecuted by the way, their end shall be serene and happy: they shall have hope in their death, and be better spoken of afterwards, than during their lives; and whilst they enjoy their everlasting inheritance, they will witness the destruction of all

PSALM XXXVIII.

The Psalmist deprecates the wrath of God, and describes the sufferings to which his sins had exposed him, 1—10. *He complains that his friends deserted him, while persecuted by his foes,* 11, 12. *He resigns himself to God, and hopes in him; while he confesses his sins, shows the character of his enemies, and pleads for deliverance,* 13—22.

A Psalm of David, [a] to bring to remembrance.

O LORD, [b] rebuke me not in thy wrath; neither chasten me in thy [c] hot displeasure.

2 For [d] thine arrows stick fast in me, and [e] thy hand presseth me sore.

3 *There is* [f] no soundness in my flesh, because of thine anger; [g] neither *is there any* * rest in my bones, [h] because of my sin.

4 For [i] mine iniquities are gone over mine head: [k] as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me.

5 [l] My wounds stink, *and* are corrupt because of my foolishness.

6 I am † troubled; [m] I am bowed down greatly; [n] I go mourning all the day long.

7 For [o] my loins are filled with a loathsome *disease:* and *there is* no soundness in my flesh.

8 I am feeble and sore broken: [p] I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart.

9 LORD, all my desire *is* before thee; and [q] my groaning is not hid from thee.

a lxx. *title.* b vi 1 lxxviii 7. 15, 16 Is. xxvii. 8 liv. 8. Jer x. 24. xxx 11. Hab iii. 2. Heb. xii. 5—11. c Deut. ix. 19. d xxi. 12. lxiv 7. Job vi. 4. Lam. iii 12. e xxxii. 4 xxxix. 10, 11. Deut. ii. 15. Ruth i. 13. 1 Sam. v. 6. 11. vi. 9.

f xxxi 9. 2 Chr. xxii 19. Job ii. 7, 8. xxxiii. 19—22. Is. i. 5, 6. g vii. 2 li. 8. cii. 3 5

* Heb. *peace* or *health.*

h xc 7, 8 Lam. iii. 40—42 i Ps. xl. 12. Ezra ix. 6. k Lev. vii. 18 Is. liii. 11. Lam. i. 14. Matt xi 28. 1 Pet ii 24. l 7. xxxii. 3. Is. i 5, 6. Jer. viii. 22.

† Heb *wearied.*

m xxxv. 14. xlii. 5. *Marg.* lvii 6. cxiv 14 n vi 6. xxxi. 10, xlii 9. xliii. 2. lxxxviii. 9. Job xxx. 28. Is. xxxviii 14. o xli. 8. 2 Chr. xxi. 18, 19. Job vii. 5. xxx. 18. Acts xii 23. p xxii. 1, 2 xxxii. 3. Job iii 24. xxx. 28 Is. lix. 11.

q cii. 5. 20. Rom. viii 22, 23. 26, 27. 2 Cor v. 2.

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impenitent transgressors. Even in this world it is evident that the afflicted righteous man is far happier than the most prosperous of the wicked. Let sinners then be counselled to depart from evil, and to do good; to repent and forsake sin, to trust in the mercy of God through Jesus Christ: and take his yoke upon them, and learn of him, that they may dwell for evermore in heaven. Let us all watch against impatience, envy, and despondency, and look more to the wretched end, than to the present state of wicked men; committing all we are, and have, and do, to the Lord's disposal, and He will order that which is best for us. Let us cease from wrath and contention, which are sure inlets to evil doing: and wait for and on the Lord, and keep his way, without wearying or turning aside: let us endeavour to give energy to edifying conversation by holy living: let us mark the closing scenes of different characters, and thus keeping our eyes fixed on eternal things, and our dependence on God's mercy, we may pass safely and comfortably through this dangerous and miserable life; meet death with composure, and have "an entrance ministered to us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of "our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ."

NOTES.

PSALM XXXVIII. *Title.* Either the Psalmist, under his affliction, composed this psalm to assist him in recollecting his sins, or in calling upon God to remember his distress; or he desired to remember as long as he lived, and wished to remind others, how he had suffered for his sins, and what his sentiments and sensations had been whilst enduring correction. It is the third of those that are called penitential psalms; and describes among his other trials some grievous diseases, with which he was visited for his sins; or, as some think, his inward trials were represented by language taken from enfeebling and loathsome sickness. It is probable, that the calamities which befel David, after his sin in respect of Bathsheba and Uriah, gave occasion to the doleful complaints contained in it. (*Notes*, &c. *Psalm* vi. xxxii.)

V. 2. *Arrows.* Acute pains, anguish of spirit, and sharp sufferings of any kind, are spoken of under the figure of barbed arrows, which fasten and rankle in the flesh, and cannot be extracted without the most exquisite torture.

V. 3. *Soundness.* Some understand this clause to mean, that disease had so altered the Psalmist, as scarcely to have left him the form or appearance of a human being. Whatever allusion may, in this passage, be made, either to the depravity of human nature, the prevalence of sin, or the anguish of the soul under a sense of divine wrath; it seems evident, that the writer was visited with some dire malady, which affected his whole frame in the most distressing manner, and that he considered this as the chastisement of God for some special sins of which his conscience accused him.

V. 4. David's iniquities, like the numberless drops which form a deluge, had been so multiplied, that they overwhelmed him; as waters which rise above a man's head, so that he can no longer stand against or escape them. And as he felt that the temporal consequences of his crimes were so distressing, and oppressed him beyond endurance; so, he seems to have been convinced, that the burden or guilt of them was far too heavy for him to endure, without finally sinking under it. What then was that load of guilt and punishment which Christ sustained, when "the LORD caused to meet on him the iniquities of "us all;" and when "He bare our sins, in his own body "on the tree!"

V. 5. Some accommodate this verse to the case of those who, having been wounded in their conflict with sin and Satan, foolishly delay submission, repentance, and application to the atoning blood of Christ, through pride and unbelief; while their souls in the mean time are growing more and more diseased and wretched, and their case more and more deplorable and disgraceful.

10 [r] My heart panteth, my strength faileth me: as for [s] the light of mine eyes, it also is * gone from me.

11 [t] My lovers and my friends [u] stand aloof from my † sore; and my ‡ kinsmen stand [x] afar off.

12 They also that seek after my life [y] lay snares *for me;* and they that seek my hurt [z] speak mischievous things, and imagine deceits all the day long.

13 But [a] I, as a deaf *man*, heard not; and *I was* as a dumb man *that* openeth not his mouth.

14 Thus I was as a man [b] that heareth not, and in whose mouth *are* no reproofs.

15 For ‖ in thee, O LORD, [c] do I hope: thou wilt ‖ hear, O LORD my God.

16 [d] For I said, *Hear me*, lest *otherwise* they should rejoice over me: when [e] my foot slippeth, they magnify *themselves* against me.

17 For I *am* ready to * halt, and [f] my sorrow *is* continually before me.

18 For [g] I will declare mine iniquity; I will be [h] sorry for my sin.

19 But [i] mine enemies *are* † lively *and* they are strong: and [k] they that hate me wrongfully are multiplied.

20 They also [l] that render evil for good are mine adversaries; [m] because I follow *the thing that is* good.

21 Forsake me not, O LORD: [n] O my God, be not far from me.

22 [o] Make haste ‡ to help me, [p] O LORD my Salvation.

r xlii. 1. cxix. 81—83. cxliii. 4—7. Is xxi. 4
s vi. 7. lxix. 3. cxix 123. 1 Sam. xiv. 27—29. Lam. ii. 11.
* Heb. *not with me.*
t xxxi. 11. Job vi. 21—23. xix. 13—17. John xvi. 32.
u Luke x. 31, 32.
† Heb *stroke.*
‡ Or, *neighbours.*
x Luke xxii 54. xxiii. 49.
y x. 9. lxiv. 4—5 cxix. 110. cxl. 5. cxli. 9. 1 Sam xviii. 1—3. Luke xx 19, 20
z xxxv. 20. lxii. 3, 4. 2 Sam xvi 7, 8. Luke xx. 20, 21.
a xxxix. 2. 9. 2 Sam. xvi 10—12 Is liii 7. 1 Pet. ii. 23.
b Am v 13 Mic vii. 5. Mark xv. 3—5 John viii. 6.
‖ Or, *thee do I watt for.*
c xxxix. 7. cxxiii. 1—3.
‖ Or, *answer.* cxxxviii. 3.

d xiii. 3, 4. xxxv. 24—26.
e xciv 18 Deut. xxxii 35
* Heb *for halting.* xxxiv 15. *Marg.* Mic iv. 6, 7.
f 6 vi. 6 lxxvii. 2, 3 Is liii 4, 5.
g xxxii. 5. li. 3. Job xxxi 33. xxxiii 27 Pro. xxviii 13
h 2 Cor vii 9—11. i iii 1 xxv 19. lvi. 1. 2. lix 1—3.
† Heb being *living are strong.*
k xxxv 19 lxix. 4 Matt x 22. John xv. 18—25. Acts iv. 25—28.
l vii 4 xxxv 12. cix 3—5. 1 Sam. xix 4—6 xxiii. 5 12. xxv. 16. 21 Jer. xviii 20.
m Matt v 10. John x. 32 1 Pet. iii. 17, 18 iv 14—16. 1 John iii. 12.
n xxii 1 11. 19. 24. xxxv 21, 22.
o xl 13 17 lxx. 1. 5. lxxi. 12. cxli. 1.
‡ Heb *for my help.*
p xxvii. 1. lxii 2. 6. Is. xii. 2.

V. 9, 10. 'But why do I make such a particular 'enumeration of my sufferings? Thou, Lord, understand- 'est what I want, and what I would have. Though I 'should say never a word, all my miseries, and all the 'sighs they cost me, are not unknown to thee. Thou 'knowest the agitation of my spirit, which wanders up 'and down in restless thought, but all to no purpose; for 'my strength has forsaken me: the light of my eyes 'is so weak, that I can scarce make any use of them.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 11, 12. Cowardice, pride, and selfishness, caused David's friends and acquaintance to keep at a distance, during his afflictions; lest they should share his disgrace and danger, or be put to expense or inconvenience: but his enemies were emboldened in forming plans to accomplish his destruction. These particulars were still more emphatically verified, in the sufferings of the Son of David. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 13, 14. David, in the patience and meekness with which he endured his complicated sufferings, was a type of Him "who, when he was reviled, reviled not again:" but David's troubles were the chastisement, and part of them seem to have been the consequence, of his transgressions; whereas Christ suffered for our sins, and our's alone.

V. 15. The translation of one clause in this verse, in the common Prayer-book, contains an important instruction, "Thou shalt answer for me, O LORD, my God." Thus Christ was silent before his false accusers and unjust judges, and committed himself to "Him that judgeth "righteously."

V. 16—18. It was evident that the enemies of David were ungodly men, who would rejoice in his falls and calamities from dislike, not to his sins, but to his religion: and therefore the honour of God was concerned to confound and silence them; and consequently to uphold his servant, notwithstanding that he was conscious of his weakness and unworthiness. This consciousness, and the fear of the consequences, not only to himself, but especially to the cause of true religion, presented a most gloomy prospect before his eyes; except as he trusted in God to keep him from falling, for the honour of his own name; and as he ingenuously confessed his past sins, and was grieved and distressed on account of them.

V. 19, 20. The humble spirit of a penitent pleading guilty before God; and the consciousness, at the same time, of being wrongfully hated and ungratefully and basely used by men; not for the sins he had fallen into in particular instances, but for the general tenour of a holy and useful life, are strongly marked in this passage; which shows, that the most decided rejoicing in the testimony of a man's conscience, respecting his conduct towards men, in those things of which he has been unjustly condemned, is perfectly consistent with the deepest humiliation as a sinner in the sight of God.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Under the temporal effects of the Lord's abhorrence of sin, and the anguish of his correcting rod, the believer is most troubled with the apprehension of his vindictive wrath, and lest he should share the doom of the ungodly; and he can bear any thing when assured that this shall never be his case. Yet God often sees good, in order to warn others, to silence the reproaches of scoffers, to vindicate the honour of religion, and for other purposes of his glory, to make the afflictions of his offending children very sharp, complicated, and permanent; and to extort from them many doleful groans and lamentations. In such circumstances, when the correction begins to produce its salutary effects; they readily trace their sorrows to the fatherly displeasure of the Lord, "whose arrows stick fast in them, and whose "hand presseth them sore; and they humbly acknowledge "their sins to be the cause of his anger." Their own iniquities form that deluge which goeth over their heads; and their sense of guilt is the heaviest burden that is laid upon

PSALM XXXIX.

David's care not to offend with his tongue, and his inward commotion, 1—3. *His prayers and meditations on the shortness of life, and the vanity of human pursuits,* 4—6. *His hope in God, with prayer for pardon and comfort before his death,* 7—13.

[a] lxii lxxvii title. 1 Chr. xvi. 41. xxv 1. 6.

To the chief Musician, *even* to [a] Jeduthun, A Psalm of David.

I SAID, [b] I will take heed to my ways [c] that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep * my mouth with a bridle, [d] while the wicked is before me.

2 [e] I was dumb with silence, I held my peace, [f] *even* from good: and [g] my sorrow was † stirred.

3 [h] My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned: *then* spake I with my tongue.

4 LORD, [i] make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it *is*; *that* I may know ‡ how frail I *am*.

b cxix. 9 1 Kings ii. 4. 2 Kings x. 31. Prov. iv. 26, 27. Heb. ii 1.
c xii. 4 lxxiii. 8, 9. cxli. 3. Prov. xviii 21.
* Heb *a bridle*, or *a muzzle for my mouth*. Jam. i. 26. iii 2—8.
d Am. v. 13 Mic. vii 5, 6. Col. iv. 5.
e xxxviii 12, 14. Is liii. 7 Matt. xxvii. 12—14.
f Matt vii 6.
g Job xxxii. 19, 20. Acts iv 20.
† Heb *troubled*.
h Jer. xx. 9. Ez. iii 14. Luke xxiv 32
i xc 12 cxix. 84. Job xiv 13.
‡ Or, *what time I have* here.

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them: "it is indeed too heavy for them to bear;" and would sink them into despair and ruin, unless removed by the pardoning mercy of God. The prevalency of sin, and the successful force of temptations from their worst diseases and most offensive and dangerous wounds: and whilst "there is no soundness in their flesh," and no rest in their bones, they are led to consider their souls, in which 'there 'is no health.' For pride, covetousness, envy, malice, and lust, are diseases of the soul of far greater malignity than fevers, dropsies, palsies, gout, or stone, are of the body: yet numbers feel not their sickness till it be too late to apply the remedy. But, when we perceive our true condition, the good Physician is valued, resorted to, and obeyed; though even they, who are in this sure way of an effectual cure, often retard it, and experience grievous relapses, through their foolishness: and their wounds rankle and corrupt, because they delay to go to their merciful Friend, and to apply the healing balm which he hath prepared. Would we not prolong our own miseries, when we are conscious of having offended, we should immediately approach the mercy-seat with penitent confessions and believing prayers; that without delay our sins might be pardoned, our strength renewed, and our enemy prevented from rejoicing over us. Yet the feeling and effects of the divine displeasure, must needs trouble him who loves God, and "bow him down greatly, and cause him to go mourning "all the day long;" and even enfeeble him, and cause him to "roar for the very disquietness of his heart:" for "a wounded spirit who can bear?" and this uneasiness will be in proportion to the degree in which we value the favour of God, and delight in communion with him. But while the hypocrite takes encouragement from David's sins to transgress; he is a perfect stranger to David's ingenuous anguish of spirit under the consciousness of his guilt. In the true believer's case, however, all this trouble will be useful: *he* will wait for and on his God, and not seek relief from the world or from himself: he will bring his whole desire before his heavenly Father, and be encouraged, because "his groaning is not hid from him;" even though like one expiring, "his heart panteth, his "strength faileth, and the sight of his eyes is gone from "him," and he knows not what to say or do. Nay, should all this be attended with the unkindness and inconstancy of lovers, friends, and relatives, who stand aloof from his affliction; whilst treacherous and cruel foes are "laying snares for his life and seeking his hurt, and "speaking mischievous things, and imagining deceits all "the day long:" that consciousness of guilt, which forms his heaviest load, will keep down indignation, silence murmurs and reproaches, and produce meek and quiet submission. For if the holy Jesus bore all this without a complaint or a reproof, what reason can a humble sinner think he has to yield to impatience or anger, when mercifully corrected for his sins, whatever rod the Lord be pleased to employ? He will therefore be as one deaf and dumb, respecting the calumnies and scoffs of the wicked, when he feels himself to be under the divine rebuke for his sins; "he will commit himself unto him "that judgeth righteously;" and be thankful that he may yet hope and pray to him with the prospect of being heard and helped. When the wicked are ready to rejoice at our calamities, or to magnify themselves against us; when our feet slip, when we feel ourselves feeble, and ready to halt or stumble, and are grieved continually, that we have given, or lest we should give, them cause to triumph over us; we have good arguments to urge in prayer, why the Lord should help and uphold us. Let us then declare before him our iniquity, and be sorry for our sins; and seek earnestly the destruction of our inward foes, which are so lively and so strong. And if, notwithstanding our offences against God, our enemies hate us, not for our sins, but because we follow the thing that is good; let us not be discouraged by their wrongful and ungrateful enmity; seeing we are in this conformed to the Saviour: but after his example let us still persevere in endeavouring to overcome evil with good. Let us also continue in prayer that the Lord may pardon and subdue our iniquities: then will he never forsake us, or be far from us: for he will surely hasten to the help of all those who trust in him as their Salvation.

NOTES.

PSALM XXXIX. V. 1—4. It is thought that David wrote this psalm during Absalom's rebellion: and it is evident that the writer's mind was greatly discomposed, by injuries and temptations, when he began his meditation. He, however, resolved to practise the rules he gave to others (xxxvii.) and not only to walk with peculiar circumspection, but especially to watch over his words, and keep his mouth, as the mouths of animals are confined by a muzzle: for so the word signifies. Aware of the

5 Behold, [k] thou hast made my days *as* an hand-breadth; and mine age *is* [l] as nothing before thee: [m] verily every man* at his best state *is* altogether vanity. Selah.

6 Surely every man walketh in † a vain shew: [n] surely they are disquieted in vain: [o] he heapeth up *riches*, and knoweth not who shall gather them.

7 And now, LORD, [p] what wait I for? [q] my hope *is* in thee.

8 [r] Deliver me from all my transgressions: [s] make me not the reproach of the foolish.

9 [t] I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst *it*.

10 [u] Remove thy stroke away from me: [x] I am consumed by the ‡ blow of thine hand.

11 When [y] thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest § his beauty [z] to consume away like a moth: [a] surely every man *is* vanity. Selah.

12 Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear unto my cry; [b] hold not thy peace at my tears: [c] for I *am* a stranger with thee, *and* a sojourner, [d] as all my fathers *were*.

13 O [e] spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and [f] be no more.

k xc. 4, 5. 9, 10. Gen. xlvii. 9. Job vii. 6. ix. 25, 26. xiv. 1, 2. Jam. iv. 14. l lxxxix 47, 2 Pet. iii. 8. m ii lxii 9. cxliv. 4. Ec. i 2. ii. 11. Is. xl 17. * Heb. *settled.* † Heb. *an image.* 1 Cor. vii. 31. n Ec. i. 14. ii 17. 20, 21. iv. 7, 8. vi 11, 12. xii. 8. —13 Is. lv. 2. Luke x. 40, 41. xii. 29. 1 Pet. v. 7. o xlix 10, 11. Job xxvii. 16. 17. Prov. xiii. 22. xxiii. 5. xxvii 24 Ec. ii. 18, 19 21. v. 14. Luke xii. 20, 21. Jam. v. 3 p cxxx 5, 6 Gen xlix. 18. Luke ii. 25. q xxxviii. 15. cxix. 81. 166. Job xiii. 15. Rom. xv. 13.——r xxv. 11. 18 li. 7—10. 14. lxv 3. cxxx 8. Mic vii. 19. Matt. i. 21 Tit ii 14——s xxxv. 21 xliv. 13 lvii. 3. lxxix. 4 cxix. 39. 2 Sam. xvi 7, 8. Joel ii. 17, 19. Rom ii. 23, 24.——t xxxviii. 13. Lev. x. 3. 1 Sam. iii. 18. 2 Sam. xvi 10. Job i. 21. ii. 10. xl. 4, 5. Dan. iv. 35

u xxv. 16, 17. 1 Sam. vi. 5. Job ix. 34. xiii. 21. x xxxii. 3, 4. ‡ Heb *conflict.* Job xl. 8. y xxxviii. 1—8. xc. 7—10. 1 Cor. v. 5. xi. 30—32. Heb. xii. 6. Rev. iii. 19. § Heb. *that which is to be desired in him to melt away.* cii. 10, 11. z Job iv. 19. xiii. 28. xxx. 30. Is. l. 9. Hos. v. 12. a 5. b lvi. 8. cxvi. 8. 2 Sam. xvi. 12. *Marg.* 2 Kings xx 5. Job xvi. 20. Heb v. 7. c cxix. 19. 54. Lev. xxv. 23. 1 Chr. xxix. 15. 2 Cor. v. 6 Heb. xi. 13 1 Pet. i. 17. ii. 11. d Gen. xlvii. 9. e Job. x. 20, 21. xiv. 5, 6. Job xiv. 10—12. f Gen. v. 24. xlii. 36.

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baseness of his enemies, he determined on a total silence before them: he would neither speak any thing in his own vindication, or to complain of them, nor utter any pious discourse, which would have been like throwing pearls before swine. Yet the treatment he met with, his indignation at the crimes which he witnessed, his zeal for the honour of God, and the restraint imposed on him, excited in his mind a vehement and painful commotion: and the thoughts that wrought within, proved like the blowing of embers, which produces an intense heat, and bursts forth into a flame. He did not indeed break his resolution by speaking before the wicked: but with vehemency and some tincture of impatience, he prayed to the Lord, that he might know his end, and how long he was to live, and to suffer such complicated evils: or, that being suitably affected with the shortness of life, and his own frailty, he might be the more engaged to prepare for death and eternity, and less concerned about all his temporal interests.—David in his entire silence, was a type of Christ when he answered nothing before Caiaphas, Herod, and Pilate.

V. 5. *At his best state, Selah;* Or, "when settled or "established most firmly." Some things decay after a certain time, but generally last that time; others endure long, barring accidents, yet are easily broken: but the life of man not only wears out speedily as a garment, but is also brittle like glass.

V. 6. *A vain show,* Or, *shadow,* unsubstantial, and vanishing. Such are all the interests, pursuits, and distinctions of this world; about which men are constantly disquieting themselves and others, till death stops their career, and they leave their acquisitions without knowing who will at length possess them, and remove to a state of important and eternal realities.

V. 7, 8. Meditation on the vanity of all outward things, led the Psalmist to fix more entirely his expectation on God alone, as the Fountain of happiness: but recollecting his transgressions and proneness to sin, he earnestly prayed for deliverance from guilt and depravity; and that he might not, by subsequent misconduct, disgrace the cause of God and expose himself to the reproach of any foolish and wicked man: (the original is *Nabal.*)

V. 9, 10. While the consideration that his afflictions were appointed by his heavenly Father, silenced the Psalmist's complaints; yet he pleaded for a mitigation of them, because he was ready to sink under them. Thus Christ, when entering on the last scene of his unknown sufferings, prayed, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from "me; nevertheless, not my will but thine be done."

V. 11. 'The word' (rendered *beauty,*) 'signifieth all 'that man desireth, as health, force, strength, beauty, and 'in whatsoever he hath delight: so that the rod of God 'taketh away all that is desired in this world.'

A moth, &c. 'The body is as a garment to the soul, in 'which sin hath lodged a moth, which by degrees fretteth 'away, first the beauty, then the strength, and finally the 'contexture of the parts.' (*Horne.*) Thus the greatest, as well as the meanest of men, is but mere vanity.

V. 12. The patriarchs lived in Canaan as in a foreign country, by the allowance of the possessors, moving their tents from place to place; and they confessed themselves to be strangers and pilgrims in the land: but David ruled as a powerful monarch and a renowned conqueror over the people of Israel, now fully settled in their promised inheritance. When, however, he considered the shortness and vanity of life, and looked forward to a future and permanent state; he too owned that he was a stranger and pilgrim on earth, even as they also had been. (*Note, Gen.* xlvii. 9.)

V. 13. *Strength,* &c. If this psalm was composed during Absalom's usurpation, David might mean, that he was desirous before he left the world, to recover his peace of mind, to be reinstated in his authority, and to retrieve his character. He, however, prayed that his faith, hope, and love might recover strength; that he might be enabled to do some further service to his people, before his death; and have inward comfort, when about to depart hence and be no more seen. His prayer in all these respects was completely answered. (*Notes,* &c. 1 *Chron.* xxix.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The presence of the wicked, especially if powerful and prosperous, exposes us to many temptations, either by en-

PSALM XL.

David praises God for deliverance out of deep distress, and shows the benefit which would thence be derived to numbers, and the happiness of such as trust in God, 1—5. As a type of Christ he states the inefficacy of legal sacrifices, and the efficacy of the Redeemer's obedience, 6—8. He declares that he had published God's righteousness and salvation; and pleads for deliverance from urgent troubles, and for the confusion of his enemies, with the triumphing of the righteous, 9—17.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

* I [a] WAITED patiently for the LORD; and [b] he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.

2 [c] He brought me up also out of an † horrible pit, out of [d] the miry clay, and [e] set my feet upon a rock, *and* [f] established my goings.

3 And [g] he hath put a new song in my mouth, *even* [h] praise unto our God: [i] many shall see *it*, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD.

4 [k] Blessed *is* the man that maketh the LORD his trust: and [l] respecteth not the proud, nor such [m] as turn aside to lies.

5 [n] Many, O LORD my God, *are* thy

* Heb. *in waiting I waited.*
a xx. ii. 13, 14. xxxvii. 7. Jam. v. 7—11.
b cxvi. 2. cxxx. 2. Dan. ix. 18.
c xviii. 16, 17. lxxi. 20. lxxxvi. 13. cxvi. 3. cxliii. 6, 7. cxliii. 3. Is. xxiv. 22. Joel. ii. 5, 6. Zech. ix. 11. Acts ii. 24, 27—31.
† Heb. *pit of noise.* Matt. xxii. 50.
d Ps. lxix. 2, 14. 15. Jer. xxxviii. 6, 12. Lam. iii. 53—55.
e xxvii. 5. lxi. 2. Mat. vii. 24, 25.
f xvii. 5. xviii. 36. xxxvii. 23. cxix. 133.
g xxxiii. 3. cxliv. 9. Rev. v. 9, 10. xiv. 3.
h cxiii. 1—5. Is. xii. 1—4.
i xxxiv. 1—6. xxxv. 27. lii. 6. lxiv. 9, 10. cxlii. 7. Hos. iii. 5. Acts ii. 37—40. iii. 4.
k ii. 12. xxxiv. 8. lxxxiv. 11, 12. cxviii. 8, 9. Jer. xvii. 7, 8. Rom. xv. 12, 13.——l xv. 4. ci. 3—7. cxix. 21.——m Is. xliv. 18, 19. Jer. x. 14, 15. Joel ii. 8. 2 Thes. ii. 9—12.
n cxxxvi. 4. Ex. xv. 11. Job v. 9. ix. 10. xxvi. 14.

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ticing or terrifying us into improper compliances, or by exciting our indignation and envy. When we are not able wholly to separate from them, we should double our watchfulness, and especially impose a strict restraint upon our tongues; lest we should be betrayed into boasting, reviling, slandering, flattering, or trifling conversation: remembering that they will criticise every expression, and turn it, if they can, to our disadvantage and the discredit of religion. Sometimes it may be necessary to keep silence even from good words, when they are likely to excite profane contempt or rage: yet in general we run into an extreme, when we are backward to engage in edifying discourse. But if we be enabled to bridle our tongues, we shall often find ourselves incapable of repressing our passions. When zeal, anger, impatience, compassion, grief, and other conflicting affections are excited in the heart, confinement increases their force, and reflection excites more disquietude, till a fire seems to be kindled within, which must in some way break forth. In this case, it is our wisdom to retire, and pour out our hearts before God, and to utter our complaints, sorrows, and desires to him alone. It is also very composing to the believer's mind, under sore trials and temptations, to know and consider his end, and the measure of his days: but we are never suitably affected with such subjects except we pray over them, and are inwardly taught by the spirit of God. We need not inquire the precise time we have to live; it will answer every good purpose attentively to consider the shortness and uncertainty of life. Our days are but a hand breadth, or as nothing before God and in comparison of his eternity: and in our greatest prosperity, and in the vigour of youth and health, verily every man is altogether vanity. He cannot live long; he may die soon, and suddenly: his busy cares are useless, his acquisitions are a shadow; he is disquieted in vain: and if he succeed in heaping up riches, he must shortly leave them, not knowing who shall gather them. How absurd then are the perplexing anxieties and the incessant fatigues of the most successful worldling, who pursues such shadows to the marring of his present comforts, and the ruin of his immortal soul! Indeed the believer's disquietude about the difficulties of his path and the treatment he meets with, are not much more rational. We are happy in exact proportion, as we despair of happiness from this changing sinful world; and wait and hope for it from the mercy and all-sufficient love of God our Saviour. Instead of being much concerned about temporal things, let us earnestly pray to be delivered from all our transgressions; and that we may not be made a reproach to those who, being foolish at all times, never so much expose their folly, as when they deride the hopes or insult over the falls of the righteous. We should look above instruments, and view the hand of God in all our afflictions: and then faith in his wisdom, justice, truth, and love; and consciousness, that he only rebukes us for our iniquity, will render us silent and submissive, because he hath done it. Then our prayers for the removal of his stroke, even when we are consumed with the blow of his hand, will be offered with resignation to his will, and hope in his mercy. But if his fatherly chastisement of his children for their offences consume their strength and comeliness, as a moth fretteth away a garment: what will be the effect of his avenging wrath against his enemies! And as every man is vanity, it behooves sinners to make haste to seek forgiveness, before they go hence and be no more seen. The Christian's sorrows are all sanctified; the gracious Lord will wipe away his tears, and answer all his prayers: he cannot but feel his afflictions; yet as a stranger and a pilgrim on earth, he hopes for a better and more enduring habitation in heaven, where his heart and his treasure are already. He expects weariness and ill treatment by the way: but his stay here will not be long; and walking with God by faith, he goes forward on his journey, undiverted from his course, and not much cast down, by the ill accommodations or difficulties with which he meets. He only desires to be spared till his measure of service on earth be finished, and his title to heaven clear; and that he may depart in that vigorous exercise of faith and grace, which may be honourable to God, encouraging to his brethren, and comfortable to himself. Then going hence, and being no more on earth, he enters upon his perfect and eternal rest: and leaves his pious friends consoled with the joyful hope of a blessed re-union; and instructed by his words and actions, how to live, to suffer, and to die.

wonderful works *which* thou hast done, and [o] thy thoughts *which are* to us-ward: [*] they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: *if* I would declare and speak *of them*, they are more than can be numbered.

6 [p] Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; [q] mine ears hast thou † opened: burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required.

7 Then said I, [r] Lo, I come: [s] in the volume of the book *it is* written of me.

8 [t] I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, [u] thy law *is* ‡ within my heart.

9 [x] I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, [y] I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, [z] thou knowest.

10 [a] I have not hid [b] thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared [c] thy faithfulness and [d] thy salvation: I have not concealed [e] thy loving-kindness and thy truth from the great congregation.

o lxxi. 15. xcii. 5 cxxxix. 6. 17, 18. Is. lv. 8, 9. Jer. xxix. 11.
* Or. *none can order them unto thee.* Job xxxvii. 19, 20.
p 1. 8. li. 16. 1 Sam. xv. 22 Is. i. 11. lxvi. 3. Jer. vii. 21—23. Hos. vi. 6. Mat. ix. 13. xii. 7. Heb x. 5—12.
q Ex. xxi. 6 Job xxxiii. 16. Is l. 4, 5.
† Heb. *digged.*
r Heb. x 7—9.
s Gen. iii 15. Luke xxiv 27. 44. John. v 39. Acts x 43. 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4 1 Pet. i. 10, 11. Rev. xix. 10.
t cxii. 1 cxix 16 24. 47. 92 Job xxiii 12. Jer. xv. 16 John iv. 34 Rom vii. 22 viii. 29.
u xxxvii. 30, 31. Pro iii. 1 Jer. xxxi 33. 2 Cor. iii 3
‡ Heb *in the midst of my bowels.*
x xxii. 22. 25. xxxv. 18. lxxi. 15—18. Mark xvi. 15, 16. Heb. ii. 12.
y cxix. 13 171, 172.
z cxxxix 2 John xxi. 17.
a Ez. ii. 7. iii. 17, 18. Acts xx. 20, 21. 26, 27. Rom. x. 9, 10. 1 Thes.

i. 8. Rev. xxii. 17 ——b Rom. i. 16, 17. iii. 22—26. x. 3. Phil. iii 9.——c Acts xiii 32, 33. Rom. xv 8, 9.——d Is. xlix. 6 Luke ii. 30—32. iii. 6. 1 Tim. i. 15.——e xxv. 10. Ex. xxxiv. 6 Mic. vii. 20. John i. 17. iii. 16, 17.

NOTES.

PSALM XL. V. 1—5. In this psalm David seems to have intended to speak of his own case and experience; but the Holy Spirit led him to use language, which in its full meaning can be applied to none but the Lord Jesus himself. The whole indeed may be accommodated to him, yet some passages seem more suited to the case of the Type, than to that of the Antitype. These verses may be interpreted of the Redeemer's deep and dreadful sufferings, and the happy effects which followed his deliverance from them. Exposed to the cruelty and malice of men, the horrid assaults of Satan, and the wrath of the Father, when bearing our sins; he was as one sinking in a dark and noisome pit, where dreadful noises are heard, and he was ready to be covered and suffocated with the miry clay: but under all these sufferings, he "waited "patiently for the LORD;" and his earnest prayers were heard: at his resurrection he was brought forth from the grave and the state of the dead: and in his exaltation he was placed as on an immoveable rock; his goings were established, his remaining work became easy, and his full success was ensured. Thus a *new* song was put into his mouth, which he teaches his people: for no such redemption could before be celebrated; and multitudes, by faith, beholding his sufferings and the glory which followed, have learned to fear the justice, and trust in the mercy of God, through him. Such persons are made happy; whilst they do not regard the rich and great so as to trust in them, or proud tyrants and persecutors so as to dread their rage; and while they renounce all connexion with those who turn aside to idolatrous and superstitious delusions, or the deceitful interests and pleasures of sin. Many wonderful works the Lord had done for sinful man and for Israel; but this would exceed them all: nor could the number or value of his thoughts and contrivances of love and mercy be ever numbered or estimated. Yet the passage may also be explained of David, and answers to some parts of the believer's experience. David had been in many troubles, and seemed ready to sink in them, as in a horrible pit; but faith, patience, and prayer, supported him, and carried him through all: in due time he was rescued, advanced, and established; his way was made plain and prosperous; a new song was put into his mouth, his example became useful to many, and his life was spent in attempting to reckon up and celebrate the wonders and counsels of the love of God to him and to his people, yet he could not at all do justice to the delightful subject. The third and fourth verses may be connected as follows. 'Many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD: *Saying*, blessed is the man,' &c. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 6—8. It is uncertain whether David had in these verses any intention of declaring, that cheerful and prompt obedience to the precepts of the moral law, proceeding from faith and love, was more acceptable to God than any legal sacrifices: but it is evident that the Holy Spirit foretold the obedience of the promised Messiah. Sacrifices, though appointed of God, were of no intrinsic value: he neither delighted in them, nor required them for their own sake: nor could they take away sin. But the incarnation and obedience of the Son of God, which they shadowed forth, were previously appointed for that purpose. His ears were *opened* to receive and obey the command of the Father; or pierced as those of servants were, who choose to continue perpetually with their masters. When the legal sacrifices were declared inefficient, the Redeemer promptly answered, "Lo, I come," &c. According to the eternal purpose of JEHOVAH, and as it was written in the Scriptures from the beginning, or the opening of the roll, concerning him, he was prepared to appear in human nature to magnify the law of God by his perfect and divine obedience, even unto the death of the cross: yea, his cordial love to the holy commandment, and his zeal for the honour of the divine government and perfections, and his compassion for the souls of men, were so powerful, that he delighted in thus performing the will of his heavenly Father. (*Note, Heb.* x. 5—10.) In quoting this passage, the apostle follows the translation of the Septuagint, which gives an interpretation, rather than a translation, of the words rendered, "Mine ears hast thou opened." But as this variation did not at all affect his argument or alter the meaning of the passage, it was not necessary that he should interrupt his subject by noticing it.

V. 9, 10. While David avowed the earnestness and boldness with which he had celebrated the works and ways of God, he typified Christ in the performance of his prophetical office. Neither reproach nor persecution had caused David to refrain his lips from declaring before the congregation of Israel, the righteousness, faithfulness, loving-kindness, and salvation of the Lord. He had not been contented with treasuring these subjects up in his heart, for his private use; but had openly published them

f lxix 13. 16.

11 [f] Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O LORD: [g] let thy loving kindness and thy truth continually preserve me.

g xxiii. 6. xliii. 3. lvii 3. lxi 7 Heb. v. 7.

12 For [h] innumerable evils have compassed me about: [i] mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up: [k] they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore [l] my heart * faileth me.

h xxii. 11–19.

i xxxviii. 4. Is. liii. 6. 1 Pet. iii. 18.

k xix. 12 lxix. 4.

l lxxiii 26. Gen. xlii 28 Luke xxi 26

* Heb *forsaketh*

13 [m] Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me: O LORD, [n] make haste to help me.

m xxv 17, 18. Matt. xxvi 36–44.

n xxxviii 22. lxx 1.

14 [o] Let them be ashamed and confounded together, [p] that seek after my soul to destroy it; let them be [q] driven backward, and put to shame, that wish me evil.

o xxxi. 17, 18. xxxv 4. 26. lxx. 2. Is. xli. 11. xlv. 24.

p Matt xxi. 38–41.

q ix. 3. John xviii. 6. Acts ix. 4–6. xii. 23. 24

15 Let them be [r] desolate for a reward of their shame, that [s] say unto me, Aha, aha!

r lxix. 24. 25. lxxiii. 19. cix. 6–20. Luke xix. 43, 44. xxi 23, 24.

s xxv. 21. 25. lxx. 3, 4.

16 [t] Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as [u] love thy salvation [x] say continually, The LORD be magnified.

t xxii 26. xxxv. 27 lxviii 3. ev. 3. Is. lxv 13, 14.

u cxi. 81 111. 123. 166, 167. Matt xiii 45, 46 Phil. iii. 7–9.

x xxxv. 27. Luke i. 46. 47. Acts xix 17.

17 But [y] I *am* poor and needy; *yet* [z] the LORD thinketh upon me: thou *art* [a] my help and my deliverer; [b] make no tarrying, O my God.

y xxxiv 6. lxix. 33. lxx. 5. Is. xii. 17. Matt. viii 20. 2 Cor. viii 9. Jam. ii. 5

z 1 Pet. ii. 23. v. 7.

a liv. 4. Is. l. 7–9. Heb. xiii. 6. — b cxliii. 7, 8. Rev. xxii. 20.

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for the edification of the people and the honour of God. Thus Christ, personally before his sufferings, and by his ministers afterwards, published to innumerable multitudes the justice, truth, and mercy of God; his method of justifying and sanctifying sinners, as well as the ways of righteousness in which he guides them. The connexion of the term *thy righteousness*, with loving-kindness, mercy, faithfulness, and salvation, and the subject evidently intended, warrants this interpretation; and shows that "the righteousness of God, which is unto all, and upon "all that believe," was primarily meant. The word rendered *preached*, is seldom used: but it seems precisely to signify preaching the Gospel, proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation.

V. 11, 12. David might be here pleading for an interest in those mercies and that salvation which he proclaimed to others; when he was struggling with those complicated evils, which were consequent to his iniquities in the matter of Uriah. These called all his other sins to his remembrance, which took such hold on him, and so discouraged him, that he should not have dared to look up, if it had not been for his belief of the infinite mercies of God. Or, as some think, Christ may be supposed to speak, in the depth of his humiliation, when our innumerable iniquities met upon him, in his agony in the garden, and his sufferings on the cross.

V. 14, 15. These verses are throughout in the future tense, and naturally express the language of lively faith and hope, rather than that of wishing or desiring the destruction foreseen and predicted. An undue regard to the Septuagint and other ancient versions, seems to have induced our venerable translators generally to put such passages in the imperative, which, at first view, at least gives them an appearance of harshness, not so congenial to the spirit of devotion. The two former verses, however, viewed as predictions of the destruction which awaits the obstinate enemies of Christ and his church, have been wonderfully accomplished in the dire end of many traitors and persecutors, and in the condition of the Jews to this day.

V. 16. "All those that seek thee shall be glad and re-"joice in thee; such as love thy salvation, shall say con-"tinually, The LORD be magnified." 'I am confident, 'that this eventually will be the case; notwithstanding 'present temptations and sufferings.' The clause, "love "thy salvation," exactly discriminates a true believer from all other men. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We are here again called upon to contemplate the intense sufferings into which our sins plunged the divine Saviour, when he willingly gave himself for us a sacrifice unto God: and we should also mark his patient confidence in the Father under them all; and observe how his prayers were heard, his soul delivered, and his body raised; and how, in human nature, he was exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour. In his exaltation all his people should rejoice: the new song which was put into his mouth, was intended for our use, that we might render praises unto our God: and the whole interesting scene, and all the mediatorial power and grace of our exalted Saviour, were designed to warn sinners to flee from the wrath to come, and to put their trust in the mercy of the Lord. Happy are all they who renounce every lying vanity and carnal confidence, thus to depend upon the living God: they shall continually experience the faithfulness of his promises, and contemplate with admiring gratitude all the counsels of his love, and his wonderful works in behalf of his redeemed people: nor will they be able to eternity to exhaust the subject, or recount all the particular instances of his mercy to them. Yet the incarnation and suretyship, the obedience and sufferings of the Son of God, are the centre and the means of all other mercies to us. Thus is God glorified, and sinners are saved: no costly sacrifices or even moral righteousness can be acceptable from sinners to a holy God, except as they stand in relation to the person and atonement of his beloved Son. In his obedience unto death the eternal purposes were accomplished, the types and prophecies of the old dispensation were fulfilled; the law of God was magnified, and the demands of justice were satisfied. Humiliating and painful as this obedience was, Jesus delighted to perform it: the law of God possessed his heart, and he was bent upon honouring its precepts and its awful sanction; that all might learn the excellency of the command, and the evil

PSALM XLI.

David shows the blessedness of those who consider the poor, 1—3. *He prays for mercy, and complains of the treachery of his enemies, and the ingratitude of one who had been his friend,* 4—10. *He expresses confidence in God, and praises him,* 11—13.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

1 BLESSED [a] *is* he that considereth * the poor: [b] the LORD will deliver him in † time of trouble.

2 The LORD will [c] preserve him, and keep him alive; *and* he shall be [d] blessed upon the earth: [e] and ‡ thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies.

3 The LORD will [f] strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt § make all his bed in his sickness.

4 I said, [g] LORD, be merciful unto me; [h] heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee.

5 [i] Mine enemies speak evil of me; When shall he die, and [k] his name perish?

6 And if he come to see *me* [l] he speaketh vanity: his heart gathereth iniquity to itself; [m] *when* he goeth abroad he telleth *it*

7 All that hate me [n] whisper together against me: [o] against me do they devise ‖ my hurt.

8 * An [p] evil disease, *say they,* cleaveth fast unto him: [q] and *now* that he lieth he shall rise up no more.

a cxii. 9. Deut xv. 7—11. Job xxix 12 16. xxxi. 16—20. Prov. xiv. 21. xix. 17 Ec. xi. 1, 2 Is lviii. 7—10 Mark xiv 7 Luke i 13, 14 1 Cor. x 8—13 Gal ii 10.
* Or, *the weak, or sick* Matt. xxv. 34—39. Acts xx. 35. 1 Thes v. 14.
b xxxiv. 19 xxxvii 26 39, 40. Heb. vi 10 Jam ii 13.
† Heb *the day of evil* xxxvii. 9 Prov xvi. 4 Ec xii 1 Rev iii. 10
c xxxiii 19 xci 3—7. Jer. xlv 4, 5.
d cxxviii. 1—6 1 Tim. iv 8.
e xxvii. 12. cxl. 8, 9
‡ Or, *do not thou deliver.*

f lxxiii. 26. 2 Kings i. 6 16 xx. 5, 6. 2 Cor. iv. 16, 17. Phil. ii. 26, 27
§ Heb *turn*
g li. 1—3 ciii 3.
h vi. 2—4 cxlvii. 3 2 Chr xxx. 18—20. Jam v. 15, 16
i xxii 6—8. cii. 8.
k Job xviii 17. xx 7. Prov x 7.
l xii 2. Neh vi. 1—14 Prov xxvi. 24—26 Dan xi. 27. Mic vii. 5—7. Luke xii. 53, 54 xx 20—23. 2 Cor. xi. 26.
m Jer xx 10.
n Prov xvi 28. xxvi. 20. *marg* Hem i 29. 2 Cor xii 20.
o xxxi. 13 lvi. 5, 6 Matt xxii. 15 xxvi. 3, 4
‖ Heb. *evil to me.*
* Heb. *A thing of Belial*
p xxxviii. 3—7. Job ii 7, 8 Luke xiii. 16.
q iii 2 lxxi 11. Matt xxvii. 42—43 63, 64.

of transgression, in connexion with the infinite love of God to sinners. Now his redemption is completed, and the proclamation is sent forth to call upon us to come and accept of it. May we believe his testimony, trust his promise, and submit to his authority! For all who thus seek the Lord shall rejoice in him; and all that love his salvation will say continually, The Lord be magnified: whilst the shame and ruin of impenitent sinners, especially of those who oppose his cause, or seek to destroy his people, and rejoice in their calamities, are ensured by the predictions and denunciations of the word of God, and even by his intercessions for his church. But if the holy Jesus, "the beloved Son, in whom the Father was well pleased," endured such innumerable evils, and became so poor and needy for our sakes; shall we, whose iniquities are more in number than the hairs of our head, complain when we meet with pain and poverty! Had it not been for his voluntary and vicarious sufferings, our sins would have taken such hold on us, that we should never have been able to look up: our hearts must indeed have failed, and in the horrible pit, whence there is no escape, our hopes would for ever have expired. Of this believers are fully convinced: and this should teach them patient submission under every trial. And if any are struggling with remorse of conscience and fears of wrath, and, to their own apprehension, sinking in a deep and horrible pit: let them wait patiently for God and cry humbly unto him; and he will hear and help them, and turn their fears and sorrows into joyful praises. If we are thus rescued, let us continue to pray that our goings may be established in holiness, as a proof that we are fixed upon the Rock of salvation. And that our praises may be honourable to God and profitable to men, we should endeavour to unite humble dependence on Christ with obedient imitation of him. For those that are really *his*, are taught in a measure to delight in doing his will, and have his law written in their hearts. Let us not then be ashamed of him or of his word; but declare his righteousness, truth, and salvation, according to our place in the church, to all around us. Let us put our whole trust in his mercy under every trial, and seek to him to make haste to help and deliver us, and to disappoint Satan and every foe, that seeketh after our souls to destroy them. Though despised and obscure, let it suffice us, that the Lord thinketh of us: and if he be our Help and Deliverer, he will make no long tarrying; but will soon remove us out of the reach of sin and sorrow, and even raise our bodies from the grave, that we may be with him, and behold and share his glory for ever.

NOTES.

PSALM XLI. V. 1—3. It is generally agreed, that David wrote this psalm during Absalom's rebellion, when it seems, his other afflictions were accompanied with sickness; or rather he had previously been visited with some dangerous disorder, from which his enemies hoped he would not recover, and this emboldened them in their treasonable practices. Finding his affliction aggravated by their cruelty and perfidy; he was led to commend that temper of mind, which disposed a man to consider and compassionate the afflicted; and to declare him happy who possessed it. Some render the first clause, "Blessed is he "that *judgeth wisely* of the poor:" 'not condemning him 'as accursed whom God doth visit, (as Job's friends did 'him;) knowing that there are divers causes why God 'layeth his hand upon us, yea, and afterwards he restor-'eth us.' It is, however, generally understood to refer to the considerate, active, and liberal kindness shown to the poor and afflicted, from genuine faith and love. (*Marg. Ref.*) Such a becoming conduct would ensure a man a gracious recompense from God; either exemption from the calamities, which in evil times befel others, the preservation of his life, with many blessings, and protection from envious and spiteful enemies; or, in case of sickness, with inward strength and various alleviations, (as when the bed of the sick is turned and smoothed to aid their repose;) till health was restored, or till a peaceful death terminated all his sorrows.

V. 4—8. David was conscious that his affliction was a

9 [r] Yea, * mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, [s] which did eat of my bread, hath † lifted up *his* heel against me.

10 But thou, O LORD, [t] be merciful unto me, and raise me up, [u] that I may requite them.

11 By this I know that thou favourest me, [x] because mine enemy doth not triumph over me.

12 And as for me, [y] thou upholdest me in mine integrity, and [z] settest me before thy face for ever.

13 [a] Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, from everlasting and to everlasting. [b] Amen and Amen.

r lv. 12–14. 20–22. 2 Sam. xv. 12. Job xix 19
* Heb. *the man of my peace.*
s Deu. xxxii. 15. Ob. 7. John xiii. 18. 26, 27.
† Heb *magnified.*
t lvii 1 cix 21
u xviii. 37 – 42. xxi. 8–10. lxix. 22–28 cix. 6–20. Luke xix. 27.
x xiii 1. xxxi. 8. xxxv 25. lxxxvi. 17. cxxiv. 6. Jer. xx 13. Col. ii. 15
y xxv. 21 xciv. 18.
z xvi. 11. xvii. 15. lxxiii 23, 24 Job xxxvi. 7 John xvii. 24
a lxxii 18, 19 lxxxix. 52. cvi 43 1 Chr. xxix 10. Eph. i. 3. Rev. iv 8 v. 9–14. vii. 12
xi. 17.——b Num v 22. Deut xxvii. 15, &c. 1 Kings i. 36. 1 Chr. xvi. 36. Jer. xxviii. 6. Matt. vi 13. 1 Cor xiv 16 Rev xxii 20

correction for his sins; and with humble confessions pleaded especially for the healing of his soul: but his enemies reviled him, and impatiently expected his death, and hoped that his very name and memory would be disgraced. Recollecting their former behaviour, and comparing it with their conduct in following Absalom, he perceived that their apparent kindness and their visits were only intended to amuse him with vain professions of attachment, and to gain an opportunity of collecting materials of slander and reproach. They maliciously adverted to every one of his words and every part of his behaviour, treasuring up in their mind whatever could be unfavourably interpreted, and then whispering it abroad among the people, to prejudice them against him and his government. And considering his malady as a proof of his guilt, (*a thing of Belial,*) they exulted in the hope that he would sink under it to rise no more.

V. 9. As David was a type of Christ, so was Ahithophel in some respects of Judas. The latter clause of this verse was fulfilled in Judas' ungrateful and cruel treachery. But Christ never *trusted in* him, as David had in Ahithophel; therefore the former part was more suited to the type than to the antitype. (*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* xvi. 20—23. *John* xiii 18.) 'The sufferings of the church, like those of her 'Redeemer, generally begin at home;—and unnatural as 'it may seem, they who have waxed fat upon her bounty, 'are sometimes the first to "lift up the heel against her." (*Horne.*)

V. 10. 'Thou art able to restore me to my throne,—'and then I shall punish them, according as my office and 'their wickedness requires.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 11—13. The Psalmist, amidst his complicated trials, concluded with lively actings of faith and adoring praises. Had not God *favoured* or *delighted in* him, his enemy would certainly before that time have been triumphing over him. He was still upheld in an upright and conscientious adherence to the cause of God and religion: and in assured hope of future felicity; and therefore he praised the LORD God of Israel, calling on all the people, by repeating earnestly (*Amen,* or *let it be even so,*) to his zealous adorations, to make them their own.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The people of God are not exempted from poverty, sickness, or any external affliction: but He considers their case and wants, and vouchsafes them relief proportioned to the exigency: He delivers them from trouble, preserves their lives, and gives them blessings on earth, as long as is really good for them: He does not give th m over unto the will of their enemies: and even upon the bed of languishing sickness, which is so depressing to nature, he communicates such strength and consolation, as render them calm and easy. After the Lord's example of kindness and compassion, the believer also has learned to consider his poor and afflicted brethren. In them he sees the once suffering Saviour; and gratitude to him unites with love to his people, in disposing him to alleviate their sorrows and supply their wants, according to opportunity and ability: nor does he exclude any other sufferers from his deep compassion, and such relief as he can afford them. Thus he evidences the reality of his faith, and obtains the assurance of gracious supports from God when afflictions fall to his share. But nothing is so distressing to the contrite believer, as a sense of the divine displeasure, and the prevalence of sin in his heart: pain and sickness will remind him to pray especially for pardoning mercy; and for the healing of his soul, which is wounded and diseased, because he hath sinned against the Lord. The most humble and upright may well expect to meet with enmity, contempt, treachery, and ingratitude from the wicked; when the holy Jesus was not only despised and rejected of men, but was betrayed and sold by one of his own apostles, whom he had treated with the utmost kindness, and distinguished by the most valuable external privileges.—Let us continually look unto Jesus, that we may not be stumbled or discouraged, if without cause many calumniate or injure us, and wish for or even seek to compass our death, or rejoice and insult over our misery or disgrace. Should any profess religion, and pretend friendship to us, and court our acquaintance, and insinuate themselves into our confidence and affection on purpose to slander and betray us, let us still remember that Christ met with far worse treatment in all these respects, than we can do; and if we in any measure walk in his steps, we must expect a proportionable share of enmity, contempt, and ingratitude. He, being risen from the dead and constituted Judge of all, will requite all his obstinate enemies: but in our private capacity we must not desire to avenge ourselves, but copy his example when he prayed for the forgiveness of his murderers. However we may be tempted and afflicted, it is a token for good, if Satan our enemy be not permitted to triumph over us: and if the Lord be merciful to us, and favour us, and uphold us in our integrity, "he will set us before his face "for ever;" and then our enemies will finally be subdued, and all our sorrows terminated. In the anticipation of faith and hope, let us then on earth solace ourselves under our conflicts and sorrows, by beginning the work of heaven: and give our cordial assent to those praises which the redeemed are continually rendering to their God and Saviour: saying, "Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting, and to everlasting. Amen, and Amen."

PSALM XLII.

The Psalmist thirsts after God; mourns his absence from the sanctuary amidst insulting foes; and recollects with regret former seasons of comfort, 1—4. He struggles against unbelief and despondency, complains unto God, and stays his dejected soul on him, 5—11.

To the chief Musician, * Maschil, for [a] the sons of Korah.

AS the hart † panteth after the water-brooks, [b] so panteth my soul after thee, O God.

2 My soul [c] thirsteth for God, for [d] the living God: [e] when shall I come and appear before God?

3 My [f] tears have been my meat day and night, [g] while they continually say unto me, Where *is* thy God?

4 [h] When I remember these *things*, I pour out my soul in me: [k] for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, [l] with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holy-day.

5 [m] Why art thou ‡ cast down, O my soul? and *why* art thou disquieted in me? [n] hope thou in God: for I shall yet ◊ praise him [o] *for* ‖ the help of his countenance.

6 O [p] my God, my soul is cast down within me: [q] therefore will I remember thee [r] from the land of Jordan, and of [s] the Hermonites, from * the hill Mizar.

7 [t] Deep calleth unto deep, at the noise of thy water-spouts: [u] all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.

8 *Yet* the LORD will [x] command his loving kindness in the day-time, and [y] in the night his song *shall be* with me, *and* my prayer unto [z] the God of my life.

* Or, A Psalm *giving instruction of the*, &c.
a xlv. xlvi xlvii. xlviii. xlix. lxxxiv. lxxxv. *titles* Num xvi. 1. 32. xxvi. 11. 1 Chr. vi. 33—37. xxv. 1—5.
† Heb. *hearth.*
b lxiii. 1, 2 lxxxiv. 2. cxliii. 6. 7. Is. xxvi 8, 9.
c xxxvi 8, 9. John vii. 37. Rev. xxii 1.
d Jer. ii. 13. x. 10 John v. 26.
e 1 Thes i 9.
f xxxvii. 4. lxxxiv. 4. 10.
g lxxx. 5. cii 9 2 Sam. xvi. 12. *Marg.*
h 10. iii. 2. xxii. 9. lxxix. 10 12.
k Ruth i 21. Job xxix. 2, &c. xxx. 1, &c. Lam. iv. 1. Luke xvi. 25.
i lxii. 8. 1 Sam. i. 15, 16.
k 1 Chr. xv. 15—28. xvi. Job xxx. 16.
l lxxxi 1—3. cxxii. 1. Deut. xvi. 11. 14, 15. 2 Chr. vii. 10. xxx. 23—26. Is. xxx. 29 Nah. i 15.
m 11. xliii. 5. lv. 4, 5. lxi. 2. cxliii. 2, 3. cxliii. 3, 4. 1 Sam. xxx. 6. Mark xiv. 33, 34.
‡ Heb. *bowed down.* xxxv. 14.
n xxvii 13, 14. xxxvii. 7. lvi. 3. 11. lxxi 14. Job xiii. 15 Is l. 10. Lam. iii 24. 26. Rom. iv. 18—20. Heb. x. 36, 37.
◊ Or, *give thanks.*
o xliv. 3. Num vi, 25.
‖ Or. *His presence is salvation.* xci. 15, 16 Matt. i. 23. xxviii. 20.
p xxii 1. xliii 4. lxxxviii. 1—3. Matt. xxvi. 39. xxvii. 46.
q lxxvii 6—11. Jon. ii 7.
r lxi. 2. 2 Sam. xvii. 22. 27.
s Deut. iii. 8, 9. iv. 47, 48.
* Or, *the little hill.*
t Job i 14—19. x. 17. Jer. iv. 29. Ez. vii. 26
u lxix. 14, 15. lxxxviii. 7 15—17. Lam. iii. 53—55. Jon. ii. 3.
x xliv. 4. cxxxiii. 3. Lev. xxv. 21. Deut. xxviii. 8. Matt. viii. 8 ——y lxiii. 6. cxlix. 5. Job xxxv. 10. Is xxx. 29. Acts xvi. 25 ——z xxvii. 1. Col. iii 3.

NOTES.

PSALM XLII. *Title.* 'A psalm to give instruction, 'committed to the sons of Korah, who were of the number 'of the Levites, as a treasure to be kept by them.' This psalm begins the second book, according to the division made by the Jews. It has not David's name prefixed to it: yet there is little doubt but that he composed it, when driven from Jerusalem and beyond Jordan, by Absalom's rebellion; and thus deprived of the benefit and comfort of public ordinances, under his complicated afflictions.

V. 1—3. The disconsolate state of the Psalmist's mind is illustrated by one of the most expressive comparisons that can be imagined. The hart or deer, when covered with dust and sweat, having been long chased on a sultry day, is ready to faint and die, and pants or brays to quench his extreme thirst from the brooks of water. Thus David longed and mourned after the courts of God: but still more for the living God himself; for his presence and favour, and those pleasures that he had enjoyed in communion with him. The want of these consolations was the more grievous; because his former confidence was now openly derided, and it was thought, either that God had deserted him, and would not or could not, afford him any relief. And these taunts and reproaches so distressed him, that he lost his appetite for his food, and tears were as his meat continually, his only solace and relief, day and night.

V. 4, 5. In this distressing situation, the Psalmist recollected former times, till his soul was even *poured out*, or melted within him. He had been used to accompany the multitude to the house of God, upon their solemn feast-days; and he counted it his chief honour and happiness to join in their sacred songs of joy and praise: but now he was driven as an exile far from that sacred scene; and Jerusalem itself was profaned by the wickedness of his adversaries. Yet still he knew that he ought not to yield to despondency: he would therefore call his soul to account for being thus cast down and disquieted. Past experience and express repeated promises combined to encourage his hope, that God would yet favour, comfort, and help him, which would be done effectually with a look or a smile; for "his presence is salvation." (*Marg.*)

V. 6—8. The Psalmist's dejection continuing, notwithstanding his struggles against it, he next complains of it to his God: being resolved to remember him with faith and hope and prayer, though apparently turned to be his enemy; and though he was banished from mount Zion, into a remote part of the land beyond Jordan, to some *little hill* in the land of Hermon: for the word Mizar, is justly rendered in other places, *small or little.* (2 *Chr.* xxiv. 24. *Is.* lxiii. 18.) His sorrows were so complicated, and his outward calamities and inward anguish so combined; that he was like a ship in a violent storm, when assaulted by one billow after another, as if they called upon each other to concur in its destruction: while the water-spouts, rushing with impetuous force into the ocean, with a dreadful noise, call also upon it to unite in overwhelming the astonished mariners, who sink into the deep, where all the waves and billows go over them. Thus David seemed ready to be swallowed up by his enemies; who, along with his inward distresses, were as water-spouts, waves, and billows, with which God seemed ready to overwhelm him for his sins. Yet he trusted that he would command these storms into a calm: (*Matt.* viii. 26.) In due season he hoped that he would discover his loving-kindness to him, which would be as the return of the day to his soul; and therefore he would praise him for the past, and make his prayer unto him, as the God of his

9 I will say unto [a] God my Rock, [b] Why hast thou forgotten me? [c] why go I mourning [d] because of the oppression of the enemy?

10 [e] *As* with * a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; while they say daily unto me, [f] Where *is* thy God?

11 [g] Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him, *who is* [h] the Health of my countenance, and my God.

[a] xviii. 2. xxviii. 1. lxii. 2. 6, 7. lxxviii. 35.
[b] xlii 1. xxii. 1, 2. xliv 23, 24. lxxvii. 9. Is xl. 27. lix 15.
[c] xxxviii. 6 xliii. 2. lxxxviii. 9. Job xxx. 26—31.
[d] lv. 3. Ec. iv. 1. Lam v. 1—16.
[e] 3. Prov. xii. 18. Luke ii. 35.
* Or, *killing*
[f] Joel ii. 17. Mic. vii. 10.
[g] 5 xliii. 5.
[h] Jer. xxx. 17. xxxiii 6. Matt. ix. 12.

PSALM XLIII.

The Psalmist prays that God would judge his cause, and restore him to his sanctuary, 1—3. He anticipates his joy and praise on that occasion, and encourages hope in God, 4, 5.

[a] JUDGE me, O God, and [b] plead my cause against an * ungodly nation. O deliver me from † the deceitful and unjust man.

[a] vii. 8. xxvi. 1 xxxv 24 lxxv 7. 1 Cor. iv. 4. 1 Pet. ii 23
[b] xxxv. 1. 1 Sam. xxiv. 15 Prov. xxii 23. xxiii. 11. Mic. vii. 9
* Or, *unmerciful.*
† Heb. *a man of deceit and iniquity.* lxxi. 4. 2 Sam. xv. 31. xvi. 20—23. xvii 1—4.

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life, even in the darkest night of sorrow and trouble. Or, he resolved to make the mercies of every day the subject of his praise, and the encouragement of his hope and prayer during the night-season, when pain or uneasiness prevented his sleep.

V. 9, 10. Though the Psalmist was sensible that God was chastising him for his sins; yet he was conscious of being truly penitent. He knew also that his cause was that of God and righteousness, and that his enemies hated him for his religion. So that he could not but wonder, on what account God, his Rock, so long forgot his servant, and left his oppressors to prosper; while they put him to extreme torture, by their impious sarcasms and reproaches.

V. 11. 'This repetition doth declare, that David did 'not overcome at once; to teach us to be constant, for 'as much as God will certainly deliver his.'—The concluding words are rather varied—"The salvations of my "countenance, and my God." The deliverances and consolations of God, his salvation, had often made the Psalmist to lift up his face with joy and gladness, and he trusted he should again praise him for similar mercies.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The believer, in proportion to the degree in which he is spiritually-minded, will either be rejoicing in, or mourning after, the living God. The thirsty hart not more eagerly panting for the refreshing stream, than the lively Christian desires the consolations of the Holy Spirit and the tokens of the love and presence of God: nothing else can afford him satisfaction; and temptations, afflictions, and discouraging delays increase the spiritual appetite, and make him the more to thirst for these living waters. He therefore values public ordinances, and delights in attending on them: so that it is indeed a great affliction to him to be banished or confined at a distance. Yet, unless he meet his God, and enjoy communion with him, he returns even from his courts disappointed and dissatisfied; and looks especially with longing expectation for that season, when he shall appear before him in the temple above, and be for ever satisfied in his favour, and that joy with which his manifested glory fills every enraptured beholder. But the comfort of his hope is often abated, and even turned into mourning, in this evil world, by the insults and the blasphemies of those who deride his confidence in God as presumption or delusion; especially when under divine rebukes, or bereft of external advantages. In such seasons of distress and prevailing iniquity, we recollect more pleasant and prosperous days, when we assembled with the people of God, and joined in his worship with the voice of joy and praise: and, comparing them with present trials, we are apt to indulge impatience and despondency. It behooves us, therefore, under every distress, to call ourselves to account; and to inquire why we are so cast down and disquieted? We may have great cause to mourn for sin, and to pray against prevailing impiety: but our extreme dejection, even under the severest afflictions or inward trials, springs from unbelief and a rebellious will: and we should therefore strive and pray against it, and endeavour to hope in God, persuaded that we shall yet praise him for the salvation of his countenance. Our enemies may indeed drive us from public ordinances, deprive us of our bibles, banish us into deserts, or immure us in prisons; but they cannot bereave us of God's favour, or preclude our approach to the throne of grace. Let us then complain of ourselves unto Him, and remember his mercy and power, under every disconsolation. And if one trouble follow hard after another: if divine rebukes from above, the assaults of hell from beneath, and the insults of men, like floods, waves, and water-spouts, seem to combine for our ruin; let us remember that they all are appointed and over-ruled by the Lord; and that we deserve more than all we endure on earth: let us recollect how Jesus said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto "death;" and how he suffered both from the cruelty of man, the rage of Satan, and the justice of the Father; yet was he heard and delivered. In his name, let us hope and pray: one word from him will calm every storm, turn the midnight darkness into the light of noon, and the bitterest complaints into joyful praises. We should then employ our time under tedious and discouraging trials, in praising God for his mercies to his church and to us, and in prayer for deliverance. Ere long our night of sorrow will finally terminate, and eternal day will succeed. Let us then never think that the God of our life and the Rock of our salvation hath forgotten us; if we have made his mercy, truth, and power our refuge. Even though we cannot but go mourning, because of the oppression of the enemy; and though the reproaches of the ungodly are painful, as a sword in our bones: yet we should struggle against despondency; and still hope in and praise God: his favour will be the health and help of our souls, and he will be our Shield and exceeding great Reward.

2 For thou *art* [e] the God of my strength: [d] why dost thou cast me off? [e] why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

3 O [f] send out thy light and thy truth: [g] let them lead me; let them bring me unto [h] thy holy hill, and to [i] thy tabernacles.

4 [k] Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my * exceeding joy: yea, [l] upon the harp will I praise thee, [m] O God, my God.

5 [n] Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God: for I shall yet praise him, *who is* the health of my countenance, and my God.

c xxviii. 7. cxl. 7. Ex xv. 2. Is xl. 31. xlv. 24 Zech x. 12. Eph vi. 10. Phil. iv. 13.
d lxxi 9. lxxvii 7 xciv. 14. 1 Chr. xxviii 9.
e xlii. 9
f lvii 3 xcvii 11 cxix. 105 2 Sam xv. 20. Mic vii 8 20. John i. 4. 17
g xxv 4, 5 cxliii 10. Prov. iii. 5, 6.
h iii. 6 xiv 4 lxviii. 15 16 lxxviii 68 cxxxii. 13. 14
i 1 Chr. xvi 1. 39 xxi. 29
k lxvi. 13 – 15. cxvi. 12—19
* Heb. *the gladness of my joy.* lxxi 23. Is lxi. 10 Hab iii 17, 18. Rom v. 11.
l lvii 8. lxxi 23. lxxxi. 2 2 Sam. vi. 5 Rev. v. 8.
m xlii. 6.
n xlii 5. 11.

PSALM XLIV.

The church acknowledges God's former mercies, and resolves to trust in him, 1—8. *Complains of being left under grievous distresses and persecutions,* 9—16. *Professes integrity under sufferings,* 17—22. *And earnestly prays for speedy deliverance,* 23—26.

To the chief Musician, [a] for the sons of Korah, Maschil,

WE [b] have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, *what* work thou didst in their days, [c] in the times of old.

2 *How* [d] thou didst drive out the heathen with thy hand, and plantedst them; *how* thou didst [e] afflict the people, and cast them out.

3 For [f] they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but [g] thy right hand, and thine arm, and [h] the light of thy countenance, [i] because thou hadst a favour unto them.

a xlii. *title.*
b xxii 31 lxxi. 19. lxxviii 3. 6. cv. 1, 2. Ex. xii. 24—27. xiii 14, 15. Is xxxviii. 19. Joel i. 3
c Num xxi 14—16. 27—30 Job viii 8. 9 xv 17—19
d lxxviii 55 lxxx. 8. cv. 44. cxxv. 10 12 cxxxvi. 17—22. Ex xv. 19 xxxiv 11. Deut vii. 1. Josh. x. 42. xi. 23. xxi. 43 Neh. ix. 22 27.
e Ex xxiii 28. Num xiii 32. Josh x 11. xxiv. 12 1 Sam v 6, 7.
f Deut ix 3, 38. viii 17, 18 Josh. xxiv 12 Zech. iv. 6. 2 Cor iv. 7.
g xvii 7 xx. 6. lxxiv 11. Ex xv. 6 Is. lxiii. 12.
h xlii 5 11 lxxx. 16
i Num xiv. 8. Deut vii 7, 8. 1 Sam. xii. 23. Mal. i 2, 3. Rom ix. 10—15.

NOTES.

PSALM XLIII. V. 1. This is evidently a continuation of the preceding psalm, and was written before David had obtained deliverance. Every day brought him fresh intelligence concerning the ungodly, ungrateful, and unmerciful conduct of Israel in general; the bulk of the nation having joined the conspirators, and being ready to proceed to all lengths against the life of their aged king, which the deceit and iniquity of Absalom or Ahithophel could suggest against him. But these reports, instead of dismaying him, seem to have raised his hope: as they confirmed his confidence in the justice of his cause; and warranted his appeal to the Judge of the world, to decide between him and his most injurious foes.

V. 3. *Light.* 'Thy favour, which appeareth by the 'performance of thy promises.' Perhaps the Psalmist also meant, the light of heavenly wisdom, teaching him how to act in such trying circumstances, so as to wait in the path of duty, for the performance of God's promises, and especially till restored to the ordinances of the sanctuary, which were far nearer to his heart, than the re-establishment of his outward prosperity and confirmation of his authority. There were at this time *two tabernacles:* that erected by Moses was at Gibeon; and the ark of the covenant was stationed on Mount Zion, in a tent which David had prepared for it. (*Notes,* 1 *Chr.* xvi. 37—43.)

V. 4. *My exceeding joy.* Or, *The gladness of my joy.* The fervent language used by the Psalmist, while anticipating his sacrifices of thanksgiving at the altar, is widely different from the frigid unimpassioned religion of modern Christians, and shames the lukewarmness of most of us.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Under the returns of distress and disconsolation, we should again and again have recourse to the effectual and only remedy of faith and prayer. As Israel treated David, after all his successes, and notwithstanding his wisdom and piety, with such ingratitude, treachery, and injustice; and as even his beloved Absalom and his professed friend and counsellor Ahithophel joined and headed the base conspiracy; and as the Son of God met with far baser treatment from the same favoured yet ungodly and merciless nation: so no eminence or usefulness can exempt any pious man from the contempt or injuries of the wicked; whether he have to do with collective bodies or individuals. But we should commit our cause to God, and he will plead, and deliver us from every unrighteous and treacherous assault. And though inward temptations often concur with outward afflictions; yet God will never cast off those who trust in him as their Protector and *Strength.* We should therefore discard such dishonourable fears; and pray the more earnestly that the Lord would send forth the truth of his word and the light of his Spirit, to guide us into the ways of holiness, peace, and salvation; and by means of his ordinances on earth, bring us to his holy habitation in heaven. Through Christ, our Altar and Sacrifice, we may here find joy in God, for which we should bless and praise his name: but under every suspension of comfort, and under every trouble, we should look forward to the season, when "God, our exceeding joy," will end our sorrows and complete our felicity. Let us then silence our complaints, and repeatedly inquire, "Why art thou cast down, "O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me?" And resolve still to hope in God; for we "shall yet "praise him; who is the Health of our countenance and "our God."

NOTES.

PSALM XLIV. V. 1—3. It is not agreed on what occasion, or by whom, this psalm was composed; nor does

4 Thou art [k] my king, O God: [l] command deliverances for Jacob.

5 [m] Through thee will we [n] push down our enemies: through thy name will we [o] tread them under that rise up against us.

6 For [p] I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me.

7 But [q] thou hast saved us from our enemies, and hast [r] put them to shame that hated us.

8 [s] In God we boast all the day long, and [t] praise thy name for ever. Selah.

9 ¶ But [u] thou hast cast off, and put us to shame: and goest not forth with our armies.

10 [x] Thou makest us to turn back from the enemy: and they which hate us [y] spoil for themselves.

11 Thou hast [z] given us * like sheep *appointed* for meat; and hast [a] scattered us among the heathen.

12 Thou [b] sellest thy people † for nought, and dost not [c] increase *thy wealth* by their price

13 Thou [d] makest us a reproach to our neighbours, [e] a scorn and a derision to them that are round about us.

14 Thou makest us [f] a by-word among the heathen, [g] a shaking of the head among the people.

15 [h] My confusion *is* continually before me, and the shame of my face hath [i] covered me.

16 For [k] the voice of him that reproacheth and blasphemeth; by reason of [l] the enemy and avenger.

17 [m] All this is come upon us; [n] yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we [o] dealt falsely in thy covenant.

18 [p] Our heart is not turned back, neither [q] have our ‡ steps declined from thy way;

19 Though [r] thou hast sore broken us [s] in the place of dragons, and covered us [t] with the shadow of death.

k lxxiv. 12. lxxxix. 18. cxlix 2. Is. xxxiii. 22.
l xlii. 8 Mark i. 25, 26 31 41. ix. 25
m xviii. 39—42. cxviii. 10—13. Is xli. 14—16 Phil. iv. 13.
n Deu xxxiii. 17. 1 Kings xxii. 11. Dan viii 4.
o lx. 12. xci. 13. cviii. 13 Zech. x. 5. Rom xvi. 20 *Marg.*
p xx. 7. xxxiii. 16, 17. Hos. i. 7.
q cxl. 7 cxliv. 10 Josh. i 5. x. 8—10. 42 xi. 6. xxiii 9, 10 Judg. ii. 18. vii 4—7. 1 Sam. vii 8—12. xiv. 6—10. xvii 47. 2 Sam. viii. 10.
r xl. 14. lxxxiii. 1—18.
s xxxiv 2. Is. xlv. 25. Jer. ix. 24. Rom. ii 17. 1 Cor. i. 29—31.
t cxv 1. 18.
u xliii. 2. lx. 1. lxxiv. lxxx 12, 13. lxxxix. 38—45 Jer. xxxiii. 24—26. Rom. xi. 1—6.
x Lev. xxvi. 17 36, 37. Deu xxviii. 25. Josh. vii. 8 12. 1 Sam. iv. 17. xxxi 1—7.
y lxxxix 41 Is. x. 6. 14. Jer xv. 13. xx 8.——z Jer. xii. 3 Rom viii. 36.——a Heb. *as sheep of meat* xiv. 4
a Deu. iv 27. xxviii. 64. 2 Kings xvii. 6 Is xi. 11, 12. Jer xxxii. 37. Ez. xxxiv 12 Luke xxi. 24.——b Deut. xxxii. 30. Is. 1 4. lii. 3, 4. Jer. xv. 13.——† Heb. *without riches.*

c Neh. v. 8—12. Rev xviii. 13
d lxxix 4. lxxx 6 lxxxix 57. Ez. xxxvi 19—23.
e cxxiii 3, 4 Jer. xlviii 27.
f Deu. xxviii. 37 1 Kings ix 7. 2 Chr vii. 20 Jer. xxiv 9
g xxii 7. Job xvi. 4. Is. xxxvii 22. Lam. ii. 15—17
h Josh vii. 7—9. Ezra ix. 6 Jer iii. 25
i lxix. 7 lxxi. 13 lxxxix 45. Jer li. 51.
k lxxiv 18 22, 23. lxxix 12 Is. xxxvii. 3, 4. 17. 23, 24.
l viii. 2.
m Dan. ix. 13.
n 20. ix 17 Deu. vi. 12 viii. 14. Is. xvii. 10. Jer ii. 32.
o Jer xxxi. 32. Ez. xvi. 59. xx. 37.
p lxxviii. 57. cxxv. 5. 1 Kings xv. 5 Job xxxiv. 27. Jer. xi. 10. Zeph. i 6 Luke xvii. 32
q cxix. 51. 157 Job xxiii. 11. 12 1 Cor xv. 58. 1 Thes ii. 10.
‡ Or, *goings.*
r xxxviii. 8 lx. 1—3 Jer. xiv. 17.
s lxxiv. 13, 14. Is. xxvii. 1 xxxiv. 13, 14. xxxv. 7. Ez. xxix. 3. Rev. xii. 9. xiii. 2. 11—13. xvi. 10.——t xxiii. 4. Job iii. 5. x 21, 22 Matt. iv. 16.

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it fully suit any period in the history of the old testament-church: for even in the days of Hezekiah under Sennacherib's oppression, or under the persecution by Antiochus Epiphanes, the *bulk of the nation* could not have made the solemn protestation contained in it, (17—22;) and it would have been still more unsuitable to the case of the Jews, during the Babylonish captivity. It is therefore no very improbable conjecture, that David, or some other prophet, composed this psalm, for the use of *the true church*, in every age, when persecuted for conscience-sake. The remnant of suffering believers are here introduced, as recollecting the work of God for Israel in former ages, to encourage their hope of his further protection and powerful interposition. Joshua and the Israelites fought valiantly against the Canaanites: yet their victories were not owing to their own valour or strength, but to the power and favour of God. The apostles laboured in the most zealous and self-denying manner to spread the Gospel in the primitive times: but its prevalence was not the effect of their eloquence or wisdom, or assiduity; but of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven to succeed their labours. The conversion and salvation of the believer is not effected by his merit, wisdom, or resolution; but springs from the mercy and grace of God; yet he diligently uses the appointed means.

V. 4. "Thou art He, my King, O God: command "the salvations of Jacob." 'Thou art the same Almighty 'God and Saviour, who by thy sovereign will didst of 'old effect these wonderful deliverances for thy people.—'Thou art our King, as thou wast their's: therefore save 'and deliver us, as thou didst them.' This is a never failing plea for the church under persecution, and for the believer, when steadily resisting temptation.

V. 5—7. God is frequently spoken of as an Horn, or as raising up for his church "an Horn of salvation:" and the Psalmist, with allusion to that metaphor, says, "Through thee will we *push* down our enemies." For the cause of God must to the end be maintained by the same powerful aid, which from the first made it to prevail.

V. 8. Or, "We will praise thee continually, and will "confess thy name for ever. Selah."—The whole confidence being placed in God, the whole glory will be rendered to him, and that for ever. The original does not convey the idea of *boasting* or *glorying* in God; though the idea is found in many parts of Scripture.

V. 9—16. Israel, in general accustomed to victory by the help of JEHOVAH, is here represented as worsted and crushed by the enemy. The Lord is pleased to permit his church sometimes to be run down, as if he had cast her off with abhorrence: his people are then plundered and oppressed: many are slain as sheep, for the pleasure or profit of their persecutors; or driven from their native country, and scattered amongst idolaters and savages; or sold at a vile price like the meanest of slaves. Of all these events, the history of the church gives many affecting illustrations. Thus the Lord seems to sell his people for nought, and allow his enemies to prevail, even to his own dishonour; as if he parted with his flock, without any increase to his other wealth. And whilst these things are transacting, his people have trials of cruel mockings, insults, and reproaches; which they could the better endure, did they not also continually hear the name and truths of God blasphemed, by their impious and revengeful enemies. From the twelfth to the fifteenth verse, (both inclusive,) is future in the original: and perhaps the Psalmist meant, that past calamities led the people to very doleful conclusions as to the event.

20 [u] If we have forgotten the name of our God, or [x] stretched out our hands to a strange god;

21 [y] Shall not God search this out? for [z] he knoweth the secrets of the heart.

22 Yea, [a] for thy sake are we [b] killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.

u 17. vii 3-5. Job xxxi. 5, &c. x lxviii 31 Ex ix. 29. 1 Kings viii. 22. Job xi. 13. y cxxxix. 1, &c. Job xxxi. 4. 14. xxxiv. 21, 22. Jer. xvii 10. xxiii 24. z Josh xxii. 22. 23. Ec. xii. 14. Rom. ii. 16. 1 Cor. iv. 5 Heb. iv. 12, 13. Rev. ii. 23. a Rom viii 36. b 11. lxxix 2, 3. 1 Sam. xxii. 17—19. 1 Kings xix 10. Matt. v. 10—12 John xv. 21. xvi. 2, 3. 1 Cor. iv. 9. xv. 30, 31. Rev. xi. 3—9. xvii. 6.

23 [c] Awake, why sleepest thou, O LORD? arise, [d] cast *us* not off for ever.

24 [e] Wherefore hidest thou thy face, *and* [f] forgettest our affliction and our oppression?

25 For [g] our soul is bowed down to the dust: our belly cleaveth unto the earth.

26 Arise * for our help, and [h] redeem us for thy mercies' sake.

c vii. 6. xii. 5. xxxv. 23 lix. 4, 5 lxxviii. 65. Is. li. 9. Mark iv. 38. d 9. lxxiv. 1. lxxxviii. 14. e x. 1 11. xiii, 1—4. Deu. xxxii. 20. Job xiii. 24. f lxxiv. 19. 23. Ex. ii. 23, 24. Is. xl. 27. 28. Rev. vi. 9, 10. g lxvi. 11. 12. cxix. 25. Is. li. 23. Lam. iv. 5. * Heb. *a help for us.* —— h xxvi. 11. cxxx. 7, 8.

V. 17—22. 'Certainly we have deserved them all,' (these calamities,) 'though this comfort is still remaining, 'that we are not so wicked as to be moved by all this 'to desert thee, and violate that covenant, whereby we are 'engaged to worship thee alone.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The formalist commonly escapes persecution by turning with the stream, and purchasing security by sinful compliances or open apostacy: but the true church of God cannot be prevailed on by menaces, sufferings, or promises, to forget God, or deal falsely in his covenant: and as the believer's heart doth not turn back from God, so his feet do not decline from his way. Neither the malice, subtlety, nor poison of the old serpent and of his progeny, even when permitted to torment him grievously, can induce him to turn aside to idolatry, or to renounce his God and Saviour. This hath been proved in ten thousand instances, whilst the disciples of Christ have been covered as with a shadow of death, in their constant expectation of it; and they have seen their brethren killed, by every tedious excruciating method, "all the day long, and accounted as sheep for the "slaughter." Their regard to the authority of their holy heart-searching God, effectually preserves them even from secret wickedness; and they make their appeal to him concerning their integrity. And indeed, so far from suffering for their iniquities, they are hated and killed for the Lord's sake; because they bear his image, profess his truths, adhere to his commandments, and seek his glory. The place of dragons, or serpents, or monsters, gives the idea of a man cast into a situation in which every hateful and dreadful creature surrounded him. Such are persecutors, and such are evil spirits, who employ them.

V. 23—26. In this trying situation the church earnestly cries for help to God, by whose permission these afflictions come upon her, and who alone can remove them. They plead their great misery: through oppression and inward dejection they are thrown prostrate, and trampled in the dust, and even cleave to the ground as utterly unable to arise: and as he had sold them, so they pray him to redeem them by his power, and through the appointed ransom, that his mercies may be glorified in their help and deliverance. 'There is a time when the triumphs of the 'enemy, and the afflictions of the church, tempt men to 'think that the eye of Providence is closed or turned away; 'or that the Almighty hath ceased to remember their sad 'estate. But the truth is, that God only giveth his people an opportunity of feeling their own insufficiency; 'and waiteth till, by fervent and importunate prayer, they 'solicit his help. For so the holy Jesus slept while the 'ship was covered with the waves; until, awakened by 'the cries of his disciples, he arose to their assistance, and 'spoke the tempest into a perfect calm.' (*Horne.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The church of God is one incorporated body from the beginning to the end of the world: and the benefits conferred on it in every age, will be acknowledged with gratitude by believers, through all generations, and even to eternity. "Whatsoever things were written of old time, "were written for our instruction" and encouragement; and parents should declare the work of God to their children, that they may learn to hope in him. When we hear of the wonderful works wrought for Israel, in bringing them out of Egypt, and settling them in Canaan: or of the still more glorious interpositions of God, in the first promulgation of the Gospel; we should learn to hope and pray for displays of his power and love, equally efficacious, though not so directly miraculous. The prosperity of the church has always been attended with the ruin of her enemies; therefore the most prosperous despisers and persecutors have cause to tremble on account of the prayers of God's afflicted people. As human policy, power, and authority could never prevail against the cause of God; so they have been very little employed in promoting it: but whatever instruments have been used, all real advantages have been gained by "his right hand, his arm, and the "light of his countenance, because he had a favour to his "people." They give him the whole glory of the past, and entirely confide in him for the future: and they prosper in their spiritual warfare, when they depend on his grace and go forth in his name. Where the word of this King is, there is power: when he commands deliverances for Jacob, they will take place: and we may "push down all "our enemies, and tread them under that rise up against "us;" when, like the servants of God of old, we disclaim all self confidence, to trust in him alone. The Lord hath always hitherto saved his people: and they may now "boast in him all the day long;" and they will praise his name for ever, for not having made them ashamed of their confidence. Yet the believer must have seasons of temptations, afflictions, and humiliating discouragements; and the church must have seasons of persecution, when her remaining witnesses prophesy in sackcloth. At such times the people of God will be run down, put to shame, plundered, murdered, banished, enslaved, despised, and reproached: and they will be ready to think that he hath cast them off, and to fear that his name and truth will be eventually dishonoured; whilst they continually hear the

PSALM XLV.

The excellency and dignity of the Messiah, with his victories and dominion, 1—8. The Church, as espoused to him; her attendants and ornaments; with coincident exhortations and promises, 9—17.

To the chief Musician upon [a] Shoshannim, for the sons of Korah, * Maschil, [b] A Song of loves.

MY heart † is inditing [c] a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made [d] touching the King: [e] my tongue *is* the pen of a ready writer.

2 Thou art [f] fairer than the children of men: [g] grace is poured into thy lips: therefore [h] God hath blessed thee for ever.

3 [i] Gird thy sword upon *thy* thigh, [k] O *most* mighty, with [l] thy glory and thy majesty.

4 And in thy majesty ‡ ride [m] prosperously, [n] because of truth [o] and meekness *and* righteousness; and [p] thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.

5 [q] Thine arrows *are* [r] sharp in the heart of the King's enemies; *whereby* [s] the people fall under thee.

a lxix. lxxx. *titles.* * Or, *of instruction* b Cant. i 1, 2, &c. Is. v. 1. Eph v 32. † Heb. *boileth*, or *bubbleth up.* Job xxxii 18—20. Prov. xvi 23. Matt. xii. 35. c xlix 3. Job xxxiii 3. xxxiv. 4. Prov viii. 6—9. d ii. 6. xxiv. 7—10. cx. 1, 2. Cant i 12 Is. xxxii. 1, 2. Matt. xxv. 34. xxvii 37 e 2 Sam xxiii. 2 2 Pet. i 21. f Cant. ii. 3 v. 10—16. Zech ix. 17. Matt xvii. 2. John i 14. Col. i. 15—18. Heb. i. 3, 4. vii. 26. Rev. i. 13—18.

g Prov. xxii 11 Is. l. 4. Luke iv. 22. John vii. 46. h xxi. 6 lxxii. 17—19. Phil. ii. 9—11 i Is. xlix. 2 lxiii. 1—6 Heb. iv. 12 Rev i. 16. xix. 15 21. k Is. ix 6, 7. Acts x. 36. Rom. xiv. 9. l xxi. 5 xcvi. 6. civ. 1. cxlv. 5. 12 Heb. i. 3. viii. 1 Jude 25. ‡ Heb *prosper thou, ride thou.* Rev vi 2 xix. 11. m cx 2,3 1 Thes. i. 5 ii. 13. 2 Thes iii 1. n lx 4 John i. 17. xiv. 6 o Zech ix. 9 Matt. xi. 29 xii. 19. 20 2 Cor. x 1.——p ii. 9. xxi. 6, 9. cx. 5, 6. Is. lix. 17. 18 lxiii 1—6. Luke xix 27. 2 Thes. i 8, 9 Rev. vi. 16, 17. xi. 18 xix. 17—21. xx 15 ——q xxi 12. Num xxiv. 8. Zech ix 13, 14.——r ii. 1—9. Luke xix. 42—44. xx. 18, 19. Acts ii. 37 41. v. 33. vii. 54——s xxii. 27. lxvi. 3, 4. Acts iv. 4. v. 14. vi. 7. Rom. xv 18, 19.

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blasphemies and triumphs of his enemies. But in all our afflictions, especially in our sufferings for the sake of scriptural christianity, we should complain unto the Lord, and exercise ourselves to have a conscience void of offence: we should be careful not to seek relief by sinful compliances; and should continually meditate on the power, truth, purity, and knowledge of our heart-searching God. If our heart turn back from him, or our steps decline from his way, he knows and will discover it to others. But if we are faithful to our engagements, and are persecuted for righteousness' sake, we are and shall be safe and happy. Even if we should be so given up into the hands of enemies, formidable and venomous as dragons, and thrown into dungeons hideous as their holes; be sore broken with every torture that malice can invent, and live in the continual expectation of a violent death: yet nothing can separate us from the love of our God; none can go beyond his purpose and permission; and in all these things we shall be more than conquerors; (*Rom.* viii. 35—39.) For though he seem to hide his face, and to forget the affliction and oppression of his people, whilst they are trampled in the dust by antichristian persecutors: yet he is waiting for our more fervent prayers, which will cause him, as it were, to awake, and arise, and help, and redeem us for his mercies' sake. We have reason to be thankful, considering our frailty, for exemption from the more violent species of persecution: but let us be careful, that prosperity and ease do not render us cereless and lukewarm: we should remember that persecution may come on us speedily, and that we ought to prepare for it: and we should not forget the state of the church, not yet delivered from her bondage and captivity. But in answer to the Redeemer's intercession and the prayers of his people, all that hate his cause shall be put to shame; truth and righteousness shall every where triumph; and none that belong to Christ shall be cast off for ever, but every one of them shall be completely and eternally saved.

NOTES.

PSALM XLV. *Title.* The word *Shoshannim* signifies *lilies*, and is several times so rendered in Canticles: as used, however, in the titles of a few psalms, it is generally understood to mean an instrument of six strings.—This psalm is entitled "A song of loves;" and it evidently describes the mutual love which subsists between Christ and his church. In many respects it resembles the Song of Solomon; and it treats of this spiritual union under the allusion of a marriage. Most expositors maintain that it was written on Solomon's marriage with Pharaoh's daughter, but a great part of it is inapplicable to that transaction: nor is there sufficient ground to support the decided opinion, that this was so much as *the occasion* of its being written, or that David composed it. The latter is indeed probable; but it is wholly a prophecy of Christ, and is quoted as such by the apostle. (*Heb.* i. 9.)

V. 1. The inspiration of the Holy Spirit stirred up in the prophet's heart this meditation upon so good a subject, as water bubbles up in a fountain: so that he spake freely of the things which he had been considering and had composed about the King, the promised Messiah; and his tongue was guided by the Spirit of God, as entirely as the pen is by the hand of a ready writer, to express promptly and fully his meaning, and nothing more.

V. 2. In speaking *of* the King, the prophet was led abruptly to address his discourse *to* him; as one in a rapture, whilst he contemplated his glorious excellencies: for he unspeakably surpassed all, whoever were admired or extolled on earth, for wisdom, justice, truth, and love; without having any intermixture of infirmity or defect. His word reveals the unsearchable riches of his grace: and being authorized to speak to sinners, as their Prophet, in the Father's name; "Grace is poured into his lips;" and his words are full of energy, instruction, persuasion, and consolation: and being in every respect fully qualified for his mediatorial work, God hath exalted and blessed him for ever, in order to the completion of it. 'His word 'instructed the ignorant, resolved the doubtful, comforted 'the mourners, reclaimed the wicked, silenced his adver-'saries, healed diseases, controlled the elements, and rais-'ed the dead.' (*Horne.*)

V. 3—5. The prophet here joyfully foretels the progress and success of the Messiah, in setting up his kingdom and overcoming his enemies. Girt with the word of truth, rendered effectual by the power of the Holy Spirit,

6 [t] Thy throne, [u] O God, *is* for ever and ever: [x] the sceptre of thy kingdom *is* a right sceptre.

7 [y] Thou lovest righteousness, and [z] hatest wickedness: therefore * God, [a] thy God, [b] hath anointed thee with [c] the oil of gladness [d] above thy fellows.

8 [e] All thy garments *smell* of myrrh, and aloes, *and* [f] cassia, out of [g] the ivory palaces, [h] whereby they have made thee glad.

9 [i] Kings' daughters *were* among thy honourable women: [k] upon thy right hand did stand [l] the queen in [m] gold of Ophir.

10 [n] Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; [o] forget also thine own people, and thy father's house;

11 [p] So shall the King greatly desire thy beauty: for he *is* [q] thy Lord; and [r] worship thou him.

12 And [s] the daughter of Tyre *shall be there* [t] with a gift; *even* [u] the rich among the people shall entreat thy * favour.

t lxxxix. 29. 36, 37 xciii. 2. cxlv 13. Dan ii 44. Luke i. 32, 33 Heb. i 8
u Is ix 6, 7. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6 John i. 1. 1 Tim. iii. 16
x lxxii. 1, &c 2 Sam. xxiii 3, 4 Jer xxxiii 15, 16 Rev. xix.
y xxx ii 5 xcix 4. Matt iii. 15. Heb. i. 9. vii 26
z c 3, 4 8. Matt. vii. 23. Luke xii 27. Rev xx 27
* Or *O God*
a lxxix. 26. John xx 17 Eph i. 3
b lxxxix. 20. Lev viii 12. 1 Sam. xvi. 13. 1 Kings i 39, 40 xix. 16 Is lxi. 1—3. Luke iii. 22 iv. 18—23. John iii 34.——c xx: 6 Acts ii 28——d John i. 16. Rom. viii 29. Col. i. 18. 19. Heb. iii 14.——e Cant i 3 13 iii 6. iv 1 13, 14. v. 1 5. 13. Matt ii. 11. John xix. 39 2 Cor ii 14—16.——f Ex. xxx. 23 24——g 15. 1 Kings xxii. 39 Am iii. 15 John xiv. 2——h xvi 11 Heb xii 2.——i 13. lxxii 10. Cant. vi 8, 9 vii. 1. Is. xlix. 23. lx. 10, 11. Rev xxi 24

k 1 Kings ii. 19.
l Cant. iv 8—11. John iii. 29. Eph. v. 26, 27. Rev. xix. 7. xxi. 2. 9
m 1 Kings x 11. Job xxii 24.
n Cant ii. 10—13 Is lv 1—3. 2 Cor. vi 17. 18. vii. 1
o Gen. ii. 24 xii. 1. Deut xxi 13. Matt x. 37 xix. 29. Luke xiv. 26. 2 Cor v. 16.
p Cant. i 8. 12—16. ii 2. 14. iv. 1—5 7. 9, 10 vi. 4 vii. 1—9, 10. Is lxii 4, 5. Zeph. iii. 17. Eph. v 26, 27.
q 6 Is. liv. 5 Jer. xxiii. 5, 6 John xx. 28. Acts x. 36. Rom. xiv 9. Phil ii 10, 11.
r ii 8——r ii 12. xcv. 6 Luke xxiv. 52 John iv. 21. 22. Rev. v. 8—14——s Is. xxiii. 17. 18 Acts xxi 3—6.——t lxxii. 10. Is. lx 6, 7 Matt ii. 11——u xxii 29 Is. xlix. 23 lx 3. 10, 11——[r] Heb *face.*

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as with a sharp sword, he rides forth as a conqueror, in unrivalled might, glory, and majesty, to spread truth, meekness, and righteousness on earth; bringing his people into a state of acceptance and peace with God; and teaching them to live in humble meekness, peace, and equity with each other. His right hand, expert in this warfare, readily executes his purpose, whether of mercy or vengeance. His arrows of conviction are very sharp, and the effects of them are very terrible for a time in the hearts of sinners, till they are humbled, subjected, and reconciled: but the arrows of his righteous vengeance are unspeakably more sharp and dreadful to his obstinate enemies; when they fall under that power to which they refused to submit.

V. 6, 7. The victorious Conqueror is here placed upon his royal throne: the prophet not only celebrates him as far superior to all the sons of men, but as being himself the eternal God. His everlasting kingdom, which he possesses for the benefit of his church, is administered with perfect wisdom and equity: his character, doctrine, precepts, and above all, his atonement, show that he "loveth "righteousness and hateth iniquity." Therefore God the Father, as his God, in respect of his human nature and mediatorial offices, hath given to him the Holy Spirit, without measure; that, being thus anointed to be our Prophet, Priest, and King, he might have the pre-eminency in the gladdening gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit the Comforter; and from his fulness might communicate them to his *fellows*, his brethren in the human nature. Various attempts have, in different ages, been made to explain away this decisive testimony to the Deity of Christ; but the manner in which the apostle quotes it, rather varied from the Septuagint and made more energetic, is conclusive to all who admit his authority. Some would render the words, "God is thy throne for ever and ever." Heaven is the throne of God; but who ever heard of God being the throne of any of his creatures? (*Note, Heb.* i. 8, 9.)

V. 8. The garments of princes were generally imbued with costly perfumes: those of the high-priests were anointed with the holy ointment, composed of the spices here mentioned, with several others. Thus the Messiah is represented as clothed with garments which diffuse a refreshing fragrancy through his royal palace, his church on earth and in heaven, in which he more rejoices, than magnificent princes do in palaces inlaid with ivory.—'From the glorious vestments of our High-Priest and 'King, is diffused the sweet savour of his heavenly graces, 'filling those happy regions of joy and gladness, where 'he keeps his residence above, and, by the communica-'tion of his Spirit, refreshing the faithful on earth with 'their odours.' (*Horne.*)

V. 9—11. The King, now seated in majesty and glory on his throne, is next represented as surrounded with a splendid train. Among the other honourable women, the daughters of kings are mentioned, who may be supposed to have submitted to his authority, and put themselves under his protection; and who would deem it an honour for their daughters to wait in his court around his queen: whilst she, arrayed in the costliest robes, stood at his right hand, as a bride adorned for her nuptials. By the *queen*, the collective body of believers seems to be intended, who, cloathed in the righteousness, enriched by the bounty, and adorned by the graces of the Spirit of Christ, adhere to him in singleness of affection and fidelity, and are admitted to the most endeared union and communion. The other attendants, mentioned here and elsewhere, (12. 14.) are either introduced, according to the customs of the times on such occasions, to keep up the allegory; or they may mean distinct churches or individuals who in succession seek to be admitted into this sacred relation. The royal consort is next exhorted, as it seems, by the Father himself, to hearken, consider, and consent to the terms of this union; and in order to enter into it, and act properly in it, she must forget her own people, and her father's house. The whole church, composed of Jews and Gentiles, consists of such as were born in sin; and separated from all idolatry, iniquity, and self-dependence; and from all their carnal interests, pleasures, and attachments of an unconverted state, must make way for receiving Christ as their whole Portion and Salvation. (*Note, Gen.* xii. 1.) When grace hath thus prepared the heart, there is a spiritual beauty with which the Redeemer is greatly delighted; and the soul is ready to submit to him as Lord, and to worship him as God, with unreserved obedience and humble adoration; as well as to cleave to him in love, and trust in him as a Saviour.

13 [x] The King's daughter *is* [y] all glorious within: [z] her clothing *is* of wrought gold.

14 [a] She shall be brought unto the king in [b] raiment of needle-work: [c] the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee.

15 [d] With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: [e] they shall enter into the King's palace.

16 [f] Instead of thy fathers shall be [g] thy children, whom thou mayest make [h] princes in all the earth.

17 [i] I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations: [k] therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever.

x 9, 10. Cant vii. 1. 1 Pet iii 9 Rev xix. 7, 8. y 1 Sam. xv., 7. Luke xi. 40 Rom. ii. 29. 2 Cor. v. 17. 1 Pet. iii. 3, 4. Rev. iii. 18 z 9 Matt v. 16. xxii 11, 12 Rom. iii 22. xiii. 14 Rev. iii. 18 a Cant i 4. John xv., 24 2 Cor. xi. 2 ——b Ex. xxviii. 39. Judg v 30 ——c Cant i 3 5. ii 7 v. 8, 9. vi 1. 3. 13. viii. 13. Rev xiv. 1—4.——d Is xxxv. 10 li 11. lv. 11, 12 lx. 19, 20. lxi. 10. Rev. vii 15—17.

e Is. lvi. 5 John xiv 3 Rev. iii. 12. 21 f Matt. xix. 29. Mark x. 29 30. Phil iii. 7, 8. g Is xlix 21. 22. liv 1—5 lx. 1—5 Gal. iv. 26, 27. h 1 Pet. ii 9. Rev. i 6. v 10. xx. 6 i xxii. 30, 31. lxxii 17—19. cxiv 4—7 Is lix. 21. Mal ... 11. Matt xxvi. 13 1 Cor xi. 26 ——k lxxii 17. Cant vi 9. Is lxi. 9 lxii. 3.

V. 12. The accession of the Gentiles to the church may be here predicted, under the name of Tyre, a neighbouring city, and at that time the mart of the world: for even the richest among the nations will in due time submit, and consecrate their wealth, to the Messiah.

V. 13—15. The relation in which the believer stands to the Lord, comprises in it every tie and affection; and the church is called spouse, sister, or daughter, indiscriminately: or the title of *spouse* or *bride*, may refer to the Son of God; that of *daughter*, to the Father. Her glory and beauty are inward and spiritual: and her adorning is most precious; as she is arrayed with the righteousness which Christ wrought out in human nature for her justification, and with the beauties of a holy conversation by the operation of the Spirit of God; who works by the labours of the ministers, and by all the means, which others diligently use, to promote the sanctification of themselves and of their brethren. When the church is thus prepared, this union is begun on earth, which will be completed and avowed in the King's palace above: whilst every individual, whose affection and dependence have been singly placed on Christ, shall be admitted as a guest at these nuptials, and likewise share for ever in the joy and honour of this sacred union. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 16. While the church forgets and renounces all worldly connexions, interests, and affections, in order to her espousal to Christ, a spiritual progeny, a numerous succession of converts, arises from this new and sacred relation. These are "kings and priests to our God, and "reign even on earth," as in reality the most honourable persons in every land: many of them have been raised to great authority, and have possessed great influence in their several countries; and, however the church hath hitherto been generally despised and persecuted, the time is coming when her sons shall be made kings and rulers through all nations, as well as heirs of an eternal kingdom in heaven.

V. 17. This verse shows, that Christ and the Church were immediately and expressly intended throughout the psalm. The language is peculiarly emphatical; and can mean nothing less, than all successive generations to the end of the world; and likewise eternal ages in heaven. Either the Father himself thus declared his purpose of glorifying his beloved Son and his people with him, for ever; or, as many explain it, the Psalmist foresaw, that this sacred poem would be used by the church through all generations, in celebrating the honour of the Redeemer, and in calling on others to do the same; and that it would thus be useful in preparing the redeemed people of God for the exalted adorations of the eternal world.—There can be no doubt, but that this will be verified by the event.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

The difference of men's characters before God greatly consists in the thoughts which habitually occupy each of their minds. The lively believer has his memory, imagination, and affections, so stored with heavenly things, that he has commonly some good matter to meditate upon, in those hours of solitude and leisure, which others waste in vanity, or employ in wicked and polluting speculations. But no subject is so congenial to the heaven-born soul, or so replete with comfort and instruction, as the contemplation of the excellences of Christ our King. Lively thoughts of his Person, character, and grace, springing up in the heart, inspire a heavenly savour into the discourse: and without the gift of prophecy, our tongues in this case become as the pen of a ready writer, simply declaring to all around us the suggestions of the Spirit of God. In the Redeemer, the enlightened soul perceives unutterable goodness and beauty, which eclipse all the dim excellences that it was wont to admire in the children of men. The gracious words which he speaks to sinners, are replete with divine harmony, and excite ineffable comfort in the broken heart; and Christ himself rejoices in his exaltation, and the power and glory which the Father hath conferred on him; because he delights in bestowing on his people the blessings which he purchased for them on the cross. All, who have seen his glory and tasted his grace, wish well to his cause: they rejoice in his former victories, and long to see him ride forth in his majesty to extend his conquests, and by his word and Spirit, to reduce enemies and strangers to a willing submission to his truth, and righteousness, and gentle dominion. But whilst he delighteth in salvation, his powerful right hand will teach him to execute dreadful vengeance on all his impenitent opposers: his sharp arrows will penetrate their souls; and all must either yield to, or be crushed by, this almighty King. For his throne is established for ever: his name is Immanuel: his sceptre is swayed in justice and mercy: he loveth righteousness and hateth iniquity; and whilst his Spirit leads believers to look unto Jesus, as "bearing our sins in his own body "on the tree," and to rest all their hope on his atonement; the views they receive of this great transaction, especially impress them with a sense of the odiousness and desert of every transgression, of the reasonableness of obedience, and teach them the beauty of holiness; so that not one of *them* can possibly abuse his grace for an encouragement to continue in sin. In proportion as we are conformed to his holy image, we may expect the

PSALM XLVI.

The church exults in the assurance of protection and consolation from God, 1—5. *Recounts his wondrous works in her behalf,* 6—9. *And while God demands submission from all the earth, she declares her confidence in him,* 10, 11.

To the chief Musician * for [a] the sons of Korah, [b] A Song upon [c] Alamoth.

GOD *is* [d] our refuge and strength, [e] a very present help in trouble.

2 Therefore [f] will we not fear, [g] though the earth be removed, and though [h] the mountains be carried into the † midst of the sea;

3 *Though* [i] the waters thereof roar *and* be troubled, *though* [k] the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.

4 *There is* [l] a river, the streams whereof shall make glad [m] the city of God, [n] the holy *place* of the tabernacles of [o] the Most High.

* Or, *of*
a lxxxiv lxxxv. lxxxvii. lxvi *titles.*
b xlvii. lxvi *titles.*
c 1 Chr xv 20
d 7 11. lxii. 7, 8. xci. 1—9 cxliii.
e Prov. xiv. 26. xviii 10 Luke xiii. 34. Heb. xi. 18.
e cxlv. 18. Gen. xxii. 14. Deut. iv. 7. 2 Sam. xxii. 17—20.
f xxiii. 4. xxviii. 8. Mat ix. 24—26 Heb xiii. 6.
g Gen vii. 11, 12. Luke xxi 9—11. 25—28 33 2 Pet. iii. 10—14
h Matt. xxi 21.
† Heb *heart of the seas.*
i xviii 4. xciii. 3, 4 Job xxxviii. 11 Is v. 30. xvii 12, 13 Jer. v. 22. Matt. vii. 25. Rev xvii. 15.
k cxiv. 4—7. Judg v 4, 5. 1 Kings xix 11. Job ix 5, 6. Jer. iv. 24. Mic.
l i 4 Nah. i. 5 Rev. xvi. 20.——l xxiii. 2 xxxvi. 8, 9 Is viii 6, 7 xlviii 18 Rev xxii 1.
m xlviii. 1 8 lxxxvii. 3 2 Chr vi. 6. Is. xxxvii. 35, 36 lx. 14. Heb. xii. 22 Rev. xxi. 2. 3. 10.——n Deut. xii. 11, 12.——o xci. 1. xcii. 1. 8. Ec. v. 8. Mic vi. 6.

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gladdening influences of the Comforter, which is communicated from his fulness: and whilst his name is to us "as "ointment poured forth;" the fragrancy of heavenly affections will recommend our conversation to the spiritually minded, and render us meet for his palace above.

V. 10—17.

Next to the Redeemer's excellencies, those of his espoused church are most worthy to be celebrated: not for what she was in herself; but for what he hath made her, in consequence of his love and choice. If we desire to share these blessings, we must hearken to his word, consider his proposals, and incline our ears and our hearts to seek a union with him: we must renounce, and even forget, our carnal and sinful attachments, pursuits, and connexions, if we would be pleasing in his eyes, or be admitted into this honourable relation. Other lords must be disavowed; for he must be our Lord as well as our Saviour: and all idols must be thrown away, that we may give him our whole heart, and render him unreserved worship, as well as seek all our happiness from him alone. Indeed the true believer's privileges, as well as the most estimable parts of his character, are *internal*, and undiscerned by an ungodly world: yet the holiness of his conversation proves the inward adorning of his soul, and that he is arrayed with the robe of righteousness and salvation. No wonder that the prosperity of the Redeemer's cause, and the conversion of sinners to him, delight all those on earth, who are pure and upright in heart; seeing that angels, who never sinned, rejoice over one sinner that repenteth: what then will be the joy, and mutual congratulations, and harmonious praises, which shall attend the final admission of all the redeemed to the full possession of their purchased inheritance! They who are taught of God, however great in the world, will count it their honour to attend upon Christ our King, and to employ their wealth and influence for the good of his church. And they who leave all for him, shall be abundantly compensated even in this world, in new and spiritual relations, friends, and honours. To be a child of God, to be espoused to Christ, and made an heir of heaven, are the highest of all possible distinctions: this honourable race shall be continued and multiplied until the end of time; and at length possess and fill the earth: and thus shall the name of the Redeemer be remembered in all generations, and his people praise him for ever and ever, Amen, and Amen.

NOTES.

PSALM XLVI. *Title.* As the sons of Korah were principal singers in the sanctuary through successive generations, the title alone does not determine the date of this psalm. It is not known by whom, or when, it was written: but the ancient opinion, that it was composed on occasion of the deliverance of Jerusalem from Sennacherib's invasion, is very probable: though some think it was composed by David, after his victories over the Ammonites and Syrians. It is, however, well adapted to the use of the church, especially in great emergencies, in every age.—When Luther received any discouraging news, he used to say, come let us sing the forty-sixth psalm.

Alamoth. (*Note*, 1 *Chr.* xv. 20.) 'Alamoth is thought 'to be either some tune in common use, or some kind of 'musical instrument, unknown to us; in which young 'virgins, as some fancy, took a peculiar delight, and 'were wont to learn to play upon it, which they make the 'reason and original of its name.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) *Alamoth* signifies *virgins.*

V. 1—3. (*Note*, xxvii. 1—3.) The clause, "a very "present help in trouble," may be rendered more literally, "found exceedingly a Help in troubles;" or, "a "Help most readily to be found in troubles." The Psalmist's experience and that of all believers from the beginning evinced it: and this encouraged his present unshaken confidence. Earthquakes, and other terrible convulsions in nature, are often made emblems of the raging of nations, the fall of empires, revolutions, and other public calamities. But if imagination should be employed to conceive of such desolations as are not likely to be realized in the full literal import of the terms here used, till the consummation of all things; still the presence and power of an almighty Protector and Upholder would suffice to secure the church and every true member of it: and strong faith would exclude terror even in the prospect of such tremendous scenes.

V. 4. Perhaps the gentle streams which watered Jerusalem may be alluded to: but the River of the water of life, the graces and consolations of the Holy Spirit, which pervade every part of the church, the city of our God, and through his sacred ordinances revive and rejoice the hearts of afflicted believers, are particularly intended.

5 [p] God *is* in the midst of her; [q] she shall not be moved: God shall help her, * *and that* right early.

6 [r] The heathen raged, [s] the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, [t] the earth melted.

7 [u] The LORD of hosts *is* with us; the God of Jacob *is*† our Refuge. Selah.

8 [x] Come, behold the works of the LORD, [y] what desolations he hath made in the earth.

9 [z] He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; [a] he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; [b] he burneth the chariot in the fire.

10 [c] Be still, and [d] know that I *am* God: [e] I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.

p lxviii.18. Deut. xxiii. 14. Is xii. 6. Ez xlvii. 7. 9. Hos xi. 9. Joel iii. 27. Zeph. iii. 15. Zech. ii. 5. 10, 11. viii. 3. Matt xviii. 20. Rev. ii. 1.
q lxii. 2. 6. cxii. 6. cxxv. 1.
* Heb. *when the morning appareth.* xxx. 5. cxliii. 8. Ex xiv. 24. 27. Luke x. viii. 8.
r ii. 1—4 lxxxiii. 2—8. 2 Chr. xiv. 9—13 xx. 1. 20—24 Is viii 9, 10. xxxvii. 28—36.
s Is. xiv. 12—16.
t lxviii 8. xcvii. 5. Josh ii 11. Is. lxiv. 1, 2. Am. ix. 5 13. Nah. i 5 Hab iii. 5, 6. 10, 11. 2 Pet. iii. 10—12. Rev vi 13, 14 xx. 11.
u 11 Num. xiv. 9. 2 Chr. xiii. 12. Is viii. 10. Matt. xxviii. 20. Rom viii. 31. 2 Tim. iv. 22——
† Heb. *an high place for us.* ix. 9——x lxvi. 5 xcii 4—6. cxi 2, 3 Num xxiii. 23——y Ex. x 7. xii 30. xiv. 30, 31. Josh. xi 20 2 Chr. xx 23, 24. Is. xxiv. 1. xxxiv. 2, &c——z Is. ii. 4 xi. 9. lx. 18 Mic. iv. 3, 4.——a lxxvi. 3—6. Ez xxxix. 3. 9, 10——b Josh xi. 6. 9. Mic. v. 10.——c Hab ii 20 Zech ii 13——d lxxxii. 18. c 3. Ex. xviii. 11 1 Sam xvii. 46. 1 Kings xviii. 36. 2 Kings xix. 19——e xxi. 13 lvii. 5. 1 Chr. xxix. 11. Is. ii. 11. 17. v. 16. Ez. xxxviii. 23. Rev. xv 3, 4.

11 The LORD of hosts *is* with us; [f] the God of Jacob *is* our Refuge. Selah.

f l. 7. xlviii. 3. Deut xxxiii. 27. Jer. xvi. 19.

PSALM XLVII.

The people are excited to rejoice in God, the universal Sovereign, who had given Israel victory and inheritance, 1—4. *The ascension and kingdom of Christ are celebrated with fervent praises; and the conversion of the nations and their princes is predicted,* 5—9.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm * for the sons of Korah.

O [a] Clap your hands, all ye people; [b] shout unto God with the voice of triumph.

2 For the LORD most high [c] *is* terrible; *he is* [d] a great King over all the earth.

* Or, *of.* xlvi. *title.*
a xcviii. 8 2 Kings xi. 12. Is. lv. 12.
b 5. xcviii. 4. 1 Sam. x 24. 2 Sam vi. 15. 2 Chr. xiii 15. Ezra iii. 11—13. Jer. xxxi. 7. Zeph. iii. 14. Zech. iv. 7. ix. 9. Luke xix. 37—40 Rev. xix. 1.
c lxv 5. lxvi. 3—5. lxviii. 35. 3. cxlv 6. Deut. vii 21. xxviii. lxxvi. 12. xxviii. 58 Neh. i 5. Nah. i. 6, 7. Rev. vi. 16, 17.
d 7. xxii 27—29. xcv. 3. Dan. vii. 13, 14 Mal. i. 14. Matt. xxviii. 18 Phil. ii. 9—11.

V. 5. *Right early.* Or, "When the morning ap-"peareth:" that is, '*In good time*, when the help shall be 'most honourable to God, and profitable to his people.'

V. 6. Nothing can be more concise, energetic, and sublime, than this verse. Many deliverances afforded Israel, answer the description, especially that under Hezekiah: but the success of the Gospel, notwithstanding all opposition, which melted away before the blessing of God on the preaching of the apostles and evangelists, was a singular accomplishment of it; and it shall ere long have a still more glorious completion, in the destruction of every antichrist, and the universal prevalence of genuine Christianity.

V. 7. 'The LORD of armies, the God of Jacob, who 'redeemed him from all evil, is with us, his descendants, 'according to his promise: what then have we to fear?'—IMMANUEL, GOD WITH US, is in every age the Refuge and Protector of his church.

V. 8, 9. The Psalmist here calls on all people to contemplate the wonders which God had wrought for his church, and the desolations he had made among her powerful enemies: for he had made wars to cease to the ends of the earth, by disabling all who had delighted in them. He will hereafter put an end to all wars by the universal success of the Gospel of peace; and this event also may be foretold.

V. 10. God himself here speaks, and demands attention and submission from the whole earth; and that they should all acknowledge and bow down to his universal, everlasting, and absolute sovereignty, if they would escape his awful vengeance.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

They who have received Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour, and live in grateful obedience to him, make the power, wisdom, truth, and love of God, their refuge and strength; and in every urgent danger and trouble, they will find him a ready and a present Help. If our faith were as strong as our security is good, we need fear no combination of enemies, no revolutions in kingdoms, and no convulsion in nature; but in the most tremendous dangers, might triumph in the fullest assurance of security and victory. Were we literally to behold the deep rooted mountains torn from their foundations and cast into the ocean, whilst its impetuous waves overflowed the banks, and deluged the earth, we should not only be safe, but might be happy, if, in communion with God, we drank of the river of divine consolations which he hath communicated to his holy church on earth, as an earnest of heavenly joys. Let us then pray for increase of faith, and be careful to lay up our treasures in heaven: thus, when the earth and all its works shall be burnt up, we shall have nothing to fear or to lose. Happy are they, in every case, who are enrolled citizens of the holy city of our God, in which he dwells, as a Father, a Defender, and a Comforter of his people. Though whilst the heathen rage, their faith and patience may be tried, He will utter his voice, their enemies will perish, and they shall triumph in his praise. But let the ungodly tremble at beholding the destruction of those who have opposed the church: soon the Lord will convert or destroy every adversary; and the nations shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and learn war no more. Let us pray for the speedy approach of these glorious days; and in silent reverence and submission worship and trust in our almighty Sovereign. And through life and in death, let us answer every fear with, "The LORD of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is "our Refuge."

NOTES.

PSALM XLVII. V. 1—3. This psalm is generally ascribed to David, though his name is not affixed to it: and it is thought to have been composed when vast multitudes were assembled, to attend on the removal of the ark to the tabernacle on mount Zion. And as the ark was a type

3 He shall [e] subdue the people under us, and the nations [f] under our feet.

4 He shall [g] choose our inheritance for us, [h] the excellency of Jacob, [i] whom he loved Selah.

5 [k] God is gone up [l] with a shout, the LORD with [m] the sound of a trumpet.

6 [n] Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto [o] our King, sing praises

7 For God *is* [h] the King of all the earth: [p] sing ye praises * with understanding.

8 [r] God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon [s] the throne of his holiness.

9 † The princes of the people are gathered together, *even* the people of [t] the God of Abraham: for [u] the shields of the earth *belong* unto God: [x] he is greatly exalted.

e xviii. 47 lxxxi 14. Deut xxxiii. 29 *Marg.* Josh. xxi 44 Phil. iii. 21.
f cx 1 Josh. x 24, 25 1 Cor. xv 25.
g Deut. xi 12. Jer. xii. 19. Ez. xx. 6. Matt. xxv. 34. 1 Cor iii. 22. 23 Eph. i. 18 1 Pet i 4.
h xvi. 3 Is. lx. 15. Am. vi. 8. viii. 7. Nah ii 2
i Deut. vii. 6—8. xxxii 3 Hos xiv. 4. Mal. i 2 Eph. ii. 4, 5.
l John iv. 9, 10.——k xxiv 7—10 lxviii. 17—19. 24, 25. Luke xxiv 51—53. Acts i 9. Eph iv. 8—10 1 Tim. iii. 16 ——l lxxviii 65 Num xxiii 21 2 Sam vi 15. 1 Chr. xv 28———m lxxxi 3. cl. 3. Num. x. 1—10. Josh. vi. 5. 1 Chr. xv. 24. xvi 42 1 Cor. xv. 52 1 Thes. iv. 16. Rev. viii. 6, &c. xi. 15.——n xcvi. 1, 2. cxvii. cxlix. 1—9. Ex. xv 21. 1 Chr. xvi. 9. xxix 20 Is. xii. 4—6. Eph v. 18—20 ——o cxlv. 1 Is. xxxiii 22 Zech ix. 9. Matt. xxv. 34 xxvii. 37.

p 2. 8. Zech xiv. 9. Rev. xi 15.
q 1 Cor. xiv 14, 15
* Or, every one *that hath understanding*
r xxii 27—29. xciii 1. xciv 10. xcvii 1 cxix 1. cx 6. 1 Chr. xvi 31 Rev. xix 6
s ix 4. xlv. 6, 7. xlviii 1 lxxxix. 14. xciv. 20. Heb iv 16. Rev. xx 11
† Or, *The voluntary of the people are gathered* unto *the people of*, &c. lxxii. 7—9 cx 2, 3 Gen. xlix. 10 Is xi. 10. lx. 4, 5 lxvi. 19. 20. Rom. xi 25.
t Gen. xvii 7, 8 Ex. iii 6. 15. Is. xli. 3—10. Matt xxii 32. Rom. iv. 11, 12. Gal. iii. 29.
u lxxxix 18 *Marg.*———x xliv. 10.

of Christ; the psalm has been applied to his ascension, after his humiliation on earth, to the right hand of God in heaven. Thus the ancient fathers understood it, and on this account it is appointed in our Church to be read on Ascension-day. Numbers being assembled, as at a solemn festival, the Psalmist calls on them to express the overflowing joy of their hearts, by clapping their hands, and lifting up their voices in triumphant shouting: because the most high God, whom Israel worshipped, and who protected Israel, was terrible to his and to their enemies, and the great Sovereign of all the earth. In the days of Joshua, and afterwards by David, he had subdued the nations of Canaan and the adjacent countries, and brought them under the dominion of Israel, but these victories were only shadows of the spiritual triumphs of the church under her king Messiah; and at length all nations shall either be joined to her in subjection to Christ, or shall be destroyed. (*Dan.* ii. 44.)

V. 4. The goodly land of Canaan was selected for the inheritance of Jacob's posterity, who were especially favoured of God, and comparatively the excellent of the earth. But they have long been excluded from that country, which typified the present privileges and chosen inheritance of the true Israel, who are in reality what the Israelites were in external character.

V. 5. 'God is gone up, by the special token of his presence, into the holy place, with shouts of joy and praise.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) If, however, we consider this as prefiguring the ascension of Him, in our nature, who is "God "over all, blessed for evermore;" and the acclamations of the heavenly hosts on that grand occasion; the whole appears vastly more interesting, and becomes in the highest degree animated, and appropriate as introductory to the repeated call to fervent praises.

V. 6. *Our King*, &c. (*Psalm* xlv. 1. 5.) The Messiah is continually celebrated in the psalms as Israel's King; it is therefore most natural to interpret this expression of him in almost every part of them; which leads us to multiplied proofs that he is JEHOVAH, and the Lord of all.

V. 8, 9. The dominion of that God, who dwelt in the holy place, by the ark, the symbol of his presence, above the mercy-seat, over the nations of the earth, as here mentioned, seems a clear intimation of the calling of the Gentiles into the church in consequence of Christ's ascension. (*Rom.* xv. 12.) All the principal persons, from the several tribes of Israel, "the people of the God of "Abraham," assembled to remove the ark, leaving the protection of their houses and families unto God, who accordingly was the shield of the land. Thus, when princes and rulers join themselves to the Lord Jesus, and use their authority and influence for the benefit of the church, God is greatly exalted, in becoming the Shield and Defender of their dominions. Some, however, interpret the last clause, to mean the rulers themselves; who, belonging to God, having their authority from him, and, using it according to his command, become the *shields* of their people; and thus by their means God is greatly exalted and honoured among men.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The universal and absolute sovereignty of our holy God would be most terrible to every sinner, were it not exercised by his incarnate Son from a mercy-seat: but now it is only terrible to the obstinate workers of iniquity. Whilst his peculiar people express their confidence, gratitude, and joy, by every token of external exultation, and animate each other in his service: let sinners submit to his authority and accept of his salvation, that they may share in his holy triumph. If we be the chosen people of God, and his love and grace have made us more excellent than our unbelieving neighbours; we may be sure that He hath chosen for us a more excellent inheritance than all the kingdoms of the world; and that he will prepare our souls for that inheritance, by every dispensation here on earth. Let us then confide in his wisdom, submit to his will, and be thankful for his distinguishing mercy. As angels and glorified saints worshipped the ascending Saviour, and welcomed him with shouts of joy and the trump of God, surely we on earth should join our praises with holy affections, and with understanding of his excellency and our obligations, that we may glorify him and edify others also. Our backwardness to this reasonable service must be overcome by repeated exhortations; and when our hearts are attuned to this holy worship, we should call on all around to unite in it: for he is our King, and the King of all the earth. He reigneth upon the throne of his holiness, which yet well consists with his plenteous mercy: all the heathen are his inheritance and property; may he hasten the time, when all kings shall serve him, and use their delegated authority to his glory! Then will all the families of the earth be blessed in him, and he will be greatly exalted: whilst as the God of Abraham, he becomes their "Shield, and "exceeding great Reward."

PSALM XLVIII.

The praises of God, with the beauty and security of Zion, and the deliverances wrought for her, are celebrated, 1—8. The church praises God, and rejoices in him, and in her privileges, 9—14.

A [a] Song *and* Psalm * for the sons of Korah.

[b] GREAT *is* the LORD, and [c] greatly to be praised [d] in the city of our God, *in* [e] the mountain of his holiness.

2 [f] Beautiful for situation, [g] the joy of the whole earth, *is* mount Zion, [h] *on* the sides of the north, [i] the city of the great King.

3 [k] God is known in her palaces for a Refuge.

4 For, lo, [l] the kings were assembled, they passed by together.

5 They saw *it, and* so they marvelled; [m] they were troubled, *and* hasted away.

6 [n] Fear took hold upon them there, *and* [o] pain, as of a woman in travail.

7 Thou [p] breakest the [q] ships of Tarshish [r] with an east wind.

8 [s] As we have heard, so have we seen in [t] the city of the LORD of hosts, in the city of our God: [u] God will establish it for ever. Selah.

9 We have [x] thought of [y] thy loving kindness, O God, [z] in the midst of thy temple:

10 [a] According to thy name, O God, so *is* thy praise unto the ends of the earth: [b] thy right hand is full of righteousness.

11 Let mount Zion rejoice, let [c] the daughters of Judah be glad, [d] because of thy judgments.

a xxx *title.* * Or *of* xlvi. *title.* b lxxvi. 10. xcix 3, 4 cxlv 3. cxlvii 5—7 c lxxxix. 6, 7. Neh ix 5. Rev xv. 3, 4. d xlvi 4. lxxviii. 68 lxxxvii. 3. Heb xii. 22. Rev xxi. 2. e xlvii. 8 xcix 9. Is. ii. 2, 3. xxvii 13. Jer. xxxi. 23 Ob. 17. Zech viii 3. Matt. xxiv 15. f l 2. Lam ii. 15. Dan. xi 16. g Is lx. 15—20 lxvi 10 Ez. xx. 6. Mal. iii 12. Heb. xii 22 Rev. xiv 1—3. h Is. xiv 13 i xlvii. 7, 8. Mal i. 14. Matt v. 35. k lxxvi. 1—5 cxxv. 1 2 Chr xii. 7. xiv 9—15 xx. 1, &c. Is. iv 5, 6. xxxvii. 33—36. Zech. ii. 4, 5 l lxxviii 2—8 2 Sam x. 6. 14 Is v 1—7 viii. 8—10 x 8 29—34. xxix 5—8. Rev. xvii. 12—14. xix 19, 20. m Ex. xiv 25. 2 Kings vii 6, 7. xix. 35—37. n Ex. xv 15, 16. Is xiii 6—8 Dan v 6 o Is xxi. 3. Jer xxx. 6 7. Hos xiii 13. p Ez. xxvii 26. q 1 Kings x 11 48. Is. ii. 16. r Jer xvii. 17. s xliv. 1, 2 lxxviii. 3—6. Is. xxxviii. 19. t 1 2 u xlvi 5. lxxxvii. 5. Is. ii 2. Mic iv 1. Matt. xvi 18. x xxvi 3 lxxvii. 10. 11 civ. 34. cv 5 6 y xl 10 lxiii 3 Cant i 4. Luke xxii. 19, 20. z lx. 1. 2. lxxvii. 12—14 2 Chr xx. 3—13 Is. xxvi 8. a cxiii 3. cxxxviii. 2. Ex. iii. 13—15 xxxiv 5—7. Deut xxviii 58. Josh vii 9 Mal. i. 11 14 b xi 7 xlv 7. x 16 Is xxxvii. 31. 2 Chr. xx. 26, xcix. 4 cxlv. 17. Rev. xix. 2. 11.—c xcvii. 8. Cant. i. 5. ii. 7 iii. 5. 22 Zech. ix. 9. Luke xxiii. 28 —d lviii 10. cxxxvii. 8. Judge v 27. Rev. xv. 4. xvi 5—7 xviii. 28. xix. 1—3.

NOTES.

PSALM XLVIII. V. 1. Many think that this psalm was composed on account of the deliverance of Jerusalem from the power and rage of Sennacherib: but others are of opinion, that it is more exactly descriptive of the invasion of the land, during the reign of Jehoshaphat, and the extraordinary triumph of him and his subjects over the kings which had confederated against him. It is, however, evident that it was occasioned by some remarkable interposition of God in rescuing the mountain of his holiness from powerful assailants.

V. 2, 3. The situation of Zion, and the adjacent region, was very beautiful, and the glory and joy of the whole land: but the peculiar honour of this holy city was the experience of her kings from age to age, that God was their Refuge and the Protector of their palaces. Zion is supposed by many to have been situated on the south side of Jerusalem: but the temple stood on the north side of the mountain, and was its peculiar honour and distinction.

V. 4—7. The confederated kings of idolatrous nations were assembled to besiege Jerusalem: but the pious princes of Judah confided in God as their Refuge. Their invaders therefore, when they approached the walls, were suddenly intimidated, troubled, and put to flight with terror and anguish, as a woman in travail; or as the affrighted mariners look at each other, when a furious east-wind drives their stout and richly laden ship upon a rock, and dashes it in pieces. These effects could not be so much ascribed to a survey of Jerusalem's fortifications, as to the immediate power of God; even as the winds and waves are at his command. 'Illustrations of this kind are sometimes introduced, by the sacred writers, without the mark of comparison. The meaning evidently is, that as the east wind shatters in pieces the ships of Tarshish, so the divine power struck the heathen kings with terror and astonishment.' (*Horne.*)

V. 8. The princes and people of Judah had often heard reports of the wonderful deliverances which God had in former ages vouchsafed to Israel, as well as the encouraging promises and predictions sent to them by the prophets: but the recent events, of which they had been eye-witnesses, and the astonishing interposition of the God of armies in behalf of his chosen city, impressed them with a far more lively sense of these things, than they ever before had attained to: and they were also encouraged, by this instance of the Lord's faithful and powerful protection, confidently to expect, that he would establish Jerusalem in safety and prosperity through all generations. As a prophecy, this must mean that city of the living God, of which Jerusalem was but a type; for Jerusalem was repeatedly taken, and at length it was given up to be trodden under foot by the Gentiles: but the church of Christ is founded on a Rock, and God will certainly establish it for ever and ever.

V. 9. Or 'We have waited in silent contemplation 'and patient hope for thy loving kindness, with sacrifices 'and believing prayers, presented at thy temple, trusting 'in thy aid, and not in our own power or valour.' This was the conduct of Hezekiah, amidst the menaces and blasphemies of Rabshakeh and Sennacherib; yet the conduct of Jehoshaphat and his subjects seems more exactly to accord to these words, than even that of Hezekiah. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 10. The *name* of God may, in this connexion, either mean, the glorious perfections by which he was known to his people, and distinguished from all the idols of the heathen; or his title, as the LORD of hosts, the God of Abraham, and the God of Israel. (*Marg. Ref.*) In both respects, the powerful protection afforded his people, and the righteous vengeance executed by his right hand on their insolent and impious invaders, would tend to make his praises celebrated through the whole *land*, and indeed to the ends of the earth.

12 [e] Walk about Zion, and go round about her: [f] tell the towers thereof.

13 * Mark ye well her bulwarks; † consider her palaces; [g] that ye may tell *it* to the generation following.

14 For [h] this God *is* our God for ever and ever: he will be our [i] Guide *even* unto death.

e Neh. xii. 31, &c. Matt. xxiv. 1, 2.
f Is. xxxii. 20.
* Heb. *Set your heart to her.*
† Or, *raise up.* Is. lviii. 12. Am. ix. 11. Acts xv. 14—16.
g lxxviii. 4. Deut. xi. 19. Joel i. 3.
h xxvi. 2. xxxi. 14. lxxiii. 26. Lam. iii. 24.
i xxiii. 3. xxv. 9. lxxiii. 24. Prov. viii. 20. Is. lviii. 11. John xvi. 13.

PSALM XLIX.

The Psalmist calls on all mankind to attend to his instructive strains, 1—4. *He shows, that the righteous need not fear in evil times,* 5. *He exposes the vanity of trusting in riches,* 6—13. *He contrasts the condition of the prosperous ungodly man with that of the believer, especially in respect of death and the resurrection,* 14—20.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm * for the sons of Korah.

[a] HEAR this, all *ye* people; give ear, [b] all *ye* inhabitants of the world:

2 Both [c] low and high, rich and poor, together.

* Or, *of.* xlviii. *title.*
a xxiv. 11. lxxviii. 1. Prov. i. 20—23. Matt. xi. 15. xiii. 9. Rev. ii. 7. 11. 17. 29.
b l. 1. Is. xlix. 6. Mal. i. 11. Matt. xviii. 19, 20. Rom. iii. 29. x. 18.
c lxii. 9. 1 Sam. ii. 7, 8. Job xxxiv. 19. Prov. xxii. 2. Jer. v. 4, 5. Jam. i. 9—11. ii. 1—7. Rev. vi. 15—17.

V. 11. This verse is in the future tense, and may literally be rendered, "Mount Zion will rejoice, and the daughters of Judah" (the other towns and cities dependent on Jerusalem) "will be glad, because of thy judgments," &c. as an anticipation, during the apparent danger, of victory and exulting praises, rather than as a subsequent exhortation. (2 *Chron.* xx. 19—22.)

V. 12, 13. The people are here called upon to go round the city in solemn procession; and, while they joyfully praised and blessed the Lord, to mark all the towers, walls and palaces, observing that not one of them had been in the least injured by their formidable invaders. This would tend the more deeply to impress their minds; and prepare them faithfully and diligently to preserve the memory of these interesting events, for the benefit of future generations. Yet it seems not to have been necessary to have taken this exact survey of Jerusalem's walls and fortifications to be transmitted to posterity, had these been any thing more than types of more permanent privileges; and if they had not been speedily to be demolished, that the things signified by them remain for ever.

V. 14. This verse, as the conclusion of a psalm, in which temporal deliverances, security, and privileges, might *appear* to be exclusively celebrated, is a strong intimation, that spiritual and eternal blessings were also meant. It was before said, that God would establish Jerusalem for ever: but it is here added, in the most emphatical language imaginable, "This God," who protects Jerusalem, "is our God," or the Friend and Patron of his true people; and this "for ever and ever," or "to all eternity:" "He will be our Guide unto death;" through all the sorrows and dangers of this world to the eternal blessings of heaven. (*Heb.* xi. 14—16.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord is a great and glorious King, and worthy of universal and most exalted praises: but none on earth will render him this due honour, except the citizens of the spiritual Jerusalem, who worship him in the mountain of his holiness, as their God and Saviour. The beauty and glory of his church, which should be, and will eventually prove, the joy of the whole earth, are derived from his presence and love, and are the reflection of his uncreated excellencies. Wherever there are princes or people who make God their Refuge, there he will be known as such: for he will never disappoint the expectation of any who hope in his word. But, when kings and nations, however numerous and potent, confederate against his church, sudden terror and destruction will be their portion. We have heard and read of the works of God for Israel of old; and in the establishment of the Gospel upon the ruins of idolatry: and if we wait for his loving-kindness in his holy temple, by persevering faith and prayer, we shall experience in our measure the same powerful supports and deliverances: and still more glorious things shall at length be accomplished, in order to establish the church throughout the whole earth. —The Lord will always act consistently with those glorious perfections which, by means of his word, are made known and celebrated to the ends of the earth: the salvation of his people will be accompanied with righteous vengeance on his enemies; but every true believer may rejoice because of his judgments. Let us then diligently examine and accurately mark, the security of the everlasting covenant, confirmed by the word and oath of the immutable God: let us consider that his church is built upon a rock, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail; and let us meditate upon his exceedingly great and precious promises, and the privileges enjoyed by every true believer. Whilst we are thus encouraged by them to trust and serve the Lord in perilous and difficult circumstances; let us point them out to our children, and to the rising generation: for this Almighty and gracious God is the Portion and the Shield of every true Christian, through successive generations and to all eternity. He will guide us all, through life to death, and through death to glory; and, in the city of our God above, we shall enjoy uninterrupted and unalloyed peace and felicity.

NOTES.

PSALM XLIX. *Title.* The author of this psalm is not known; 'But whoever composed it, it is likely he had in 'his eye the unreasonable thirst of mankind after riches, 'and their insolence when they have acquired them; which, 'it is possible, was a great discouragement to some pious 'but poor people in his time.' 'And, therefore, he indit-'ed this psalm to check that vanity, by setting death be-'fore their eyes,' &c. (*Bp. Patrick.*)—It is not improbable that David wrote the psalm, and gave it to the sons of Korah; though the title may mean that it was ascribed to the sons of Korah.

3 [d] My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and [e] the meditation of my heart *shall be* of understanding.

4 [f] I will incline my ear to [g] a parable: I will open my [h] dark saying upon the harp.

5 [i] Wherefore should I fear in [k] the days of evil, *when* [l] the iniquity of [m] my heels shall compass me about?

6 They that [n] trust in their wealth, and [o] boast themselves in the multitude of their riches;

7 None *of them* can by any means redeem *his* brother, nor [p] give to God a ransom for him:

8 (For [q] the redemption of their soul *is* precious, and it ceaseth for ever;)

9 [r] That he should still live for ever, *and* not [s] see corruption.

10 For he seeth *that* [t] wise men die, likewise [u] the fool and the brutish person perish, and [x] leave their wealth to others.

11 [y] Their inward thought *is, that* their houses *shall continue* for ever, *and* their dwelling-places to all * generations; [z] they call *their* lands after their own names.

12 Nevertheless man *being* [a] in honour abideth not; he is [b] like the beasts *that* perish.

13 This their way *is* [c] their folly: yet their posterity † approve their sayings. Selah.

d Deut. xxxii 2. Job xxxiii 3.33. Prov iv. 1, 2. viii 6—11. xxii. 17. 20, 21 2 Tim. iii. 15—17.
e xix. 14. xlv. 1. civ. 34. Matt. xii. 35.
f lxxviii 2. Mat. xiii. 35.
g Num. xxiii 7. Ez. xx. 49. Mat. xiii. 11—15.
h Pro i. 6. Dan viii. 23. Luke xii. 3. 2 Cor. iii. 12.
i xxvii. 1, 2 xlvi. 1, 2. Is. xli. 10, 11. Acts xxvii. 24 Phil. i. 28.
k Pro. xxiv. 10. Am. v. 13. Eph. v. 16
l xxxviii. 4. Pro. v. 22. Hos. vii. 2
m xxii. 16. lvi. 6, 7. Gen xlix. 17. 1 Sam. xxvi. 20.
n lii. 7. lxii. 10. Job xxxi 24. Pro. x. 15. xxiii. 5. Mark x 24. 1 Tim. vi. 17.——o Esth. v. 11. Jer. ix. 23 Ez. xxviii. 4. 5. Hos xii. 8. Luke xii. 19.
p Matt. xvi. 26. xx. 28. 1 Tim. ii. 6. 1 Pet. i. 18——q Job xxxvi. 18, 19.
r lxxxix. 48. Pro. x. 2 xi. 4 Ec. viii 8. Zech. i. 5 Luke xvi. 22, 23.
s xvi. 10. John viii. 51, 52. Acts ii. 27. 31. xiii. 35—37
t Ec. ii 16. ix. 1, 2. Rom. v. 12—14. Heb ix. 27.
u lxxviii. 22. xcii 6, 7. xciv. 8. Prov. xii. 1. xxx. 2. Jer. x 8.
x 17. xvii. 14. xxxix 5. Ec. ii. 18, 19. 26. v. 13—16. Jer xvii. 11. Luke xii 20. 1 Tim. vi. 6—10.
y v. 9. lxiv. 6. Ez. xxxviii 10. Luke xi. 39. Acts viii. 22.
* Heb. *generation and generation.*
z Gen iv 17. 1 Sam. xv 12. 2 Sam. xviii. 18.
a 20. xxxix 5. lxxxii. 7. Jam. i. 10, 11. 1 Pet. i. 24.
b Ec. iii. 18—21. ix. 12——c Luke xii. 20. 1 Cor. iii. 19.——† Heb. *delight in their mouth.* Jer. xliv. 17. Luke xi. 47, 48. xvi. 27, 28.

V. 1—4. The Psalmist in these verses sublimely introduced his subject, by demanding an audience from the whole human race to a message which he would deliver unto them from God; and his important and universally interesting instruction, being written in the sacred Scriptures, has already been proposed to innumerable multitudes, and will at length be heard by all the inhabitants of the earth, whether of noble or ignoble birth, whether rich or poor. As the Prophet of God, he had first inclined his ear to his divine Instructor: and finding the subject difficult, because of the corrupt prejudices, aversion, and inaptitude of the mind of man to such spiritual subjects, and to require the closest attention in order to a right understanding and explanation of it; he had carefully meditated on it before he spake; and then he had formed it into poetry, and set it to music; that sacred melody might be the vehicle of weighty instruction.

V. 5. The old translation seems to give the true sense of this verse: "Wherefore should I fear in the evil days, "*when* iniquity shall compass me about, *as at* mine heels." 'What cause is there, that I should be troubled with fears, 'and cares, and anxiety of mind, in calamitous times, when 'the iniquity of those who endeavour to supplant me hath 'surrounded me on all sides, and left me no way to escape 'them?' (*Bp. Patrick.*) In the judgment of the best critics, among whom Bishop Lowth is one, the word, rendered as a substantive *my heels*, is a participle signifying *my supplanters*. 'The purport of the question is plainly 'this: Why should I give way to fear and despondency, 'in the times of calamity, when the wickedness of my 'wealthy and powerful adversaries compasses me about to 'supplant and overthrow me?' (*Horne.*)—When the consequences of a man's sins overtake him, and he has no way to escape, he may well fear: but the believer has no occasion to fear the power or subtlety of his most malicious persecutors.

V. 7. A *ransom*. That is, *an atonement, expiation*, or *propitiating sacrifice*: for this is the literal meaning of the word. They who glory and trust most in their riches, cannot with all their wealth satisfy divine justice, so as to ransom their nearest relative or best beloved friend, from death, to which he is sentenced by the righteous Governor of the world.

V. 8. *Precious*. 'Rare, or not to be found, as pro-'phecy was precious in the days of Eli.' (1 *Sam.* iii. 1.) The price of redemption, whether of the life or soul, was too high for any mere man to pay: so that the ancient fathers referred the verse to Christ, in this sense, 'No man 'can redeem his brother, he alone excepted, who is also 'God.' (*Marg. Ref.*) 'Even a Jewish interpreter under-'stands these words of the King Messiah, who, having 'died for the redemption of his, afterwards liveth for ever, 'as was predicted by Isaiah.' (*Is.* liii. 10.) (*Horne.*)

V. 9. 'As long as the world endureth, this will be a 'vain endeavour.—Let a man attempt it, if he will, upon 'himself. Can he prolong his own life,—that it shall be 'perpetuated and never dissolved.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) And if this be a vain attempt, who can redeem or save his own immortal soul from the awful sentence of eternal punishment?

V. 10. Every man may see, that the wise and learned of the world die in the same manner as the foolish and stupid: and they who have prospered in heaping up wealth, leave it all behind; perhaps to those for whom they never intended it, and who rejoice at their death.

V. 11. 'Various are the contrivances of vain men, to 'have their names written on earth, and to procure, after 'death, an imaginary immortality for themselves and their 'families, in the memory and conversation of posterity; 'which is not often obtained, and if obtained is of no value: 'when with less trouble they might have secured to them-'selves a blessed immortality in the kingdom of the Re-'deemer.' (*Horne.*)

V. 12. The word, rendered *abideth*, signifies to *lodge all night*. Man's continuance in the world resembles a traveller's lodging at an inn, whence he removes in the morning. So soon must wealth and honour be relinquished, and the most honourable men die like the beasts that perish; except as distinguished by an immortal soul, and a future state of righteous retribution.

14 [d] Like sheep [e] they are laid in the grave; [f] death shall feed on them; and [g] the upright shall have dominion over them in [h] the morning: and [i] their * beauty shall consume † in the grave, from their dwelling.

15 But [k] God will redeem my soul from the ‡ power of the ◊ grave: for he [l] shall receive me. Selah.

16 [m] Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when [n] the glory of his house is increased;

17 For when he dieth [o] he shall carry nothing away: [p] his glory shall not descend after him.

18 Though ‖ while he lived he [q] blessed his soul: and *men* [r] will praise thee, when thou doest well to thyself.

19 * He shall go [s] to the generation of his fathers; they shall [t] never see light.

20 [u] Man *that* is in honour, and [x] understandeth not, [y] is like the beasts *that* perish.

d xliv 11. Jer. xii. 3. Rom. viii. 36. e Job xvii 13. 14 xxi. 13. 26. xxx 23. Ec. xii. 7. Is xxxviii. 10. 11. f Job xxiv 19. 20. g xlvii. 3 Dan vii 22 Mal iv. 3. Luke xxii 30. 1 Cor. vi 2 Rev ii. 26, 27. xx 4. h xxx 5. Hos vi 3. i xxxix. 11 Job iv. 21. * Or *strength*. † Or, *the grave being an habitation to every one of them* Job xxx 23. k xxxi. 5. lvi. 13 lxxii 24 Hos xiii. 14. Rev. v. 9. xiv 13.——‡ Heb *hand*.——◊ Or, *hell*. xvi. 10. lxxxvi 13. lxxxix. 48. *Marg*——l Luke xxiii. 46 John xiv. 3 Acts vii 59.——m 5. xxxvii. 1. 7. Esth iii. 1—6. Prov xxviii. 12——n Gen xxxi 1. Esth. v. 11. Rev. xxi 24. 26.

o Job i. 21. Ec. v. 15. Luke xvi. 24 1 Tim. vi. 7. p Is v. 14 x. 3. 1 Cor. xv 43. ‖ Heb *in his life*. q Deut. xxix. 19. Hos xii. 8 Luke xii. 19 r 1 Sam. xxv. 6 Esth iii 2 Acts xii 20—22 Rev. xiii. 3. 4 * Heb. The soul *shall go* Ec. iii. 21. xii 7 Luke xvi 20. xvi. 22, 23. s Gen. xv 15. 1 Kings xvi 6 t Iv 13 Job xxxviii 30 Mat. viii 12 xxii 13. Jude 13 u 12 Esth v. 11—14 vii 10. x Job iv. 21.——y lxiii. 18. 19.

V. 13. Some render the first clause, 'This their way 'is their confidence,' meaning a rash and presumptuous confidence. 'Yet so close does this folly stick to mankind, 'that they who succeed in their possessions make no be'nefit of this observation; but are as very fools to them'selves, and tread in the steps of those who went before 'them.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) Indeed, they not only copy their example, but imbibe their principles and adopt their maxims, as admired dictates of wisdom.

V. 14. The most powerful and prosperous are soon crowded into the grave, as the sheep into the slaughter-house. There death feeds upon them, in silence and darkness, until the morning of the resurrection: then the poor oppressed believers will have the dominion over their haughtiest persecutors. The grave will consume all the glory and beauty of the wicked, which they possessed in their splendid earthly habitations; and meanness, deformity, and contempt will be their portion; whilst "the righteous "shall shine forth as the Sun in the kingdom of their "Father."—The word translated repeatedly *the grave*, is often rendered *hell*, and probably means the unseen state, whether of body or soul.—'Christ's coming is the morn'ing, when the elect shall reign with Christ, as Head over 'the wicked.' Then all the beauty, splendour, and external decoration, which the most admired of the ungodly and affluent showed in their palaces, will appear withered and gone; and they will be in all respects loathsome and contemptible.

V. 15. When the believer dieth, his soul redeemed by the Saviour's blood, is received to glory: the life of his body shall also be restored; it shall be redeemed from the power of the grave, refined and rendered incorruptible, and glorious. The Psalmist in this verse expresses a full confidence, both that his soul would be preserved from hell, and his body raised from the grave; being received by the Lord to be for ever with him. Leave this out; and what does the solemn exordium of the psalm introduce? for no other important distinction, in respect of happiness, between the righteous and the wicked, is so much as mentioned.

V. 16, 17. 'Be thou not troubled or dismayed, who'soever thou art that hearest or readest this, when thou 'seest a worldly man grow very rich, and great honours 'heaped upon his family; which enables and emboldens 'him perhaps to use the meaner sort contemptuously.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) When he dies 'nothing shall attend him 'but his shroud to the grave, and his works to the judg'ment-seat. View him in this light, (and this is the 'proper light to view him in) and he will cease to be the 'object of fear or envy.' (*Horne.*)—Worldly men count wealth and magnificence *their glory:* but holiness, being the moral image of God, is the true *glory* of our rational nature; and this will accompany us to heaven.

V. 18. Prosperous sinners count themselves happy, and promise themselves much enjoyment for many years to come: and such is mankind, that they who succeed in ambitious or covetous pursuits, or who live in luxury and splendour, will be sure to find foolish and selfish admirers and flatterers.

V. 19. Death will convey one generation after another from the *light* of this world; and how awful are the words, "They shall not see light for ever!"

V. 20. He that in prosperity has not understanding to use the gifts of God to his glory, but abuses them in wickedness, willingly renounces the grand distinction between a rational creature and the beasts that perish. As to this world, he gratifies his appetites and inclinations, and dies as they do: but "after death is the judgment."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The important truths which relate to the eternal state of the righteous and the wicked, are equally interesting to all the inhabitants of the earth, "both high and low, rich "and poor together." Blessed be God, they are plainly proposed to us in his holy word; and had it not been for man's dislike to such subjects, they would have been universally heard and understood.—"At the call of folly, what 'multitudes are always ready to assemble! But Wisdom, 'eternal and essential Wisdom, crieth without, she lifteth 'up her voice in the streets; and who is at leisure to 'attend her heavenly lectures? The mouth of Jesus always 'spake of wisdom; but few regarded him: the meditation 'of his heart was ever of understanding; but it was ac'counted madness.'—(*Horne.*) We should however still endeavour to illustrate and enforce these important instructions, by every method which can soften prejudice, or gain attention: especially by showing their influence on our own hearts in mortifying covetousness, ambition, envy, and discontent; in raising us above the fear of man, and rendering us constant and cheerful, in doing the will and professing the truth of God, amidst the successful enmity of

PSALM L.

The almighty God, comes in awful majesty from Zion, to judge his people, in the sight of the assembled world, 1—4. *He commands that the saints be gathered to him; and declares that the heavens shall declare his righteousness,* 5, 6. *He delighteth not in legal sacrifices, but in spiritual worship,* 7—15. *Hypocrites are rebuked and silenced,* 16—21. *The ungodly are warned, and salvation is promised to the upright,* 22, 23.

A Psalm of * Asaph.

THE [a] mighty God, [b] *even* the LORD, [c] hath spoken, and [d] called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof.

2 [e] Out of Zion, [f] the perfection of beauty, [g] God hath shined.

* Or, *for Asaph.* lxxiii. lxxxiii. *titles* 1 Chr. xv. 17 xvi 37 xxv. 2. 6. 2 Chr. xxix 30

a xxlv. 3—6. Gen xvii. 1 Josh. xxii. 22 Neh. ix. 6 32. Jer. x 6 xxxii 19.

b 1 Kings xviii. 21. 36, 37. Is. xxxvii 20. liv. 5

c Is. i. 2. Am iii 8.

d xlix. 1, 2. cxiii. 3. Ma i. 11. Matt xxv 32.

e Is xii 6 xxvi. 21 Hos v 14. 15. Hab ii. 20. Heb. xii 22—26 ——f xlviii. 2. lxxxvii. 2, 3 xc 17. Cant v 16 Zech. ix. 17.——g lxxx. 1. Deu xxxiii 2. Hab. iii. 3, 4. Rev. i. 16. xxi. 23.

persecutors or oppressors. How general, yet how absurd and infatuated, is it, for men to boast of their riches and trust in them! to pursue them as the one thing needful, if they have a prospect of acquiring them, and to repine and murmur, if they have not! Yet it is most evident, that wealth can neither prolong the life nor save the soul of the possessor, or his most beloved relatives: and had not the ransom of the death of Christ intervened, the body of every sinner must have finally been left in the grave and his soul in hell; for the redemption was too precious to be otherwise effected, and must have been let alone for ever. And as we see that neither wealth nor worldly wisdom will exempt any man from dying; and that all such acquisitions must shortly be relinquished for ever: how vain are all our anxious cares and labours! What good will it do any man, to have his name perpetuated on earth, when he hath no name in the registers of heaven? Thus foolish are the thoughts and ways of ungodly men. Yet one generation after another applaud their maxims: and the character of a fool, as drawn by heavenly wisdom itself, continues the favourite model for imitation, in the judgment of a vast majority even of professed Christians! (*Marg. Ref*) Death alone can convince men in general of the folly of laying up treasures upon earth: and were there no future state, the most wealthy and honourable would soon be levelled with the beasts that perish: but in the prospect of the resurrection and of eternity, the most prosperous of the wicked are infinitely more wretched and base. In this light, let the believer view the riches and the children of this world, that he may not be tempted to envy or impatience, or to fear evil consequences to himself and to the church of God, when sinners grow rich and honourable. Soon will they die, and carry nothing away with them of all their splendour and magnificence. Though they foolishly congratulate themselves, and others applaud them, as having done well for themselves; yet they are going to the generation of their fathers, and shall never see light; "for to them is reserved the blackness of darkness for "ever." But the real Christian, when he dies, bids farewell to sin and sorrow; his soul is received to glory; his body shall be redeemed from the grave, and raised incorruptible and glorious. His inheritance is in heaven; and in the resurrection he will sit in judgment on those who here oppressed and persecuted him. And is there a rational creature that can prefer the lot of the rich sinner to that of poor Lazarus? (*Notes, Luke* xvi. 19—31.) And is this more than brutish stupidity universal to the human race, if left to themselves? What need then have we of revelation and of the teaching of the Holy Spirit; when, with all our boasted powers, we are prone to such infatuation, in the most important of all concerns! O Lord, deliver us from the love of the world, and teach us to set our affections on things above!

NOTES.

PSALM L. *Title.* "Hezekiah commanded the Levites to sing praises unto the LORD with the words of "David, and of Asaph the *seer*." (2 *Chr.* xxix. 30.) Hence it appears that Asaph was a prophet, and wrote some psalms, and probably this among the rest. Some expositors, however, are of opinion, that Asaph the seer, was a different person from Asaph the Levite, and one of the chief singers in the days of David; that he lived at a later period; and that it is not unlikely he was contemporary with Hezekiah, and referred in this psalm to the hypocrisy of the Jews in general, even during Hezekiah's reformation. But at whatever time the psalm was composed, the instructions contained in it are of general importance and utility. It is a most sublime poem; which is generally supposed to predict the coming of Christ, the abolition of the Mosaic dispensation, and the introduction of Christianity; with the condemnation of the Jews, especially of the Scribes and Pharisees, for rejecting it. But the judgment executed upon Jerusalem prefigured the awful proceedings and consequences of the general judgment: and the Scribes and Pharisees are the parents of a numerous progeny of superstitious, formal, and hypocritical professors and teachers of Christianity, who will be condemned at that solemn day.

V. 1, 2. In the preceding psalm all the inhabitants of the world were addressed *in the name of God;* but here the mighty God (or, the God of gods,) JEHOVAH himself, is introduced with inexpressible solemnity; and all the inhabitants of the earth, as well as his people Israel, are summoned to attend. His august tribunal, however, is not placed on mount Sinai, whence he delivered his fiery law; but on mount Zion, where his glory was manifested, above the mercy-seat and the ark of the covenant, which prefigured his gracious Gospel. Accordingly Zion is here called "the perfection of beauty:" as reflecting the uncreated glory and excellency of JEHOVAH, who thence shines forth in the perfect harmony of all his divine attributes. Indeed, the words *perfection of beauty* may be referred to God himself; who appears in the Gospel at once infinitely glorious and infinitely lovely. (*Marg. Ref.*)

3 [h] Our God shall come, and shall not [i] keep silence: [k] a fire shall devour before him, and [l] it shall be very tempestuous round about him.

4 He shall [m] call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may [n] judge his people.

5 [o] Gather [p] my saints together unto me; those that have [q] made a covenant with me by sacrifice.

6 And [r] the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for [s] God *is* Judge himself. [t] Selah.

7 ¶ [u] Hear, [x] O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, and [y] I will testify against thee: [z] I *am* God, *even* thy God.

8 [a] I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices or thy burnt-offerings, *to have been* continually before me.

9 I will [b] take no bullock out of thy house, *nor* he-goats out of thy fold.

10 For [c] every beast of the forest [d] *is* mine, *and* the cattle upon a thousand hills.

11 I [e] know all the fowls of the mountains: and [f] the wild beasts of the field *are* * mine.

12 If I were hungry I would not tell thee: for [g] the world *is* mine, and [h] the fullness thereof.

13 Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?

14 [i] Offer unto God thanksgiving; and [k] pay thy vows unto the Most High:

15 And [l] call upon me in the day of trouble: [m] I will deliver thee, and thou shalt [n] glorify me.

h xlviii. 14. lxviii. 20.
i 21. lxxxiii. 1. Is. xlii. 13, 14. lxv. 6, 7.
k xcvii. 3. Ex xix. 18. Lev. x. 2 Num. xvi. 35. Deut ix. 3. 1 Kings xix. 11, 12. Dan. vii. 10. Nah. i. 5—7. Hab. iii. 5. Mal. iii. 2, 3. iv. 1. Matt. iii. 12. 2 Thes. i. 8, 9. Heb. ii. 3. x. 28, 29 xii. 18—21. 29.
l xviii. 7—15 xlvii 4, 5.
m 6. Deu. iv. 36. xxx 19. xxxi. 28. xxxii. 1. Is. i. 2 Mic. vi. 1, 2.
n xcvi. 13. xcviii. 9. Is. xi. 3, 4. John v. 22, 23.
o Matt. xxiv. 31. 1 Thes. iv. 16, 17 2 Thes. ii. 1.
p xcvii. 10. Deu. xxxiii. 2, 3. Pro. ii. 8. Zech. xiv. 5. 1 Cor. vi. 2. 3. 1 Thes. iii 13. Jude 14.——q Ex xxiv. 3—8. Matt. xxvi. 28. Heb. ix. 10—23. xiii. 20.——r xcvii. 6. Rom. ii. 5. Rev. xvi. 5—7 xix. 2.——s lxxv. 7. Gen. xviii. 25. John v 22, 23. Rom. xiv. 9—12 2 Cor. v. 10. Rev. xx. 11, 12.——t vii. 3—5. ix. 16.——u lxxxi. 8. Is i. 18 Jer ii. 4, 5 9.——x. lxxxi. 10—12 Ex. xix. 5. 6. Deut. xxvi. 17, 18. 1 Sam. xii 22—25.——y Deut. xxxi. 19—21. 2 Kings xvii. 13. Neh. ix. 29, 30. Mal. iii 5.——z Ex. xx. 2. 2 Chr. xxviii. 5. Ez. xx. 5. 7. 19, 20. 33. Zech. xiii. 9.——a xl. 6—8. li. 16. Is. i. 11, &c. Jer. vii. 11—23. Hos. vi. 6. Heb. x. 4—10.

b Is. xliii. 23, 24. Mic vi 6—8. Acts xvii 25.
c viii. 6—8. civ. 24, 25 Gen. i. 24, 25. ii. 19. viii. 17. ix 2, 3. 1 Chr. xxix. 14—16. Job xl 15, &c. Jer xxvii. 5, 6. Dan ii. 38.
d civ. 14 Gen. xxxi. 9. Jon. iv. 11.
e civ. 12. cxlvii. 9. Gen. i. 20—22 Job xxxviii. 41 xxxix. 13—18. 26—30. Mat. vi. 26. x. 29—31. Luke xii. 24.
f Is. lvi. 9. Ez. xiv. 15, 16.
* Heb. *with me.*
g xxiv 1, 2 cxv. 15, 16. Ex. xix. 5. Deut. x. 14. Job xli. 11. 1 Cor. x. 26—28.
h civ. 24. cxiv. 15, 16. Gen i. 11, 12. 28—30. viii. 17
i 23 lxix. 30, 31. cvii. 21, 22. cxlvii. 1. Hos. xiv. 2. 1 Thes. v. 18 Heb. xiii. 15. 1 Pet ii. 5. 9.
k lvi. 12. lxxvi. 11. cxvi. 12—14. 17, 18. Lev. xxvii. 2, &c. Num. xxx. 2, &c Deut. xxiii. 21. Ec. v. 4, 5. Nah i. 15.——l lxxvii. 2. xci. 15. cvii. 6. 13. 19 28. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 12, 13. Job xxii 37. Luke xxii. 44. Acts xvi. 25. Jam. v 13.——m xxxiv. 3, 4. lxvi. 13—20 Luke xvii 15—18.——n 23. xxii. 23. Matt. v. 16. John xv. 8. 1 Pet. iv. 11. 14.

V. 3. God is said to *keep silence*, when he exercises long-suffering, and does not immediately punish men for their sins. Thus he long bore with the provocations and hypocrisy of Israel: as he still bears with the corruptions and abominations of professed Christians; and with the wickedness of mankind in general. But the time was approaching when he would no longer keep silence, but would come to execute vengeance on the guilty: and though his tribunal would be placed in Zion; yet his coming would be attended with those terrible displays of majesty, justice, and holiness, with which the law was given from mount Sinai. Thus when Christ came among the Jews, though in the character of a Saviour, they could not "abide the day of his coming;" and his righteous indignation, like unquenchable fire, burnt up the chaff; that is, he destroyed by awful judgments the bulk of the nation, which persisted in rejecting him. But his second coming to judge the world, to perfect the salvation of his people, and to punish the wicked, will be attended with still more tremendous displays of his power and justice; especially against such as neglect, oppose, or abuse his Gospel. (*Marg. Ref.*)—'The Jewish rabbies affirm the subject of 'this psalm to be, that judgment which will be executed 'in the days of Messiah; ignorant, alas! that they them-'selves, and their people, are now become the unhappy 'objects of that judgment.' (*Horne.*)

V. 4—6. All the inhabitants of heaven, as well as earth, shall be summoned to witness the proceedings of their omnipotent Sovereign, and they will all concur in declaring that his decisions are perfectly wise and righteous. The whole human race indeed must appear in judgment: yet the professed worshippers of God, who have his oracles and ordinances among them, are chiefly spoken of, in all the descriptions given us in Scripture of that solemn season: because these descriptions were especially given for their instruction, warning, and encouragement. The *saints* may mean those who are really such, and who are interested in the new covenant, through the sacrifice of the great Redeemer. These were separated from among the unbelieving Jews, before vengeance was executed on the nation: and they will be gathered together by the holy angels previously to the condemnation of the wicked at the last judgment. (*Marg. Ref.*) But some think that *professed saints* are meant, who trusted to the national covenant with Israel through the appointed sacrifices, and were at length to be convicted of substituting a form, instead of the power of godliness As "the "Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judg-"ment to the Son;" we cannot mistake the person of whom it is said, "For God is Judge himself."

V. 7—15. The Israelites in general confided and gloried in their relation to JEHOVAH as *their* God. And indeed they were peculiarly favoured by him, and were bound by every tie to worship and serve him only, and to expect their happiness from him. But this external profession, when insincere, could not secure them from his wrath: nay, God, even *their God*, would speak and testify against them. They were also prone to place their chief dependence on the legal sacrifices, without attending to their import, or offering them in a proper frame of mind: thus they mistook the shadow for the substance, and at length were condemned for that perverse mistake, when they persisted in rejecting the Messiah: for these sacrifices, when thus offered in unbelief, pride, and hypocrisy, were abominable to God: (*Note, Isaiah* i. 11—15.) To lead their minds therefore to an attention to the more inward and essential parts of religion, and to prepare them for a more spiritual dispensation, they were here informed that the Lord's controversy with them would not be about the omission of sacrifices, except as that arose from perverseness and rebellion. The time was approaching, when He would take no bullock or he-goat from them, requiring none but spiritual sacrifices. They could not be so gross as to suppose that he wanted their cattle, as he was the sole

16 ¶ But unto [o] the wicked God
saith, [p] What hast thou to do to declare
my statutes, or *that* [q] thou shouldest
take my covenant in thy mouth?
17 Seeing thou [r] hatest instruction,
and [s] castest my words behind thee.
18 When thou sawest a thief, then
[t] thou consentedst with him, and * hast
been [u] partaker with adulterers.
19 Thou † givest thy mouth to evil,
and [x] thy tongue frameth deceit.
20 Thou sittest *and* [y] speakest against
thy brother; thou [z] slanderest [a] thine
own mother's son.
21 These *things* hast thou done, and
[b] I kept silence; thou [c] thoughtest that
I was altogether *such an one* as thyself:
but [d] I will reprove thee, and [e] set *them*
in order before thine eyes.
22 Now [f] consider this, ye that [g] for-
get God, lest [h] I tear *you* in pieces, and
there be [i] none to deliver.
23 [k] Whoso offereth praise glorifieth
me: [l] and to him that ‡ ordereth *his* con-
versation *aright*, will I shew [m] the sal-
vation of God.

o Is. xlviii 22. lv. 6, 7. Ez. xviii. 27.
p Prov. xxvi. 7. Is. i. 15. xlviii 1, 2. lviiii. 1—7. Jer. vii. 4—7. Matt. vii. 3—5. 22, 23. Acts xix. 13—16. Rom. ii. 17—24. 1 Cor. ix. 27. 2 Pet. ii. 15.
q xxv 14. lxxviii. 36—38. Ez. xx. 37, 38. Heb. viii. 9.
r Prov. i. 7. 28, 29. v. 12, 13. viii. 36. xii. 1. John iii. 20. Rom. i. 28. 2 Thes. ii. 10—12. 2 Tim. iv. 3, 4.
s Neh. ix 26. Is v. 24. Jer. viii. 9. xviii. 12 xxxvi. 23, &c.——t Prov. i. 10—19. Is v 23. Mic. vii. 3. Rom. i 32. Eph. v 11—13.——* Heb. *thy portion* was *with adulterers*
u Lev. xx. 16. Job xxxi. 9—11. Prov. ii. 16—19. vii. 19—23. Jer v. 8, 9. Heb. xiii 4
Matt. xxiii. 30 1 Tim. v. 22.——† Heb. *sendest*. Iii. 2—4. Jer. ix. 5.——x v. 9. x. 7 xii. 2, 3. xxxvi. 3, 4 lv. 12. 21 lxiv. 3—5. Is. lix 3, 4. Hos. iv. 2 Rom. iii. 13, 14. Jam. iii. 5—9. Rev. xxi. 8——y xxxi. 18. Matt. v. 11. Luke xxii. 65.

z Lev. xix. 16. Prov. x. 18. 1 Tim. iii. 11. Tit ii. 3. Rev. xii. 10.
a Matt. x. 21.
b 3. cix. 1—3. Ec. viii. 11. Is. xxvi. 10. lvii. 12. Rom. ii. 4, 5.
c lxxiii. 11. xciv. 7—11. Num. xxiii. 19. Is. xl. 16—18.
d 8. Prov. xxix. 1. Rev. iii. 20.
e xc 8. Ec. xii. 14. Am. viii. 7. 1 Cor. iv 5.
f Deut. xxxii. 29. Ec. vii. 14 Ez. xviii 28 Hag. i. 5 Luke xv. 17.
g ix. 17. x. 4. Job viii. 13. Is. li. 13. Jer. ii. 32. Hos iv. 6.
h Hos. v. 14. xiii. 8 Rev. vi. 16, 17.
i vii. 2. 2 Sam. xxii. 42. Is. xlii. 22. Am ii. 14. Mic. v. 8.——k 14, 15. xxii 23 lxxxvi. 9. 12 Rom xii 1. xv. 6 9. Gal. i. 24.——l xxiv. 4, 5 xxv. 14 lxxxv. 9. John vii. 17. viii 31, 32 Acts x. 2—4. xi 14. xiii. 26——‡ Heb. *disposeth* his *way* Phil. i. 27. Jam. iii. 13. 1 Pet. i. 15——m xci. 16, Is. xii 2. xlv. 17. xlix. 7. li. 5, 6. Luke ii. 30.

Proprietor of all things; or imagine that he would eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats! Such sacrifices therefore could not be acceptable to him, except as expressions of faith and love. On the other hand, a humble thankful heart, disposed to worship and praise God, and to fulfil the engagements implied in the profession of being his people, as well as the vows they made in the day of their distress; and to confide in him and seek help from him in trouble by earnest prayer, were sacrifices suited to his holy nature. This spiritual worship springing from a penitent believing heart, and connected with humble submission and obedience, was the grand substance of true religion, even under the Mosaic dispensation; and would be the substance of *that* which was about to succeed: and worshippers of this character would be accepted and delivered, and would render glory and praise to God for temporal mercies and eternal salvation. This passage was evidently intended as an intimation, that the ceremonial law would be abrogated at the coming of the Messiah; as well as an encouragement to prayer and praise.

V. 16—21. Multitudes of the strictest professors and teachers of the Jewish Church, were not only superstitious and formal, (and so either blind guides or blindly led,) but even atrociously wicked; and yet they cloaked their crimes with apparent zeal. Thus in all ages many love the credit of being Christians, and the dignity of instructors, who hate instruction; and many deal in the word of God with their lips, who pour contempt upon it in their lives. And whilst they zealously plead for some parts of divine truth, they secretly, nay, perhaps openly, indulge themselves in lewdness, dishonesty, and in wicked and deceitful conversation, and the basest slander and calumny, especially against those who are strictly conscientious, and such pious persons as, being near to them, put them to shame by their example. Nay, in this manner they often excuse, and even think they have compensated for, their crimes, by their earnestness in promoting what they suppose to be the cause of God. But the righteous Judge disdains such vile hypocrites, and abhors their religious profession and preaching, even worse than their theft, adultery, and lies; because they tend more to disgrace the Gospel, and to prejudice or deceive the souls of men. "What have they to do to declare his statutes, or to take "his covenant in their mouths?" His cause needs not such helpers; he never set them to work, and they must expect his vengeance as their recompense. Such were the scribes and chief priests, who were scrupulously zealous about externals, whilst they were full of rapine and covetousness; and were seeking to murder the holy Jesus, by bearing false witness against him before Pilate, in the most atrocious manner. Now the whole of this strange delusion arises from an abuse of God's long-suffering, and a wilful mistake of his character and the intention of his Gospel: as if the methods of his grace, the doctrines of his word, or the ordinances of his worship, were *substituted in the stead of a holy life*, and afforded men the license to indulge their lusts with impunity. But as the Jews of old were reproved, convicted, condemned, and punished with the most dreadful severity, on these accounts: so will all the superstitious, formal, hypocritical, enthusiastic, or antinomian abusers of the Gospel, when the day of judgment shall come and the secrets of men shall be judged by Jesus Christ.

V. 22, 33. The Psalm concludes with warning all of every description, who forget God, (which is the cause of every fatal error and daring crime,) to consider the account which they must give, and to flee from the wrath to come; for if the Almighty appeared as their enemy, no deliverer could possibly be found: and with encouraging the upright to offer their humble tribute of grateful praise; with which God will be glorified through the promised Redeemer, notwithstanding their deficiencies: and in a circumspect and conscientious conversation, to wait for a fuller discovery and experience of God's salvation; or to look for the coming of their promised Saviour. According to the concluding words of these verses, no man ordereth his conversation or conduct aright, who trusts in his own works, and does not seek the salvation of God; none seeks that salvation properly, who is not conscientious in his whole conduct; and none, who unites the two, fails of salvation. The Latin version is very striking. 'Him 'that disposes, or regulates, his conduct, I will cause to 'enjoy my salvation.' The preventing grace of God leads a man, like Cornelius, to regulate his conduct piously and uprightly, and to wait for God's salvation in this way; and the promise ensures to such a person the enjoyment of that salvation. What a noble view does this psalm give then of God and of Revelation! God stands forth as the

PSALM LI.

David earnestly prays for mercy, humbly confesses his sins, and laments his original depravity, 1—6. He entreats forgiveness, sanctification, and renewed comfort, that he may glorify God and promote the conversion of sinners, 7—15. He shows that God delights more in a contrite heart than in legal sacrifices, 16, 17. He prays for the prosperity of the church, 18, 19.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, [a] when Nathan the prophet came unto him, [b] after he had gone in to Bathsheba.

[a] 2 Sam. xii. 1—13
[b] 2 Sam. xi. 2 &c.

Parent, and Lord, and Judge of all: exercising an universal providence, soliciting us to make him our refuge, to worship and serve him, promising us his reward and favour. And in that very volume of Scripture which enjoins so many ceremonies, how little intrinsic value is there ascribed to them, compared with spiritual worship and ordering the conversation aright!

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—15.

The almighty and eternal JEHOVAH hath spoken to men from mount Sinai as a Lawgiver, and from mount Zion as a Saviour: and ere long he will speak to the whole human race from his righteous tribunal. That solemn season will be to sinners "the day of wrath, and of the revelation of "the righteous judgment of God," whilst heaven and earth shall approve the sentence denounced against them. But they who have been favoured with the blessed Gospel, in which the beauty and glory of all the divine perfections shine forth from the face of Jesus Christ; and who have neglected or abused it, will hear the most tremendous doom. Happy they who are saints indeed; who have acceded to the covenant of grace by faith in the Redeemer's atoning sacrifice, and who have shown the sincerity of their love by the fruits of righteousness! these shall first be severed from among the wicked, and announced heirs of eternal life. But let us beware of resting in any form: even divine truths and institutions may be held and attended on in unrighteousness; and God will testify against his own professed people, who trust to their privileges, and frequent his ordinances in pride, superstition, or self-righteousness. He demands the heart, and will not be put off with an unmeaning external observance: how then can human inventions please him, when repentance, faith, and holiness, are neglected?—We cannot offer unto God any thing which he hath not bestowed upon us, or any thing that can profit him: so that the notion of *meriting* from him is replete with ignorance as well as arrogance. As the Jews and their costly oblations were abhorred, when they rejected him of whom Moses and their prophets had written; so will the ordinances of Christianity and even moral obedience be rejected, if substituted in *his* place: and no spiritual services can be performed, except by faith in him and the supply of his spirit. To be sensible of our own indigence, dependence, and unworthiness; to seek every thing from the all-sufficient God by faith and prayer; to render him the tribute of a thankful heart; to perform the vows implied in baptism and the Lord's supper; and to call upon him in every time of trouble, as our only Refuge and Friend, are reasonable sacrifices, and suited to him, who "is a Spirit, and seek-"eth such to worship him, as worship him in spirit and "truth." They who thus worship, glorify God: and every answer to prayer, received with gratitude, forms an earnest of their eternal salvation.

V. 16—22.

If ignorant formalists, though not grossly immoral or profane, are under a dangerous delusion, what will be the doom of those who understand, profess, and preach the truths of God; attend on and even administer his ordinances, and speak of his everlasting covenant: whilst they hate instruction, despise his commandments, and are companions with thieves, adulterers, liars, slanderers, and false swearers? Yet how many such professors and teachers of Christianity disgrace the present age!—How many such scandals are found even among those who are zealous for the doctrines of grace! And how strangely are they connived at, and enabled to keep up their confidence, as if the Judge of the world were altogether such an one as themselves! Indeed, their present impunity emboldens them to expect that they shall always escape. But the Judge will come and will strip off their masks, and reprove, convict, and condemn them: he will set in order before them, and publish to the world what they have done; He will say to each of them, 'See what thou hast 'wrought,' whilst the pages which record their crimes shall be read to their confusion; and they will be speechless, when sentenced to "depart into everlasting fire, "prepared for the devil and his angels." Let us then judge ourselves and beware of hypocrisy; let ministers see to it, that they preach first to themselves, and love and practise their own instructions: let every one inquire, whether he be indeed "allowed of God to be put in trust "with the Gospel;" or whether he run without being sent? Now it is evident that God abhorreth, and will never allow of, those who presume to declare his truths, whilst they are living in the love and habitual practice of gross sin, and take pleasure in those that do; and then slander and revile their more pious brethren, because not of their party, and because their example puts them to shame. If any have hitherto been thus forgetful of God, or given up to wickedness, let them consider their urgent danger: for if the Judge appear against them, who then can rescue them from his almighty indignation? He now warns, that he may not hereafter punish: let us then thankfully embrace his Gospel, and praise him for his mercy: and endeavouring to glorify him in word and deed, wait for his complete and eternal salvation.

a xxv. 6, 7 cix 21. cxix. 124. Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7 Num xiv. 18, 19 Dan ix. 9. 18. Mic vii. 18. 19. Rom. v 21, 22. Eph. i 6—8. ii. 4, 5
d v. 7. lxix. 13. 16. cvi. 7 45. Is. lxiii. 7. 15. Marg. Lam. iii. 32.
e xl. 11. lxxvii. 9. cxlv. 9.——f 9. Neh. iv. 5 Is. xliii. 25 xliv. 22. Jer. xviii. 23. Acts iii. 19 Col. ii. 14——g 7. Ez. xxxvi. 25. Zech. xiii 1. 1 Cor vi. 11. Heb. ix. 13, 14. x. 21, 22. 1 John i 7—9. Rev. i. 5. vii 14——h 7. xix 12

HAVE mercy upon me, O God, [c] according to thy loving-kindness: according unto [d] the multitude of thy [e] tender mercies [f] blot out my transgressions.

2 [g] Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and [h] cleanse me from my sin.

3 For [i] I acknowledge my transgressions: and [k] my sin *is* ever before me.

4 [l] Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done *this* [m] evil in thy sight: [n] that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, *and* be clear [o] when thou judgest.

i xxxii 5. xxxviii. 18. Lev xxvi. 40, 41. Neh. ix. 2 Job xxxiii. 27. Prov. xxviii. 13. Luke xv. 18—21.
k xl 12. Is. lix. 12. Jer ii 22.
l Gen. ix. 6. xx. 6. xxxix. 9. Lev. vi. 2—7 2 Sam. xii. 9, 10. 13, 14 Jam ii. 9—11.
m Gen xxxviii. 7. 2 Kings xvii. 17. xxi. 6.——n. 1 4. 6. Luke vii. 29. Rom. iii. 4. 19.
o Acts xvii. 31. Rom. ii 5. Rev xv 3, 4. xvi. 5. xix. 11.

NOTES.

PSALM LI. *Title.* (*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* xi. xii.) When Nathan had delivered his message, we may suppose that David retired to his chamber full of confusion, remorse, and anguish; and there poured forth his soul before God in unreserved confessions and fervent prayers. And, considering his rank, his age, and a variety of circumstances relating to his family, to persons disaffected to his government, and to his character among the surrounding nations, it might have been thought expedient for him to have been satisfied with these secret acts of contrition and devotion; with humbling himself before God by fasting and prayer; and with "bringing forth fruits meet for "repentance." Especially as God had already remitted the sentence of temporal death, to which the law condemned him. But he viewed the subject in another light, when brought to reflect seriously on his conduct and its probable consequences. The honour of God and of true religion was deeply concerned, and with it the best interests of vast multitudes: nor did there appear any other way in which the bad effects of his crimes could be so thoroughly prevented, as by his publicly taking the deepest shame to himself, for having acted directly contrary to that holy religion which he professed. Whatever might be the consequences to himself and his reputation, (zeal for the glory of God and love to his people having now revived and gained the ascendency in his heart, united with deep self-abhorrence, and a kind of indignation against himself,) he seems to have resolved, without delay, to publish to his family, his subjects, the world at large, and all future generations, the judgment which, in the sight of God, he now entertained of his late behaviour, in the substance of his secret confessions and supplications, and the way in which, with deep anguish and distress, he sought forgiveness and salvation. He therefore not only composed this psalm for his private use, or to show to his friends, or leave among his writings: but he gave it to the chief musician, that it might form a part of the public Psalmody at the tabernacle, and in consequence be circulated through all the land, and among other nations; and continue in the church, with his other sacred poems, for the instruction and warning of mankind in all future ages. Nothing can well be conceived more humiliating than such a measure; nothing could more decidedly show how much he preferred the honour of God to his own credit; in short, nothing could more clearly manifest the depth of genuine repentance.

V. 1, 2. The *mercy* of God, his *loving-kindness*, his *tender mercies*, the *multitude of his tender mercies*, form the only plea, which the royal penitent admits in seeking forgiveness of his heinous crimes. He does not once mention his former services in the cause of religion; or palliate his conduct, by the peculiar temptations of his high rank, and the customs of princes; or plead that he was inadvertently betrayed into it, and led on by imperceptible degrees, step by step: but as a vile and miserable sinner, with many repetitions, he dwells on the only cheering thought his case allowed of; and entreats, that God would, "to the praise of the glory of his grace," forgive his sins; as a debt that is remitted is blotted out. And as the stain was beyond expression deep, that he would thoroughly wash and cleanse it all away. The language is taken from the washings and purifications of the Mosaic law; and shows that the Psalmist here fervently prayed to be cleansed from the *pollution* as well as the *guilt* of his sins; that he was aware no outward forms or endeavours of his own could effect this cleansing; and that he sought the blessing through the redemption and grace of the promised Saviour. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 3. (*Note* xxxii. 1—3.) While David endeavoured to cover his sins, (to conceal or excuse them,) he could not *sincerely* and heartily seek forgiveness from God as an act of entirely unmerited mercy and grace. And this seems to have been his state of mind before Nathan came to him: but now "being come to himself," he is deeply conscious of his most heinous guilt; and confesses it openly and ingenuously, with all its aggravations: nay, the remembrance of his complicated baseness seems to haunt him continually, and his conscience incessantly reproaches him: so that he can by no means exclude the most distressing reflections. Thus he "submits to God's right-"eousness, "owns he deserves to perish, and is prepared, if spared, to ascribe the whole honour of his salvation to the rich mercy and grace of God alone. (*Notes*, *Luke* xv.)

V. 4. 'It is thy prohibition, O God, that can make 'a sin. I have sinned against men, but it is thy law that 'I have violated; in that is my offence.' (*Bp. Hall.*) 'If 'thou shouldst pronounce the heaviest sentence upon me 'for my crimes, and execute it with the greatest severity, 'I could not accuse thee of too much rigour; but would 'still justify thee in thy proceedings, and clear thee from 'all such unjust imputations.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) David's crimes had deeply injured Bathsheba, Uriah, Joab, and the other accessaries to Uriah's murder, the men slain with him, their families, and the nation; and they were likely to occasion most fatal consequences in various ways, to vast numbers: yet the chief malignity of his conduct consisted in this, that it was a complication of the most daring rebellions against the great and glorious Governor of the world; contempt of His majesty, excellency, and righteous law; a most ungrateful return for immense obligations; and an apostacy in heart from God, through idolatrous love of worldly pleasure. Indeed no words can ex-

5 Behold, [p] I was shapen in iniquity;
and in sin did my mother * conceive me.
6 Behold, [q] thou desirest truth in [r] the
inward parts: and [s] in the hidden *part*
thou shalt make me to know wisdom.
7 [t] Purge me with hyssop, [u] and I
shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be
whiter than snow.

p lviii. 3. Gen. v. 3. viii. 21. Job xiv. 4 xv. 14–16. John iii. 6. Rom v. 12. Eph. ii. 3.
* Heb. *warm.*
q xxvi. 8. cxxv. 4. Gen xx. 5, 6. 2 Kings xx. 3. 1 Chr. xxix. 17. 2 Chr xxxi. 20, 21. Prov. ii 21. Jer. v. 3. John iv. 23, 24 2 Cor. x i. 12. Jam iv. 8.
r v. 9. 1 Sam. xvi. 7, Job xxxviii. 36. Luke xi. 39. Rom. vii. 22.——s Job xxxii. 8. Jer xxxi. 33. xxxii. 40 1 Pet iii 4 ——t Lev. xiv. 4—7. 49—52. Num xix 18–20. Heb. ix 19
u Heb. ix. 13, 14 1 John i. 7. Rev. i. 5.——x Is. i. 18. Eph. v. 26, 27. Rev. vii. 13, 14.

8 [y] Make me to hear joy and gladness; *that* [z] the bones *which* thou hast broken may rejoice.
8 [a] Hide thy face from my sins, and [b] blot out all mine iniquities.
10 [c] Create in me [d] a clean heart, O God; and [e] renew a † right spirit within me.

y xiii. 5. xxx. 11. cxix. 81, 82. cxxvi. 5, 6. Matt v. 4.
z vi. 2, 3. xxxviii. 3. Job v. 17, 18. Is. lvii 15–19. Hos. vi. 1, 2. Luke iv. 18. Acts ii. 37—41. xvi. 29—34.
a Is. xxxviii. 17. Jer. xvi. 17. Mic. vii 18, 19.
b 1. Col. ii. 14.
c 2 Cor v. 17.
Eph. ii 10 ——d lxxiii. 1 Prov. xx. 9. Jer. xiii. 27. xxxii. 39. Ez. xi. 19. xviii. 31. xxxvi. 25—27 37. Matt v. 8. Acts xv. 9. 1 Pet i. 22.——e Rom xii. 2 Eph. iv. 22—24. Col. iii. 10. Tit. iii 5.——† Or, *constant* lxxviii. 8. 37. Josh. xiv. 14. 1 Kings xv. 3—5 Acts xi. 23. 1 Cor. xv. 58. Jam. i. 8.

press the heinousness and aggravation of his guilt in this view of it: and this view seems to have possessed and overwhelmed his mind to such a degree, as to make every other consideration appear comparatively as nothing. Even before the law was given, God himself stated that the grand malignity of murder consisted in its being an assault on man, whom he created in his own image. (*Gen.* ix. 6.) Crimes in civil society, which are injurious to individuals, are yet punished as violations of the laws of the land, done against the king and the peace of the realm; such are called 'Pleas of the Crown,' and high treason is the chief crime in every land. David indeed was not accountable for his conduct to any human tribunal; and though he had carefully concealed his transgressions from man, he was sensible that the Lord had witnessed the whole, and would bring it to light: he therefore found himself constrained to plead guilty to the most humiliating charges of guilt and depravity, against mankind without exception, which were contained in the word of God; for he was convinced that *his* base conduct, after all his peculiar advantages and zealous profession of religion, would abundantly justify those declarations of the entire wickedness of the human heart, and fully confute the blasphemous censures which ungodly men ventured to pass upon the government of God, and upon his denunciations and judgments, as if unjust and severe. Thus, in every sense, the case of David, when well understood, is suited to justify God in all his declarations, and to vindicate his whole government from every aspersion.

V. 5, 6. David was the offspring of lawful and honourable marriage; nothing is hinted against his father Jesse in the sacred oracles, and he repeatedly speaks of his mother as the hand-maid of the Lord: yet having received from his parents Adam's fallen nature, with all its evil propensities, he confesses he was conceived and shapen in iniquity. His late dreadful fall evinced the depravity of his heart; and in these instances he had only acted according to its corrupt bias; being in himself naturally prone to rebellion against God. This he confessed in deep humiliation; yet it by no means followed that the Lord should relax in his requirements, because of the depraved propensities of his apostate creatures. His perfect law requires *entire* truth, purity, and love in the heart and conduct; and in this alone he delighteth; and *sincerity* from the inmost soul, in repentance, faith, and renewed obedience, is requisite even according to the Gospel: this the Psalmist had been taught, before his transgressions: "in the hidden "part the LORD *had* made him to know wisdom," which was a great aggravation of his guilt, in that he sinned against knowledge, conscience, and the peculiar obligations conferred on him. If we read the clause in the future tense, as in our translation, it expresses the Psalmist's hope that the Lord would, notwithstanding his guilt and depravity, graciously communicate to him true wisdom; and enable him to know and do what he required and delighted in. 'I am so far from representing my innate 'propensity to evil, as an excuse for what I have done; 'that I confess the consideration of it ought to have made 'me the more watchful and diligent to suppress those bad 'inclinations which I knew to be so natural.——I am 'amazed at my folly, that I should be so careless; when 'I know that thou requirest us, not to entertain, with the 'least kindness, those first motions which we find in our 'thoughts and desires after any evil, but uprightly to 'oppose them.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 7. The *hyssop*, employed in sprinkling the blood of the sacrifices, (as it is generally thought;) in the leper's offerings when cleansed; and in sprinkling the water of purification, (*Marg. Ref.*) represented the efficacy of faith, in applying to the soul the blood of Christ for pardon, and the influences of the Holy Spirit for sanctification. Thus David prayed to be completely cleansed from all sin, both as to its guilt and pollution, that he might be as if he had never sinned: and thus believers will at length be made equal to the angels, who are arrayed in spotless robes of innocence, whiter than the snow itself.

V. 8. A man who has carelessly fallen from a precipice and broken his bones, when he comes to himself will feel exquisite torture, and be utterly disabled for the present; and probably will be reminded of his fall as long as he lives. Thus David had, through unwatchfulness, been induced to commit the most heinous wickedness: and though, by the abundant mercy of God, he was preserved from that final destruction which he had justly merited; yet he experienced such anguish of conscience, and such a sense of the divine displeasure, and met with such severe rebukes from the Lord, that he felt as if all his bones had been broken: he was full of pain; he was crippled, and disabled from his former employments. He hoped, however, that the God of salvation would restore his peace and comfort; and thus set his broken bones, and cause them to rejoice.

V. 9. 'The soul, still restless and uneasy, reiterates 'her request, that God would not only cease to behold her 'iniquity for the present, as a man who turneth away his 'face from a writing, but that he would not behold it any 'more, as a man who blotteth out what is written, so 'that it can never be read again.' (*Horne.*)

11 [f] Cast me not away from thy presence; and [g] take not thy [h] Holy Spirit from me.

12 [i] Restore unto me [k] the joy of thy salvation: and [l] uphold me *with thy* [m] free Spirit.

13 [n] *Then* will I teach transgressors [o] thy ways; and sinners shall be [p] converted unto thee.

14 [q] Deliver me from * blood-guiltiness, O God, thou [r] God of my salvation: *and* [s] my tongue shall sing aloud of [t] thy righteousness.

15 [u] O LORD, [x] open thou my lips; and [y] my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

xlii. 2. lxxi. 9. 18. Gen. iv 14. 2 Kings xiii 23. xvii. 18 - 23. xxiii 27. 2 Thes. i. 9.
g Gen vi. 3. Judge. xiii. 25. xv. 14. xvi. 29. 1 Sam. x. 10. xvi 14. 2 Sam. vii 14. Is. lxiii. 10 11.
h Luke xi. 13. John xiv. 26. Rom. i. 4. viii. 9. Eph. iv 30.——i lxxxv. 6—8. Job. xxix. 2, 3. Is. lvii. 17, 18. Jer xxxi. 9—14.——k xiii. 5 xxi. 1. xxxv. 9. Is xlix. 13. lxi. 10. Luke i. 47. Rom v. 2—11 ——l xvii. 5. xix. 13. cxix. 116, 117. 133. Is. xli. 10. Jer. xii 23. Rom. xiv. 4. 1 Pet i. 5. Jude 24.——m Rom. viii. 15. 2 Cor. iii. 17. Gal. iv. 6, 7.
n xxxii. 5. 8—10. Luke xxii. 32. John xxi. 15—17. Acts ii. 38—41. ix. 19—22 2 Cor. v. 8—20
o xxv 4 8 Is. ii. 3. Acts xiii 10.
p xix.7 Is vi. 10. Jer. xxxi. 18. Matt. xviii. 3. Acts iii 19. xv. 3. xxvi 18—20. Jam. v. 19, 20
q Ex. vi 9. lv. 23. Gen. ix. 6. xlii. 22. 2 Sam. iii. 28. xi. 15—17. xii. 9 xxi. 1.
* Heb *bloods*. Ez. xxxiii. 8. Hos. iv. 2. Acts xviii. 6. xx. 26.
r xxxix. 22. lxviii. 20. lxxxviii. 1. Is. xii. 2. xlv 17 Hab iii. 18.——s xxxv 28. lxxi. 15—24. lxxxvi. 12, 13.——t Ezra ix. 13 Neh. ix. 33. Dan. ix. 7. 16 Rom. x 3 ——u Gen. xliv. 16. 1 Sam. ii. 9. Ez. xvi. 63. Matt. xxii. 12. Rom. iii. 19 ——x Ex. iv. 11. Ez iii. 27. xxix. 21. Mark vii 34.——y lxii. 3—5. cxix. 16 Heb. xiii 15.

V. 10. The production of a holy disposition in a sinner's heart: the forming him to a spiritual judgment and taste, a submissive will, a pure imagination and well regulated affections, is a *new creation:* even as if Satan, by almighty power, should again be made a holy angel. This state of the understanding and heart is "a *right* spirit," it is reasonable and excellent; such as all intelligent beings should possess, and absolutely necessary to true liberty and felicity. Man originally possessed it: but it was lost by the fall: and where it is again produced, it is the *renewal* of a right spirit. This is begun in regeneration, and carried on by progressive sanctification, and completed in glory. When the sinner feels such a change to be necessary, and that he is unable to work it in himself: and when he reads the promises of God to this purpose, (*Ezek.* xxxvi. 25—27.) he asks it from God: and every discovery of remaining sinfulness leads the believer to renew this supplication; and thus the change is gradually effected.—The margin, however, more exactly from the original, renders it, *constant*, "Renew a *constant*" or an *established* "spirit within me." Holy angels are *established* in a right spirit; and so are "the spirits of just men made perfect." Even on earth real Christians have in a measure this *constant established* spirit: but hypocrites are *unstable.* David had experienced the inconstancy of his heart; and was sensible, that even if pardoned and restored, he should, in case he were left to himself, be again drawn aside; and prayed earnestly for that *constancy*, which might enable him "with purpose of heart to cleave unto the Lord." (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 11. Eternal banishment from the gracious presence of God, under his wrath and curse, constitutes a principal part of the misery of hell: and something like this misery may be felt on earth, even by the believer, when, excluded from comfortable communion with God, he finds his heart oppressed with the sense or dread of deserved wrath. This heaviest of all afflictions David deprecated. The Spirit of God departed from Saul when he was rejected from being king; and David feared the same sentence for his more atrocious crimes, as in some respects they certainly were. All his sufficiency, as the prophet of God, as his anointed king, and as the Psalmist of Israel, was derived from the Holy Spirit: and all his comfort and usefulness must terminate, if the Holy Spirit should be finally taken from him. It is indeed, on scriptural ground, maintained, that the Spirit of life and sanctification is never finally taken from believers: but, even in this case, their comforts may expire in despondings, their credit in disgrace, and all their gifts and usefulness may wither and be lost to the end of life.

V. 12, 13. "The joy of God's salvation," arises from a persuasion and perception of the mercy and grace of God according to his promises, of the nature and glory of his salvation, as revealed in the Scriptures, of its suitableness to the sinner's wants, its freeness and sufficiency; from a prevailing confidence of an interest in it; and from communion with God and the exercise of faith, hope, admiring, adoring, grateful love, and all other holy affections, as springing from the Spirit of sanctification. The raptures and ecstasies peculiar to the prophets were of a very different nature, and arose from the sublime discoveries made to them in dreams or visions, and they did not always imply holiness of heart: whereas *the joy of salvation* is the common privilege of the regenerate, according to the degree of their grace, and belongs to none else.—This joy David had experienced, and he had lost it by sin: that loss he regrets; and he earnestly prays for the restoration of it: for it cannot subsist, unless the conscience be kept tender, the heart watchful and spiritual, and the will submissive; and unless communion with God be maintained, and the Holy Spirit not grieved by gross misconduct. But the royal penitent likewise feared, that even should he recover this holy joy, he should again lose it if left to himself; and therefore he earnestly prayed that God would uphold him with his *free* Spirit. The Holy Spirit may be thus called, because he is *freely* bestowed on sinners through the gracious Saviour: but this epithet seems rather to mean, that he sets the soul at liberty from sin and Satan; produces a noble, ingenuous, and liberal disposition, and teaches us to serve and worship God as children, and not as slaves. (*Marg. Ref.*) Thus comforted and upheld, he purposed to teach sinners the ways of God, of peace, and holiness; and by using his influence for this purpose, and warning and encouraging them by his experience, he trusted many would be led to "repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance."

V. 14. The guilt of murder as it were haunted David's mind, and he was still praying for the removal of it from his conscience. And if he might but obtain this blessing from the God of his salvation, though dreadful judgments had been denounced against him and his family for his crimes; he yet engaged to be open in vindicating the justice of God in them, connected with his own deep disgrace. Many expositors explain the words to mean, that he would celebrate that *righteousness* by which sinners, who believe, are accounted righteous before God, or the faithfulness of God to his promises.

V. 15. Conscious guilt had stopped David's mouth, when he attempted, as formerly, to show forth the praises of God, or to plead his cause: but he trusted that the

z 6. Ex. xxi. 14. Num xv 30, 31 xxxv. 31. Deut. xxii 22.
* Or, *that I should give it.*
a xl. 6. 1. 8 Prov. xv. 8. xxi 27. Is. i 11—15 Jer. vii. 22, 23. Am. v 21—23. Heb. x. 5, 6.
b cvii 22. Mark xii. 33. Rom xii. 1 Phil. iv 18 Heb xiii. 16 1 Pet. ii. 5 — c xxxiv. 18. cxlvii. 3 2 Kings xxii 19 Is. lvii. 15 lxi. 1—3 lxvi 2 Ez. ix. 3, 4. 6 Matt v 3. Luke xviii. 11—14. — d xxii. 24 cii. 17. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 12, 13. Am. v. 21. Luke vii. 39—50. xv. 2—7 10 21—32.

16 For thou [z] desirest not sacrifice; * else would I give *it*: [a] thou delightest not in burnt-offerings.

17 [b] The sacrifices of God *are* [c] a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, [d] thou wilt not despise.

18 [e] Do good in [f] thy good pleasure unto Zion: [g] build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

19 Then shalt thou be [h] pleased with [i] the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt-offering, and whole burnt-offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

e xxv. 22. cii 14. cxxii. 6—9. cxxxvii 5, 6. Is. lxii 1. 6, 7. Jer li.50. 2 Cor. xi. 28, 29
f Luke xii. 32. Eph. i. 5. 9. Phil. ii. 13. 2 Thes i 11.
g Neh ii. 17. Is. lviii 12 Dan. ix. 25. Mic. vii. 11. Zech. ii. 5.
h lxvi 13—15. cxviii 27. Eph. v. 2 — i iv. 5 Mal. iii. 3.

comforts of his pardoning love, and the returning influences of his Holy Spirit, would open his mouth, and give him confidence and liberty upon such favourite themes.

V. 16. Murder and adultery were by the law punishable by death; and therefore no sacrifices were appointed to be offered by those who were guilty of them. The Lord would not accept, and did not desire, any sacrifices in David's case: and indeed he had no delight in sacrifices and burnt-offerings *for their own sake;* but merely as shadows of the true atonement, and expressions of a penitent believing thankful heart.

V. 17. The legal sacrifices were long after this continued, as types of the Redeemer's atoning sacrifice: nor can a broken heart do aught towards *purchasing* forgiveness. But a humble spirit, broken off from all self-dependence and the love of sin, and crushed down into deep self-abasement and abhorrence, is a spiritual sacrifice pleasing and honourable to God: for he who is enabled to present this oblation, unreservedly submits to the justice of God; casts himself, without plea or excuse, upon his free mercy; thankfully accepts of his salvation; and will walk according to it, in all humble obedience, and patient submission to the will of God. This broken and contrite spirit man despises as mean and contemptible; and the possessor is apt to deem it unmeet to be presented to his offended Sovereign: but God will never despise or reject such an unequivocal effect of his own renewing grace.

V. 18, 19. David feared lest his guilt should render him an *Achan* in the congregation of Israel: and therefore he concluded his penitential prayer, with entreating God to protect and prosper Zion; that the ordinances of his house might be administered to his glory, and the edification of his people. For though the Lord delighted not in burnt-offerings, for their own sake: yet as they were typical of the Messiah's atonement; as they subserved the interests of true piety, and were accompanied by other sacrifices of righteousness, he was pleased with them.—'Thus it ought to be the fervent prayer of every man, especially in any exalted station, that no sins by him committed may any ways prejudice others, or obstruct the edification of the Church.' (*Horne.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—4.

If the most eminent believer ceases to watch and pray, Satan may obtain such advantages against him, that for the time he shall seem perfectly fascinated and stupified: but the Lord will at length, by rebukes or corrections, bring him to himself; and the depth of his humiliation will be proportioned to the heinousness of his sins. But the hypocrite is durably callous; and his religious profession and opinions are abused to excuse his crimes, and to buoy up his presumptuous confidence. The true penitent, even though before his fall he had been eminently holy and useful, has nothing to plead, except his own misery and the Lord's abundant mercy. For the more we are enabled to do in his service, the greater are our obligations: and our sins are the more aggravated when committed against knowledge, mercies, and vows; when they do violence to the new nature and the strivings of the Holy Spirit; and when they are inconsistent with our character and profession, and tend to hishonour the Gospel and mislead our brethren. The real penitent will be deeply humbled and afflicted, but he will not sink into despair; and in proportion as he renounces every false confidence, the more earnestly will he call upon God to "have mercy on him, according "to the multitude of his tender mercies." He longs to have the whole debt of his sins cancelled, and every stain cleansed. He would be thoroughly washed from his iniquities, till all his guilt and defilement be completely removed: but the hypocrite always has some secret reserves, and would spare some favourite lust. Whilst sinners conceal or palliate their sins, they are out of the way of mercy: but when they humbly and ingenuously plead guilty, and unreservedly confess their crimes, they may even plead that confession as a reason why they should be spared: for this yields the point in contest; i. e. that the Lord might justly punish, and that salvation must be all of grace. When a load of guilt oppresses a man of a tender conscience, the recollection of his sins and their aggravations follows him into company and into retirement, it occurs to his mind in scenes of business and of pleasure, and even breaks his rest, and disquiets his dreams, so that "his sin is ever before him:" but slight convictions, where the heart is not broken, are soon shaken off; and the wound is skinned over, but not cured. The true penitent considers every sin as rebellion against the authority and infinite Majesty of heaven. If he has been preserved from those crimes which evidently injure society, he reflects with shame upon the enmity and ingratitude of his heart against God, which have been manifested in his general conduct; and on this account he thinks himself a chief sinner: but if guilty of grosser transgressions, he considers his rebellion against God in them far more enormous than any injury which he has done to men like himself. He is also ashamed of the folly of bestowing pains to hide those actions from men, which are done in the sight of his Lord and Judge: he pleads the cause of God against himself, and allows of the most humiliating charge in his word, as true in his own case: whilst they who excuse themselves,

PSALM LII.

David contrasts the deceit and malice of Doeg with the goodness of God, 1—4. He predicts Doeg's ruin, and the joy of the righteous, 5—7. He professes confidence in God, and that he shall praise him for ever, 8, 9.

To the chief Musician, Maschil, *A Psalm* of David, when [a] Doeg the Edomite came and [d] told Saul, and said unto him, David is come to the house of Ahimelech.

WHY [c] boastest thou thyself in [d] mischief, [e] O mighty man? [f] the goodness of God *endureth* continually.

2 [g] Thy tongue deviseth mischief; [h] like a sharp razor, [i] working deceitfully.

a liv. 3. 1 Sam. xxi. 7. xxii. 9—19.

b lix. 7. Jer. ix. 8. Ez. xxii. 9.
c x. 2, 3. xciv 4. Rom. i 30. 2 Tim iii. 2.
d vii. 14. x. 7. xxxvi. 3—6. Prov. vi. 14. 18. Is lx. 4. Mic. vii 3.
e Gen. vi. 4, 5. x. 8, 9. 1 Sam. xxi. 7.
f ciii. 17. cvii. 1. 1 John iv. 6, 7.
g l. 19. lxiv. 2—6 cxl. 2, 3 Prov. vi. 16—19 xxx. 14. Jer. ix 3, 4. xviii. 18 Matt. xxvi 59. Acts vi 11—13. xxiv. 1 5 Rev. xii. 10.——h lvii. 4. lix. 7. Prov. xii. 18. xviii. 21.——i cix. 2. cxx 2 3 Cor. iv. 2. xi. 13.

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often dare to arraign and censure the decisions and proceedings of the Almighty.

V. 5—13.

When the heart is deeply humbled on the recollection of heinous transgressions, the penitent is led to trace back the streams of actual sin to the fountain of original depravity, not to cavil or object with the infidel and the hypocrite, but for his own deeper humiliation: he compares the propensities of his heart with the holy law and glorious perfections of God; and perceiving the contrariety, "abhors "himself, and repents in dust and ashes." When he considers that "truth in the inward parts," in which the Lord delighteth, and that wisdom that he teacheth, and how contrary he hath often acted to both, he is ashamed of his temper and conduct, and is led the more entirely to expect every thing good from the influences of divine grace, overcoming the tendency of corrupt nature. In short he feels his need of pardon and of holiness; he longs for peace of conscience and purity of heart; and his experience of his own utter inability to obtain them for himself puts vigour into his prayers to the Lord, to purge him by the blood and Spirit of Christ, "that he may be clean; to wash him, "that he may be whiter than snow;" to "cause him "to hear joy and gladness, that his troubled spirit "may rejoice;" and having pardoned all his sins, by almighty power "to create in him a clean heart, and re-"new a right spirit within him," that for the future he may hate and flee from all sin. He longs for this renewal to holiness as much as for the joy of salvation; and to be upheld from falling, equally with the light of God's countenance, and the consolations of his Holy Spirit. Nothing so animates the soul to teach the ways of God to sinners, and to seek for their conversion, as a deep experience of the bitterness of sin, and of the freeness and pleasantness of the pardoning love of God: they therefore always form the most zealous preachers to others, who have themselves been most deeply humbled; and they are most earnest for the salvation of their fellow-sinners, who most value and rejoice themselves in the salvation of God.

V. 14—19.

When the heart is humble and the conscience tender, renewed recollection of heinous transgressions again discourages the soul: but this excites more fervent prayers, and when mercy is bestowed by the God of salvation, such penitents will most abound in thankful praises. Yet conscious guilt stops the mouth, and the humbled sinner is afraid or ashamed to speak of his God, as in times past, until the impediment be removed by some tokens of pardoning love, and the comforts of the Holy Spirit. Such an one would do any thing, or part with any thing, to obtain pardon and peace; but human inventions are worthless, and even divine ordinances are no more than *means* of communicating the blessings procured by the sacrifice of Christ; and which can only be received by a broken and contrite heart, with which God is well pleased. No personal fears or troubles of conscience can render the gracious soul forgetful of the interests of the church, or indifferent about them: the humble believer and faithful minister often fear, lest their own misconduct should blast their endeavours for doing good: and whatever they suffer, or whatever become of them, they still desire and pray, that true religion may prevail, and that spiritual sacrifices may abound through Jesus Christ to the praise and glory of God. 'O Lord, give us true repentance, for thy mercies' sake; help us to offer the sacrifice of a contrite spirit; preserve us from hypocrisy and blood guiltiness, especially that of occasioning the ruin of immortal souls by our example or neglect; and enable us to walk with increasing watchfulness, and to pray more fervently for our fellow-christians and fellow-sinners.'

NOTES.

PSALM LII. V. 1. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xxii.) Doeg is here represented as boasting of his successful treachery and savage cruelty, in murdering a multitude of unarmed and unresisting priests, and of women and children; as if he had performed some great exploit: and perhaps he menaced David and his company with the same vengeance. But the Psalmist, by contrasting Doeg's malice and mischief with the persevering goodness of God, sharply reproved him: and in fact, relying on the faithful and merciful promises of God, he set him and his other enemies at defiance.

V. 2. Doeg appeared before Ahimelech with the semblance of piety; yet treacherously became his accuser and murderer. This unsuspected malice and cruelty were like a mortal blow given with a well-set razor, so as scarcely to be felt.

3 Thou [k] lovest evil more than good; *and* [l] lying rather than to speak righteousness. Selah.

4 Thou lovest all [m] devouring words, * O *thou* deceitful tongue.

5 [n] God shall likewise † destroy thee for ever: he shall take thee away, and [o] pluck thee out of *thy* dwelling-place, and [p] root thee out of [q] the land of the living. Selah.

6 The [r] righteous also shall see, and [s] fear, [t] and shall laugh at him:

7 [u] Lo, *this is* the man *that* [x] made not God his strength; but [y] trusted in the abundance of his riches, *and* [z] strengthened himself in his ‡ wickedness.

8 But I *am* [a] like a green olive-tree in the house of God: [b] I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever.

9 [c] I will praise thee for ever, because thou hast done *it:* and I will [d] wait on thy name: [e] for *it is* good before thy saints.

k Jer. iv. 22. Mic. iii. 2. Rom. i. 25. 2 Tim. iii. 4.
l lxii. 4. Jer. x. 3—5. 8. John viii. 44. Rev. xxii. 15.
m 1 Sam. xxii. 19. Jam. iii. 6—9.
* Or, and *the deceitful tongue.*
n vii. 14—16. lv. 23. lxiv. 7—10. cxx. 2—4. cxl. 9—11. Prov. xii. 19. Rev. xxi. 8.
† Heb. *beat thee down*
o xxxvii. 35, 36. Job xviii. 14. xx. 6, 7. Luke xvi. 27, 28.
p Prov. ii. 22.
q xxvii. 13. cxvi. 9. Is. xxxviii. 11.
r xxxvii. 34. xcvii. 8. Mal. i. 5. Rev. xv. 4. xvi. 5—7. xviii. 20. xix. 1, 2.
s xl. 3. cxix. 120.
t lviii. 10, 11. Is. xxxvii. 22.
u Is. xiv. 16, 17. John xix. 5.
x cxlvi. 3—5. Jer. xvii. 5.
y xlix. 6, &c. lxii. 9, 10. Job xxxi. 24, 25. 1 Tim. vi. 17
z lxxiii. 7—11. 18—20. Ec. viii. 8. Hos. xii. 7, 8.
‡ Or, *substance.*
a xcii. 12—14. Jer. xi. 16. Hos. xiv. 6—8. Rom. xi. 24.
b xiii. 5. xxxiii. 18. cxlvii. 11.
c cxlv. 1, 2. cxlvi. 2. Eph. iii. 20, 21.
d xxvii. 14. xl. 1. xlviii. 9, 10. lxii. 1, 5. cxxiii. 2, 3. cxxx. 5, 6. Pro. xviii. 10.
e liv. 6. lxxiii. 25, 26.

PSALM LIII.

The general corruption of mankind; the madness of persecutors; and the terrors that seize on them, 1—5. *A prayer for the salvation of Israel,* 6.

V. 3, 4. It appears that Doeg not only sought the favour of Saul, but entered cordially into the detestable service. His heart, being enmity against God, hated his priests and servants, because he had a rooted aversion to piety and holiness. He loved evil, lying, and murder, and gave them a decided preference to goodness, righteousness, and truth: for he took pleasure in gratifying his malignity and impiety, as others do in gratifying avarice or sensual lusts. Nor was this all: for he loved and preferred in others the same hateful dispositions in which he indulged himself; and by calumny and lies prepared the way for persecution and murder. Thus he resembled, and was in some respects a type of, those who saw and hated the holy Jesus, because they hated the Father that sent him, and accomplished his death by lying witnesses and virulent accusations.

V. 5. An accumulation of most expressive metaphors is here used, to mark the certainty of that dreadful punishment which awaited this prosperous and haughty persecutor.

V. 6, 7. The righteous, beholding the ruin of this vile transgressor, would reverence the divine justice, become more afraid of sin, and be confirmed in true religion: yet they would exult in beholding condign vengeance executed upon one who was become so execrable and terrible by his crimes; and express cordial satisfaction in observing the event of a man's trusting in wealth and prosperity, encouraging himself in wickedness, and renouncing God and setting him at defiance.

V. 8. *A green,* &c. The olive-tree produces the oil, which is useful to man, and was employed in the worship of God. (*Note, Judges,* ix. 9.) Thus David, being rooted in love to God's ordinances, would abide and be fruitful in his house: whilst Doeg, "who was detained before the "LORD," became a fire-brand to destroy others and himself.

V. 9. The Psalmist praised God, as if his prediction had already been fulfilled; and he determined to wait still on his name. The *Name* of God is glorious and excellent, in the judgment of all his saints: and they all deem it right, reasonable, honourable, and profitable, to wait patiently his time, in his ways, for the performance of his promises.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is far worse to glory in, than to perpetrate, wickedness: yet many mighty men have been ambitious of being distinguished by doing extensive mischief, with valour, or crafty policy. Indeed poets, orators, and historians have generally celebrated those as heroes, whose conduct has been the reverse of the divine goodness, and the very counterpart of Satan's malice, pride, deceit, and murder; who have abused superior advantages and endowments, to devise and execute plans of more extensive devastation; or by slanders and treachery to excite war and bloodshed among those who were at peace. The words of a deceitful tongue are often, not only as a sharp razor, but more devouring than the sword; and numbers in all ages have loved evil more than good; and lies more than truth and equity. —But it is wonderful 'that any man should value 'himself for being able to do mischief, when God es-'teemeth it his glory to do good:' and his goodness will increase the condemnation of all those who are emboldened by it in committing iniquity: but it forms the security of those who depend on it and copy it as their example.—The believer foresees that God will cast down, sweep away, eradicate and extirpate from the earth, and destroy for ever in hell, those who make not him their strength, but idolize their wealth and prosperity, and who encourage themselves in wickedness: and no criminals will perish with greater exultation of the righteous than hardened persecutors. Their success is like the luxuriant growth of some poisonous plant, which it is a public service to destroy. But the righteous man is a fruitful olive-tree, planted in a good soil: he trusts in the everlasting mercy of God, and delights in his ordinances; and however he be now afflicted, (and thus conformed to the suffering Redeemer,) he will wait on the name of the Lord, and will praise him for ever. In expectation of this felicity, let us begin the work of heaven on earth; praying continually that we may only witness, but never share the perdition of the ungodly.

To the chief Musician upon [a] Mahalath Maschil, *A Psalm* of David.

THE [b] fool hath [c] said in his heart, *There is* no God. [d] Corrupt are they, and [e] have done abominable iniquity: [f] *there is* none that doeth good.

2 [g] God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were *any* [h] that did understand, that did [i] seek God.

3 [k] Every one of them is gone back: they are all together become [l] filthy; *there is* [m] none that doeth good, no, not one.

4 Have [n] the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who [o] eat up my people *as* they eat bread: they have not called upon God.

5 [p] There * were they in great fear *where* no fear was: for God hath [q] scattered the bones of him that encampeth *against* thee: [r] thou hast put *them* to shame; [s] because God hath despised them.

6 † O that the salvation of Israel *were come* [t] out of Zion! When God [u] bringeth back the captivity of his people, [x] Jacob shall rejoice, *and* Israel shall be glad.

a lxxxviii. *title.* b xiv 1, &c. xcii. 6. Matt v. 22 Luke xii. 20 c x 6. 11. 13. 1 Kings xii. 26. Rom. i. 22. 28. d Gen vi. 5, 6. 11—13. Job xiv. 4. xv. 16 e Lev xviii. 24—30. Deut xii. 31 1 Kings xiv 24. Ez. xvi 47. 51. 1 Pet. iv. 3 f Rom. iii. 10, &c. g xxxiii. 13, 14. cii 19. Jer. xvi. 17. xxiii. 24. h cxi. 10 Deut. iv. 6 Job xxviii. 28 i x. 4 xxvii. 8. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. 2 Chr xv 2. xix. 3. Is. lv. 6 k xiv 3 2 Sam xx 2. Is. liii. 6. lxiv 6. Jer viii. 5, 6. Zeph. i. 6. l Job xv. 16. Ez. xxxvi. 25. 2 Cor vii. 1. Rev xxii. 11. m Rom iii. 12. 1 John ii. 29. 3 John 11 n xciv 8. Is. xxvii. 11. Jer. iv. 22. Matt. xxiii. 17, &c o xxvii. 2. Jer. x. 25. Rev xvii. 16. p Lev. xxvi. 17. 36 Deut xxviii. 65—67 1 Sam xiv. 15. 2 Kings vii 6, 7 Job xv. 21. Prov. xxviii. 1——* Heb. *they feared a fear.* xiv. 5.——q cxli. 7. Ez. vi. 5. xxxviii. 1—11.

r xxxv. 4. 26. xl. 14. lxxxiii. 16, 17 s ii. 4. lxxiii. 20. Is. xxxvii. 22, &c. Lam ii 6. † Heb. *Who will give salvations,* &c xiv. 7. t i. 2. Is. xii. 6. xiv. 32. u lxxxv. 1. cxxvi. 4. Job xlii. 10. Jer. xxxx 18. xxxi. 23. Joel iii. 1. Am. ix. 14. x cvi. 46—48 Ezra iii. 11. Neh xii. 43. Is. xii. 1—3.

PSALM LIV.

David complains of his enemies, and prays for deliverance, 1—3. *He glories in the help of God, predicts ruin to his foes, and vows sacrifices and praises,* 4—7.

B. C. 1060.

To the chief Musician on Neginoth, Maschil, *A Psalm* of David, [a] when the Ziphims came and said to Saul, Doth not David hide himself with us?

SAVE me, O God, [b] by thy name, and [c] judge me by thy strength.

a 1 Sam. xxiii. 19, 20. xxvi. 1. Mic. vii 5, 6. Matt. x. 21 b xx. 1. xlviii. 10. lxxix 9. Ex. iii. 14, 15. xxiii. 21. xxxiv. 5, 6. Prov. xviii 10. Is. xxx. 27. Matt. i. 21. 23. Acts iv. 12. c xxvi. 1. xliii. 1, 2. xcix. 4 Prov. xxiii. 11. Jer. l. 34

NOTES.

PSALM LIII. *Title.* This psalm differs very little from the fourteenth; and it is not known, nor has it been conjectured with much probability, on what account, or for what reason, the same sentiments are repeated in almost the same words. The variations, however, are sufficient to show, that the psalm in one place was *intentionally* altered from that in the other; and it is probable, from some change in the Psalmist's circumstances, or some events which had occurred subsequent to its first publication. The word *Mahalath* seems to denote a hollow instrument of music, a flute or pipe; and *Maschil* or *instructing*, implies the scope of it, viz. an instruction or warning against impiety towards God, and rebellion against his anointed king.

V. 1—4. (*Notes*, &c. xiv.) The only variations in these verses are the change, in several instances, of one word for another of exactly the same import. 'Are not 'the workers of iniquity conscious, that they eat up my 'people,' &c.? Thus the last verse is rendered in some versions.

V. 5. This verse contains much more than the parallel one in the fourteenth psalm; while the sixth of that psalm is wholly omitted. The rebels who rose up against David's authority, chiefly because they hated his religion, and were instigated by the spirit of persecution, proved on trial very cowardly; for no doubt God was pleased to impress terror on their hearts, when there was no adequate danger. Thus the army of Absalom which encamped against David was easily routed, numbers fell in the forests, and being left unburied, their bones were scattered: and because God despised the impotent rage of this abandoned party, his servant easily put them to confusion. They were a sort of type of the Jewish persecutors of Christ and his disciples.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The folly of sinners greatly appears in their acting as if they could escape the notice of Omniscience, prosper in defiance of Omnipotence, or be happy in rebellion against the source of all felicity. They who go back from a religious profession, generally become most filthy, or malicious persecutors, who of all other sinners are most infatuated: for God hath despised, and will confound and destroy them; as he hath often scattered the bones of powerful armies who have encamped against his church. A guilty conscience and a dread of vengeance frequently fill the enemies of God with fears, where nothing formidable can be perceived; but at length their worst terrors will be awfully realized: and as the deliverance and prosperity of the church on earth will be attended with the ruin of all anti-christian opposers: so the eternal joys of the redeemed will be attended with the everlasting shame and misery of all their impenitent oppressors.

NOTES.

PSALM LIV. *Title.* (*Notes*, &c. 1 *Sam.* xxiii. 21—28.) This psalm seems to contain the prayer and confident expectation of David, in the extremity of danger; when the Ziphites led Saul and his army to the very spot where David and his small company lay concealed; and when, surrounded on every side by blood-thirsty deceitful foes, nothing but an extraordinary divine interposition could possibly preserve him. Viewed in this light, and compared with the event, it appears peculiarly interesting; and shows that the Psalmist's confidence in God and fervency in prayer, increased in proportion to the emergency.

V. 1. The honour of God, and of his holy name, was deeply concerned in David's preservation; as the Lord

2 [d] Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the words of my mouth.

3 For [e] strangers are risen up against me, and [f] oppressors seek after my soul: [g] they have not set God before them. Selah.

4 Behold, [h] God *is* mine helper: the LORD *is* with them that [i] uphold my soul.

5 He shall [k] reward evil unto * mine enemies: [l] cut them off in thy truth.

6 I will [m] freely sacrifice unto thee: [n] I will praise thy name, O LORD, [o] for *it is* good.

7 For [p] he hath delivered me out of all trouble: and [q] mine eye hath seen *his desire* upon mine enemies.

d v. 1—3. xiii 3. lv 1, 2 cxxx 2 cxliii. 7
e lxix 8. lxxxvi. 14. Job. xix. 13—15
f xxii. 16. lix. 3—5. Matt xxvii. 20—23.
g xvi 8. lxxxvi. 1. liii 4. John xvi. 3.
h cxviii 6, 7 13 1 Chr. xii 18. Is. xli. 10. l. 7—9. Rom. viii. 31. Heb. viii 6.
i Is. xlii. 1.
k xxxi. 23. cxxxvii 8. 2 Tim. iv. 14. Rev xviii 6.
* Heb *those that observe me.* v 8. xxvii 11 *Marg.* l lxxxix 49. cxliii. 1. 12.
m lxvi. 13—16. cvii 22 cxvi 17. Deut xii 6, 7.
n vii 17 xxi. 11. cxl 13.
o l. i. 9. xcii. 1. cxlvii. 1.
p xxxiv. 19 Gen. xlviii. 16 2 Sam. iv. 9 2 Tim. iv. 18.
q xxxvii. 34. lviii. 10, 11. lix. 10. xci. 8. xcii. 11. cxii. 8.

PSALM LV.

David prays in great distress and terror, 1—8 *He describes the wickedness and predicts the ruin of his enemies,* 9—15. *He determines to continue in prayer; and confiding in God to deliver him and confound his foes, he exhorts others to trust in God,* 16—23.

To the chief Musician on [a] Neginoth, Maschil, *A Psalm* of David.

[b] GIVE ear to my prayer, O God; and [c] hide not thyself from my supplication.

2 Attend unto me, and hear me: [d] I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise;

3 Because of the voice of the enemy, because of [e] the oppression of the wicked: [f] for they cast iniquity upon me, and in wrath they hate me.

a vi. liv. *titles.*
b v. 1. xvii. 1. lxiv. 1. lxxx. 1. lxxxiv. 8. 1 Pet. iii. 12.
c xxviii. 1 lxxx. 4 cxliii. 7. Lam. iii. 8
d xiii. 1, 2. xxxii. 3. xxxviii 6. xliii. 2. cii. 9. 10. Is. xxxviii. 14.
e xii. 5 liv 3. lxxiii 8. Lam. iii. 34—56.
f xxvii. 12. xxxv. 11. 2 Sam xv. 3. xvi. 7, 8. Matt xxvi. 59.

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had expressly engaged to give him the kingdom. And as the Omnipotent Judge of all could not want power to defend his servant from the cruelty and iniquity of Saul and his party, and thus to vindicate his own glory: the Psalmist in assured faith appealed to his righteous decision, and applied for his effectual protection. His argument resembles that of Joshua.—"O LORD, what shall I say, "when Israel turneth their backs on their enemies! For the "Canaanites shall cut off our name from the earth: and "what wilt thou do unto thy great name?" (*Josh.* vii. 8—10.)

V. 3. The Ziphites belonged to the same tribe with David; yet they acted as strangers: and Saul, the Lord's anointed king, and his party, were become most cruel and blood-thirsty tyrants: for they had "not set God before "them." Selah. Let that be noted.

V. 4. *Uphold.* Jonathan and some others adhered to David, and upheld his cause; and God would certainly favour them.

V. 5. *Truth.* In fulfilling his promises the God of truth would certainly cut off the enemies of his servant. (1 *Sam.* xxvi. 10.) This was well known; and therefore David only prayed for the accomplishment of the promises, attended with those circumstances from which it was inseparable. 'The application to Christ and to Christians 'is plain and easy; for which reason our Church has 'appointed this psalm to be read on Good Friday.' (*Horne.*)

V. 6. To offer thank-offerings and praises was right, pleasant, and acceptable to God.

V. 7. The words *his desire* are not in the original, either in this or in any of the similar passages. We may suppose that David, as well as Jeremiah, could say, "I "have not desired the woful day, thou knowest." But he was assured that he should witness the awful judgments of God on his enemies, as well as the performance of his engagements to him.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Our nearest relations may prove more unkind than strangers; they who ought to protect us may become our oppressors; and professors of true religion will generally behave to believers worse than heathens do. And looking unto David betrayed by the men of Judah, and to Jesus betrayed by his apostle, and delivered to death by the Jewish rulers and people, what can we expect from any who have "not set God before them," except ingratitude, treachery, malice, and cruelty? But God is the helper of his people: he will favour and prosper those that uphold their souls, while he confounds their persecutors: and his truth is engaged to reward evil to their enemies. Let us then trust him and call upon him, when injured, or tempted: for his name's sake he will then save us, and plead our cause with all his power.—We should recollect past deliverances to encourage our faith and prayer in present trials: and it is good and acceptable for us to sacrifice freely our spiritual oblations of grateful praise for the past, whilst we wait for further mercies.—As the risen and ascended Jesus could adopt the Psalmist's words, and say, "He hath de-"livered me from all trouble, and mine eye hath seen his "desire upon mine enemies;" so will his risen people at length be enabled to join in them. 'Lord help us to bear our cross without repining, and at length bring us to behold and to share thy victories and glory.'

NOTES.

PSALM LV. V. 1. *Hide not,* &c. That is, 'Do 'not disregard my prayer, nor leave me to myself, when 'I cry for help in my extreme distress.'

V. 3. *They cast,* &c. This psalm is supposed to have been composed during Absalom's rebellion. The leaders of that faction, both out of malice and to strengthen their party, charged David with various crimes of which he was

4 [g] My heart is sore pained within me; and [h] the terrors of death are fallen upon me

5 [i] Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and [k] horror hath * overwhelmed me.

6 And I said, [l] O that I had wings like a dove! *for then* would I fly away, and be at rest.

7 Lo *then* [m] would I wander far off, *and* remain in the wilderness. Selah.

8 I would hasten my escape from [n] the windy storm *and* tempest.

9 Destroy, O LORD, *and* [o] divide their tongues: for [p] I have seen violence and strife in the city.

10 [q] Day and night they go about it upon the walls thereof; [r] mischief also and sorrow *are* in the midst of it.

11 [s] Wickedness *is* in the midst thereof: [t] deceit and guile depart not from her streets

12 For [u] *it was* not an enemy *that* reproached me; then I could have borne *it:* neither *was it* he that hated me *that* did [x] magnify *himself* against me; [y] then I would have hid myself from him:

13 But *it was* thou, † a man, mine equal, [z] my guide, and [a] mine acquaintance.

14 ‡ We took sweet counsel together, *and* [b] walked unto the house of God in company.

15 [c] Let death seize upon them, *and* [d] let them go down quick into § hell: for wickedness *is* in their dwellings, *and* among them.

g vi 3. lxix. 20. lxxxviii. 3. cii. 3—5 Matt xxvi. 37, 38. Mark xiv. 33 34. John xii. 27 2 Cor. i. 8—10
h xviii 4, 5. cxvi. 3. Is xxxviii. 10—13. Heb v. 7
i cxix 120. 2 Sam. xv. 14 Job vi. 4. xxiii 15, 16
k xlii 6 lxi. 2 lxxxviii 15, 16 Luke xxii. 44.
* Heb. *covered.*
l xi. 1. cxxxix 9. Rev xii. 14.
m 1 Sam. xxvii 1. 2 Sam xv. 14 xvii. 21, 22. Prov. vi. 5, 6. Jer ix. 2 xxxvii 12
n xviii 4 Is. xvii. 12, 13 Matt vii. 25—27.
o Gen. xi. 7—9. 2 Sam. xv. 31. xviii 1—14. John vii 45—53. Acts xxiii 6—10.
p Jer. vi 7 xxiii. 14. Matt xxiii. 37, 38.——q lix 6, 14, 15. 1 Sam. xix. 11. 2 Sam xvii 1. 2 Hos. vii 6. Mic ii. 1, 2 John xviii. 3. 28 Acts ix 24.——r 2 Sam. xvi. 21, 22. Is lix 6—15 Ez. ix. 4 Zeph iii. 1—3.
s Ez. xxii. 1—13. Acts vii. 51, 52.
t cxix 2, 3 Is. lix. 7. Jer v. 26, 27. ix 3—5. Matt. xxvi. 4.
u xli 9 x xxxv. 26. xxxviii. 16. Is. x 15
y Mat xxvi 21—23. John xiii. 18. xviii. 2, 3.
† Heb. *a man according to my rank*
z 2 Sam. xv. 12. xvi. 23. Jer. ix. 4 Mic vii 5.
a Job xix 13. Matt. xxvi 47—50 Mark xiv. 44, 45. Luke xxii. 21. 47, 48.
‡ Heb. *Who sweetened counsel*
b xlii 4. cxxii. 1. Is ii 3. Ez. xxxiii 31.
c lix 13 lxix. 22—28 cix. 6—20. 2 Sam. xvii 23. xviii. 9 14. Matt. xxvii. 5. Acts i. 18—20.
d Num. xvi. 30—34. Matt. xxvi. 24. Acts i. 25.
§ Or. *the grave.* ix. 17.

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not guilty. Thus Christ was falsely accused by those who had taken counsel to put him to death.

V. 4—8. In general David showed the firmest courage in the most extreme dangers: but the unnatural rebellion of Absalom, which he knew to be the correction of his sin in the matter of Uriah, quite unmanned him; and he was filled with terror and consternation. Nay, he was become so weary of the treachery and ingratitude of men, and of the cares and disappointments of his high station, that he longed to have done with society, and to hide himself in some desert from the fury and fickleness of his people. He wished, in his haste, for the wings of the harmless dove, that he might fly away and be at rest; and his varied expressions, and the representation of the popular commotion as a violent tempest, show the vehement agitation of his mind. Yet in his more collected moments he could not approve of such a wish; he was not at liberty to leave his useful station; he could find no rest any where, but in God, with whom he might commune in the midst of society; and he must wait for his more perfect rest, till he had fully served his generation. 'These words de-' scribe the state of David's mind, when he went over the ' brook Cedron, and up mount Olivet, "weeping as he " went," and expecting speedily to be cut off: they describe ' the agony of the Son of David, when he likewise went ' over the same brook Cedron, at the time of his passion, ' when "his soul was sore amazed, and very heavy," and " exceeding sorrowful even unto death." (*Horne.*) It may be added, that at that awful crisis the Saviour also prayed, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me; ne-" vertheless, not my will but thine be done:" and David likewise speedily recovered his composure, and said, " Behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good " unto him." (2 *Sam.* xv. 26.) Every circumstance concurs in fixing this period as the date of the psalm: though some think it was composed during the persecutions which David endured from Saul.

V. 9—11. David had rescued Jerusalem from the Jebusites: and it became "the holy city," when the ark of God was placed there: yet it was now become the seat of violence and strife. This he perceived at the breaking out of Absalom's rebellion, and therefore he would not venture to continue there: and when the usurper had got possession, mischief and sorrow, wickedness and guile, occupied the city in every part, parading it day and night, and guarding it against every approach of piety, equity, and loyalty, as against the most dangerous foes. David therefore prayed, that the Lord would render the devices of the usurpers a Babel, by confounding their language and counsels, and thus leaving them to disunion, and mutual jealousies and suspicions. This was granted, when Hushai's counsel was preferred to Ahithophel's; and when that crafty politician, the stay of the whole party, went and hanged himself. Thus the nation of the Jews, after they had rejected Christ, were destroyed by being divided: and Jerusalem, having become the scene of every enormity, was miserably desolated by the Romans.

V. 12—15. Ahithophel's treachery was peculiarly distressing to David; and it was the more galling for being wholly unexpected. So far from having been an avowed enemy, who now took occasion to reproach him and to exult in his calamities, or menace his life, Ahithophel had been David's counsellor and bosom-friend, and treated by him as an equal, or as one of his own rank: he had also been his chosen and pleasing companion in the exercises of religion, and in pious conversation. Yet this very man, without any affront or previous quarrel, became an apostate, and a traitor, and gave Absalom the most malicious and infernal counsel imaginable! Thus Christ was betrayed by one whom he had honoured as a companion, a disciple, and an apostle; who resembled Ahithophel in his crimes and in his doom: for both were speedily overtaken by divine vengeance, in the same dreadful manner. This was foretold by David concerning Ahithophel, and by Jesus concerning Judas: for the words are in the future, and more naturally signify a prediction, than an imprecation. (*Marg. Ref.*)

16 ¶ As for me, [e] I will call upon God; and the LORD shall save me.

17 [f] Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and [g] cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.

18 [h] He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle *that was* against me: for [i] there were many with me.

19 God shall [k] hear and afflict them, even [l] he that abideth of old. Selah. * Because they have [m] no changes, therefore they fear not God.

20 He hath [n] put forth his hands against such as be [o] at peace with him: he hath † broken his covenant.

21 [p] *The words* of his mouth were smoother than butter, but [q] war *was* in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet *were* they drawn swords.

22 [r] Cast thy ‡ burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: [s] he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.

23 But thou, O God, [t] shalt bring them down into [u] the pit of destruction: ◊ bloody and deceitful men [x] shall not live out half their days; but I will trust in thee.

e i. 15. xci. 15. cix. 4. Luke vi. 11, 12. xxii. 37—44.
f v. 2, 3. cxix. 62. 147, 148. 164. Dan. vi 10. 13. Mark i 35 vi. 46 — 48. Luke xviii 1—7. Acts x. 3 9. 30 Eph. vi. 18. 1 Thes. v. 17.
g Job xix. 7. Lam. iii. 8. Heb. v. 7
h iii. 6, 7 xxvii. 1—3. lvii. 3 cxviii. 10—12. 2 Sam. xviii. 23. xxii. 1. Acts ii. 33—36
i 2 Kings vi. 16. 2 Chr. xxxii. 7, 8. Matt. xxvi. 53.
k lxv. 5. cxliii. 12. l Thes. ii 15, 16. Rev. vi. 10, 11.——l xc 1, 2 Deut xxxiii. 27. Mic. v. 2. Col i. 17.——* Or *With whom* also there be *no changes, yet*, &c —— m lxxiii 5, 6. Prov 1 32. Ec. viii 11. Is. xxxvi. 20. Jer. xlviii. 11. Zeph. i. 12.——n 1 Sam. xxii. 17. xxiv. 10. 2 Sam xviii. 12. Acts xii. 1.

o vii. 4. cix. 5. cxx. 6, 7
† Heb. *profaned*. lxxxix. 28. 34. 38. 2 Sam. ii. 4 v. 3. xiv. 32, 33. xv. 10—12. Ec. viii 2. Ez. xvii. 16 — 19. Matt. x. 1—4.
p xxviii. 3. lvii. 4. lxii 4 lxiv. 3. Prov. v 3, 4. xii 18 xxvi 24—26. 28. Matt. xxvi. 25 Luke xx. 20, 21.
q John xiii 2.
r xxvii. 14. xxxvii. 5. *Marg.* xlii 10, 11. lxii. 8. lxiii. 8. Is. l. 10. Mat. vi. 31—34. xi 28. Phil. iv. 6, 7. 1 Pet v. 7.
‡ Or, *gift*.
s xvi. 8. xxxvii. 24. lxii. 2, 6. 1 Sam. ii. 9.
John x. 28—30. 1 Pet. i. 5.——t vii. 15, 16. lvlii. 9. lix. 12, 13 ——u Prov. xvi. 11. xxvii. 20. Is. xxxviii. 17.——◊ Heb. *men of bloods and deceit shall not live half their days*. v 6. 2 Sam. iii. 27 xx. 9, 10. 1 Kings ii. 5, 6.——x Job xv. 32. Prov. x. 27. Ec. vii. 17. Matt xxvii. 4, 5.

—'The sudden destruction of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, 'who, for stirring up rebellion against Moses and Aaron, "went down alive into the pit," seems here alluded to; 'as the grand representation of the manner in which the 'bottomless pit shall one day shut her mouth for ever 'upon all the impenitent enemies of the true King of Israel 'and great high Priest of our profession.' (*Horne.*)

V. 17. Probably this was David's general practice; from which he was not diverted by any of his troubles, but was rather made more earnest in it. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'I will never 'give over my importunity, till he graciously grant my pe-'tition, and send me relief.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 18. As this verse is in the past tense, whilst those which precede and follow it are future, the Psalmist seems to refer to his former experience of the Lord's goodness and faithful care of him; and thus to encourage himself and his friends to expect a happy event to their present perils. In former instances, when far superior forces had attacked him, God had delivered him in peace, and made him triumphant; for his invisible protectors and helpers were more numerous and powerful than all his visible foes. Thus our Lord said, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now "pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more "than twelve legions of angels." And angels terrified and drove away the Roman soldiers, rolled away the stone from the sepulchre, and attended his resurrection and ascension.

V. 19. He "who inhabiteth eternity," hearing the prayers of his distressed servants, would certainly punish their persecutors; who had been hardened in impiety, by uninterrupted prosperity. Or, God would certainly afflict them, because *they would not turn* and fear him.

V. 20, 21. Absalom, or Ahithophel, seems to have been here intended: but the character and language of crafty flattering courtiers and of malicious dissemblers, in all ages, is emphatically described. Thus Judas betrayed Christ, when he had said, "Hail, Master, and kissed "him."

V. 22. 'Whatever God has *given* or *allotted* thee, 'commit it all to his keeping by faith and prayer.' This is the way of peace and safety.

V. 23. *Half*, &c. Such persons, as are here described, generally come to a violent end, before half the years are elapsed which they might otherwise have been expected to live.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The most excellent persons have always experienced the basest treatment in this evil world: and the more any mere man hath resembled the Son of God in heavenly zeal and purity, the more hath he been traduced and hated by them whose crimes he opposed, or whose hypocrisy he detected. The clamours and oppression, the calumnies and malice, of ungodly men, may however be the more easily endured, if we possess peace of conscience, and a sweet sense of the divine favour. But when our sufferings from men excite in us the sense, or the dread, of the anger of our offended God; when a guilty conscience gives Satan advantage in assaulting our peace, and sapping the foundations of our hope; we must needs "mourn in our complaint," and the thoughts of our hearts will often become like the tempestuous waves of the restless ocean: so that in this case even eminent believers have been filled for a time with inexpressible horror and consternation. Yet none of them was ever so overwhelmed with terror and anguish as the holy Jesus was; when "it pleased the LORD to bruise "him, to put him to grief, and to make his soul an "offering for *our* sins." But in "his agony he prayed "more earnestly," and was heard and delivered: and if we trust in his merits, and copy his example, we too shall be supported under all, and carried through all. They who are most conversant with mankind, will see the most to disquiet, discourage, and disgust them; if they have a spiritual judgment, and are labouring to do good. Disappointment and vexation, arising from the experience of the inconstancy, ingratitude, and treachery of mankind in general, will sometimes render them weary of the most eminent stations and honourable services; and make them long for retirement and obscurity, where they may no longer witness the miseries and crimes which they cannot prevent. This should induce us all to seek our rest in God, and to be willing to depart hence to a better world when he pleases: but we must not be weary of well-doing, or relinquish our work, till our Lord and Master release us: and at last no change can add to our present continued

PSALM LVI.

David prays for mercy, depending on the word of God, amidst the rage and malice of his enemies, 1—7. He comforts himself by thoughts of the Lord's providential care and gracious promises, and by praising him for past deliverances, 8—13.

To the chief Musician upon Jonathel-em-rechokim, * Michtam of David, [a] when the Philistines took him in Gath.

1 [b] BE merciful unto me, O God: for man would [c] swallow me up; he fighting daily oppresseth me.

2 Mine † enemies would daily swallow *me* up; for *they be* [d] many that fight against me, O thou [e] most High.

3 [f] What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.

4 [g] In God I will praise his word; [h] in God I have put my trust: I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.

5 Every day [i] they wrest my words: [k] all their thoughts *are* against me for evil.

6 They [l] gather themselves together, they [m] hide themselves, they [n] mark my steps, when they wait for my soul.

7 Shall they [o] escape by iniquity? [p] in *thine* anger cast down the people, O God.

* Or, *a golden.* Psalm. xvi. lvii. lix. *titles.*
† Heb *observers.* liv. 5. *Marg.*
a 1 Sam. xxi. 11. 15.
b xxxi. 9—11. lvii. 1—3. lix. 10. lxix. 13—16. cxxxvi. 10. 15. 17—20. cxliii. 12.
c xxi. 9. xxvii 2. xxxv. 25. lvii. 3. cvi. 17. cxxiv. 3. Prov. i. 12. Lam. ii. 2. 5. 16. 1 Cor. xv. 54.
d iii. 1. cxviii. 10—12. Acts iv. 25—27. Rev. xvi. 14.
e ix. 2. xci. 1. xcii. 1. 8. xciii. 4. Is. lvii. 15. Dan. v. 18. Mic. vi. 6.
f xxxiv. 4. lv. 4, 5. 1 Sam. xxi. 10—12. xxx. 6. 2 Chr. xx. 3. 2 Cor. i. 8—10. vii. 5, 6.
g 10, 11. xii. 6. xix. 7, 8. cxix. 89, 90. 160. cxxxviii. 2. John x. 35.
h xxvii. 1. xlvi. 1, 2. cxviii. 6. Is. xxxi. 3. xli. 10. Rom. viii. 31—39. Heb. xiii. 6.
i Is. xxix. 20. 27. Matt. xxi. 15. xxvi. 61. John ii. 19. 2 Pet. iii. 16.
k 1 Sam. xviii 17. 21. 29. xx. 7. 33. Jer. xviii. 18. Luke xxii. 3—6.
l ii. 1—3. lix. 3. lxxi. 10. cxl. 2. Matt. xxvi. 3. 4. 57. xxvii. 1. Acts iv. 5, 6. xxiii. 12—14.
m x. 8—10. lxiv 2—6. Dan. vi. 4.
n xvii. 11. lvii. 6. lxxxix 51. Job xiv. 16. xxxi. 4. Jer xx. 10. Luke xx. 20.
o xciv. 20, 21. Is. xxviii. 15. Jer. vii. 10. Hab i. 13.
p lv. 9. 15. 23. Jer. x. 25. xviii. 19—23.

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happiness, except that which augments our holiness. No wickedness so distresses the believer, as that which he witnesses in the visible church of God: with anguish of heart he often perceives violence and discord in the congregations, where the Gospel of peace is preached and professed; by which the common cause is weakened, the truth disgraced, and far more mischief done than by all the fury of persecutors. When professed Christians forsake God, and give in to malice, wickedness, and deceit; destruction and sorrow are at hand: disunion of heart, and intestine quarrels make way for further evils; and instead of a holy city, a Babel will be erected, which must also be destroyed. —The true Christian must expect trials from professed friends, from those whom he hath most trusted and served; and from those with whom he hath taken sweet counsel, and associated in the ordinances of God: this will be very painful, but by looking unto Jesus he will be enabled to bear it. Though we must not pray for the destruction of our most treacherous injurers; yet we may warn them of the doom of those who before them have trodden in the same path: and in every possible trial let us call upon the Lord, and he will save us. Our souls need spiritual nourishment at least as often as our bodies need food: but we generally starve in the midst of abundance; because we pray so seldom, so superficially, and so formally. David had more loyal subjects than he expected; Christ had more favourers than appeared, when the general cry was, "Crucify him, Crucify him:" and there are more true Christians, and believers have more real friends, than in their gloomy hours they suppose. If, however, God be for us, he will deliver our souls in peace from every conflict, whether few or many side with us: and it is better to have *changes* and afflictions, than to be hardened by uninterrupted prosperity, and thus emboldened to treachery and cruelty: which generally end in untimely death, and bring men down into the pit of destruction. Flatterers, whose words are soft and insinuating, are always to be suspected and dreaded: for many of this tribe have war in their hearts; and by smooth deceitful language do more harm, than they could have done with their drawn swords. But let us learn to trust only in the Lord, and to cast every burden upon him, by faith and prayer: for he will never suffer the righteous to be moved, either for want of inward supports, or outward protection. And having thus found comfort ourselves, let us exhort and encourage our afflicted brethren to apply for the same relief.

NOTES.

PSALM LVI. *Jonath-el-em-rechokim.* This signifies, *The silent dove in a far country.* David had been harmless as a dove, in the midst of Saul's persecutions: he was silent and patient under oppression: he was now driven like a timorous dove to a distance from his home and from the ordinances of God: and when exposed to extreme danger from the Philistines, set on perhaps by the relations of Goliath, he bore all patiently, and attempted no revenge. In this he typified the harmless, suffering, and patient Jesus. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xxi.)

V. 1, 2. Whilst David remained in the land of Judah, his countrymen fought against him: and at Gath the Philistines sought to slay him. Thus Jews and Gentiles united against Christ; and his disciples are "hated of all men "for his name's sake." The word rendered *swallow me up*, seems to mean, *pursue me panting*, with eagerness and rage; as Saul of Tarsus breathed out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of Christ. The last clause may be rendered, "There be many that fight against me from on high," or, from a safe and fortified place.

V. 3, 4. "In the time of alarm," when others were dismayed and he was tempted to fear, the Psalmist determined to trust in God; and to honour his word, and glory in it, as full security in every possible danger. He especially referred to the promises of God, that he should be king over Israel.

V. 5. *Wrest*, &c. Or, "They thwart me in all my "concerns." The words, in either sense of them, with the rest of this and the following verses, emphatically describe the conduct of the scribes and priests towards the Lord Jesus, of which the insidious perverseness and disingenuity, with which Saul and his courtiers treated David, were a sort of prefiguration.

8 Thou [q] tellest my wanderings: [r] put thou my tears into thy bottle: *are they* not in thy book?

9 When [t] I cry *unto thee*, [u] then shall mine enemies turn back: this I know; for [x] God *is* for me.

10 [y] In God will I praise *his* word: in the LORD will I praise *his* word.

11 In God have I put my trust: [z] I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.

12 [a] Thy vows *are* upon me, O God: [b] I will render praises unto thee.

13 For [c] thou hast delivered my soul from death: [d] *wilt* not *thou deliver* my feet from falling, that I may [e] walk before God in [f] the light of the living?

q cv. 13, 14. cxxi. 8. Num xxxii. 2, &c. 1 Sam xix. 18. xxii. 1—5. xxvii. 1. Is. lxiii. 9. 2 Cor. xi. 26. Heb. xi. 8. 14. 38.
r xxxix. 12 cxxvi. 5, 6 2 Kings xx. 5 Job xvi. 20. Rev. vii. 17.
s cxxxix. 16. Mal. iii. 16. Matt. x. 30 Rev. xx. 12.
t cxviii. 11—13. Ex. xvii. 9—11 Jer. xxxiii. 3.
u xviii. 38—42. xxvii. 2. John xviii. 6.
x xlvi. 7. 11. Is. viii. 9, 10. Rom. viii. 31.
y 4. lx. 6. Gen. xxxii. 11. Matt. xxiv. 35. Heb. vi. 18. 2 Pet i. 4.
z xxvii 1 cxii. 7, 8. Is. li. 7, 8. 12, 13.
a lxvi 13, 14. lxxvi. 11. cxvi. 14—19 cxix. 106. Gen. xxviii 20—22. xxxv. 1—3 Num. xxx. 2, &c 1 Sam i 11. 24—28. Ec. v. 4—6——b ix. 1—3. xxi. 11 lix. 16, 17. Is. xii. 1——c lxxxvi. 12, 13. cxvi. 8. 2 Cor. i. 10. 1 Thes. i. 10. Heb. ii. 15. Jam. v. 20.——d xvii. 5 xciv. 18. cxlv. 14. 1 Sam ii. 9.——e cxvi. 9. Gen xvii. 1. Is. ii. 5. xxxviii. 3.——f Job xxxiii. 30. John xii. 35, 36. Eph. v. 8. 14. Rev. xxi. 23, 24.

PSALM LVII.

In extreme danger, David fervently prays to be delivered from his cruel foes, 1—6. He encourages himself in praising God, and desires that he may be universally glorified, 7—11.

To the chief Musician, * Al-taschith, Michtam of David, [a] when he fled from Saul in the cave.

BE merciful unto me, O God, [b] be merciful unto me: for [c] my soul trusteth in thee: yea, [d] in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, [e] until *these* calamities be over-past.

2 I will cry unto [f] God most high; unto God [g] that performeth *all things* for me.

* Or, *Destroy not.* a golden Psalm. lviii. lix. *titles.*
a cxlii. 1. 1 Sam. xxii. 1. xxiv. 3.
b lvi. 1. lxix. 13—16. cxix. 76, 77.
c ix. 10. xiii. 5. cxxv. 1. Is. 1. 10.
d xvii. 7, 8. xxxvi. 7. lxi. 4. lxiii 7. xci. 1. 4. 9. Ruth. ii. 12. Luke xiii. 34.
e Is. x. 25. xxvi. 20. Matt xxiv. 22. John xvi. 20. Jam. v. 10, 11. Rev. vii. 14. xxi 4.
f lvi. 2. cxxxvi. 2, 3 Is. lvii. 15.
g cxxxviii. 8 Is. xxvi. 12 Phil. i 6. ii. 12, 13. Heb. xiii. 21.

V. 8. *Wanderings.* In the translation used in the common Prayer Book, the word *flittings* is used. This is a provincial term for removing from one residence to another: but it is not generally understood. David was continually removing from place to place: but the Lord numbered all his wanderings, and watched over him wherever he went. And his tears were noticed, as if preserved in a bottle, or registered in a book; no doubt therefore his life would be precious in the sight of the Lord. 'If God keep the tears of his saints, much more will he 'remember their blood to avenge it; and though tyrants 'burn their bones, yet can they not blot the tears and 'blood out of God's register.'

V. 12. *Thy vows,* &c. David had, it seems, made solemn vows, under his distresses, of rendering public praises unto God, when delivered; and of using his promised regal authority, to promote his glory: and he confidently expected, and fully purposed to perform these vows.

V. 13. The Lord had rescued David from many imminent perils of death; and he trusted that he would keep him from falling by the hands of his enemies; that he might live, to walk before him, as his anointed king, in prosperity and usefulness. Or, he meant that God, having saved his soul by converting grace, would uphold him in the ways of holiness, in which he desired to walk till he came to heaven.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The heavy and continued trials through which many of the Lord's servants have passed, should teach us to be silent and patient under our lighter afflictions. "We "have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin." Our good words may indeed be wrested to an evil meaning; and our footsteps watched by those who devise evil against us: but we are not in general endangered by furious assailants, who would swallow us up and destroy us; or, at least, they who would oppress us, have their hands bound or otherwise employed. Yet are we often tempted to repine and despond under our trivial sorrows! For this we should check and condemn ourselves; and under every disquieting fear, we should place our confidence in God, and pray more earnestly for his pardoning mercy. Meditation on the power of the Most High, engaged by his faithful promise for the protection of his people, will encourage us to say with boldness, "The "Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man can do "unto me." (*Heb.* xiii. 6.) The believer's soul, and body, and character, and interest, are all safe under the divine protection; and when he prays earnestly, his enemies will be driven back and disappointed. Men may for a time prosper *in* and *by* iniquity; but God in his anger will soon cast them down: and our only security lies in escaping *from* iniquity. The Lord graciously notes and orders the *removals* of his people: whilst they keep in the path of duty, they cannot be driven from his gracious presence; and their tears of godly sorrow, and those which are extorted by persecution, will be reserved to be jewels in their crown of glory. Let us then be careful to discharge our own obligations. General vows are upon us as Christians, which have been ratified at baptism and the Lord's supper; and we have made promises and engagements in seasons of trouble and distress. Let us be careful to perform them, when delivered, and then we may leave all the rest with the Lord: and if his grace have delivered our souls from the death of sin; he will deliver our feet from falling, and bring us to heaven, to walk before him for ever in the light of the living.

NOTES.

PSALM LVII. *Al-taschith,* or *Thou wilt not destroy. Destroy not.* This may intimate, that David trusted that the Lord would not permit him to be destroyed, though closely pursued by Saul. Some think the word refers to the restriction David laid on his officers, not to destroy Saul. (*Notes,* 1 *Sam.* xxiv.)

V. 2. *That performeth,* &c. David could not *perform* for himself those things which were requisite for his secu-

3 He shall [h] send from heaven, and save me * *from* the reproach of him that would [i] swallow me up. Selah. God shall [k] send forth his mercy and his truth.

4 My soul *is* [l] among lions: *and* I lie *even among* them that are [m] set on fire, *even* the sons of men, [n] whose teeth *are* spears and arrows, and their [o] tongue a sharp sword.

5 [p] Be thou exalted, O God, [q] above the heavens: *let* [r] thy glory *be* above all the earth.

6 They have prepared [s] a net for my steps; [t] my soul is bowed down: they have digged a pit before me, into the midst whereof they are fallen *themselves.* Selah.

7 [u] My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is † fixed: [x] I will sing and give praise.

h xviii. 6, &c. cxliv. 5—7. Matt. xxviii. 2—6 Acts xii. 11 * Or, *he reproacheth him, that would*, &c. i lvi. 2. Num. xxiii. 24. Job xxxi. 31. Mic. ii. 2, 3 k xl 11. xliii 3. li. 6. John i. 17. l x. 9 xvii. 12, 13 xxii. 13—16 xxxv. 17. lviii. 6. Prov. xxviii. 15. Dan. vi. 22—24. m Judg. ix. 20. Jam iii 6. n lviii. 6, Job iv. 10, 11. Prov. xxx 14. o lv. 21. lxiv. 3. Prov. xii. 18. xxv. 18. Rev. xix. 15. p xxi. 13. cviii. 4, 5. 1 Chr. xxix. 11. Is. ii. 11. 17. xii. 4. xxxvii. 20. Matt. vi 9, 10. q viii. 1. cxiv. 4—6. r lxxii. 19. cxlviii. 13. Num xiv. 21. Is. vi 3. Hab ii 14. iii. 3 ——s vii. 16. ix. 15, 16 xxxv 7, 8 cxl 5. 1 Sam xxiii. 22—26. Prov. xxix. 5 ——t xlii 6. cxlii. 3. cxliii 4. Matt. xxvi. 37, 38.——u cviii. 1, 2. cxii. 7 ——† Or, *prepared.*——x xxxiv. 4 Is. xxiv. 15. Rom. v. 5 Eph. v. 20.

8 [y] Awake up, [z] my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I *myself* will awake early.

9 [a] I will praise thee, O LORD, among the people: I will sing unto thee among the nations.

10 For [b] thy mercy *is* great unto the heavens, and [c] thy truth unto the clouds.

11 [d] Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: *let* thy glory *be* above all the earth.

y Judg v. 12. Is. lii. 1, 2. z xvi. 9 xxx. 12. cviii. 1—3. Acts ii. 26. a ii. 1. xviii. 49. xxii 22, 23. xcvi. 3. cxxxviii. 1. 4, 5. cxlv. 10—12. Rom. xv. 9. b xxxvi. 5. lxxi. 19. lxxxv. 10, 11. lxxxix. 1, 2. ciii. 11. cviii 4. c Gen ix. 9—17. Is. liv 7—11. Heb. vi. 17, 18. d 5. viii. 1—9. Rev. xv. 3, 4.

PSALM LVIII.

David reproves unjust elders and judges, 1, 2. *He describes the odious character of the wicked,* 3—5. *He predicts their ruin; and the joy of the righteous, on beholding the just judgments of God upon them,* 6—11.

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rity and advancement: he would not seek them by killing Saul, nor would he allow his soldiers to slay him: but he trusted in God, who had given him the promise of the kingdom, to perform all things necessary to its fulfilment in his own time and manner.

V. 3. *From the,* Or, "*To the reproof of him, that would swallow me up.*"—God would sooner send his angels from heaven to deliver his servant, than suffer his furious enemies to destroy him.

V. 4. *My soul,* &c. 'The fiercest of beasts, the most 'devouring of elements, and the sharpest of military 'weapons, are selected to represent the power and fury 'of David's enemies: how much more furious were the 'enemies of Christ, who, in his passion, resembled Daniel 'in the lion's den, and the three children in the fiery furnace? (*Horne.*)

V. 5. *Be thou,* &c. If David had been run down, God would have been dishonoured: but his marvellous deliverance and advancement were honourable to the name of the Lord; and even angels in heaven, as well as men on earth, would glorify him on that account. In this he was peculiarly a type of the Saviour.

V. 7—11. The Psalmist here suddenly changes his language from deep complaints to exulting praises. His heart, delivered from desponding fears, was fixed in a determination to praise God, and to employ his tongue and all his musical powers in that service: with this he would awaken the morning, or begin the day; and he would render his worship public, that both the Jews and the surrounding nations might hear. This may with peculiar propriety be applied to Jesus, as risen from the dead, and exulting in the view of the glory of God, in the conversion of the Gentiles.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Protection from man's *injustice* must be sought from the Lord's *mercy;* and the most eminent believers need frequently to reiterate the publican's prayer, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." But an inward consciousness that our souls trust in the Lord, may enable us in the most imminent dangers, to expect, that our calamities will at length be overpast: and, in the mean time, by faith and prayer, we must make the shadow of his almighty wings our refuge; (*Note, Ruth* ii. 12.) If we have fled from the wrath to come unto Jesus Christ, we are interested in all his merits, grace, and victories; and in all the precious promises and glorious perfections of our God: and he, that hath *performed* all things requisite to the salvation of his people, will in answer to our prayers *perform* all things *for* us and *in* us, which are needful to our enjoyment of it. It is true that the sons of men, among whom we live, are often savage as lions, and fierce as the flaming fire: their teeth seem to be spears and arrows, and their slanderous tongues sharp swords: and Satan, a still more subtle, powerful, and cruel enemy, would swallow us up. But notwithstanding their snares and pits, their stratagems and assaults, we are safe, if we belong to the Lord. The Redeemer was far more exposed to their rage and malice, and by their wicked hands was crucified and slain: yet the Lord sent from heaven and raised him from the dead, and advanced him to his glorious throne: and he will, through him, send forth his mercy and truth, and, graciously accomplishing his promises, will rescue our souls from all tempters and persecutors; and angels shall join with men in beholding and celebrating his glory in our salvation. Let us then seek to have our hearts fixed on him, and prepared for his spiritual worship; to celebrate the praises of his boundless mercy and unfailing faithfulness, and to "glorify him with body and spirit, which "are his." Let us assuredly expect and wait for, the completion of what concerneth us: and let us earnestly pray, that the Lord would be exalted above the heavens, and his glory above all the earth, by extending the blessings of his Gospel through every part of every land.

To the chief Musician, * Al-taschith, Michtam of David.

DO ye indeed speak righteousness, [b] O congregation? do ye judge uprightly, [c] O ye sons of men?

2 Yea, [d] in heart ye work wickedness; ye [e] weigh the violence of your hands in the earth.

3 The wicked are [f] estranged from the womb: they go astray † as soon as they be born, speaking lies.

4 Their [g] poison *is* ‡ like the poison of a [h] serpent; *they are* like [i] the deaf § adder *that* stoppeth her ear;

5 Which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, ‖ charming never so wisely.

6 [k] Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth; break out the great teeth of [l] the young lions, O LORD.

7 Let them [m] melt away as waters *which* run continually: *when* he bendeth *his bow to shoot* his arrows, let them be as cut in pieces.

8 As a snail *which* melteth, let *every one of them* [n] pass away: *like* [o] the untimely birth of a woman, *that* they may not see the sun.

9 Before your pots can feel [p] the thorns, he shall take them away [q] as with a whirlwind, * both living, and in *his* wrath.

10 [r] The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance: he shall [s] wash his feet in the blood of the wicked.

11 So that a man shall say, [t] Verily *there is* † a reward for the righteous: [u] verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.

* Or, *destroy not a golden* Psalm. lvii. lix. *titles.*
a lxxii. 1—4. Deut. xvi. 18, 19. 2 Sam. xxiii. 3. 2 Chr. xix. 7, 8. Is xi. 3—5. xxxii 1 Jer. xxiii. 5, 6.
b lxxxii. 1, 2. Num. xi. 16. Deut. i. 15, 16. 2 Sam. v. 3. Matt. xxvi. 3. xxvii. 1. Luke xxiii. 50, 51. Acts v 21.
c lxxxii. 5, 6.
d Ec iii. 16. Is. lix 4—6. Jer. xxii. 16, 17. Ez xxii. 12. 27. Mic iii. 1—3 9—12. John xi. 47—53. xciv. 20. Is. x. 1. xxvi. 7
e Prov. xxii. 15. Is. xlviii. 8. Eph. ii. 3. iv. 18.
f Job v. 5. Job xv 14.
† Heb. *from the belly.* xxii. 10. Is xlvi. 3.
g cxl. 3. Ec x 11. Rom. iii. 13. Jam iii. 8.
‡ Heb. *according to the likeness of.*
h Matt. iii. 7. xxiii 33
i Jer. viii. 17.
§ Or, *asp.* Job xx. 14. 16. Is. xi. 8
‖ Or, be *the charmer never so cunning* Deut. xviii. 11. Is. xix. 3.
k iii. 7. x. 15. Job iv. 10, 11. xxix. 17 Ez. xxx. 21, &c.
l xvii. 12. xci. 13. Num. xxiii. 24. Is xxxi 4. Hos. v. 14. Mic. v 8.
m xxii. 14 lxiv. 7. 8. cxii 10. Ex. xv 15. Josh. ii 9. 11. 2 Sam. xvii. 10. Is. xiii. 7.
n xxxvii 35, 36. Matt. xxiv. 35. Jam. i. 10
o Job iii. 16. Ec. vi 3.
p cxviii. 12. Ec. vii 6.
q lv. 23. lxxiii. 18—20 Job xviii. 18. xx. 5, &c. Prov. i. 27. xiv. 32. Is. xvii. 13. xl. 24. Jer. xxiii. 19.
* Heb. as *living as wrath* Num. xvi 30.
r lii 6. lxiv. 10. lxviii 1—3. cvii. 42. Judg. v. 31. Prov. xi. 10. Rev. xviii. 20. xix. 1—6
s lxviii. 23. Job xxix. 6. Rev. xiv. 20
t lxxiii 13—15 xcii. 15. Mal. iii. 14. Rom. ii. 5.
† Heb. *fruit of the,* &c. Is iii. 10 Rom. vi. 21, 22.
u ix. 16. lxiv. 9. lxvii. 4. lxxxiii. 18. xcvi. 13. Mal. ii. 17. 2 Pet. iii. 3, 4—10.

NOTES.

PSALM LVIII. V. 1, 2. It is conjectured that Saul instituted a legal process against David; and, by corrupting the assembly of the elders, obtained an iniquitous sentence of treason against him, in order to cover his malicious persecution. Thus the Sanhedrim, and the people of the Jews, and Pilate, condemned Jesus to be put to death. In both cases, the persons concerned *inwardly designed* and loved wickedness; and whilst they pretended to weigh the cause in the balance of justice, they used their power to commit violence, after having deliberately considered the nature and consequences of their conduct: and this was the more heinous, as it was perpetrated by the magistrates placed over the people of God, in the land where his name was worshipped and his oracles made known.

V. 3—5. The Psalmist here traced back the base conduct of his persecutors, (as he did his own crimes, *Marg. Ref.*) to the source of original depravity; which had neither been counteracted by proper discipline, nor subdued by regenerating grace.—All wickedness springs from the alienation of the heart from God: and children very soon manifest evil tempers, and contract early habits of lying and of other vices. If therefore they grow up without change or restraint, and escape with impunity, or are even encouraged in wickedness, (as Saul's courtiers and judges were;) they will at length be hardened in sin, and ready to perpetrate any villany. The most hateful dispositions are found as natural to them and as fatal to others, as the poison of a serpent. It was indeed commonly allowed, that some kind of music, or skilful incantations, would disarm the rage of serpents in general: yet one species of adder seemed to be deaf, or as if she stopped her ears against the most skilful strains of those who attempted to charm her; so no arguments, persuasions, or services of David, could mollify the envenomed malice of Saul and his party against him.—In like manner the heavenly discourses and the beneficent miracles of Jesus did not prevail to disarm the rage of that generation of vipers against him: and sinners still stop their ears, and close their hearts against conviction or persuasion, whilst they rush forward in rebellion and enmity against God and his cause.

V. 6—9. David's enemies were strong and savage as young lions: he therefore prayed that *their teeth might be broken* to prevent mischief. They overwhelmed him like an inundation: but he desired it might prove like a land flood, which is soon wasted. They were about to shoot him: but he would have their bows, or their arrows, to be shivered to pieces, and become like straw, and do no execution: and he prayed that they might waste insensibly as the snail, which leaves its substance all along its track; and that they might come to nothing, like an abortion. He also predicted, that their prosperous rage, (which resembled the crackling of thorns under a pot,) would soon be extinct, and produce no effect: whilst the Lord in his wrath would hurry them into speedy destruction; as a furious whirlwind drives a living man down a precipice, or into a dreadful pit. This seems the meaning of the passage: but the original is to us peculiarly difficult.

V. 10, 11. David's cause was that of true religion; and though he would not avenge himself, he knew that the Lord would, and with terrible displays of his power and wrath. Then the righteous would rejoice, not in the misery of Saul and his party, but in the display of the divine glory, and in the triumphs of truth and piety over ungodliness and iniquity: nay, the most terrible circumstances of their ruin would add to the comfort and purity of the righteous; as if a man should take pleasure in washing his feet in the blood of those who had trampled upon every thing sacred: whilst all who witnessed these events would be constrained to confess, that "Verily there "is a reward, or *fruit*, for the righteous, verily he is a God "that judgeth in the earth."—All this was most signally verified in the destruction of Jerusalem, after the Jews had crucified their Messiah: and it hath had, and will have,

PSALM LIX.

David, in great danger, prays to be saved from his enemies, complains of their cruelty, but still trusts in God, 1—10. *He prays for and predicts their confusion and ruin, and resolves to praise God continually,* 11—17.

To the chief Musician, * Al-taschith, Michtam of David; [a] when Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him.

[b] DELIVER me from mine enemies, O my God: † defend me from them that rise up against me.

2 Deliver me from the workers of iniquity, and [c] save me from bloody men.

3 For, lo, [d] they lie in wait for my soul: [e] the mighty are gathered against me; [f] not *for* my transgression, nor *for* my sin, O LORD.

4 They [g] run and prepare themselves without *my* fault: [h] awake to ‡ help me, and behold.

5 Thou therefore, O LORD God of hosts, [i] the God of Israel, awake to [k] visit all [l] the heathen: [m] be not merciful to any wicked transgressors. Selah.

6 They [n] return at evening: they make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city.

* Or, *Destroy not*, a *golden* Psalm. lvii lviii. *titles*.
a Judg. xvi. 2, 3. 1 Sam. xix. 11, &c. 2 Cor. xi. 32, 33.
b vii. 1, 2. xviii. 48. lxxi. 4. cxliii. 12. Luke i. 74, 75 2 Tim. iv. 17, 18.
† Heb. *set me on high*. xii 5. xci. 14. Is xxxiii. 16.
c xxvi 9. xxvii. 2 lv. 23. cxxxix. 19.
d x. 9, 10. xxxvii. 32, 33 xxxviii. 12. lvi 6. 1 Sam. xix. 1 Prov. xii. 6, &c. Mic. vii. 2. Acts xxiii. 21.
e ii. 2. Acts iv. 26, 27.
f vii. 3—6 lxix. 4. 1 Sam. xxiv. 11. xxvi. 18. John xv. 25.
g 1 Sam. xix. 12—24 Prov. i. 16. Is. lix. 7. Acts xxiii. 15 Rom. iii 15.
h v. 6. xxxv. 23. xliv. 23 Is li 9.
† Heb *meet*
i Gen. xxxiii. 20. Ex iii. 15
k Ex xx. 5.
l ix. 15. liv. 3. Is. i 10 Am. ix. 7. Rom. ii. 23, 29. ix. 6.
m vii. 12, 13. lv. 15. Is xxvii. 11. Ez. xviii. 27, 28.
Jam. ii. 13.——n 14. 1 Sam. xix. 11.

repeated accomplishments, in the establishment of true Christianity upon the ruins of its opposers: but the day of judgment will be its grand and final accomplishment.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Injustice established by law and decreed by judges, is more malignant than any other. It is grievous to behold the sons of men preying upon their own species: but more so to see the congregation of those who profess to be the children of God, combining against the remnant of his true people. We may very properly appeal to the consciences of such iniquitous judges, whether indeed they speak righteously and decide uprightly? But the malice, avarice, or pride of their hearts, prevails against their convictions; and their iniquity is intentional, deliberate, and determined. Whilst we behold the effects of natural depravity in the horrid crimes of others, we should be humbled by recollecting that the principles of them all are in our hearts also. We ought therefore to be thankful to the Lord for merciful restraints; earnest in seeking renewing grace; watchful over ourselves, and patient under the effects of our fallen nature in others. We may see in our children the wickedness of the world in embryo: their dislike to religion, their ingenuity at inventing lies, their pride, vanity, envy, and anger, are rank weeds, which if neglected, will overspread their minds, and prevent the growth of every good thing. It is our duty therefore to bestow pains upon their education; and above all to pray for converting grace to make them new creatures. But, though the poison of a serpent be within us; we may prevent in great measure its breaking forth to the injury of others. When the Saviour's instructions, reasonings, and persuasions are duly regarded; the very serpent becomes harmless and gentle like the dove. But they who refuse to hear him that speaketh to them in strains of heavenly wisdom, must perish miserably and eternally; nor can all nature furnish images, to represent their dreadful doom. Though the righteous are not glad at calamities: yet they must rejoice to see the cause of God triumphant, and men on every side convinced that there is a reward for the righteous and a God who judgeth in the earth. They must therefore exult on some occasions, in the ruin of terrible persecutors: they will in due time rejoice at the destruction of all antichristian corrupters of the faith; and at last they will witness the perdition of ungodly men with unmingled joy, and sing, "So let all thine enemies perish, "O LORD."

NOTES.

PSALM LIX. *Title.* (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xix. 11—18.) 'In 'this psalm David expresses what his thoughts and affec-'tions were, when Saul sent officers to watch his house all 'night, and to slay him when he came out of his door in 'the morning.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) His triumphant confidence in God in this extreme danger, and his anticipated fervour of gratitude for the deliverance which he fully expected, show a peculiarly pious and happy state of mind in such trying circumstances.

V. 1. *Defend*, or, "Thou shalt set me on high," &c. The clause is future, and implies the strongest assurance of safety, and advancement above all enemies, grounded on the special promises of God.

V. 3. *Not for*, &c. David had not in any thing offended Saul, but was persecuted by him and his adherents, for his good deeds, not for his sins: and in this he typified the suffering, but perfectly holy Jesus.

V. 5. *Be not*, &c. The Lord's mercy and patience towards the inveterate enemies of his cause, might appear to David ruinous to the interests of true religion in Israel: but the words are rather a prediction of that judgment without mercy, which will be executed upon all the implacable opposers of Christ and his people; as they may literally be rendered, "Thou wilt not be merciful to any "perfidious workers of iniquity." They who repent, cease to be "wicked transgressors" or "perfidious "workers of iniquity;" and none of the impenitent find mercy.

V. 6. *They return.* David's persecutors remitted their pursuit of his life during the day time: but in the evening they returned to hunt their prey, with menaces and reproaches, as the hound gives mouth when upon the scent after the hunted animal: thus they compassed the city to prevent his escape. The scribes and pharisees also chose

7 Behold, [o] they belch out with their mouth; [p] swords *are* in their lips: for [q] who, *say they*, doth hear?

8 But [r] thou, O LORD, shalt laugh at them; thou shalt have all [s] the heathen in derision.

9 *Because of* [t] his strength will I wait upon thee: for God *is* my * defence.

10 [u] The God of my mercy shall [x] prevent me: God shall [y] let me see *my desire* upon mine † enemies.

11 [z] Slay them not, lest my people forget: [a] scatter them by thy power; and [b] bring them down, O LORD, [c] our shield.

12 [d] *For* the sin of their mouth *and* the words of their lips, let them even be [e] taken in their pride: and for [f] cursing and lying *which* they speak.

13 [g] Consume *them* in wrath, consume *them*, that they *may* not *be*: and [h] let them know that God ruleth in Jacob unto the ends of the earth. Selah.

14 And [i] at evening let them return; *and* let them make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city.

15 Let them [k] wander up and down ‡ for meat, and ∮ grudge [l] if they be not satisfied.

16 But [m] I will sing of thy power; yea, I will [n] sing aloud of thy mercy [o] in the morning: [p] for thou hast been my Defence and Refuge [q] in the day of my trouble.

17 Unto thee, [r] O my Strength, will I sing: [s] for God *is* my Defence, *and* the God of my mercy.

o Prov. xv. 2. *Marg.* Matt. xii. 34.
p lv. 21. lvii. 4. lxiv. 3—5. cix. 2, 3. Prov. xii. 18.
q x. 11. 13. lxxiii. 11. xciv 7—9. Job xxii 12, 13. Jer. xxiii. 24.
r ii. 4. xxxvii. 13. 1 Sam xix. 15, 16. Prov i 26.
s 5. Matt. xviii. 17.
t xviii. 1, 2 xxvii. 1. 14 xlvi 1. lxii 5, 6 11. Is. xii. 2. xxvi 3, 4. xl 31. Matt. vi 13
* Heb *high place* ix. 9 xx 1. xlvi. 7. *Marg* Is. lviii. 14. Hab. iii 19.
u 17. 2 Cor. i. 3. Eph ii. 4, 5. 1 Pet v. 10
x xxi 3. lxxix 8. Is. lxv. 24. 1 Thes iv. 15.
y liv. 7. xci 8. xcii. 11, cxii. 8. cxix. 53 1 Sam. xxvi. 10 2 Sam. 11. 12. 17. Jer. xvii. 16. Luke xix. 41—44. Rom. x. 2, 3.——† Heb. *observers.* v. 8. liv. 5. *Marg.* lvi. 6 ——z Gen. iv. 12, 13. Judg i 6, 7. Ec. ix. 5. Ez. xii. 15, 16 xiv. 22, 23
a xliv. 11. lii. 5. Lev. xxvi. 33. Deut. iv. 27. xxviii. 64. xxx. 3, 4. Ez xii. 15. Luke i 51, 52. xxi. 24.——b Job xl 12.——c iii. 3. lxxxiv 11 ——d lxiv 7, 8. lxxix. 12. cxx. 3, 4 cxl. 9, 10. Prov. xii. 13. xviii. 7. Matt. xii. 36, 37. xxvii. 25. 63.——e x. 2 Prov. vi. 2. xi. 6.——f cix. 17, 18. Hos. iv. 2. Luke xxiii. 3.

g 11. vii. 9. Num. xiv. 34. 35. xxxii. 13 Deut. ii 14—16. vii. 22, 23.
h lxxxiii. 18. cxxxv. 5, 6. 1 Sam xvii 46, 47. 1 Kings xviii. 36, 37. 2 Kings xix. 19. Is. liv. 5 Ez. xxxviii. 23. xxxix 7. Dan. iv. 25. 35—35.
i 6 xxii. 16.
k cix. 10. Job xv. 23. xxx. 1—7. Is viii. 21.
‡ Heb *to eat.* Deut. xxviii. 48. 53—58. 2 Kings vi. 25—29 Lam. iv. 4, 5 9 10. v. 9, 10. Matt. xxiv. 7, 8.
∮ Or, *if they be not satisfied. they will stay all night Title.*
l Is lvi. 11. Mic. iii. 5
m 9, 10. xxi. 13. cvi 8. cxlv. 11. Ex. xv 6. Job xxxvii 23
n xxxi. 7 xxxvi. 5. lxxxvi. 13. lxxxix. 1. ci. 1. Rom. xv. 9. Eph. i. 6, 7.——o v. 3. xxx. 5. cxliii 8. 1 Sam. xix 11, 12.——p iv. 1. lxi. 2, 3. 1 Sam. xvii. 37. 2 Cor. i. 10. Eph. iii. 20
q lxxvii. 2 cxvi. 1—5. cxxxviii. 7. Jer. xxx. 7. Heb. v. 7.——r xviii. 1 xlvi. 1.——s 9, 10.

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the night for the season of their machinations against the Son of David.

V. 7. *Swords*, &c. The reviling menaces and proud boastings, which were vented from the furious malice of these persecutors, wounded David's peace and reputation like swords, and subserved their designs of murdering him: nor would they have dared to utter such notorious falsehoods, if they had not disbelieved the being of a God, or their accountableness to him.

V. 8. (*Note* ii. 4.) In this psalm (5) and in other places the Israelites who set themselves against the man after God's own heart, are called *the heathen:* and in like manner the Jews, when they had crucified the Son of David, and persisted in refusing to submit to him, were excluded from the church of God, and have ever since been treated as a part of the Gentile world; except as marked with more striking indications of the divine displeasure.

V. 9. 'The more strong and the more malicious Saul 'is, the more will I look unto thee;—for thou, O God, art 'my sure refuge in my greatest distresses.' (*Bp. Hall.*) Many, however, suppose the Psalmist to refer to the almighty power of God, as the ground of his cheerful confidence.

V. 10. God, who had always shown mercy and loving kindness to his servant, would certainly come to his aid in this emergency, in some way beyond all human expectation; so that when he seemed to stand afar off, he would show himself present, to prevent his enemies from hurting him. He would also exceed the hope of his friends, and seem to answer his prayers before they were finished.—Thus David would be enabled to look on his enemies without dismay, and behold their disappointment. Nothing is said, either in this or other similar passages, of David's *desiring* the destruction of his foes; and his conduct, when he heard of Saul's death, implies, that he had not *desired*, though he had foreseen the woful day. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 11—13. The rejection of the Jewish nation, their long continued dispersion, and their preservation as a distinct people, every where reminding men of God's vengeance on those who reject his gospel, and proudly despise and blaspheme his Son; (whilst every successive generation allows the deeds of their fathers by their enmity against Christianity,) form such a striking accomplishment of these verses, that we must conclude the Holy Spirit intended these events in them: though it is probable that David meant the disgrace, degradation, and gradual extirpation of Saul's family, for their opposition to the Lord's Anointed, and all their imprecations and calumnies against him.

V. 14, 15. These verses may mean, that the punishment of David's persecutors would be answerable to their crimes: their clamours against him would be followed by howlings of distress, like those of the dog that is starving with hunger: they would in vain compass the city to find food, and would grudge all that went beside them. The extreme famine in Jerusalem, when besieged by the Romans, and the state of the Jewish nation ever since, as destitute of the bread of life, might be alluded to. But some think that David here again describes the conduct of his enemies, as foretelling and rejoicing in their disappointment: and that having repeated what he had said before, adds what should be translated, "They wander up and "down to devour *me:* and if they be not satisfied, "they tarry all night." The words are throughout in the future tense, and may properly be thus rendered. In the old translation, the last clause is, "Surely they shall not be "satisfied, though they tarry all night."

V. 16. *In the morning.* David was confident that in the morning, when his enemies expected to devour him, he should in perfect safety be singing the praises of God.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When we suffer for well-doing, we are so far conformed to our Redeemer, and have an evidence of our acceptance

PSALM LX.

David complains of the heavy judgments which God had inflicted on Israel, 1—3. *He takes courage from present successes to pray for more complete deliverance, and to exult in the prospect of subjugating all his enemies; according to the promises of God to him,* 4—12.

a lxxx. *title.* * Or, *a golden,* Psalm lix. *title.* b 2 Sam. viii. 3. 12, 13. x. 16. 1 Chr xviii 3 12, 13. xix. 16.—19.

To the chief Musician upon [a] Shushaneduth, * Michtam of David, to teach; [b] when he strove with Aram-naharaim, and with Aram-zobah, when Joab returned, and smote of Edom in [c] the valley of salt twelve thousand.

c 2 Kings xiv. 7. 2 Chr. xxv. 11. d 10. xliv. 9. lxxiv. 1. lxxxix 38. cviii. 11. 1 Chr xxviii 9. Rom xi. 1, 2 e lix. 11 1 Sam iv. 10, 11. 17 xiii 6, 7. 11. 18—22 xxxi. 1—7 † Heb *broken* f lxxix 9. lxxxiii 3. 7. 19. lxxxv. 4. xc. 13. g civ. 32. cxiv. 7 2 Sam. xxii. 8 Job ix. 6 Is. v 25. Jer. iv. 24 x. 10 Am. viii 8. Hab iii 10. Matt. xxvii. 51. h lxxxix 40 2 Sam ii. 8, &c iii 1. &c. Is. vii. 8

O GOD, [d] thou hast cast us off, [e] thou hast † scattered us, thou hast been displeased; [f] O turn thyself to us again.

2 Thou hast [g] made the earth to tremble; [h] thou hast broken it: [i] heal the breaches thereof; for it shaketh.

3 Thou hast [k] shewed thy people hard things: thou hast made us [l] to drink the wine of astonishment.

Jer xlv. 17. xlviii. 38. Hag ii. 6, 7 —i 2 Chr. vii 14. Job v. 18. Is ii 13. Ez xxxiv. 16. Hos vi. 1 —k lxxi 20. Neh. ix. 32. Dan ix. 12.—l lxxv 8. Is li. 17. 22. Jer. xxv. 15. Lam. iv. 21. Ez. xxiii. 31, 32. Hab. ii. 16. Rev. xvi 19. xviii. 6.

with God. We should indeed greatly fear suffering as "evil-doers, or as busy-bodies in other men's matters:" but not be either afraid or ashamed of the hatred of the workers of iniquity, when "they prepare themselves, "and are gathered together against us, without our fault." They may be both mighty and bloody; their words may be as swords, and their actions may correspond with them: but the Lord will awake, and behold, and hasten to the help of his servants. In vain did Saul and his mighty men seek the life of David: they could not prevent his advancement to the throne, but they occasioned their own ignominy and ruin. Nor could the rulers of the Jews, by crucifying Jesus, prevent his glorification; but they thus hastened their own destruction: and neither tempters nor persecutors can succeed any better, in lying in wait for the soul of the believer. The serpent and his seed bruised the heel of the Redeemer, but He will crush their head: because of the Lord's strength, his servants may then confidently wait on him: and if we trust in him as the God of our mercy, and have recourse to him in every temptation and tribulation, he will assuredly be our Defence against all those that rise up against us. In proportion as we are conscious, that we are not *wicked transgressors* that continue impenitent in known sin, we may be satisfied that our cause is of God. The predictions that we read, concerning the vengeance to be executed on all the implacable enemies of Christ and his kingdom, and upon all the impenitent and unbelieving; and the accomplishment of many of them in this present world, should impress our minds with an awe of the divine Majesty and purity, and a dread of all iniquity. The destruction of Jerusalem, and the state of the Jewish nation for much above seventeen hundred years, when viewed in connexion with that awful imprecation upon themselves and their children, which accompanied their malice and lying testimony against Christ, and their cry, "Crucify him, crucify "him," should make us tremble at the thought of lies and imprecations, which are the offspring of pride and hatred; and still more, lest we should at last be found despisers or abusers of his Gospel. But we should also pray for the conversion of that people, that they may at length know that Jesus is the Lord and God, and that he ruleth in Jacob, and unto the ends of the earth. Our prayers, however, for our personal enemies and the opposers of our holy faith, should be attended with solemn warnings: for there will no mercy be shown to obstinate and impenitent transgressors; but they will be eternal monuments of the Lord's abhorrence of sin, whilst his wrath will be unto them as a devouring, yet unquenchable, fire. But the trials of the upright will terminate in joy and praise: when the night of affliction is over, they will sing of the Lord's power and mercy in the morning: He is their Defence and Refuge in the time of their trouble: let them now in assured faith and hope, praise him for those mercies, for which they will rejoice in him and praise him for evermore.

NOTES.

PSALM LX. *Title. Shushan-eduth* seems to mean, a psalm of testimony set to an instrument of six strings. The psalm was intended to testify and teach the danger of opposing the servants of God, and the happiness of uniting with them. *Aram-Naharaim*, or *Syria of the rivers*, that is, between the Tygris and the Euphrates, denotes Mesopotamia: and Aram-zobah, Syria to the west of the Euphrates. (*Note*, 2 *Sam.* viii. 13, 14.)

V. 1—3. When Saul and his sons were slain, the Philistines triumphed, and the Israelites were scattered and dismayed. The setting up of Ishbosheth over the ten tribes, and the consequent divisions and civil war, made *the land* to tremble, broke its force, and exposed it to the common enemy. Thus the people of God, for their sins, were showed *hard things*, and made to drink the wine of astonishment, as if they had been his enemies. For the wound made by a skilful surgeon may be as painful as that made by a mortal foe: though it be given with a contrary intention, and to save life instead of destroying it. When the Israelites supported Saul, whom God had rejected, and who was evidently given up to the most furious passions, and to adopt the most ruinous measures; when to please him they concurred in persecuting David, the Lord's anointed, whose wisdom and courage, as well as exemplary piety, loyalty, and patriotism, entitled him to their highest esteem and confidence; and when after Saul's death they, at Abner's instance, adhered to Ishbosheth, and carried on war against David in direct opposition to the known will of God: they seemed to be perfectly infatuated, as if they had drunk some intoxicating poison, which had bereaved them of their senses, and so filled them with terror and amazement, that they knew not what they did.

4 Thou hast given [m] a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed [n] because of the truth. Selah.

5 [o] That thy beloved may be delivered; [p] save *with* thy right hand, and hear me.

6 [q] God has spoken in his holiness; [r] I will rejoice, [s] I will divide [t] Shechem, and mete out [u] the valley of Succoth.

7 [x] Gilead *is* mine, and Manasseh *is* mine; Ephraim also *is* [y] the strength of mine head; [z] Judah *is* my lawgiver;

8 [a] Moab *is* my wash-pot; [b] over Edom will I cast out my shoe: Philistia, * triumph thou because of me.

9 [c] Who will bring me *into* the † strong city? who will lead me into Edom?

10 [d] *Wilt* not thou, O God, *which* [e] hadst cast us off? and *thou*, O God, *which* [f] didst not go out with our armies?

11 [g] Give us help from trouble: for [h] vain *is* the ‡ help of man.

12 Through God [i] we shall do valiantly: for he *it is that* shall [k] tread down our enemies.

m xx. 5. Ex. xvii. 15. *Marg.* Is. xi. 12. xlix. 22. lix. 19.
n xii. 1. 2. xlv. 4. Is. lix. 14, 15. Jer. v. 1—3.
o 12. xxii. 8. cviii. 6. Deut. viii. 7, 8. xxxiii. 3. Matt. iii. 17. xvii. 5.
p xvii. 7. xviii. 35. xx. 6. lxxiv. 11. Ex. xv. 6. Is. xl. 10.
q lxxxix. 19. 35. cviii. 7—13.
r xxxii. 11. 2 Sam. iii. 18. v. 2. Jer. xxiii. 9. Am. iv. 5.
s lvi. 4. cxix. 162. 2 Sam. vii. 18—29. Luke i. 45—47.
t Josh. i. 6. 2 Sam. ii. 8, 9. v. 1—3.
u Gen. xii. 6. *Sichem.* Josh. xx. 7. xxiv. 1. 32.——u Josh. xiii. 27.——x Josh. xvii. 1. 5, 6. 1 Chr. xiii. 19. 37.——y Deut. xxxiii. 17. 1 Sam. xxviii. 2.——z Gen. xlix. 10.
a 2 Sam. viii. 2. 1 Chr. xviii. 1, 2.——b Gen. xxv. 23. xxvii. 40. Num. xxiv. 18. 2 Sam. viii. 14. 1 Chr. xviii. 13.

* Or, *triumph thou over me* (by an irony.) cviii. 9. 2 Sam. v. 17, &c. viii. 1. xxi. 15—22.
c Judg. i. 12. 24, 25. 1 Chr. xi. 6. 17—19.
† Heb. *city of strength.* 2 Sam. xi. 1. xii. 26, &c.
d xx. 7. xliv. 5—9. cxviii. 9, 10. Is. viii. 17. xii. 1, 2.
e l. cviii. 11. Jer. xxxiii. 24—26.
f Deut. i. 42. xx. 4. Josh. vii. 12. x. 42. 1 Sam. iv. 6, 7. 10, 11. 1 Chr. x. 1, &c.
g xxv. 22. cxxx. 8.
h cxxiv. 1—3. cxlvi. 3. Is. xxx. 7. xxxi. 3.
‡ Heb. *salvation.* lxii. 1.——i xviii. 32—42. cxliv. 1. Num. xxiv. 18, 19. Josh. i. 9. xiv. 12. 2. Sam. x. 12. 1 Chr. xix. 13.——k xliv. 5. Is. x. 6. lxiii. 3. Zech. x. 5. Mal. iv. 3. Rev. xix. 15.

V. 4. David, as anointed of God and advanced to the throne, was a *banner* given to the pious remnant of Israel: and it was displayed, that they might resort to it, and under his authority and command expect the performance of the Lord's faithful promises, and the triumphing of his truth. In this he was a Type of Christ, and his kingdom and salvation.

V. 5. David was beloved of God, and a type of his "beloved Son, in whom he is well pleased:" but the words in the original are plural, and evidently relate to Israel, as the Lord's chosen and beloved people; (*Marg. Ref.*) and the verse contains the intercession of David for his subjects; who prefigured in this our heavenly Advocate, that never fails to plead in behalf of all, however heretofore rebellious, who bow to the sceptre of his grace and come to God by him.

V. 6—12. God had promised to David the throne over all Israel; and to Israel the dominion over the adjacent countries. The promises were in part fulfilled, as they related to David. Shechem, Succoth, Gilead, and Manasseh, were in his possession. These had been subject to Ishbosheth; who had also been supported by Ephraim, that powerful tribe, which was now become the guardian of David's government and person: the legislative authority was transferred to the tribe of Judah, where it would continue till the coming of the Messiah: and whilst Israel, being willingly subject to David's equitable government, shared its blessings, the neighbouring nations were about to be forced into submission. Moab would soon be reduced to bondage, and employed in the lowest menial services. David also fully expected in a short time to vanquish Edom, and take possession of it, by casting his shoe over it; or even tread it under foot and crush its strength; as it had been predicted: (*Marg. Ref.*) and let Philistia now triumph over Israel as in times past, if it could. These conquests however were not completed. Bozrah of Edom, or some other strong city, (perhaps Rabbah of the Ammonites,) yet remained unsubdued: but David would not rely on his own valour and conduct, nor on those of his captains or allies, for completing his conquests; but on the Lord, who had cast off his people, but was now returned to them, and fought for them: and their enemies would soon perceive the difference between the armies of David, which JEHOVAH accompanied to the battle, and those of Saul when JEHOVAH had doomed him to destruction.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The anger of God against sin is the sole cause of all misery, personal or public, in families, churches, and nations, that hath been, is, or shall be endured, in time or to eternity. Professing churches are often cast off, and deprived of their privileges for their sins; nations tremble, and are broken for the same cause; yea, the earth and creation itself, groan under the load of man's guilt. Even the true believer, when he commits iniquity, will sometimes be showed heavy things, and made to drink of the wine of astonishment, till anguish and dismay for a time seize upon him. In all these cases, there is no remedy, but by returning to the Lord with repentance, faith, and prayer; and beseeching him to return to us, and heal the breaches that sin hath made. Blessed be his name, he hath given a banner, in the cross of Christ, to those that fear his name: that resorting thither, and receiving mercy, they may enlist under him who now fills the mediatorial throne, and so wage successful war against the enemies of their souls. Oh may this banner be every where displayed, that all nations may embrace the truth, and experience the faithfulness of God to his promises. He who exalted the Saviour by his own right hand to the throne of glory, will hear his intercession for all who pray in his name, and are beloved for his sake; and save them also by his almighty power. The man, who is in Christ a new creature, may rejoice in all the precious promises which God hath spoken in his holiness, and by his Holy One; and may consider the whole purchased inheritance as his own in reversion: and the present privileges to which he is called, and the sanctifying and comforting influences of the Spirit which he experiences, are the sure earnests of heavenly glory. If Christ be ours, all things are ours; mercy, grace, peace, wisdom, righteousness, strength, and victory; life and death, angels and men, earth and heaven are ours; and all things shall, in one way or other, subserve our eternal good. We are not yet, however, made complete conquerors: and no true believer will abuse these truths, to the allowed indulgence of sloth or vain confidence.

PSALM LXI.

David encourages himself by past experience, to persevere in prayer, 1—3. Because of former, and in the prospect of future, mercies, he purposes to praise and serve God for ever, 4—8.

a lv. vi. liv. lv. *titles.*

To the chief Musician upon [a] Neginah, *A Psalm* of David.

b v. 1—3. xvii. 1. xxviii. 2. lv. 1, 2. cxxx. 2. Phil. iv. 6.

HEAR [b] my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer.

c xlii. 6. cxxxix. 9, 10. Deut. iv. 29. Jon. ii. 2—4.

2 [c] From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when [d] my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to [e] the Rock *that* is higher than I.

d xlii. 5. lv. 5. lxxvii. 3. cxlii. 3. cxliii. 4. Mark xiv. 33. 34. Luke xxii. 44, 45.

e xviii. 46. xxvii. 5. xl. 2. lxii. 2. 6. Is. xxxii. 2.

3 For [f] thou hast been a Shelter for me, *and* a [g] strong Tower from the enemy.

f iv. 6, 7. cxvi 2. cxi 7. Is. xlvi. 3, 4. 2 Cor. i. 10.

g xviii. 2. Prov. xviii 10.

4 [h] I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever: [i] I will * trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah.

h 7. xv. 1. xviii. 6. xxvii 4. xc. 1. xci. 1. xcii. 13. Rev. iii 12.

i xvii. 8. lxiii. 7. xci. 4. Ruth ii. 12. Matt. xxiii. 37.

5 For thou, O God, [k] hast heard my vows: thou hast given *me* [l] the heritage of those that fear thy name.

* Or, *make my refuge.* lvii. 1. lxii. 7. cxlii. 4, 5. Heb. vi. 18.

k lvi. 12. lxv. 1. lxvi. 19.

l xvi. 5, 6. cxv. 13. Mal. iii. 16—18. Acts x. 35.

6 Thou † wilt prolong the king's life: *and* his years as ‡ many generations.

† Heb. *shalt add to the days of the king.* xxi 4. 6. lxxii. 15—17. Is liii 10.

‡ Heb *generation and generation.* lxxxix 36, 37.

7 He shall [m] abide before God for ever: O [n] prepare mercy and truth, *which* may preserve him.

m xli. 12. Is ix. 6, 7. Luke i. 33. Heb. vii. 21—25. ix. 24.

n xl. 11. lvii. 3. Gen. xxiv. 27. xxxii. 10. Prov. xx. 28. Mic. vii. 20. Luke i. 54, 55.

8 So will I [o] sing praise unto thy name for ever; [p] that I may daily perform my vows.

o xxx. 12. lxxix. 13. cxlv. 1, 2. cxlvi. 2.

p lxv. 1. lxvi. 13—16.

Trusting in God to arm us for the conflict, to lead us forth and support us, and to give us strength in every time of trouble, we may do valiantly and tread down all our enemies, and we shall ere long obtain the conqueror's crown. The church also, over which oppressors have so often insulted, as if the Lord had cast her off, shall speedily triumph over them all: and whilst they, who willingly submit to our anointed King, shall share his glories, all his foes shall be put under his feet.

NOTES.

PSALM LXI. V. 2. This psalm seems to have been composed, when David was driven by Absalom's rebellion, like an exile beyond Jordan, to the extremities of the land, and far from the sanctuary of God. His heart was overwhelmed with complicated distresses, as by an inundation. The divine mercy, support, and protection, formed the Rock on which he desired to rest his soul, out of the reach of the tempestuous waves that dashed and raged below: but he was like the ship-wrecked mariner, who is exposed to the raging billows, from which he would be secured, if he could reach the summit of a rock that is close to him: but it is far too high for him to climb it without help. Thus David found, that he could not by faith and hope ascend, and be established on, the Rock of salvation, unless the Lord led him to it and helped him to get upon it.

V. 3. 'Nothing doth more strengthen our faith, than 'the remembrance of God's succour in times past.'

V. 4, 5. The Psalmist, though now driven away from the courts of God, rested assured that he should be restored again to them, and perpetually enjoy the comfort and benefit of public ordinances: but he seems also to have looked through the shadow of the earthly sanctuary, to "the holy place not made with hands," and to have exulted in hope of the eternal felicity of heaven; as now abiding under the covert of the Almighty, and being "kept "by his power through faith unto salvation." For it can hardly be supposed, that he meant his temporal authority, by the "heritage of those that fear the name of God;" which had been given him, in answer to his earnest prayers and solemn vows.

V. 6, 7. David might here mean himself as king of Israel: though *apparently* deposed; he trusted that he should yet live, and reign over the people of God, for some time to come; and his kingdom would be continued to him in his posterity to future generations, according as God had mercifully promised, and would faithfully perform.—But the King Messiah, as descending from him, who was to reign for ever over the house of Israel, and by whom the mercy and truth prepared for sinful men was to be conferred, seems to have been especially intended. Whatever became of David's personal interests, he rejoiced in the prospect of the Messiah's kingdom; and prayed for the *faithful* performance of God's *gracious* promises, which form the stability of his mediatorial throne. The Chaldee paraphrase of the sixth verse is very remarkable, 'Thou 'shalt add days to the days of King Messias; his years 'shall be as the generation of this world, and of the world 'to come.' (*Horne.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When removed from other comforts, we should more earnestly seek consolation from God: and when cares, fears, sorrows, or temptations, like a wild deluge, overwhelm our hearts, our cries unto him should be more fervent than ever. No outward situation can exclude us from communion with God through Jesus Christ; but without divine assistance, we can neither climb, nor take shelter in, that Rock of salvation: when therefore we perceive that there is safety in him and none in ourselves, we should pray fervently for the Holy Spirit of promise, that we may by his gracious teaching and assistance, "believe to the "saving of our souls." As genuine experience is acquired, encouragement will abound: for we shall more readily trust in the covert of his wings, when he hath been heretofore a Shelter for us, and a strong Tower from our enemies. When we have the opportunity we should keep close to the ordinances of God; and we should re-

PSALM LXII.

David avows his confidence in God, and warns his enemies of their danger, 1—7. He exhorts the people to trust in the Lord, and not in men, in iniquity, or in riches, 8—10. For power and mercy belong to God, 11, 12.

To the chief Musician, to [a] Jeduthun, A Psalm of David.

*TRULY [b] my soul † waiteth upon God: [c] from him *cometh* my salvation.

2 [d] He only *is* my Rock and my Salvation; *he is* my ‡ Defence; [e] I shall not be greatly moved.

3 [f] How long will ye [g] imagine mischief against a man? [h] ye shall be slain all of you: [i] as a bowing wall *shall ye be, and as* a tottering fence.

4 They only [k] consult to cast *him* down from his excellency; [l] they delight in lies; [m] they bless with their mouth, but they curse § inwardly. Selah.

5 [n] My soul, [o] wait thou only upon God; for [p] my expectation *is* from him.

6 He only *is* [q] my Rock and my Salvation; *he is* my Defence; [r] I shall not be moved.

7 [s] In God *is* my salvation and [t] my glory: [u] the rock of my strength, *and* my refuge, *is* in God.

8 [x] Trust in him at all times; ye people, [y] pour out your heart before him: [z] God *is* a refuge for us. Selah.

a xxxix. lxxvii. *titles.* 1 Chr xvi. 41, 42. xxv. 1. 3. * Or, *Only.* 2. 5, 6 b xxv. 5 xxvii. 14. xxxiii. 20. xl. 1. cxxiii. 2. cxxx. 5, 6. Is. xxx. 18. xl. 31. Luke ii. 25. 33. Jam v. 7. † Heb. *is silent.* xxxvii. 7. lxv. 1. *Marg.* c xxxvii. 39. lxviii. 19, 20. cxxi. 2. Is. xii. 2. Jer. iii. 23. Luke ii. 30—32. d 6. xviii 2. xxi. 1. xxvii. 1. lxxiii. 25, 26. Deut. xxxii. 30, 31. Is. xxvi. 4. xxxii. 2. ‡ Heb. *high place.* lix. 9 lxxxix. 18. *Marg.* e xxxvii. 24. Mic. vii. 8, 9 1 Cor. x. 13. 2 Cor. iv. 8, 9. f iv. 2. lxxxii. 2. Ex. x. 3. xvi. 28 Prov i 22. vi. 9. Jer. iv. 14. Matt. xvii. 17. g xxi 11. xxxviii. 12. cxl. 2. Hos. vii. 15. h lxxiii. 18—20 1 Sam. xxvi. 10. i Is xxx. 13, 14. k ii. 1—3 Matt. ii. 3, 4. 16 xxii 16. 23. 34, 35 xxvi. 3, 4 xxvii 1. John xi 47—50. Acts iv. 16, 17. 25—28. l lii. 3 cxix. 103. Prov. vi 17 xiii. 5. Hos. vii. 3. John viii. 45. Rom i. 32. Rev. xxii. 15. m xxviii 3. lv. 21. Luke xx. 20, 21. § Heb. *in their inward parts.* v. 9. li. 6. Luke xi. 39. Rom vii. 22. n xlii. 5. 11 xliii. 5. ciii 1, 2 civ 1. 35. cxlvi. 1. o 1 xxvii. 13, 14. xxxvii 34. Lam. iii. 24—26. Mic. vii. 7 Hab. ii. 3. Zeph. iii. 8. John vi. 67—69. p xxxix. 7. lxxi. 5. Jer. xvii. 17. Phil. i 20.—q 2. xviii. 31, 32 Is xlv. 17. Hos i 7. r xvi. 8. cxii. 6 Prov. x. 30 xii. 7.—s Is xlv. 25 Jer. ix. 23, 24. 1 Cor. i. 30, 31. Gal vi. 14.—t iii. 3. iv. 2—u xxxi 22 xciv 22. xcv. 1. Is. xxvi. 4.——x xxii. 4, 5. xxxiv. 1, 2. xlvi. 1—3. Job xiii 15. Is xxvi. 4. 1 10. 1 John ii. 22——y xlii. 4. cii *title.* cxlii. 2. 1 Sam. i. 15. Is. xxvi. 16. Lam ii. 19. Phil iv. 6.——z xlvi. 11. Prov. xiv. 26. Heb vi. 18.

member, that he hears our vows, and witnesses our pious desires, intentions, and engagements; and therefore we should daily perform them. If he have given us the goodly heritage of those that fear his name, we shall have enough: our anointed King is alive for evermore; and all his true subjects shall live by him, and with him, and thus abide before God for ever. Being made partakers of that grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ, we may rejoice and sing praise unto him, whatever be our outward circumstances: and whilst, according to our engagements, we are daily employed in his pleasant service, we may cheerfully hope to sing praises to him for ever and ever.

NOTES.

PSALM LXII. *Title.* Jeduthun was first chosen to be one of the chief musicians, when the ark was removed to mount Zion: and, as this psalm is incribed to him, some have thought, that it relates to Absalom's rebellion, and not to the persecution which David endured from Saul. But as several other psalms, which certainly were composed before David came to the throne, are inscribed to the chief musician; we must suppose, that when the Psalmody at the sanctuary was appointed, David delivered to the chief musicians the psalms which he had previously written, as well as those which he afterwards from time to time composed. Internal evidence does not clearly show to which season of distress the Psalmist referred; as his language seems equally suited to either of them. 'There 'are no petitions at all in this psalm; nor any thanks-'givings: but only expressions of faith and confidence in 'God.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 1, 2. The word rendered *waiteth,* signifies *silence.* "Yet my soul keepeth silence unto God." 'Though Satan 'tempted him to murmur against God, yet he bridled his 'affections, and resting upon God's promise, he bore his 'cross patiently, and overcame all temptations.' David was conscious, that in calm submission and well-grounded confidence, he sought and expected protection and deliverance from God. He therefore steadily adhered to the line of duty; believing it "good both to hope, and quietly to "wait for the salvation of the LORD." And he rested assured, that though his enemies might for a while give him some disturbance, yet he should not be *greatly moved,* or materially injured, either in his temporal or spiritual concerns.

V. 3, 4. The Psalmist, having avowed his confidence in God, expostulates with his enemies, warns them of their danger, and exposes their wickedness. Saul and his party, envious of David's reputation, incessantly plotted against his life, and to exclude him from the royal dignity, to which God had appointed him; and they greatly desired to see him disgraced by some evident misconduct. They delighted in lies, both when they falsely accused him, and when they deceitfully spoke friendly to him: but by this they only brought ruin upon themselves; like a wall, which first bulges out and totters, and then falls down at once.—In like manner, Absalom, Ahithophel, and the other conspirators, artfully formed their measures for driving, with disgrace, their aged monarch from that honourable station to which God had raised him; and they covered their treachery and malice with fair pretences: but they only brought on themselves swift and dreadful destruction.—The opposition of the Jews and other enemies to Christ and his cause, springs from similar motives, is conducted in the same manner, and has had, or will have, the same event.

V. 5—7. The Septuagint renders the fifth verse, "Nevertheless my soul *submit* to God, for my patience is from "him:" and no doubt quiet submission to God, as well as a single expectation of deliverance, happiness, and honour from him alone, in his own time and manner, was meant.—The repetitions, with some variation, of these verses, are peculiarly animated: and the Psalmist, by thus dwelling on the ground of his encouragement, baffled his temptations and found his faith and hope invigorated.

9 Surely [a] men of low degree *are* vanity, *and* [b] men of high degree *are* a lie: to be [c] laid in the balance, they *are* * altogether [d] *lighter* than vanity.

10 [e] Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery; [f] if riches increase, [g] set not your heart *upon them.*

11 God hath [h] spoken once; twice have I heard this; [i] that * power *belongeth* unto God.

12 Also unto thee, O LORD, *belongeth* [k] mercy: for [l] thou renderest to every man according to his work.

a xxxix. 5. 11. 1 Sam. xviii. 5—7. xxiii. 12. 19. 20. 2 Sam. xv. 6. Matt. xxi. 9. John xix. 15.
b Iv. 13, 14. cxviii. 6. 1 Sam. xviii. 21—26. xxvi. 22—25. 2 Sam. xv. 31. Rom. iii. 4.
c Dan. v. 27.
* Or, *alike.*
d Is. xl. 15. 17.
e Job xx. 19—29. Is. xxviii. 15. xxx. 12. xlvii. 10. lix. 4. Jer. xiii. 25. xvii. 11.——f xxxix. 6. lii. 7. Deu. vi. 10—12. viii. 12—14. Job xxvii. 16, &c. xxxi. 24, 25. Mark viii. 36, 37. x. 23, 24. Luke xii. 15—21. 1 Tim. vi. 17.——g xci. 14. Prov. xxiii. 5.

h Job xxxii. 14. xl. 5.
i lxviii. 34, 35. Is. xxvi. 4. Mat. vi. 13. xxviii. 18. John xix. 11. Rev. xix. 1.
Or, *strength.*
k lxxxvi. 15. ciii. 8. 17. Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. Dan. ix. 9. 13. Mic. vii. 18.
l Job xxxiv. 11. Prov. xxiv. 12. Jer. xxxii. 19. Ez. xviii. 30. xxxiii. 20. Matt. xvi. 27. Rom. ii. 6. 2 Cor. v. 10. Eph. vi. 8. Col. iii. 25. 1 Pet. i. 17. Rev. xxii. 12.

V. 8—10. The Psalmist having risen above the disquietude with which he had been assaulted, next gives counsel and caution to the people in general, (as he had before warned his persecutors:) He exhorts them to trust in God at all times, whatever their outward circumstances or inward conflicts might be: and by fervent prayer to pour out their hearts before him, (*Marg. Ref.*) and they would find him a secure refuge in every danger.—But as for men, no confidence could reasonably be placed either on the fickle multitude, who might be induced to murder one day the very persons whom they idolized the day before; or on the great, who generally made promises which they never performed, and raised expectations which they never answered: so that even vanity itself seemed heavier in the balance than all of them together. Yet to trust in oppression or injustice would be still more foolish and wicked. 'Be not so vain as to trust to ill-gotten goods: for if your 'riches increase by honest means, they are not things, 'wherein to place either your confidence and hope, or your 'love and joy.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) 'Indeed he who is made 'vain and covetous by money, however honestly gotten, 'renders that a curse to one, which was designed a bles-'sing to many, and drowns himself in the spring, which 'should have watered all around him.' (*Horne.*)—The old translation of this last verse, seems more literal than the present version. "Trust not in oppression, nor in "robbery: Be not vain: if riches increase, set not your "heart upon them."

V. 11, 12. God had solemnly declared, as it were once for all, and the Psalmist had repeatedly heard it, or "had "heard these two things," that power and mercy belong to God. 'So that the wicked shall feel thy power, and 'the godly thy mercy.'—The Lord can punish and destroy, he can save and bless, as he pleases: all created power is from him and bounded by him; and no creature can do more harm or good than He pleases. Mercy also belongeth to him: and his recompensing the defiled imperfect services of believing sinners, and blotting out all their transgressions for the Redeemer's sake; and so punishing none but the unbelieving and impenitent, is a full proof of his abundant mercy, and an encouragement to trust in him.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The lively believer, conscious of sincerity, can without hesitation avow, "Truly my soul waiteth upon God." From the Lord, "his Defence, and Salvation," he expects present safety and eternal felicity, he considers all creatures as instruments in His hands; and he waits for promised blessings in the path of duty, and in the use of appointed or allowed means. Yet, however blamelessly he conducts himself, he must expect a measure of the same enmity with which the world treated his Saviour; when every device was framed, every deceit used, and every slander propagated, to cast him down from his excellency. But the doom of David's persecutors, and of the crucifiers of Christ, may be expected by all who would tempt his people to sin, or vilify their characters: and none will be punished more severely, than they who deceive men with fair words and smooth speeches; who "delight in lies," who "bless with their mouth, but curse inwardly." Let us, however, having fairly warned and expostulated with such infatuated persons, wait only upon God, and expect all our happiness from him: then shall we not *greatly be moved*, either to anger, to pride, or to despondency, by the malice or flattery of the ungodly: Nay, when our faith grows strong, we shall be confident of *not being moved at all* to our real hurt: and meditation and prayer are blessed means of invigorating faith and hope.—When we are rendered joyful and bold in reliance on God under peculiar trials, we have a vast advantage in exhorting our brethren to similar confidence. We may and ought to "trust in "him at all times," in persecution, temptation, affliction, and at the approach of death for this is our privilege, and honourable to God, and it will lead us to "pour out "our hearts before him;" laying open all our fears, sorrows, and wants, as to our bosom Friend, (*Note*, 1 *Sam.* i. 15;) and making him our Refuge from every danger and foe; and we shall renounce other confidences, that we may singly depend on him. They who refuse to do this, will find at length that their dependence on men, whether on the *many* or the *great*, will terminate in disappointment and shame: and wo be to them who trust in iniquity and oppression; who accumulate wealth by evading good laws, or oppressing under the colour of bad ones, or setting all law and justice at defiance; while the miseries of multitudes ripen individuals for the vengeance of heaven. Indeed *reliance* on increasing riches, however obtained, is idolatry, and totally inconsistent with the life of faith.—Yet the idea of increasing wealth is associated with that of augmented felicity in almost every human heart; and it is extremely difficult to possess riches without trusting in them and setting the heart upon them. The true and consistent believer, however, receives *all* from God; and uses it to his glory as a steward who must render an account. These things God hath spoken, and we have heard: may we not forget that power belongeth only to him; may we trust in his mercy and grace: and abound in his work, expecting a gracious recompense from him alone!

PSALM LXIII.

David earnestly thirsts for God, and to behold his glory at the sanctuary, 1, 2. *Regarding the love of God more than life, he determines to rejoice in praising him,* 3—5. *By meditation and prayer he rises to full assurance of protection, success, and exulting joy in God; and predicts the ruin of his enemies,* 6—11.

A Psalm of David, [a] when he was in the wilderness of Judah.

O GOD, [b] thou *art* my God; [c] early will I seek thee: [d] my soul thirsteth for thee, [e] my flesh longeth for thee [f] in a * dry and thirsty land where no water is;

2 [g] To see thy power and thy glory, so *as* I have seen thee [h] in the sanctuary.

3 Because [i] thy loving-kindness *is* better than life, [k] my lips shall praise thee.

4 Thus [l] will I bless thee while I live: [m] I will lift up my hands in thy name.

5 [n] My soul shall be satisfied as *with* † marrow and fatness, and my mouth shall praise *thee* [o] with joyful lips:

6 When [p] I remember thee upon my bed, *and* meditate on thee in the *night-watches.*

7 [q] Because thou hast been my help; therefore [r] in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.

8 My soul [s] followeth hard after thee: [t] thy right hand upholdeth me.

a 1 Sam. xxii. 5. xxiii 14—16 23—25. xxvi 1—3. 2 Sam. xv. 28
b xxxi. 14. xlii 11. xci. 2. cxviii 28 cxliii 10 Ex. xv. 2. Jer. xxxi. 1. 33. Zech xiii. 9. John xx. 17.
c v. 3. lxxviii 34. Job viii 5. Pro. i. 27, 28 viii. 17. Hos. v. 15. Matt. vi. 33 xlii 1,2 lxxxiv. 2. cxix. 81. cxliii. 6. John vii. 37. Rev. vii. 16, 17.
d cii 3—5. Cant v. 8.
e Ex. xvii. 3. Is xxxv. 7. xli. 18. Matt. xii. 43.
* Heb. *weary land without water.* Is. xxxii. 2.
g xxvii. 4. cv. 4. cxlv. 11 Ex. xxxiv. 18, 19. 1 Sam. iv. 21, 22. 2 Cor. iv 4—6.
h lxviii 24. lxxiii. 17, 18. lxxvii. 13, 14 xcvi. 6, cxxxiv 2
i iv 6. xxi. 6. xxx 5. Phil. i. 23.
k xxx. 12 li. 15. lxvi 17 Hos. xiv. 2. Rom. vi. 19. xii 1 1 Cor. vi. 20. Heb. xiii. 15. Jam. iii. 5—10.
l civ. 33. cxlv. 1—3. cxlvi 1, 2.
m cxxxiv 2. 1 Kings viii. 12, &c Hab. iii 10.
n xvii 15. xxxvi. 7—9 lxv. 4. civ. 34. Cant. i. 4. Is. xxv. 6. Jer. xxxi. 14.
† Heb. *fatness.*
o xliii. 4 lxxi. 23. cxviii. 14, 15. cxxxv. 3. cxlix. 1—3. Ezra iii. 11—13. Rev. xix. 5—7
p xlii 8. lxxvii. 4—6. cxix 55. 147, 148. cxxxix. 17, 18. cxlix. 5. Cant. iii. 1, 2 Lam. ii. 19 ——q liv. 3, 4.——r v. 11. xxi 1 lvii. 1 Sam. xvii. 37. 2 Cor. i. 10.——s lxxiii. 25. cxliii 6, 7. Gen. xxxii. 26—28. 2 Chr. xxxi. 21 Cant. iii. 2 Is. xxvi. 9. Matt. xi. 12. Luke xiii. 24. xviii. 5—7. t xxxvii. 24. lxxiii. 23. xciv 18. Cant. ii. 6. Is. xli. 10. xlii. 1. Phil. ii. 12, 13. Col. i. 29

NOTES.

PSALM LXIII. *Title.* It is generally supposed that David composed this most fervent and devout psalm, when pursued by Saul in the deserts of Judah. (*Marg. Ref.*) Some, however, think that it was written at a later period; namely, when he fled from Absalom, and before he passed over Jordan.

V. 1—4. The Psalmist, banished from the courts and ordinances of God, considered himself as a weary traveller, in a desolate and half parched land, when ready to perish by thirst. And his earnest desire after communion with God and his worshippers at the sanctuary, seems to have affected his body as well as his soul; perhaps spoiling his rest and appetite, and impairing his health and vigour.—He resolved, however, having chosen the Lord for his God, to seek him early, diligently, and with decided preference. —'Thus the true Christian dedicates to God the sweet 'hour of prime. He opens the eyes of his understanding 'with those of his body, and awakes each morning to 'righteousness. He arises with an inextinguishable thirst 'after those comforts which the world cannot give; and 'has immediate recourse, by prayer, to the Fountain of 'the water of life, ever longing to behold the divine 'power and glory in the sanctuary above, of which he has 'been favoured with a glimpse, in the services of the 'church below.' (*Horne.*)—Many explain the words, "To see thy power and glory," &c. of the ark, which was the symbol of the Lord's powerful, glorious, and gracious presence with his people. But the ark itself was concealed from sight: nor does it appear that, in the days of David, there was in general any *external* display of the divine glory at the sanctuary. It may therefore be supposed, that he referred to the internal and spiritual views which, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, he had experienced of the perfections and glory of God, while attending on those ordinances, which both commemorated the wonderful works of the Lord for his people, and typified the salvation of the promised Redeemer. These contemplations and discoveries, had often excited his admiring and adoring love and gratitude, and animated his confidence and joy in God; which made him regret exceedingly the loss of such pleasant and profitable opportunities. This enjoyment of the love of God, as an anticipation of heavenly felicity, he valued more than life itself; and therefore he was fully determined to employ himself and his powers of body and soul in praising the Lord, as long as he lived, and wherever he was driven; confidently expecting that the sweet experience which he recollected, would thus be renewed to him; even if banished from the outward means of grace.

V. 5, 6. 'The remembrance of thy favour is more 'sweet to me than all the pleasures and dainties of the 'world.' The Psalmist waited for the pleasure of communion with God, with more ardent desire than any epicure ever anticipated the enjoyment of sensual pleasure; and the remembrance of God during the night cheered his soul when dangers or cares disturbed his rest. Can any candid man read this psalm, and then speak of true devotion as merely a dispassionate intellectual exercise of the understanding, without any warm emotions or vehement affections of the heart? Weighed in the balance of such phlegmatic Christians, the man after God's own heart must be numbered among enthusiasts: for though his devotion was most rational, it certainly was most fervent and enraptured; and in fact the more rational on that very account.

V. 7, 8. The remembrance of past protection and deliverance, encouraged David not only to rely on the power, truth, and love of God, in his extremest dangers; but to rejoice in this confidence under his sharpest afflictions. His soul cleaved unto God, as the child clings about its kind parent, when alarmed or in pain; and followed hard after him, earnestly seeking nearer communion and conformity; being upheld by the power of divine grace in thus pressing forward in his heavenly course.—The fervour of David's devotion, whether pouring out his soul in earnest prayer, with vigorous exercises of faith and hope; or celebrating the praises of God with admiring

u xxxv. 4. 26. xxxviii. 12. xl. 14. lxx. 2 1 Sam. xxv 29 x ix 17 lv 15. 23. lxxxvi. 13. Num. xvi 30 —33. 1 Sam. xxviii. 19. Job xl. 13. Is. xiv. 9. 15 19. Ez. xxxii. 18—32. Acts i. 25.——* Heb. *make him run out*, like water, *by the hands of the sword.* 1 Sam. xxvi. 10. xxxi. 1—6 Jer. xviii. 21. Ez. xxxv. 5.

9 But those [u] *that* seek my soul to destroy *it*, shall [x] go into the lower parts of the earth.

10 They shall * fall by the sword: they shall be [y] a portion for foxes.

y Ez. xxxix. 4. 17 — 20 Rev. xix. 17, 18

11 But [z] the king shall rejoice in God; every one that [a] sweareth by him shall glory: but [b] the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped.

z ii 6. xxi. 1. 1 Sam. xxiii. 17. xxiv 20. a Deu. vi. 13. Is. xlx 18 xlv 23. lxv. 16. Zeph. i. 5.

Heb. vi. 13.——b xxxi. 18. Rom. iii 19. Tit. i. 10, 11.

love, joyful gratitude, and glowing zeal for his honour and glory, seem especially to have procured him the honourable distinction of "the man after God's own heart."—The following verses from Dr. Watts, well support the animation of the leading parts of this exquisitely beautiful psalm.

With heart, and eyes, and lifted hands,
For thee I long, to thee I look;
As travellers, in thirsty lands
Pant for the cooling water-brook.

With early feet I love t'appear
Among thy saints, and seek thy face;
Oft have I seen thy glory there,
And felt the power of sovereign grace.

Nor fruits nor wines that tempt our taste,
Nor all the joys our senses know,
Could make me so divinely blest,
Or raise my cheerful passions so.

My life itself without thy love,
No taste of pleasure could afford,
'Twould but a tiresome burden prove,
If I were banish'd from the Lord.

Amidst the wakeful hours of night,
When busy cares afflict my head,
One thought of thee gives new delight,
And adds refreshment to my bed.

I'll lift my hands, I'll raise my voice,
While I have breath to pray or praise;
This work shall make my heart rejoice,
And spend the remnant of my days.

V. 9—11. The Psalmist, while employed in these devout exercises, clearly foresaw the disgraceful end of his persecutors. They would perish, as if swallowed up by the earth, with Dathan and Abiram: or falling by the sword, they would be left unburied, for food to the foxes, with which the land abounded. This was, probably, the case with many that fell at Gilboa. He also foresaw himself, as advanced upon the throne, to be the king of Israel; and as rejoicing in God, and not in his outward dignity, or in the ruin of his enemies: whilst every one, who cordially *sware allegiance to him*, or who, as worshippers of God, *swore with solemnity by his name*, would glory in the advancement of his servant; and all who falsely accused, or attempted to deceive him, would effectually be confuted and silenced.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The true believer is convinced, that nothing in this world can satisfy the desires of his immortal soul; and he therefore expects happiness from the eternal God, as his God and Portion. In his more lively frames, an inextinguishable thirst after the discoveries of his glory, and the experience of his grace and love, lead him to seek the Lord early, every day, with the best of his time and the prime of his affections. He likewise greatly values public ordinances, and when confined from them, or constrained to live among those who know not God, he regrets his loss, feels as one banished into a parched wilderness; and, with a mixture of pleasure and pain, recollects, how he "has seen the power and glory of God in his sanctuary." This uneasiness, to which he is occasionally liable, arises from the same source with any other part of his experience, which is more habitual, especially when faith and hope are most in exercise: the world itself appears to him a weary desert, and he longs for the joys of heaven, of which he hath had some foretastes in the ordinances of God on earth. Yet even in this wilderness wells of salvation are opened, and his gracious thirst is in part allayed: and the want of stated means of grace sometimes excites more vigorous desires, and more earnestness in waiting on God in secret. The believer in this frame of mind values the loving kindness of God more than life; and is even willing to depart hence, that he may fully enjoy it. This foretaste and prospect tune his heart and lips to praise the Lord, and to rejoice in the midst of tribulation: and he desires, as a sweet solace during his weary pilgrimage, "to bless the Lord while he lives, and to lift up his hands "in his name." Then the pleasures of the world lose their attraction; "for his soul is satisfied, as with marrow and "fatness," whilst joyfully praising and thinking upon God: and such contemplations at once excite his gratitude, increase his confidence, and animate him in seeking conformity and nearness to the Lord; aspiring after still greater attainments, as feeling himself upheld by the power of the Almighty. To mount with David towards heaven, in these exalted strains of devotion and zeal, should be our holy ambition: true Christians can in some measure, and at some times, appropriate his emphatical language: but, alas! we too commonly have to complain "that our souls cleave to the dust." Let us then be more instant in prayer, that we may be quickened according to his word of promise. The enemies of such Christians as have been feebly described, are also enemies of Christ our King: present disgrace and eternal ruin will be their certain doom, if they persist in their enmity; and the lies, with which they blaspheme the Redeemer, or slander his people, or deceive one another, shall be silenced in anguish and despair. But our King having now entered upon the joy set before him, all who bow before him, and swear fealty to him, shall rejoice and glory in God with him; and obtain an honour and happiness infinitely superior to that of the most exalted throne on earth. And if the Israelites had reason to rejoice in their king, how much more should we glory in our King of righteousness and peace!

PSALM LXIV.

David, praying for deliverance, describes the malice and subtlety of his enemies, 1—6. He predicts their ruin, and the effects of it on the beholders, 7—10.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

[a] HEAR my voice, O God, in my prayer: [b] preserve my life from fear of the enemy.

2 [c] Hide me from the [d] secret counsel of the wicked: [e] from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity:

3 Who [f] whet their tongue like a sword, *and* [g] bend *their bows to shoot* their arrows, *even* bitter words;

4 That they may [h] shoot in secret at [i] the perfect: [k] suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not.

a xxviii. 7. lv. 1, 2. cxxx. 1, 2. cxli. 1. cxliii. 1—3. Lam. iii. 55, 56.
b xvii 8, 9. xxxi. 13—15. xxxiv. 4. lvi. 2—4. Acts xviii. 9, 10. xxvii. 24.
c xxvii. 5. xxxi. 20. cxliii. 9. Is. xxxii. 2.
d lvi. 6. cix. 2, 3. 1 Sam. xxiii. 2, 3. 2 Sam. xvii. 2—4. Jer. xi. 19. xviii. 23. Matt. xxvi. 3, 4 Acts xxiii 14, 15 xxv. 3.
e ii. 2 iii. 1. Luke xxiii. 18—23.
f lvii. 4. Prov. xii 18. xxx. 14. Is liv. 17. Jer. ix. 3. Jam. iii. 6—8.
g xi. 2
h x. 8, 9 Neh iv. 11. Hab. iii 14.
i lix 3, 4 John xix. 6 1 Pet. ii. 22, 23.
k 7 1 Sam. xviii. 11. xix. 10. 2 Sam. xv. 14

5 They [l] encourage themselves *in* an evil * matter: [m] they commune † of laying snares privily; they say, [n] Who shall see them?

6 They [o] search out iniquities: ‡ they accomplish § a diligent search: both [p] the inward *thought* of every one *of them*, and the heart, *is deep*.

7 But [q] God shall shoot at them *with* an arrow; [r] suddenly ‖ shall they be wounded.

8 So shall they make [s] their own tongue to fall upon themselves: [t] all that see them shall flee away.

9 And all men [u] shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for [x] they shall wisely consider of his doing.

10 [y] The righteous shall be glad in the LORD, and shall trust in him; and all [z] the upright in heart shall glory.

l Ex. xv. 9. Num. xxii. 6. Prov. i. 11—14. Is. xli. 6. Rev. xi. 10.
* Or, *speech.*
m 1 Sam xxiii. 19—23. Mat xxiii. 15. xxvi. 3, 4
† Heb. *to hide snares* cxxiv. 7. cxl 5.
n x. 11. lix. 7. xciv. 7. Ez viii 12.
o xxxv. 11. 1 Sam xxii. 8—13 xxiv. 9. xxv. 10 Dan. vi. 4, 5. Matt. xxvi. 59—66. John xviii. 29, 30. xix. 7.
‡ Or, *we are consumed by that which they have thoroughly searched.*
§ Heb. *a search searched.*
p v. 9. Prov. xx. 5 Is. xxix. 15 Jer xvii. 9, 10. 1 Cor. iv. 5.
q vii. 12. 13 xviii. 14 Deut xxxii. 23. 42 Job vi. 4. Lam. iii. 12, 13.
r 4. lxxiii. 19. Prov. vi. 15. xxix. 1. Is. xxx. 13. Matt. xxiv. 40, 50, 51 1 Thes v. 2, 3 ——‖ Heb *their wound shall be.* 1 Kings xxii. 34. 1 Chr. x. 3—7.
s lix. 12 cxl. 9. Job xv. 6. Pro. xii. 13. xviii. 7. Mat. xxi 41 Luke xix. 22 ——t Num. xvi 34. 1 Sam. xxxi. 3—7. Nah. iii. 7. Rev xviii. 4, 10.——u lii. 6 cxix. 120. Jer. l. 28. Rev. xi. 13.——x lviii. 11. cvii. 44, 45. Is. v. 12. Ez xiv. 23. Hos. xiv. 9
y xxxii. 11. xxxiii. 1. xl. 3 lviii. 10. lxvlii. 2, 3. Phil. iv. 4. ——z xcvii. 11. cxii. 2. 1 Cor. i 30, 31. Gal. vi. 14.

NOTES.

PSALM LXIV. V. 1. *Fear.* Thus our Liturgy, 'That we, surely trusting in thy defence, may not fear 'the power of any adversaries.' 'By thee, we being de- 'fended from the fear of our enemies.' Increasing our faith is as effectual an answer to these petitions, as removing the danger.

V. 2, 3. It is probable that the secret consultations of Saul and his courtiers against David, and the deceitful and violent measures they adopted in order to destroy him, gave occasion to this psalm. Open reproaches and false accusations wound like a sword in close fight: secret detraction slays like an arrow shot from a distance, or in the dark, or concealed from view.

V. 4, 5. David was not only an upright character, but he was *perfectly innocent* of those crimes which were laid to his charge: yet his enemies, not having the fear of God before their eyes, and being hardened against the dread of consequences, propagated their calumnies, secretly but very rapidly encouraging one another, and consulting together, in what way to ensnare and destroy him; fully expecting to escape detection, and acting as if God himself did not see them, or would not call them to account for their wickedness. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'Envy and malice cru- 'cified the Son of God: but during the course of their 'proceedings against him, you hear only of zeal for the 'law, and loyalty to Cæsar.' (*Horne.*)

V. 6. This verse may be rendered, perhaps more literally, "they search out iniquities: we are consumed by "that which they have thoroughly searched out: for the "inward part and the heart of man is very deep." Saul and his partizans searched, to find out some real or apparent iniquity, that David had committed, in order to cover the malice of their persecution: and they sedulously contrived new methods of perpetrating their crimes. Their intentions however, were carefully concealed: and the malice and dissimulation, and the wickedness of their hearts, were deep and unfathomable.

V. 7—9. While the persecutors were levelling their arrows, and about to shoot suddenly at David; God would unexpectedly cut them off; and their mortal wounds would be inflicted at once, while they were promising themselves complete success. Their blasphemies, perjuries, imprecations, and slanders, would, as an immense load of guilt, fall on them, and sink them into destruction. Their doom would be so dreadful, that the spectators would flee away, lest they should be involved in it: and all who heard of it would fear to imitate their conduct; be constrained to acknowledge the hand of God, and learning useful instruction from the awful dispensation, would cause others to understand it. Thus the benefit derived from it by numbers would illustrate the wisdom and goodness, as well as justice of God in his severity towards these wicked men. (*Marg. Ref.*) The dreadful imprecation of the Jews, when demanding our Lord's crucifixion, "His blood be "on us and on our children," has indeed fallen upon them. The destruction of Jerusalem filled the beholders with terror, and forced them to acknowledge that it was the work of God. Even Titus, the Roman emperor, confessed that he had fought and conquered by the favour of the Almighty; and the nation of the Jews, scattered through the world affords a most instructive lesson to every land, and to all succeeding generations.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The continuance or renewal of our trials will render the repetition of the same petitions requisite: but varied

PSALM LXV.

David praises God, for answering prayer, taking away sin, blessing his chosen, and performing wonders in their behalf, 1—5. For his providential goodness and bounty, 6—13.

To the chief Musician, a Psalm *and* Song of David.

a PRAISE * waiteth for thee, O God, b in Zion: and c unto thee shall the vow be performed.

2 O d thou that hearest prayer, e unto thee shall all flesh come.

3 † Iniquities f prevail against me: *as for* g our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away.

4 h Blessed *is the man whom* thou i choosest, and k causest to approach *unto thee, that* he may dwell in thy courts: l we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, *even* of thy holy temple.

5 *By* m terrible things n in righteousness wilt thou answer us, o O God of our salvation; *who art* p the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are q afar off *upon* the sea:

a xxi. 13 cxv. 1, 2. * Heb. *is silent.* lxii. 1 *Marg.* b lxxvi. 2. lxxviii. 68, 69. 1 Chr xi. 7. xv 29. xvi 41, 42 xxv. 1, &c. Rev. xiv. 1—3. c lvi 12. lxxvi. 11. cxvi. 17, 18. d lxvi. 19. cii. 17. cxlv 18, 19. 1 Kings xviii 29. 37. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 13. Is. lxv. 24. Jer. xxix 12, 13. Dan. ix. 17—19. Luke xi. 9, 10. Acts x. 31. 1 John v. 14, 15. e xxii. 27. lxvi. 4. lxxxvi. 9. Is. xlix. 6. lxvi. 23. John xii. 32 Rev. xi. 15.

† Heb. *Words.* or, *Matters of iniquity* f xxxviii. 4 xl. 12. 2 Sam. xii. 7—13 Mic. vii. 8, 9. Rom. vii. 23—25. Gal. v. 17. g li 2, 3 7. lxxix. 9. Is. i. 18, 19. vi. 7. Zech. xiii. 1. John i. 29. Heb ix. 14. 1 John i. 7—9. Rev. i. 5. h xxxiii. 12. lxxxiv. 4. i lv. 3. lxxviii. 70, 71. cvi. 4, 5. cxxxv 4. Eph. i. 4, 5. 2 Thes. ii. 13, 14. k xv. 1. xxiii. 6. xxiv. 7. Rev. iii. 12. l xvii. 15 xxxvi. 8. lxiii. 5. Jer. xxxi. 12—14. 25. Deut. iv 34. x. 21 Is xxxvii. 36 —n cxlv 17. Rom. ii. 5. Rev. xv. 3, 4 xvi 5 xix 1—3.—o lxviii. 19, 20 —p Is. xlv 22 Matt xxviii. 19, 20. Rom xv. 10—12.—q Is. li. 5. lx. 5. lxvi. 19. Zeph. ii. 11. Zech ix. 10. Eph ii. 17, 18.

expressions may often be affecting and useful to ourselves and others. When faith in God triumphs over the fear of powerful and malicious men, our prayers are certainly heard, and final deliverance from the danger will in due time follow. The most blameless will be reviled, and the most useful hated, by such men as took secret counsel and made open insurrection against the perfect and divine Saviour, and who whetted their tongues and shot their sarcasms against him, before they shed his blood. Such transgressors are often inwardly alarmed with the dread of consequences: but they encourage each other, till they flatter themselves with the hopes of impunity, and despise the all-seeing eye of God. Actuated by the most malignant enmity, with deep dissimulation they search out iniquities, that they may pretend zeal for God's glory, whilst they are murdering his people; (*Matt.* xxvi. 59:) but all their malice will rebound upon themselves, and God himself will fight against them, and destroy them: and all, who behold their doom in a future state, will reverence the power and justice of God in it. But it is our wisdom *now* to fear because of the judgments of God, and to flee from the wrath to come; to declare and consider his works, and to shun the rocks on which others have split. For the righteous alone can rejoice and trust in this holy Lord God: and all, who uprightly rely on his mercy, and seek to know and do his will, shall glory in him as their Salvation and eternal Portion.

NOTES.

PSALM LXV. V. 1. Some expositors think that this psalm was composed after the famine of three years, which occurred towards the close of David's reign; when God had heard the prayer of his people, and was entreated for the land: and the concluding part of it renders that opinion highly probable. 'It becomes us, O God, to praise thee 'in thy sanctuary, (though we cannot worthily express, 'but must rather *silently* adore thy incomparable excellen-'cies;) and to pay the vows which we made unto thee in 'the time of our distress.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The old testament church waited in silent expectation for the coming of the Messiah and the accomplishment of the promises, prepared then to burst forth into vocal praises and to perform her vows. Zion was the centre of her worship, and the type of the true church, whence alone cordial praises are rendered by us.

V. 2. The readiness of the Lord to answer prayer, when more extensively made known, would induce men of all nations to come and worship him on his mercy-seat in Zion: and the answer of the church's prayer, in the coming of the Messiah, would make way for the propagation of the Gospel among the Gentiles: till at length all the human race should come to God, as his suppliants. These events the Psalmist evidently predicted.

V. 3. 'Nor need their sins,' (the sins of those mentioned in the preceding verse,) 'discourage them: for thou hadst 'matter enough of that kind against me, to have hindered 'the prevalency of my prayer, if thou hadst charged my 'iniquities upon me. But thou hast been graciously pleased 'to forgive not only me, but my people, their transgression.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) 'O God, our iniquities stand in the way of 'thy mercies, and prevail strongly against all the endea-'vours of my reformation: but, do thou both mercifully 'forgive, and powerfully remedy, our offences.' (*Bp. Hall.*) 'He imputeth it to his sins, and the sins of the people, that 'God, who was accustomed to assist them, withdraw 'his succour.' The Psalmist evidently experienced, as the apostle did afterwards, that "when he would do good, "evil was present with him:" and the mercy and grace of God through the promised Saviour to take away both the guilt and power of sin were his only support. Hoping for this deliverance from guilt and depravity, he determined to persist in waiting on God, seeking his glory, expecting his help, and celebrating his praises.

V. 4. Here the Psalmist seems to congratulate the priests and Levites, on their happiness, in being chosen to the sacred office of ministering to God in holy things, as their constant employment. But this was only an emblem of the spiritual priesthood, the chosen of God, to whom David belonged, though a king, and of Judah: and therefore he joins himself with those who would be satisfied with the rich provisions of the sanctuary, the spiritual communion with God, of which the feasts on the peace-offerings were an external sign.

V. 5. The *terrible* judgments, which God *in righteousness* inflicted upon Pharaoh, the Egyptians, the Canaanites,

6 Which [r] by his strength setteth fast the mountains; *being* [s] girded with power:

7 Which [t] stilleth the noise of the seas, [u] the noise of their waves, and [x] the tumult of the people.

8 They also that dwell [y] in the uttermost parts are [z] afraid at thy tokens: thou makest [a] the outgoings of the morning and evening to * rejoice.

9 Thou [b] visitest the earth, and † waterest it: [c] thou greatly enrichest it with [d] the river of God, *which* is full of water: [e] thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it.

10 Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly; thou ‡ settlest the furrows thereof: thou § makest it soft with showers: [f] thou blessest the springing thereof.

11 Thou [g] crownest the year ‖ with thy goodness; and [h] thy paths drop [i] fatness.

12 They [k] drop *upon* the pastures of the wilderness; and the little hills * rejoice on every side.

13 [l] The pastures are clothed with flocks: thy valleys also are covered over with corn; [m] they shout for joy, they also sing.

r xxiv. 2. cxix. 90. Mic vi. 2. Hab. iii. 6. s xciii 1. 1 Sam. ii. 4. Is. lix. 1 t lxxxix 9. cvii. 29. Jon i. 4 15. Matt. viii. 26, 27. u xciii. 3, 4. civ. 6 — 9. Job xxxvii. 8—11. x ii. 1—4 lxxvi. 10. Is xvii. 12, 13. John xviii. 5. y ii. 8. z xlviii. 5, 6. lxvi. 3 cxxvi. 2 cxxxv. 9. Ex. xv. 14—16. Josh ii. 9—11 Hab. iii. 3, &c Acts. v. 38, 39 Rev. xi 13. a xix. 5. lxxiv. 16 civ. 20—23. cxxxvi. 8. Gen viii 22. Deut. iv. 19. Job xxxviii. 12.——* Or, *sing.* 13. cxlviii. 3.——b civ. 13, 14. Deut xi. 11 12 Ruth i. 6 Job xxxvii 6. 13. Jer. xiv. 22. Acts xiv. 17 ——† Or, *after thou hadst made it to desire rain* lxiii. 1 ——c 11. lxviii 9, 10. civ. 13—15. cxlvii 8, 9. Job v 10, 11 Jer v. 24. Joel ii. 23—26.———d xlvi. 4. Rev. xxii. 1.

e civ. 15. cvii. 37. Gen. xxvi 12. 1 Tim vi 17, 18. ‡ Or, *causest rain to descend into the furrows thereof.* § Heb. *dissolvest.* f cxlvii. 8. 1 Cor. iii. 6. 7. g v. 12 *Marg.* ciii. 4. Prov. xiv. 18 Heb. ii. 7—9. ‖ Heb. *of thy goodness.* h xxv. 10. civ. 3. Joel ii. 14. 21—26. Hag. ii 19. Mal iii. 10. i xxxvi. 8. Rom. xi. 17. k civ 10—13 Job xxxviii. 26, 27. * Heb. *are girded with joy.* 6. Is. lv 9—13. lxi. 10, 11. l civ. 24 — 28. Zech. ix 17. Acts xiv 17——m xcvi. 11—13. xcviii. 7—9. Is. xxxv. 1, 2. 10 lii. 9. lv. 12. Jer. xlviii. 33.

and the other enemies of Israel, were answers to the prayers of his people: the dreadful judgments on the Philistines, Syrians, and others who opposed David, were the same: and so were the terrible things by which the Christian dispensation was introduced, and the foundations of idolatry overturned. 'Thou wilt declare thyself to be the preserver of thy church, in destroying thine enemies, as thou didst at the Red Sea.' It is, however, evident, that the terrible judgments executed on those, both Jews and Gentiles, who opposed the establishment of Christianity, were especially predicted: because it happened at that season that the "God of salvation" became the "confidence of all "the ends of the earth," and "of them that were afar off "in the isles of the sea." (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 6, 7. That Almighty God, who created and preserves the vast mountains; who sets bounds to the tempestuous sea, and rules its waves in the most furious storms; who divided the Red Sea before Israel, and with it overwhelmed Pharaoh and his host, still protects his church: and by the same power he restrains the madness of enraged multitudes or of haughty tyrants, and calms their fury or crushes their power, whenever they attempt any thing contrary to his wise, faithful, and merciful designs. Who can read these verses without thinking of Him who "rebuked the wind, "and said to the sea, Peace, be still, and the wind ceased, "and there was a great calm:" and who said to the furious company that came to apprehend him, "I am he," and, "they went backward and fell to the ground?" (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 8. Several of the appearances in nature excited a fear of the divine power among the heathen: whilst the ordinary course of providence caused them to rejoice; even from the most eastern regions, whence the morning-sun appears, to the most western, whither he retires when it is evening. The reports also of the judgments of God on the enemies of Israel excited consternation in distant nations, and the glad tidings of his salvation have made, or will make, the inhabitants of every land to rejoice.

V. 9. "Thou visitest the land, and desirest it, (or "causest it to desire,) and greatly enrichest it." "The "river of God," in this connexion, evidently denotes those abundant and constant supplies of water with which the Lord replenishes and fructifies the earth, as a large river waters the country through which it flows: but under that emblem the pouring out of the Spirit, after the ascension of Christ, and the blessed effects that followed, seem to have been predicted.

V. 10. "Do thou water the ridges abundantly, do "thou cause the rain to descend into the furrows," &c. This verse seems to be a prayer for the blessing. Thus the land is made ready for the seed, after man has properly tilled it: and when he has sown the corn, the Lord causes it to grow and ripen. In like manner, while his ministers use appointed means and sow the seed of divine truth, God both prepares the hearts of the hearers, and gives the increase.

V. 11. 'The herbs, fruits, and flowers produced by 'the earth are as a beautifully variegated crown set upon 'her head, by the great Creator.' (*Horne.*) Every year also is thus crowned by his bounty. Wherever the Lord passeth, he scattereth abundance around his paths; and the clouds, which are called his chariots, drop down fatness on the earth.

V. 12, 13. Nothing can be more beautifully descriptive of a fruitful country in a favourable season, than these verses: while the poetical representation of the "little hills "girding themselves with gladness;" and the pastures and valleys, covered with flocks and crops of corn, exulting and shouting for joy, has peculiar animation. The same metaphors are often used for the happy effects of the Gospel, when successfully preached, especially in places before enveloped in darkness. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Our God reveals himself upon a mercy-seat, ready to hear and answer the prayers of all who come to him by faith in Jesus Christ; men in general are invited to come unto him, and seek his face; and in due time all the inhabitants of the earth shall become his worshippers. As the Lord fulfils his promises, the church reiterates his praises: the new testament-church renders that praise, and performs those vows, which the old testament-church engaged for, when waiting and praying for the coming of the promised Redeemer; future generations shall praise him for hearing our prayers for the predicted success of the Gospel through the earth; and every believer will

PSALM LXVI.

The Psalmist exhorts all men to observe the works of God, and to praise him with solemn awe and lively gratitude, 1—9. *He shows how God had tried and delivered his people,* 10—12. *He determines to perform his vows; and declares how God had answered his prayers,* 13—20.

To the chief Musician, A Song *or* Psalm.

[a] MAKE a joyful noise unto God, * all ye lands:
2 [b] Sing forth the honour of his name; make his praise glorious.
3 Say unto God, [c] How terrible *art thou in* thy works! [d] through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies † submit themselves unto thee.

a lxxxi. 1. xcv. 1, 2. xcviii. 4. c. 1. 1 Chr. xv. 28. * Heb. *all the earth.* xcvi. 1. cxvii. 1, 2. cl. 6. 1 Chr. xvi. 23, 24. Is. xxiv. 16. b xlvii. 6, 7. lxxii. 18. xcvi. 3—10. cv. 2, 3. cvi. 2. cvii. 15, 22. 1 Chr. xxix. 10—13. Neh. ix. 5. Is. vi. 3. xii. 4—6. xlix. 13. Rev. iv. 8—11. v. 13. c xlvii. 2. lxv. 5. lxxvi. 12. Ex. xv. 1—16. 21. Judg. v. 2—4. 20—22. Is. ii. 19. lxiv. 3. Jer. x. 10. —— d xviii. 44. xxii. 28; 29. lxviii. 30. lxxxi. 15. † Or, *yield feigned obedience.* Heb. *lie.* lxxviii. 35, 36.

render him praises, as he graciously fulfils his promises. Thus "praise waiteth for our God in Zion;" and thus are the vows performed, which continually accompany the prayers of his people. And we may urge this as a cogent plea for the granting of our petitions, seeing it will redound to his glory. Nor can either the number or prevalency of those iniquities, for which we are humbled, invalidate the plea, when we come in the Redeemer's name: because, "as for our transgressions, he will purge them "away," "to the praise of the glory of his grace."—Blessed indeed is that man whom the Lord chooseth, and by his spirit causeth to approach him in humble faith and prayer; and who, finding acceptance with him, learns to delight and be at home in his courts and ordinances.—We may find that satisfaction in the goodness of his house which others in vain expect from the world: and whilst we see these blessings spring from his special love and choice, we may rejoice at the prospect of their eternal completion in his holy temple above. It is, however, only through that blessed One, who was chosen to approach unto the Father, and to abide in the true tabernacle, as our Advocate, that we sinners can expect or experience this felicity: and through him, the God of our salvation is become the confidence of all the ends of the earth; even of us Britons too, who are afar off upon the sea. But these blessings communicated to mankind, in answer to the prayers of his people, have been attended with terrible vengeance upon opposers: still more dreadful things will accompany the further prevalence of the Gospel: and the complete salvation of the church will coincide with the eternal destruction of the ungodly. Nay, the Lord often answers the prayers of his people, with such convictions, rebukes, and corrections, as are for the time very terrifying unto them. But let us trust his power, truth, and love, and submit to his righteousness. The strength, which setteth fast the mountains, upholdeth the believer: the word, which stilleth the stormy ocean, can silence the tumult and rage of our most numerous and potent enemies: and he who enricheth the earth with such abundant and varied liberality, can neither want sufficiency nor bounty to feed the souls of his people. We should then adore him for the *tokens* of his power, in taking righteous vengeance on his enemies, and rejoice in beholding it displayed in mercy. We should with wonder, gratitude, and praise, behold and participate the abundance which, by the wise and kind providence of God, is diffused through the earth: and whilst we see year after year crowned with the goodness of the Lord; so that the hills and valleys, covered with corn and cattle, seem to rejoice in, and proclaim, their Creator's praise: we should remember our unworthiness, be thankful for our portion, and use it to the glory of the giver; admire and imitate his goodness to the wicked and ungrateful children of men; and pity and pray for those who abuse these gifts to the dishonour of the giver. But these temporal mercies to us unworthy creatures shadow forth more important blessings. The rising of the Sun of righteousness; and the pouring out of the Holy Ghost, that river of God, full of the waters of life and salvation, render the hearts of sinners, which before were hard, barren, and worthless, fruitful in every good work; and change the face of nations, more than the sun and rain do the face of nature. Wherever the Lord passes, by the preaching of his Gospel, attended by his Holy Spirit, his paths drop fatness, and numbers of every description are taught to rejoice in and praise him. These blessings have already been extended to many nations which were afar off: may we unite in prayers that they may descend upon the pastures of the wilderness; that the whole earth may hear and embrace the Gospel; and that all, who are favoured with the means of grace, may bring forth abundantly "those fruits of righteousness, which are through "Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father."

NOTES.

PSALM LXVI. *Title.* The double title, A Song, a Psalm, is supposed by some to mean, *a very joyful song of praise.* The name of David is not affixed to this psalm; and various opinions have been entertained concerning the time, author, and occasion of it: some of which are sufficiently extravagant. But it is highly probable that it was written by David, when established on the throne, and made victorious over his enemies on every side.

V. 1—3. The Psalmist earnestly excites all the inhabitants of the *land,* (the word is singular in the original,) to exert their powers to the utmost in celebrating the praises of God, who had so interposed in their behalf; and executed such terrible punishment on their enemies, that many who inwardly disliked them and their religion, being alarmed by the power of his works, had reluctantly submitted themselves, and pretended to become the worshippers of JEHOVAH. This was an emblem of the effects produced by the Gospel in the first ages, when numbers, by the miracles wrought, and the judgments of God inflicted on the Jews and other opposers of Christianity, feigned submission, and embraced Christianity, without any real change of heart or character.

4 [e] All the earth shall worship thee, and shall sing unto thee; they shall sing *to* thy name. Selah.

5 [f] Come and see the works of God: *he is* [g] terrible *in his* doing toward the children of men.

6 [h] He turned the sea into dry land: they went through the flood on foot: [i] there did we rejoice in him.

7 [k] He ruleth by his power for ever; [l] his eyes behold the nations: [m] let not the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah.

8 [n] O bless our God, ye people, and [o] make the voice of his praise to be heard.

9 [p] Which * holdeth our soul in life, and [q] suffereth not our feet to be moved.

10 For thou, O God, [r] hast proved us: thou [s] hast tried us, as silver is tried:

11 Thou [t] broughtest us into the net; thou laidest affliction [u] upon our loins.

12 Thou hast [x] caused men to ride over our heads: we went [y] through fire and through water: [z] but thou broughtest us out into a † wealthy *place*.

13 [a] I will go into thy house with burnt-offerings; [b] I will pay thee my vows,

14 Which my lips have ‡ uttered, and [c] my mouth hath spoken, [d] when I was in trouble.

15 I will offer unto thee burnt-sacrifices of § fatlings, [e] with the incense of rams; [f] I will offer bullocks with goats. Selah.

16 [g] Come *and* hear, all ye that fear God, [h] and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.

e xxii. 27. lxv. 5. lxvii. 2 xcvi. 1, 2. cxvii. 1 Is. ii. 2—4 xi 9. xlii. 10—12. xlix. 22, 23. Dan vii. 14. Mal. i. 11. Rev xv. 4
f 16. xlvi. 8 cxi 2 cxxvi. 1—3. Num xxiii 23.
g 3. xcix. 3. Ez i. 18.
h lxxviii. 13. cvi. 8—10. cxiv. 5—7. cxxxvi 13, 14. Ex xiv 21, 22. Is. lxiii 13, 14.
i cvi. 11, 12 Ex. xv. 1, &c. Rev. xv 2, 3
k lxii 11 Dan iv. 35 vi 26, 27. Matt. vi. 13 xxviii. 18.
l xi. 4 xxxiii. 13. 2 Chr xvi. 9.
m ii. 10—12 lii. 1—5. lxxiii. 3—12. lxxv 4, 5 Ex. xviii. 11. Job ix 4. Is x. 7—16. xxxvii. 28, 29. Dan. v. 20—28.
n Deu. xxxii 43. Rom. xv 10, 11.
o 2. xlvii. 1. Jer. xxxiii 11. Rev. v. 11—14. xix. 1 5, 6 ——— p xxii 29. 1 Sam. xxv 29 Acts xvii 28. Col iii. 3. 4
* Heb. *putteth.* ——— q xxxvii. 23, 24. lxii. 2. 6. xciv 18 cxii 6 cxxi. 3. cxxv. 3. 1 Sam. ii 9. ——— r xvii. 3 Deut. viii. 2. 16. xiii. 3. ——— s Prov. xvii. 3. Is. xlviii 10. Zech. xiii. 9 1 Pet. i. 6, 7

t Job xix 6 Lam i. 13 iii. 2, &c Matt. vi. 13.
u Deu. xxxiii 11.
x cxxix. 1—3. Is. li 23.
y Is. xliii. 1, 2. Acts xiv. 22. 1 Thes iii. 3, 4.
z xxxiii 19. xl. 2, 3. Job xxxvi. 16. Luke xvi. 25. Jam v. 11. Rev. vii. 14, &c.
† Heb. *moist.* cvii. 35—37. Is. xxxv. 6, 7.
a li 18, 19. c. 4. cxviii 19 27. Deu. xii 11, 12. Heb. xiii 15.
b xxii 25 lvi. 12. cxvi. 14 18 Ec. v. 4. Jon ii. 9. Nah. i. 15.
‡ Heb. *opened.* Judg. xi 35, 36
c Num. xxx. 2. 8 12.
d Gen xxviii. 20—22. xxxv. 3. 1 Sam i. 11 2 Sam. xxii. 7
§ Heb *marrow.*
e Jer. xli 5.
f 2 Sam vi. 13. 17—19 1 Chr. xvi. 1—3.
g 5 xxxiv 2. 11. xxxii. 5, 6. lxxi. lxxi. 18. Mal. iii. 16. 1 Tim i 15, 16. 1 John i. 3. ——— h xxii 23, 24. 29. 1 Cor. xv. 8—10.

V. 4. The words rendered *all the earth*, may mean *all the land:* this is not therefore so evidently a prophecy of a more enlarged dispensation than that of Moses, as many are which occur in these psalms; which were entirely overlooked by the Jews in the time of Christ. In like manner the clearest and most explicit predictions, that the kingdom of Christ shall at length be established all over the earth, are little attended to by numbers of Christians, but will most certainly be at length accomplished.

V. 5. 'He toucheth the slothful dulness of man, who 'is cold in the consideration of God's works.'

V. 6. The miraculous passage of Israel over the Red Sea which overwhelmed the Egyptians, and their secure march through the divided streams of Jordan, to possess Canaan and extirpate the inhabitants, are celebrated in this verse. All Israel rejoiced in the temporal benefits thus conferred on them; but the true church rejoiced in God their Saviour and Friend, and the display of his glory in these events. Israel, as the visible church from age to age, was considered as one body, which rejoiced and exulted on that occasion. Moses, Aaron, Miriam, and all Israel led the song of joyful praise on the banks of the Red Sea; and transmitted both the benefits and the grateful and triumphant remembrance of them to the next generation. Thus from age to age the church rejoiced and blessed God, in concert with those who were eye-witnesses of his wonderful works.

V. 7. 'He observes the motions of all nations, who 'may learn by the Egyptians and Canaanites, that they 'who contemn his authority, in vain endeavour to exalt 'themselves; for they shall certainly be abased.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The last clause may be rendered "the rebel-"lious shall not exalt themselves."

V. 9, 10. The dangers and distresses by which Israel had been tried and proved as in a furnace, during their bondage in Egypt, and afterwards in the time of the judges, and during some parts of Saul's reign, seemed to threaten their existence as a nation: yet God had wonderfully preserved and delivered them; as a man's life is saved from imminent danger, or his health established after some very dangerous disease, or his steps upheld on the slippery brink of a precipice. The astonishing preservation of the Jews as a separate people, during their long continued dispersions and oppressions to this day, when it shall be crowned by their conversion to Christianity and restoration to the promised land, will constitute a still more extraordinary instance of the watchful care of Providence over that people, who in this particular are a sort of type both of the church and of individual believers.

V. 11, 12. The Lord had, for wise, righteous, and merciful reasons, brought Israel into a net, by inducing them to go down into Egypt and settle in that country. Their oppressors, having thus entangled them, laid heavy burdens on their loins, using them like beasts of burden. Nay, they were so powerful, cruel, and haughty, that they seemed to ride over their heads; and, having thrown them down, to trample them under foot. Yet from this situation, through fiery trials, through seas and rivers, God had brought them to rest and prosperity in Canaan.

V. 13, 14. The Psalmist, having stirred up the people to praise God for his general mercies to Israel, avows his intention of celebrating, with sacrifices and oblations, those deliverances which he had lately received, both personal and public; and thus to perform the vows which in the most open and solemn manner he had made, in the season of great danger and affliction.

V. 15. This verse may be literally rendered, "I will "offer unto thee the burnt-sacrifices of fatlings, even rams "*with incense;* I will prepare bullocks and goats:" That is, 'I will liberally provide for every part of the service 'at the tabernacle.'

V. 16. The psalm, being given to the chief musician, was made public, and all might read it: but the Psalmist especially called the attention of those who feared God, or

f xxx. 6 xxxiv 3, 4 cxvi. 1, 2. 12
k xxx. 1 cxlv. 1. l Job xxvii 8, 9 Prov. xv 9 29. xxi. 13. xxviii. 9 Is i. 15. John ix. 31 Jam iv 3.

17 [l] I cried unto him with my mouth, and [k] he was extolled with my tongue.
18 [l] If I regard iniquity in my heart, the LORD will not hear *me*:
19 *But*[m] verily God hath heard *me;* he hath attended to the voice of my prayer.
20 [n] Blessed *be* God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.

m vi. 9. xxxiv. 6. cxvi. 1, 2 Lam. iii. 55, 56. Heb. v 7 1 John iii. 20–22.
n li 11. lxxxvi 12, 13. 2 Sam. vii. 14, 15.

were truly pious persons to this part of it; as they alone were prepared to enter into the spirit of it, to derive instruction from his experience, and to glorify God on his account.

V. 17. *Extolled*, &c. That dependence on God and expectation from him, and those spiritual affections, which are implied in believing prayer, are honourable to his power, truth, and love; so that he is extolled or magnified by them.

V. 18, 19. It is probable, that the Psalmist had not only been reproached with his past transgressions, but also charged with hypocrisy and a secret course of habitual sin: but the answer made to his prayers, 'brought along with 'it a testimony of his sincerity, far more valuable than 'his kingdom. For had he been guilty of such crimes, 'or entertained so much as a thought of them, as his 'enemies charged him withal, the Lord, who hates iniquity, would have denied his request!' (*Bp. Patrick.*)—The original is, "If I looked at iniquity with my heart;" that is, if I thought of it with affection and desire. He that *regards iniquity*, entertains the thoughts of it as a man does welcome visitants. He provides for their entertainment, is reluctant to part with them; and as far as he can safely, he seeks and seizes the occasion of practising the sin which he thus thinks of with satisfaction. This evidences that the love and dominion of sin, is inconsistent with true repentance; and, if connected with a profession of religion, it is a clear evidence of hypocrisy. In this case God will not accept or answer a man's prayers. But if the consciousness of sin in the heart, or the intrusion of evil thoughts create uneasiness and a desire to be rid of them; if they be like the presence of an impertinent intruding visitant, or that of a dun to a moneyless debtor; this is an argument of sincerity in repentance, faith, and regard to God and his will; and God delights in the prayer of the *upright*. So that evident answers to solemn and particular prayers are attestations to a man's integrity.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The glorious perfections and works of God should induce all men in every land to delight in praising him, in singing forth the honour of his name, and in making his praise glorious; accounting it their highest honour thus to adore and glorify his name: and nothing but human depravity prevents this exercise from being as universal on earth as in heaven. But neither his exuberant goodness, nor his terrible judgments, nor the greatness of his power, can bring his enemies to more than a *forced* and *feigned* submission; except effectual grace new-create their hearts unto holiness. In this way, however, vast multitudes have been, by the Gospel, brought to be his willing servants and spiritual worshippers, and at length all the inhabitants of the earth shall sing his praise. It is very proper that sinners should be excited to "Come, and behold the works of the LORD, "and how terrible he is in his doing toward the children "of men:" that observing how "he ruleth by his power," over those who do not become his willing subjects; and how he beholds the nations, to hinder the rebellious from exalting themselves: they may see the necessity of seeking the favour of him whose wrath is so destructive; and that, considering the deliverances vouchsafed his people, they may desire to share their privileges. His servants also should consider his wonderful works, that they may be excited to bless their God, and "cause the voice of his "praise to be heard:" and in the redemption of the death of Christ, and the glories that followed that grand event, they have more surprising and affecting subjects to contemplate, than Israel's deliverance from Egyptian bondage.—The Lord not only preserves our temporal life; but maintains that spiritual life which he hath communicated: nor will he suffer the feet of his servants to be moved to their utter casting down, by any of the difficulties of their path, or assaults of their enemies. Yet he will try their faith by affliction, as silver is tried in the fire; that it may be proved genuine and be further purified. Oppressions and persecutions, and even temptations, are on this account permitted as benefits to our souls: they indeed spring from the malice of men or devils; but we must receive them as prescribed by our God, to effect his gracious purposes.—Through various convictions, conflicts, and troubles, the slave of Satan escapes from his galling yoke, and obtains peace and joy in believing: and through much tribulation the believer must enter into the kingdom of God. Whilst our praises unite with those of the whole church of God, for *general* mercies vouchsafed from age to age; and our prayers for all that yet remains to be done: we must by no means overlook our own concerns. Under every trouble we should cry unto the Lord with our mouth and from our heart; and take occasion from our distressing situation, more solemnly to engage ourselves to his service. Then he will deem himself honoured by our worship: and when we obtain deliverance, we must pay the vows which our mouth hath spoken in the day of our distress. The sacrifice of the death of Christ hath superseded the legal oblations with which the ancient believers expressed their grateful zeal: but we must offer continually the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving; our bodies must be presented as a living sacrifice unto the Lord, while our souls are as consecrated priests to him; and without grudging we must expend our substance "in doing good" to our brethren, and to all men as we have opportunity; "for with such "sacrifices our God is well pleased." Besides the general example of gratitude for our mercies, which we publicly exhibit, we should more particularly declare unto those who fear God what he hath done for our souls, and how he hath heard and answered our prayers: *they* alone are capable of understanding, and will be edified and encouraged by our experience, and will join with us in prayer and praise; and this will turn to our mutual com-

PSALM LXVII.

A prayer for an increase of blessings to the church: that all nations may know and rejoice in God's salvation, and submit to his righteous government, 1—7.

To the chief Musician, on [a] Neginoth. A Psalm *or* Song.

[b] GOD be merciful unto us, and [c] bless us, *and* [d] cause his face to shine * upon us. Selah.

2 [e] That [f] thy way may be known upon earth, [g] thy saving health among all nations.

3 [h] Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

4 [i] O let the nations be glad, and sing for joy: [k] for thou shalt judge the people righteously, [l] and [†] govern the nations upon earth. Selah.

5 [m] Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

6 *Then* [n] shall the earth yield her increase; *and* God, *even* [o] our own God, shall bless us.

7 [p] God shall bless us; and [q] all the ends of the earth shall [r] fear him.

a iv. vi. lxxvi. *titles*
b xxvii. 8. Num. vi. 24—27. 2 Cor. xiii. 14.
c xxviii. 9. Eph. i. 3.
d iv. 6. xxxi. 16. lxxx. 1—3. 7. 19. cxix. 135. 2 Cor. iv. 6.
e Heb. *with us.*
f xxviii. 5. Eph. viii. 25—27. Heb. viii. 20—28. Acts ix. 30.
g Acts xxii. 10. xviii. 25. xxii. 4.
h xliii. 5. lxvi. 1—4. cxvii. 2. Is. xlix. 6. Luke ii. 30, 31. iii. 6. Tit. ii. 11.
i xcvii. 1. cxxxviii. 4. 5. Deut. xxxiii. 19. Is. xxv. 14—16. xlv. 12. xlix. 7. Rom. xv. 9. Gal. iv. 27.
k ix. 8. xcvi. 10—13. xcviii. 9. Gen. xviii. 25. Amos viii. 2. Rom. ii. 5.
l xcvii. 8. xcviii. 8. Is. lv. 4.
m 3. Matt. vi. 9, 10.
n xxxv. 9—12. Lev. xxvi. 4. Is. xxx. 23. Ezek. xxxvi. 29. Hos. ii. 21—23. Joel iii. 6—9.
o xlviii. 14. Gen. xvii. 7. Ex. iii. 15. Jer. xxxi. 1. 33.
p xxix. 11. lxxii. 17. Gen. xii. 2. 3. Acts ii. 26. Gal. iii. 9. 14.
q xxii. 27. lxv. 5. xcviii. 3. Is. xliii. 6. xlv. 22. lii. 10. Mic. v. 4. Zech. ix. 10. Mal. i. 11. Acts xiii. 47. Rev. xv. 4.
r Mal. iv. 2. Acts xiii. 26.

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fort, and to the glory of God. But without uprightness in our professed repentance, faith, and love, we cannot share these spiritual privileges: if we love iniquity in our hearts, though we refrain from the gross practice of it, the Lord will reject our hypocritical supplications. But the feeblest petition of the repenting sinner, coming from a broken heart, will by no means be despised: and when we pray in simplicity and godly sincerity, our requests will be evidently answered; and this will turn unto us for a testimony, increasing our assurance of the Lord's love to us, and exciting our gratitude to him, who "hath not "turned away our prayer nor his mercy from us."

NOTES.

PSALM LXVII. V. 1—3. It is probable that David composed this psalm: perhaps on the same occasion as the foregoing. It may be considered either as a *prayer* or as a *prophecy:* for the whole, being in the *future tense,* is more naturally interpreted as a prediction, than as a supplication. Most versions indeed render it as a prayer, and in this sense it is exceedingly animated: yet it may be doubted, whether the method of explaining the language of *direct prophecy,* as a mere *wish or desire of the event,* have not darkened the evidence from prophecy for the divine inspiration of Scripture, and damped the expectations, exertions, and prayers of pious persons for the enlargement of the church. Prophecy may easily be converted into prayer for its accomplishment: but the prayers even of inspired persons must not be considered as prophecies. —The believing remnant of the old testament-church here predicts or prays, that God would continue and complete his mercies to them, and bless them, shining on them as the enlightening, cheering, and fertilizing sun, and smiling on them as a loving Father. The effect of this would be, a general prevalence of truth and righteousness, of love, peace, joy, and all the fruits of the Spirit: and when the visible church became thus pure, united, and happy, it would powerfully conduce to its enlargement, till the *way of the* LORD would be known on earth, and that salvation, which heals the distempered souls of men, would reach all nations; and all the "Gentiles would glorify God for his "mercy." This psalm is adopted into the liturgy of our church; and when it is read and attended to with understanding and affection, the prophecy is in part fulfilled. The substance also of these verses, as a petition, is inserted in the excellent "prayer for all sorts and conditions of "men:" though the order being reversed, the connexion between the purity and peace, and the enlargement of the church through all lands, is not so clearly maintained. The coming of Christ, "the Sun of Righteousness, who "arose" on the land of Israel, "with healing in his "wings:" the success of the Gospel in the primitive ages, and the future conversion of the nations to Christ, seem to have been predicted in the most unequivocal manner: nor can the *prophecy* be considered as *fulfilled,* while any part of the world remains in Pagan, Mahometan, or Jewish darkness; or while any part of the church continues in bondage to antichristian tyranny and superstition, or corrupted with heresy, and miserably divided, as it is at present.

V. 4. This is literally, "The nations shall be glad and "sing for joy," &c. By the knowledge of God through the Gospel, the nations will rejoice in his righteous government, and in the prospect of his righteous judgment. And the establishment of his kingdom throughout the earth will fill the world with righteousness, and terminate all iniquity, oppression, fraud, licentiousness, and impiety.

V. 6, 7. These verses are translated as a *prediction,* the rest as a *prayer:* yet the original is uniformly the future tense; which is the language of express prediction, except when some connected clauses otherwise determine the sense. The *increase* is that which God gives, while his faithful servants plant and water; for our God blesses us, when he thus succeeds the work of his ministers: and we are assured that he will do this more and more, till the remotest regions; till China, Japan, Peru, and every corner of the earth shall remember themselves, fear the Lord, and become his worshippers.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The church on earth still needs God's mercy, and further blessings from him in performance of his promises. When he shines upon his people, and fills them with light, purity,

PSALM LXVIII.

David prays for, or predicts, the confusion and destruction of the wicked, and the joy of the righteous, 1—3. *He praises the mercy and majesty of God, especially as shown in bringing Israel out of Egypt into Canaan,* 4—14. *Under the type of the ark of God taking possession of Zion, and the prosperity of Israel, he predicts the ascension of Christ, the rapid success of the gospel, and the punishment of obstinate opposers,* 15—31. *He exhorts all nations to praise the God of Israel,* 31—35.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm *or* Song of David.

a LET God arise, let his enemies b be scattered: let them also c that hate him flee * before him.

2 d As smoke is driven away, *so* drive *them* away: e as wax melteth before the fire, *so* let the wicked perish f at the presence of God.

3 But g let the righteous be glad; let h them rejoice before God: yea, let them † exceedingly rejoice.

4 i Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: extol him that k rideth upon the heavens by l his name JAH, and rejoice before him.

5 m A Father of the fatherless, and n a Judge of the widows, *is* God o in his holy habitation.

6 p God setteth the solitary in ‡ families: q he bringeth out those which are bound with chains: but r the rebellious dwell in a dry *land.*

a vii 6, 7 xliv. 23 lxxxiii 65—18 cxxxii 8, 9. Num x 35. 2 Chr. vi 41. Is. xxxiii 3. xlii 13, 14. li. 9, 10 b 14 30 lix 11. lxxxix 10 Is. xii 15, 16 Ez. v. 2 xii 14, 15. Dan ii 35 c xxx. 8 Ex xx. 5 Deut. vii 10. John xiv. 23, 24. * Heb. *from his face.*

d xxxvii 20 Is. x 18 Hos. xiii 3. e cvii 5 Is lxiv. 2 Mic i 4 f xxx 7 lxxx. 16 Nah. i 5, 6. 2 Thes i. 8, 9. Rev. vi. 16, 17. g xxxii 11 xxviii. 7 lviii. 10. lxiv. 10 xcvii 12. Rev. xviii 20. xix 7. h xcv. 1, 2 xcviii. 8, 9 c 1, 2 Deut. xxi 12 † Heb *rejoice with gladness* xxi 1. xlii. 4 1 Pet i. 8. i lxvi 4 lxvii. 4. Is. xii 4—6 k 33. xviii 10 civ. 3. Deut xxxiii. 26 Is xix 1 l Ex. iii 14. vi 3. m x 14. 18. lxxxii 3. 4. cxlvi 9. Job xxxi 16, 17. Jer xlix 11. Hos xiv 3. n lxxii. 2 4 Deut. x 18 Job xxix. 12, 13 Is i 23. Jer v 28 Luke xviii 2—7 Eph. Acts vii 48, 49. o xxxiii 14 2 Chr vi 2 xxx 27 Is. lvii 15. lxvi 1 p cxiii 4 cxiii 5 1 Sam. ii 5 Gal. iv 27. ‡ Heb *a house* q cvii 10. 14 cxvi. 7 Is xlv. 1 Acts xii. 6. &c. r cvii 34. 40 Deut. xxviii. 23, 24 Hos. ii 3 Mal i. 3.

and consolation, it exceedingly tends to spread the knowledge of his salvation. None, except narrow-minded zealots for a party, would wish to confine the blessings of the gospel within any other limits, than the whole extent of the earth. They who have experienced the salutary efficacy of this invaluable medicine, would have all their fellow-sinners to share their felicity: and they who delight in praising God, would have all people to rejoice in him, and praise him with them; for his precepts are as equitable, as his mercies are abundant. Thus the examples, prayers, and endeavours of zealous Christians, make known the ways of God on earth. When the expected Redeemer came, the Gospel was preached to the Gentiles, and the earth at large began to give her increase. But, alas! a small part of mankind have hitherto embraced Christianity; but few *real* Christians comparatively are found even in the purest *Christian countries;* and lamentable divisions and offences prevail even among that remnant. We have therefore still need to pray, that 'our own God would be merciful to his 'church, and bless it with increasing knowledge, purity, 'and love; that every thing being removed, which tar-'nishes the beauty of the Christian religion, or weakens 'the endeavours of Christians to spread the Gospel, his 'saving health might be diffused through all nations: that 'our Redeemer might establish his righteous kingdom over 'all mankind; that they may yield a revenue of praise and 'glory to his name; and that all the ends of the earth may 'worship him in reverence and godly fear.' Amen.

NOTES.

PSALM LXVIII. V. 1—3. This psalm is supposed to have been written and used when the ark was carried up to Mount Zion. The first of these verses evidently refers to the words used by Moses, at the removal of the ark: (*Note, Num.* x. 35:) but the sacred name JEHOVAH, used in that passage, is here changed for ELOHIM, or God: and the future tense in the first clause is substituted instead of the imperative; the language of prediction for that of prayer. Indeed the whole version, more literally than the present, renders the whole of these verses as a prophecy. "God "will arise, and his enemies shall be scattered," &c.—The Psalmist looked back to the former mercies of God to Israel, and presaged further prosperity to his people, now the symbol of God's presence had taken possession of its appointed residence among them. The presence of God with Israel had dissipated the force and projects of those who hated him and them, as the cloud of smoke is dispersed by the wind, or as the wax is liquified by the fire. And while the wicked had perished at his presence, the righteous had often expressed their admiring gratitude and joy, in every imaginable way. Thus it had been of old; thus it would certainly be in future times; and thus the worshippers prayed that it might be then, and at all times.

V. 4. (*Note, Deut.* xxxiii. 26.) JAH is an abbreviation of JEHOVAH, and signifies *self-existence* and *eternity.* This name is used very frequently, in conjunction with *Hallelu:* forming the word *Hallelujah.* Or, Praise JAH, or JEHOVAH. He, who derives his being from none, but gives being to all, is engaged by promise and covenant to protect and bless his people, who are on that account, as well as others, called on to extol and rejoice in him.

V. 5, 6. This God of immutable majesty and glory, whose ark, the symbol of his presence, abode in the sanctuary, as typical of the human nature of Jesus Christ, his true temple, in which he will dwell for ever: was the condescending Patron of orphans, widows, and all destitute persons. They who had lost their relations in Egypt and the wilderness, were brought into other families in Israel, and settled in Canaan: the people who had been in cruel bondage to Pharaoh were set at liberty; but as the surviving rebellious Egyptians inhabited a country desolated by divine judgments, so the rebellious Israelites dwelt during forty years in the barren wilderness. The calling of the Gentiles, and the rejection of the unbelieving Jews, seem likewise to have been predicted.

7 O God, [s] when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou didst [t] march through the wilderness; Selah

8 The [u] earth shook, [x] the heavens also dropped at the presence of God: *even* [y] Sinai itself *was moved* at the presence of God, [z] the God of Israel.

9 Thou, O God, [a] didst * send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst † confirm thine inheritance, when it was weary.

10 [b] Thy congregation hath dwelt therein: [c] thou, O God, hast prepared of thy goodness for the poor.

s cxiv. 1, &c. Ez. xxii. 21. Deut. iv. 34. Judg. iv. 14. Hab. iii. 3.
t Judg. v. 4. Mic. ii. 13. Hab. iii. 12.
u lxxvii. 18. cxiv. 7. Is. lxiv. 3. Heb. xii. 26. Rev. xi. 19.
x Judg. v. 4, 5.
y Ex. xix. 18. Deut. v. 23–25.
z v. 5. xii. 13. Is. xlv. 3.
a lxv. 9, &c. lxxxv. 16, 17. lxxxvii. 21–27. Deut. xi. 10, 11. Ez. xxxiv. 25.
* Heb. *shake out.*
† Heb. *confirm it.*
b lxxiv. 1, 2. 19. Ex. xix. 5, 6. Num. xvi. 3. 1 Pet. v. 3.
c Deut. xxvi. 5. 9, 10. xxxii. 8—14. 1 Sam. ii. 8. Job v. 10, 11. Luke i. 53.

11 [d] The Lord gave the word: great *was* the ‡ company of those that published *it.*

12 [e] Kings of armies § did flee apace: and [f] she that tarried at home divided the spoil.

13 Though [g] ye have lien among the pots, *yet shall ye be as* [h] the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold.

14 [i] When the Almighty scattered kings ‖ in it, [k] it was *white* [l] as snow in Salmon.

d xl. 3. Ex. xiv. 15. xvii. 9, &c. Judg. iv. 6, &c. Eph. iv. 11.
‡ Heb. *army.* 25. Ex. xv. 20–22. Judg. v. 1, &c. Rev. xix. 13, 14.
e Ex. xiv. 25. Num. xxx. 8, 9. Josh. x. 16. 42. xii. 7, &c. Judg. v. 19. Rev. vi. 15. xix. 17–20.
§ Heb. *did flee, did flee.*
f Num. xxxi. 27. 1 Sam. xxx. 24.
g lxxxi. 6. Ex. i. 14. 1 Cor. vi. 9–11. xii. 2. Eph. ii. 1–3. Tit. iii. 3.
h lxxiv. 19. cv. 37. cxlix. 4. 1 Kings iv. 20, 21. Ez. xvi. 6. 14. Luke xv. 16. 22. Eph. v. 26, 27. Rev. i. 5, 6.——i Num. xxi. 3. 21, &c. Josh. x. 10, &c. xii. Rev. xix. 14–21.——‖ Or, *for her, she was.*——k Judg. ii. 7. Jer. ii. 31.——l Is. 7. Is. i. 18.

V. 7, 8. When Jehovah, evidently displayed his glory from the pillar of fire and cloud, conducted Israel in triumph out of Egypt and through the wilderness; the whole creation seemed to stand in awe of the Creator.—The earth trembled, the heavens poured down impetuous showers, while the sea divided to open a path for Israel, and returned to overwhelm their pursuers.—But especially, when the people were encamped before Sinai, that mountain shook to its foundations, at the presence of Israel's God. (*Note, Judg.* v. 4, 5.)

V. 9, 10. The awful displays of Jehovah's glory were not more extraordinary than his gracious interpositions in behalf of his people. In order to provide for their urgent wants, "He commanded the clouds from above, and "opened the doors of heaven; and rained down manna "upon them to eat." "He rained flesh also upon them "as dust, and feathered fowl like as the sand of the sea." Thus they were plentifully supplied, and their hearts were confirmed, or strengthened and encouraged, when wearied with marching through the wilderness. They dwelt in the midst of their provisions; and the poorest of them were as sufficiently provided for, as if they had inhabited Canaan when rendered most fruitful by the early and latter rains. —The word rendered, *Thy congregation*, seems to mean *any living thing;* and to mark out in one general term the immense multitude of living creatures which were in this astonishing manner continually maintained. The Septuagint render it *Thy living creatures.*—Considering the psalm as predictive and descriptive of the ascension of the Saviour, our thoughts are naturally led to the events that followed, and many parts of it are finally applicable to those events. In this view, how weary and barren was the visible church at the death of Christ! but what a gracious and refreshing rain was soon sent down upon it in the pouring forth of the Spirit at the day of Pentecost and afterwards! What provision was then made for the poor souls who had long waited for redemption in Israel, or who had groped in darkness in other lands.

V. 11, 12. In many instances the Lord himself "gave "the word," commanding the Israelites to march against their enemies, or to go forward regardless of them: and when he had given his people the victory, he put into their mouths the words of praise and thanksgiving.—Then, "great was the army of those that published it."—The word is feminine; and the Psalmist seems to allude to the custom of the women in companies, joining to celebrate the successes of the nation with songs of praise and triumph, as Miriam and the women of Israel, and Deborah, and others did. (*Marg. Ref.*)—So decided were their victories, that while the kings commanding vast armies fled with the greatest precipitation, but in vain, the spoil which was taken was so large, that even the women who remained at home received a share of it. (*Marg. Ref.*) Thus when our Lord, having risen as a conqueror from the grave, gave the word to preach his gospel, vast numbers were raised up to publish the glad tidings: opposing rulers and empires fell before them; and millions have shared the blessings who were exempted from the persecutions and sufferings, which apostles and evangelists endured.—It is also remarkable, that the whole of these verses is in the future tense; and therefore, though properly applied, as the language of poetry to past events, it may well be considered as prophetical likewise.

V. 13. Israel, making bricks in Egypt, and lodging like slaves between the rows of the kilns or furnaces, being covered with clay and smoke, appeared very mean: but when possessed of Canaan, during the reigns of David and Solomon, they appeared in beauty and splendour; and still more so, as they were a holy people unto the Lord. Thus the slaves of Satan, when converted to Christ, being justified and sanctified by him, begin to look comely and honourable; and when they shall arrive in heaven, all remains of their sinful estate shall disappear, and they shall be as "the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her fea-"thers with yellow gold."

V. 14. When the Almighty scattered and destroyed the kings of Canaan *by* or *for* his church, (the dove mentioned in the preceding verse; for the words are feminine;) she not only became very honourable; but was also so purified from sin and adorned with holiness, that she appeared like the top of Salmon when covered with snow.—The generation which fought under Joshua was peculiarly excellent: and under the judges, and in after ages, they were generally reformed before they were delivered and made victorious. But the original is in the future tense, and seems an evident prediction, under allusions to these past events, of the purity of the church, and the success of the gospel, in the primitive ages, and at the approach of the millennium. The

15 [m] The hill of God *is as* the hill of Bashan; an high hill, *as* [n] the hill of Bashan.

16 [o] Why leap ye, ye high hills? *this is* [p] the hill *which* God desireth to dwell in; yea, the LORD will dwell *in it* for ever.

17 [q] The chariots of God *are* twenty thousand, *even* * thousands of angels: the LORD *is* among them [r] *as in* Sinai, in the holy *place*.

18 [s] Thou hast ascended on high, [t] thou hast led captivity captive: [u] thou hast received gifts † for men; yea, *for* [x] the rebellious also, [y] that the LORD God might dwell *among them*.

19 [z] Blessed *be* the LORD, *who* [a] daily loadeth us *with benefits, even* the God of our salvation. Selah.

20 *He that is* [b] our God, *is* the God of salvation; and [c] unto GOD the Lord, *belong* [d] the issues from death.

21 But [e] God shall wound the head of his enemies, *and* the hairy scalp [f] of such an one as goeth on still in his trespasses.

22 The LORD said, [g] I will bring again from Bashan, [h] I will bring *my people* again from the depths of the sea:

23 That [i] thy foot may be ‡ dipped in the blood of *thine* enemies, *and* [k] the tongue of thy dogs in the same.

m ii 6. lxxviii 68, 69. lxxxvii. 1, 2. Is. ii. 2, 3.
n Deut iii. 10. Mic vii. 14.
o cxiv. 4 6. Is ii 2.
p cxxxii. 13, 14. Deut. xii. 5 11. Heb. xii 22, 23. Rev xxi 2, 3
q xviii 10. Deu xxxiii.2 2 Kings ii. 11. vi 17. Ez. i. 15, &c. Dan. vii. 10. Matt. xxvi 53. Rev. v. 11
* Or. *many thousands.*
r Ex. iii. 5. xix. 22, 23.
s xxiv 2. 7—10. xlvii 5. cx 1. Mark xvi. 19. Luke xxiv. 51. Acts i. 9. Eph iv. 8—10. Heb. iv. 14. vi. 20. viii. 1. 1 Pet. iii. 22.
t Judg. v. 12.———u Luke xxiv. 49. John xiv 16, 17. xvi. 7. 13—15. Acts i. 4. ii. 4. 33 38. Eph. iii. 8.———† Heb *in the man* 1 Cor. xv. 45—47. Col. i. 18, 19. ii. 3. 9 Heb. i. 3———x Prov. i. 22, 23. Is. lv. 7. Matt. ix. 13. Luke xxiv. 47. Acts ii. 23 36. 38—44. ix. 17. 1 Tim. i 13—15. Tit. iii. 2—7.———y cxxxii. 13, 14. 2 Chr. vi. 18. Is. lvii. 15. Ez. xlviii. 35. John xiv. 17. 23. 2 Cor. vi. 16. Rev. i. 20. ii. 1. xxi. 3.

z lxxii 17—19 ciii. 1, &c. Eph. i. 3.
a xxxii.7. cxxxix. 17 18. Lam. iii 23.
b Is. xii 2 xlv. 17—22. Hos. i. 7. John iv. 22.
c cxviii 17, 18. Deut. xxxii. 39. 1 Sam. ii. 6 John v. 21 25. 28, 29. xi 25, 26 Heb ii. 14, 15. Rev. i. 18.
d Prov iv 23.
e cx 6. Hab. iii. 13 Mark xii 4.
f 18. vii. 12. Prov i. 24, &c. Ez xviii 27—30. Luke xiii. 5 Heb. ii. 1—3 xii. 25. Rev. ii. 14—16.
g Num. xxi 33. Is. xi. 11—16. xlix. 22.
h Ex. xiv. 22. 29 Is. li. 10, 11 Jer. xxiii. 5—8. Ez. xxxvi. 24.
i Hos. i. 10, 11.———i lviii. 10.———‡ Heb. *red.*———k 1 Kings xxi. 19. xxii. 38. 2 Kings ix. 33—37. Rev. xix. 17—21.

nineteenth chapter of Revelation seems to be a prophetic exposition of this verse, far more striking than any which can be found in the history of Israel.

V. 15, 16. It is supposed that this part of the psalm was sung, when the company attending the ark came within view of mount Zion. If the former of these verses be read with notes of interrogation, the passage may be thus rendered, "The hill of God, *is it* the hill of Bashan? "The hill with craggy eminences, the hill of Bashan? "Why leap ye so," (or why look ye askance with envy;) "ye hills with craggy eminences?" (or ye lofty hills?) "This is the hill which God desireth for his habitation; "yea, JEHOVAH will dwell in it perpetually." The apostrophe is exceedingly animated and poetical, viewed in this light. God had preferred Zion to the loftiest mountains, as the place of his permanent residence, and the type of his true church in which he will dwell to eternity.

V. 17. The God of Israel is here described as a mighty Prince and Conqueror coming to his palace to possess his throne, with a vast army of chariots and horsemen: as his thousands of angels were a far more splendid retinue than ever attended the greatest monarch. Thus he descended upon mount Sinai: thus he would dwell upon mount Zion: thus the Messiah ascended into heaven, attended with an innumerable company of angels: and thus he shall at length come to judge the world. The original word does not seem to mean angels; yet they are evidently intended. —The marginal reading *many thousands* is more literal.

V. 18. When the ark was placed upon mount Zion, the tabernacle was enriched with the spoils of the vanquished nations, which were there desposited for the benefit of the Israelites, notwithstanding their rebellions, that "the LORD God might dwell among them:" and of these spoils the temple was chiefly built. But the ascension of Christ must here be meant, who is thus proved to be JEHOVAH: when he ascended into heaven he led captive Satan, sin, and death, which had held all men in captivity; and he received, as the purchase of his death, all those gifts which were needful, in order to the conversion of sinners and completing the salvation of believers: these he continually bestows on those for whom he received them; even on rebellious men, that the LORD God may dwell amongst them, as their Friend and Father. The apostle both cites this passage, and explains it in respect of the gifts bestowed. He does not, however, take it from the Septuagint, but gives the sense in other words. To receive a gift for another implies giving it. Some render the word translated *for men, in man,* as referring to the human nature of Christ. The original name or title here is JAH, the God.

V. 19, 20. The preceding review of the Lord's dealings with his church caused the Psalmist to break forth abruptly into adoring praises. This must have had vast effect, when sung by the numerous bands which attended the ark, accompanied with instrumental music, in great variety and perfection. The God of salvation day by day, or every day, heaped benefits on his people, and should therefore be praised every day. Unto him, even GOD the Lord, belong the outgoings from death. Life and death, heaven and hell, are absolutely at his disposal. The Lord Jesus is "the Resurrection and the Life." He has "the "keys of death and hell;" He has 'opened the gates of 'everlasting life to all believers,' he has made a way for their escape from spiritual and eternal death, and he will raise their bodies incorruptible and immortal.

V. 21. The gifts received by the ascended Saviour, though for rebellious man, would not preserve such from destruction as went on still in their sins. The God of salvation, while he pardons and blesses the repenting rebel, is peculiarly terrible to the impenitent and unbelieving.—The hairy scalp means, the crown of the head, the principal strength, confidence, and glory of the enemy. Christ will crush the serpent's head. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 22, 23. The Lord had promised to save Israel from their enemies by the hand of David: he would therefore renew the wonders which he wrought, when Og king of Bashan was slain, and when the Egyptians perished at the Red Sea. The ascension of Christ made way for most signal displays of the Lord's power, in spreading the Gospel, and in taking vengeance on his enemies: and the more glorious prevalence of Christianity shall be attended with such slaughter of anti-christian opposers, as will literally verify

l xxiv. 7—10. xlvii. 5—7. 2 Sam. vi. 12—17. 1 Chr. xiii. 8. xv. 16. 24.
m lxxxvii. 7. cl. 3—5. Rev. xiv. 2, 3.
n cxlviii. 12, 13. Ex. xv. 20 Judg. xi. 34. 1 Sam. xviii. 6. Jer. xxxi. 4. 13.
o cvii. 32. cxi 1. cxxxv. 19—21. 1 Chr. xvi. 7, 8, &c.
* Or, Ye that are *of the fountain of Israel.*
p Deu. xxxiii. 28. Prov. v. 16. Is. xlviii. 1.
q Gen. xlii. 32. Judg. xx. 35. xxi. 6, &c. 1 Sam. ix. 21. 1 Chr. xii. 16. 29. xv. 9. xxvii 21.
r xlvii. 9. lx. 7. Is. xi. 13. Ez. xxxvii. 21—27
† Or, with *their company.*
s xlii. 8. xliv. 4. lxxi. 3. John v. 8, 9. Acts iii. 6—8. 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10.——t cxxxviii. 8. Eph iii. 17—20. Phil. i. 6. 2 Thes. i. 11.

24 ¶ They have seen thy goings, O God; [l] *even* the goings of my God, my King, in the sanctuary.

25 The singers went before, [m] the players on instruments *followed* after; [n] among *them were* the damsels playing with timbrels.

26 [o] Bless ye God in the congregations, *even* the LORD * from [p] the fountain of Israel.

27 There *is* [q] little Benjamin *with* their ruler, [r] the princes of Judah † *and* their council, the princes of Zebulun, *and* the princes of Naphtali.

28 Thy God hath [s] commanded thy strength: [t] strengthen, O God, that which thou hast wrought for us.

29 [u] Because of thy temple at Jerusalem, [x] shall kings bring presents unto thee.

30 [y] Rebuke the ‡ company of spearmen, the multitude of the bulls, with the calves of the people, *till* [a] *every one* submit himself with pieces of silver: § scatter thou the people *that* [b] delight in war.

31 [c] Princes shall come out of Egypt; [d] Ethiopia shall soon [e] stretch out her hands unto God.

32 Sing unto God, [f] ye kingdoms of the earth; O sing praises unto the LORD. Selah.

33 To him that [g] rideth upon the heavens of heavens, *which were* [h] of old; lo, he doth ‖ send out [i] his voice, *and that* a mighty voice.

u 1 Chr xvii 4—12. xxii 7—14. xxviii. 10, &c. xxix. 3 2 Chr. ii. 5, 6. vi 8, 9.
x lxxii 10, 11. lxxvi. 11. 1 Kings x. 10. 24. 2 Chr. xxxii. 23. Ezra vii. 13—28. Neh. ii. 8. Is. lx. 6—11 16.
y 2 Sam. viii. x. 2 Chr. xiv. xx. Is. xxxvii.
‡ Or, *beasts of the reeds.* Jer. li. 32, 33.
z xxii. 12, 13. Is. xxxiv. 7. Jer. l. 11.
a ii. 12. xviii. 44. 2 Sam. viii. 2. 8—11.
§ Or, *he scattereth.* 14.
b cxx. 7. Rom. vii. 22 Jam. iv. 1.
c lxxii 8—11. Is. xix. 18—25 xlv 14. lx 6, 7. lxvi. 19.
d Zeph iii. 19. Acts viii 27, &c.
e xliv. 20 lxxxviii 9. cxl ii. 6 1 Kings viii. 22 ——f lxvii. 2—5. c. 1. cxvii. 1, 2. Deut. xxxii 43. Rom xv. 10, 11. Rev. xv. 4.
g 4. xviii 10. civ. 3 ——h xciii 2. cii 25.——‖ Heb. *give.*——i xxix. 3—9. lxxvii 17, 18. Ez. x. 5. John xii. 28, 29. Rev xi. 12 15. 19

the words here used. As the verses follow the prophecy of our Lord's ascension, these events seem more directly predicted; and especially the conversion of the Jews, their restoration to their own land, and the vengeance on those who shall oppose them. (*Notes*, *Ex.* xxxviii. xxxix.)

V. 24, 25. When the solemnity of the day was nearly finished, these verses seem to have been sung. The congregation had been spectators of the triumphant manner, in which their God and King had gone up to take possession of his sanctuary, attended with sacred music and rejoicing: He had accepted their services; and all was so happily concluded, as to presage future prosperous days. Thus the prophecy of the Son of David, (the King of kings and Lord of lords,) going forth to destroy his enemies and enlarge his kingdom, is introduced by a vision of "Much "people in heaven, saying Allelujah, Salvation, and "glory, and honour, and power unto the Lord our God, "&c." (*Rev.* xix.) A scene not unlike, but immensely more august, than that procession with the Ark to mount Zion, which was the pledge of David's further victories and prosperity.

V. 26. *From*, &c. That is, 'We that spring from the "*Fountain*," or the *stock* of Israel.' Thus the people in companies seem responsively to have called upon each other, to bless the Lord.

V. 27. The tribe of Benjamin, from which Saul the first king of Israel sprang, joined in this solemnity, as willingly subject to David; and though a small tribe, descended from Jacob's youngest son, and now eclipsed by Judah, whose princes supported David by their counsels, it manifested no jealousy nor envy. Not only the rulers of the other tribes in the vicinity of Jerusalem attended on this occasion, but those of Zebulun and Naphtali which lay most remote: so harmonious was the whole nation on this occasion! Thus after Christ's ascension, rival nations and people, near and far off, thronged into his church.

V. 28. The people seem here to have addressed the king. The LORD his God had commanded all parties thus to strengthen his interests, and had effected their willing submission; and they prayed, that he would establish what he had by him wrought for his people, in preserving the unity of the nation, and increasing its prosperity.

V. 29. The word rendered *temple* is used for the tabernacle: (1 *Sam.* iii. 3.) yet it is probable, that David spoke this prophetically, and foretold that the temple, which was to be built at Jerusalem, would render the worship there performed so much known, that kings would bring presents and oblations to JEHOVAH, to be offered there. This was a figure of the conversion of the kings of the earth unto Christ in the latter days.

V. 30. The same word is here rendered *company*, which is before translated *congregation*, but which signifies *a living creature:* (*Note*, 10.) and it seems in this place to mean *a wild beast.* The whole verse may be thus rendered: 'Rebuke the wild beast of the reeds, the congregation of 'the mighty among the calves of the nations skipping or 'exulting, with pieces of silver; scatter the people that 'delight in war.' (*Horne.*) Many interpret the *beast of the reed*, to mean the crocodile, the emblem of Egypt; and the *calves of the nations*, the objects of the Egyptian idolatry: while their *skipping with pieces of silver* is supposed to refer to the rites of their worship. As, however, David was not attacked by the Egyptians, or about to make war on them, this interpretation is not very satisfactory. The *beast of the reed* or *lance*, seems to denote a warrior, fierce as a wild beast, perhaps Hadadezer king of Syria. "The "multitude of the bulls and the calves of the people" were the powerful and numerous commanders, with their troops; and I apprehend the prayer is 'Lord, rebuke them, 'enraged and strong as they are, till they *lay themselves* '*down for us to set our feet on their necks*, and supplicate 'their lives, offering pieces of silver for tribute, as owning 'themselves subject to us. Yea, "scatter the people that "delight in war," "as they evidently do." (*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* viii. x.) It is no doubt to be considered also as a typical prophecy, and prayer of the church for a decided victory over the most furious and haughty of her oppressors and persecutors

V. 31—33. The victories gained by David and Israel

k xxix. 1, 2. xcvi. 6—8. 1 Chr. xvi. 28, 29. Rev. xix. 5.
l Deut. xxxiii. 26. 2 Pet. i. 17.
* Or, *heavens.*
m xlv. 4, 5. lxv 5. lxvi. 5. lxxvi. 12. Neh. i. 5. Heb. xii. 24—29. Rev. vi. 16, 17.

34 [k] Ascribe ye strength unto God: [l] his excellency *is* over Israel, and his strength *is* in the * clouds.

35 O God, *thou art* [m] terrible out of thy holy places: the God of Israel *is* [n] he that giveth strength and power unto *his* people. [o] Blessed *be* God.

n xxix. 11. Deut. xxxiii. 25. Is. xl 31 Zech. x. 12. Eph iii. 16. Phil. iv. 13. Col. i. 11
o lxxii. 18, 19.

over the surrounding nations, would induce even those that were more distant, and most addicted to idolatry, to come to Jerusalem, and join themselves to the worshippers of the true God. (*Marg. Ref.*) The conversion of the nations, in consequence of the judgments of God on the opposers of the Gospel, in the primitive times, and before the millennium, is evidently foretold: for the kingdoms of the earth are called upon to join in the praises of Israel: and to adore him who rode on the heavens to the help of his people, (*Note, Deut.* xxxiii. 26.) and who spake with a mighty voice to them from mount Sinai. When the Messiah ascended on high, to "the glory which he had "with the Father before the world was," He sent forth the powerful word of his gospel, calling on all men to submit to him, "and honour him even as they honoured the Fa- "ther that sent him."

V. 34, 35. All the perfections of God, which are his excellency, concur in protecting his church. The power which made the clouds and rules the highest heavens, is exerted in behalf of his people and communicated to them, "out of his holy places;" the sanctuary of old, as the type of "heaven itself," whither the Forerunner is for us entered; and whence especially he is terrible to his enemies.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—17.

When the Lord arises to plead the cause of his people, the confederated power of those who hate him will be dissipated and dissolved; and at length all the wicked will perish at his presence. The same displays of his power and glory will rejoice the righteous; and words cannot express the cause they have, and will have, to triumph in their unchangeable Friend, and to celebrate his praises. His condescension is equal to his majesty: he always patronizes the afflicted and oppressed; and poor sinners, helpless and exposed more than any fatherless children, are readily admitted into his family, and share all the blessings of that high relation. Indeed all the company of his chosen were once bound in Satan's chains, and employed in a baser drudgery than that of making bricks; and far more wretched and abject, than the Israelites in Egypt. But when he comes to break off their chains, and claim them for his own, he leads them forth to liberty, to victory, and to eternal glory. They are made willing to follow him, and he goes before them: heaven and earth concur in supplying their wants, and promoting their salvation: difficulties in their path only make way for their almighty Friend to show his care of them: he guides and guards them; he feeds their souls with the Bread of heaven, and gives them the waters of life to drink: and whilst he graciously prepares for the *souls* of the poor in *spirit*, he will not withhold what is needful for their *bodies*. They reap the benefit of the Redeemer's victories; and, fighting under his banner and by his word of command, they profit by the assaults of every enemy; until complete salvation render those white as snow in Salmon, and beautiful beyond all that is lovely in the visible creation, who once were most mean and loathsome, through the guilt and defilement of their sins.

V. 18—35.

The death of our Redeemer was the price of all the blessings which he confers on *sinners*, and his resurrection and ascension were the earnest. When he ascended on high, our God declared his church of ransomed sinners to be his residence, which he greatly desired and delighted in; whilst in its exalted Head "all the fulness of the Godhead "dwelleth bodily." He now reigns over heaven, and earth, and hell, with unlimited authority. In vain do kings or nations envy or oppose his sovereignty: all must submit, or be destroyed by him; and his wrath is more dreadful from mount Zion than it was from mount Sinai.—Having led our oppressors captive, he hath received gifts for rebellious man, which he never refuses to those who humbly sue for them; and they who partake of them, become thenceforth "an habitation of God through the "Spirit." The gift of his written word, and of the ministry of his gospel, are vouchsafed to our land: He gave the word, great was the multitude of those who published it; and they have been raised up successively even to the present day: may he give commandment that thousands more may be raised up, to go forth and preach the gospel in every part of the earth! And may we, may all the inhabitants of Britain, profit by our peculiar privileges! If we have embraced from our hearts this proffered mercy, let us "bless the Lord who daily loadeth us with benefits." Our God is the God of salvation: he hath quickened us when dead in sin, and will not leave us till he hath brought us to glory, honour, and eternal life. But he will crush the serpent's head, and utterly destroy all those who go on still in their trespasses: for his mercies to his church will be attended with judgment on his enemies, till the complete salvation of the one be accompanied with the final ruin of the other. And as our Lord and King condescends to come and dwell among his people, let us observe the tokens of his presence; and let all of every rank, age, and sex, concur in blessing his name: for union and harmony are the stability of the church. All our strength is in and from the Lord; and if he have begun to communicate his grace to our souls, we may pray in faith, that he would daily stablish that which he hath wrought for and in us. May he speedily so strengthen his cause upon earth, that all the proud, idolatrous, and oppressive, all that delight in war, or maintain opposition to his church, may be scattered and brought down; that all kings and nations may share the blessings of his gospel, and sing praises to his name. May these predictions be fulfilled in their most extensive meaning, that all the inhabitants of the world may adore and rejoice in his excellency over Israel; and that he may no longer be terrible to any of them out of his holy

PSALM LXIX.

David, as the type of Christ, mingles doleful complaints with fervent prayers for himself and his people, 1—21. *He devotes his enemies to destruction,* 22—29. *He engages to praise and bless God, calls on the whole creation to join him, and predicts the enlargement and prosperity of the church,* 30—36.

To the chief Musician upon [a] Shoshannim, *A Psalm* of David.

SAVE me, O God; for [b] the waters are come in unto *my* soul.

2 [c] I sink in * deep mire, where *there is* no standing: I am come into † deep waters, where [d] the floods overflow me.

3 [e] I am weary of my crying: [f] my throat is dried: [g] mine eyes fail while [h] I wait for my God.

4 They that [i] hate me without a cause are [k] more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, [l] *being* mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: [m] then I restored *that* which I took not away.

5 O God, thou knowest my foolishness; [n] and my ‡ sins are not [o] hid from thee.

6 [p] Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord God of hosts, be ashamed for my sake: let not those that seek thee, be confounded for my sake, [q] O God of Israel.

7 Because [r] for thy sake I have borne reproach; [s] shame hath covered my face.

8 I am [t] become a stranger unto my brethren, [u] and an alien unto my mother's children.

9 For [x] the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; [y] and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.

a xlv. lix. lxxx. *titles.*
b 14, 15. xviii 4. xlii. 8. Is. xxviii. 17. xliii. 2. Lam. iii. 54. Jon ii. 3—5. Rev. xii. 15, 16. xvii. 15.
c xl. 2 Jer. xxxviii. 6. 22.
* Heb. *the mire of depth.*
† Heb *depth of waters.* lxxxviii. 6, 7. Ez. xxvii. 26—34.
d xxxii. 6. Gen vii. 17—23. Matt. vii. 25. xxvi. 37, 38
e vi. 6. xiii. 1—3. xxii. 2. Gal iii. 13. Heb. v. 7.
f 21. xxii. 15. John xix 28—30.
g cxix. 82. 123. Deut. xxviii.32. Job xi. 20 xvi. 5. Is. xxxviii. 14. Lam. ii. 11
h xxv. 21.xxxix. 7.
i John xv. 25.
j Pet, ii. 22.
k xl. 12.
l vii. 3—5. xxxv. 12. 19 xxxviii. 19, 20. cix. 3—5.
m Is. liii. 4—7. 2 Cor. v. 21. 1 Pet. ii. 24 iii. 18.
n xvii. 3. xix. 12. xliv. 20, 21.
‡ Heb *guiltiness.*
o xxxviii. 9. Jer. xvi. 17.
p vii. 7. xxv 3. xxxv. 26, 27. Is. xlix. 23. Luke xxiv. 19—21. Acts iv. 7—16.
q lxxii.18. 2 Sam. xxiii 3. Acts xiii. 17 23.
r xxii. 6—8. xliv. 22. Jer. xv. 15. John xv. 21—24.
s Is. l. 6. liii, 3. Matt. xxvi. 67, 68. xxvii. 29, 30. 38—44. Luke xxiii.11. 35—37. Heb. xii 2
t xxxi. 11. Job xix. 13—19. Matt. xxvi. 48—50. 56. 70—74. John i. 11. vii. 5.
u 1 Sam. xvii. 28 Mic. vii. 5, 6. Matt. x. 21, 22. 35, 36.
x cxix. 139. 1 Kings xix. 10. 1 Chr. xv. 27—29. xxix. 3. Mark xi. 15—17. John ii. 14—17.——y lxxxix. 50, 51. Rom. xv. 3.

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places! And whilst all unite in ascribing power and dominion unto him, may all experience strength communicated from him, enabling them to resist temptation, and to overcome every enemy of their salvation: that one nation may call upon another to bless the Lord, and all on earth may form one general chorus, like that of angels in heaven, continually saying with alacrity and gratitude, "Blessed be "God," even the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, throughout all ages, for evermore!

NOTES.

PSALM LXIX. V. 1—3. It is probable, that David, in great distress during Absalom's rebellion, composed this psalm with reference to his own case: but the Holy Spirit evidently spake "of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory "that followed." Indeed it is so manifest a prophecy of Christ, that we should consider him as the speaker in most parts of it. In these verses he compares himself to a man sinking in the mire, whilst the floods of waters go over his head. His sufferings from the hands of wicked men, from the powers of hell beneath, and from the justice of the Father, whilst external torment united with internal agony to enhance his distress, were thus represented with peculiar propriety. He continued to cry for help, till his throat was parched with thirst, and his eyes grew dim, and failed in the agonies of death: whilst, in perfect faith and patience, but in the extremity of conflict, he waited for his God to deliver him.

V. 4. The multitudes who hated the Lord Jesus without a cause, nay, though his miracles of mercy alone merited their most grateful love, and who demanded his crucifixion, could not be numbered. The rulers of the Jews and of the Romans who had all the power in their hands, were combined to destroy him, being his enemies wrongfully. Then did he make restitution for our robbery and satisfaction for our crimes, and restored that honour to the divine law which he had not taken away. David indeed was hated wrongfully, and in many things receded from his right: but these concluding words were far more emphatically verified in Christ.

V. 5. 'O God, the righteous Judge, I make my 'appeal to thee, who knowest the very worst of me; and 'protest that, whatever my mistakes, or my wilful sins may 'have been,—I never did them any injury, nor gave them 'any cause to persecute me." (*Bp. Patrick.*) The words, as spoken by David, have no difficulty: yet they may be considered, as an appeal to the heart-searching God for his general integrity, as well as a confession of folly and sin in many instances. If applied to the Lord Jesus, as spoken by him, they must be interpreted of our folly and iniquity being imputed to him; as the debt which he had not contracted, but was required to pay; the robbery which he had not committed, but was made answerable for. Thus many expositors understand the verse: though perhaps it should be explained as the language of the type, rather than of the Antitype.

V. 6, 7. These verses may be explained either as a prayer or a prediction; being in the future tense. David prayed, that his sufferings might not prove an occasion of sin or discouragement to his pious brethren; because he was persecuted and reproached, not for his crimes, but for his religion. Thus St. Paul earnestly desired that the Ephesians might not faint because of his sufferings on their account. But the case of our Lord's disciples, of those who "trusted that it was he that should redeem "Israel;" while they witnessed the contempt and cruelty which he endured, and the ignominious death which he submitted to, and while he lay in the grave, seems most emphatically described. He, however, foretold, that their sorrow should be turned into joy; being assured, that "he suffered—the just for the unjust, that he might "bring us to God."

10 When [z] I wept, *and chastened* my soul with fasting, that was to my reproach.

11 [a] I made sackcloth also my garment; and [b] I became a proverb to them.

12 [c] They that sit in the gate speak against me; and [d] *I was* the song of the * drunkards.

13 But as for me, [e] my prayer *is* unto thee, O LORD, [f] *in* an acceptable time: O God, [g] in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation.

14 [h] Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink: [i] let me be delivered from them that hate me, and [k] out of the deep waters.

15 [l] Let not the water-flood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up, and [m] let not the pit shut her mouth upon me.

16 Hear me, O LORD; [n] for thy loving-kindness *is* good: [o] turn unto me [p] according to the multitude of thy tender mercies.

17 And [q] hide not thy face from thy servant; [r] for I am in trouble: † hear me speedily.

18 [s] Draw nigh unto my soul, *and* [t] redeem it: deliver me [u] because of mine enemies.

19 Thou hast known [x] my reproach, and my shame, and [y] my dishonour: [z] mine adversaries *are* all before thee.

20 [a] Reproach hath broken my heart, and [b] I am full of heaviness: and [c] I looked *for some* to ‡ take pity, [d] but *there was* none; and for [e] comforters, but I found none.

z cii. 8, 9. cix. 24, 25. Luke vii. 33, 34.
a xxxv. 13, 14. Is. xx. 2. xxii. 12. Joel i 8. 13.
b xliv. 13, 14. Deut. xxviii. 37. 1 Kings ix. 7. Jer. xxiv. 9.
c Deut. xvi. 18. Matt. xxvii. 12, 13. 20 41, 42. 62, 63. Luke xxiii. 2. Acts iv. 26, 27.
d xxxv. 15, 16. Job xxx. 8, 9 Mark xv. 17—19.
* Heb. *drinkers of strong drink.* Dan. v. 2—4 23.
e lv. 16, 17. xci. 15. Matt. xxvi. 36, &c. Luke xxii. 44. John xvii. 1, &c Heb. v. 7. 1 Pet. ii. 23
f 1 Sam. xxv. 8. Esth v. 2. 6. vii 2. Is. xlix. 8. lv. 6 2 Cor. vi. 2.
g xl. 10, 11. xcviii 3 Gen. xxiv. 27. Mic vii. 20. Luke i. 72. Acts xiii. 32, 33. Rom. xv. 8, 9.——h xl. 1—3. Jer. xxxviii. 6, &c, 21, Lam. iii. 55.
i xxv. 18, 19. xxxv. 19. cix 3 21. Luke xix 14. 27. Acts v. 30. 31.——k 2. xlii. 7. cxxiv. 4, 5. cxliv. 7. Mark xiv. 34. &c. xv. 34——l Jon ii 2—7. Matt. xii. 40.
m lxxxviii 4—8. Num xvi 33, 34. Acts ii. 24 31.
n xxxvi. 7. lxiii. 3. cix. 21
o xxv. 16. xxvi 11. lxxxvi 15, 16.
p 13. li. 1. Is. lxiii. 7.
q xiii. 1. xxii. 24. xxvii. 9. xliv. 24. cii. 2. cxliii. 9. Matt. xxvii. 46
r Matt. xxvi. 38.
† Heb *make haste to hear me.* xl. 13 lxx. 1. Job vii. 21.
s x. 1. xxii. 1. 19. Jer. xiv. 8.
t xxxi. 5. cxi 9. Job vi 23.
u Deut. xxxii. 27. Josh vii. 9.
x 7—9. xxii. 6. 7. Is. liii. 3. Heb. xii. 2 1 Pet ii. 23.
y John viii. 49.
z ii. 2—4 xxxviii. 9.
a xlii 10. cxxxiii. 4. Heb. xi. 36.
b xlii. 6. Matt. xxvi. 37, 38. John xii. 27.
c Is. lxiii. 5. Mark xiv. 37.
‡ Heb. *to lament* with me.
d cxiii 4. John xvi. 32. 1 Tim. iv. 16, 17.——e Job xvi. 2 xix. 21, 22. Matt. xxvi. 56.

V. 8, 9. The Lord Jesus "came to his own, but his "own received him not;" his countrymen called him a Samaritan who had a devil: "neither did his brethren "believe on him," and the inhabitants of Nazareth, where he had been brought up, attempted to destroy him. Because his zeal for the honour of the law, and the purity of the worship of God, which entirely occupied his soul, and raised him above all inferior considerations, and his plain reproofs of hypocrisy and iniquity, exasperated the mercenary and worthless teachers and rulers of the Jews, and set all orders of men against him. In calumniating him, they ascribed the miracles which he wrought by the Spirit of God to Beelzebub; and in many ways they reproached God, in reproaching his beloved Son, who was the express image of his Person; for "they both saw and hated both "him and his Father." As two apostles have quoted this verse, with express application to Christ, we are warranted in explaining it as a direct prophecy of him, or even as his words. But the usage which David experienced from his son Absalom, his relations, his counsellors, and his subjects, chiefly for his zeal, for the honour of God, and true religion, rendered him a striking type of Christ in this respect, and doubtless occasioned this complaint.

V. 10—12. The Lord of glory voluntarily became a man of sorrows. "In the likeness of sinful flesh," and as a poor man, he appeared in the habit of humiliation, as if he had been a penitent in sackcloth. He wept, and fasted, and prayed, and he was despised and reproached for it. He was called "a Samaritan who had a devil," a Nazarene, and "this deceiver;" and he was made a by-word and a proverb to the people. The chief priest and rulers, who sat as judges in the gate, with deliberate malice conspired his death: and the very drunkards profanely made songs of him and diverted themselves amidst their intemperate revels, by reviling and ridiculing him. Something of this kind had befallen David: but Jesus was far more derided and abhorred. (*Marg. Ref.*)—The Septuagint renders the first clause in these verses, "I bowed down "my soul with fasting." The word *chastened* is not in the original, and seems not so well to suit the case as *afflicted* or *humbled* would have done.

V. 13. *Acceptable*, &c. Or, *a time of good will*, or *special favour*. 'Knowing, that albeit I now suffer trou-'ble; yet thou hast a time wherein thou hast appointed 'my deliverance.' 'I commend myself with the greatest 'earnestness unto thee, O LORD, who, now that I am so 'despicable, wilt think it, I hope, the fittest time for my 'deliverance.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) When the Redeemer was enduring his extremest sufferings, that he might glorify God and save the souls of his people, it was an acceptable time for his prayers in behalf of himself and them. Through him it is an acceptable time for our prayers, when his Gospel is preached to us, and his Spirit is striving with us.

V. 14, 15. The original, beginning with the language of prayer, and proceeding in that of assured confidence, by a change of the imperative for the future, has great animation; "Deliver me from the mire, and I shall not "sink: I shall be delivered from those that hate me," &c. This last expression explains the meaning of the figurative language in these verses, and in the beginning of the psalm. They contain the prayer and expectation of the Redeemer in the depth of his humiliation, when his enemies and sufferings seemed about entirely to overwhelm him: but he knew that his soul would not be left in the place of separate spirits, nor his body in the grave to see corruption; but that his resurrection and exaltation would make way for him to accomplish his purposes of love.

V. 16—20. To understand, and be suitably affected, with these verses, it is peculiarly necessary to compare them with the history given by the Evangelists of our Lord's agony in the garden, and his sufferings on the cross

21 They gave me also [f] gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me [g] vinegar to drink.

22 ¶ Let [h] their table become a snare before them: and *that which should have been* for *their* welfare, *let it become* [i] a trap.

23 Let [k] their eyes be darkened, that they see not; and [l] make their loins continually to shake.

24 [m] Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger [n] take hold of them.

25 [o] Let their * habitation be desolate; *and* † let none dwell in their tents.

26 For [p] they persecute *him* [q] whom thou hast smitten; and [r] they talk to the grief of those ‡ whom thou hast wounded.

27 [s] Add § iniquity unto their iniquity: and [t] let them not come into thy righteousness.

28 Let them be [u] blotted out of the book of the living, and not [x] be written with the righteous.

29 But [y] I *am* poor and sorrowful: [z] let thy salvation, O God, set me up on high.

f Jer. viii. 14. ix. 15. xxiii. 15. Matt. xxvii. 34.
g Mark xv. 36. Luke xxiii. 36. John xix. 29.
h Prov. i. 32. Mal. ii. 2. Rom. xi. 8—10
i Is. viii 14, 15. 1 Pet. ii. 8.
k Is. vi. 9, 10. xxix. 9, 10. Matt. xiii 14, 15. John xii. 39. 40. Acts xxiii. 26, 27. Rom. xi. 25 2 Cor iii 14.
l Deut. xxviii. 65—67. Is. xxi 3, 4. Jer. xxx. 6. Dan v. 6. Rom. xi 10.
m lxxix. 6. Lev. xxvi. 14, &c Deut. xxviii. 15, &c. xxix. 18—28. xxxi. 17. xxxii 20—26. Hos. v. 10. Matt xxiii. 35—37. Luke xxi. 22. 1 Thes. ii 15, 16 Rev. xvi. 1.——n Ex. xv. 15. Is. xiii. 8. Zech. i. 6.——o 1 Kings ix 8. Jer. vii. 12—14. Matt. xxiii. 38. xxiv. 1, 2. Acts i. 20.——* Heb. *palace.* Is. v. 9 vi. 11.

† Heb. *let there not be a dweller*
p cix. 16. 2 Chr. xxviii. 9. Job xix. 21, 22. Zech. i. 15. 1 Thes ii. 15.
q Is. liii. 4. 10. Zech. xiii. 10.
r Mark xv. 28—32.
‡ Heb *thy wounded.*
s lxxxi. 12 Ex. viii. 15 32. ix. 12. Lev. xxvi. 39. Is v 6. Matt. xxi 19 xxiii. 31, 32. xxvii. 4, 5. Rom. i 28. ix. 18. 2 Thes. ii 11, 12 Rev. xxii. 10, 11
§ Or, *punishment of iniquity.* cix. 17—19. 2 Tim. iv. 14.
t xxiv. 5. Rom. ix 31. x. 2, 3.
u Ex. xxxii. 32, 33. Is lxv. 15. Hos. i 9. Rev. iii. 5. xxii. 19.——x Is. iv. 3. Ez. xiii. 9. Luke x. 20. Phil. iv. 3. Heb. xii. 23. Rev xiii. 8. xx. 12—15.——y xl. 17 cix. 22. 31. Is. liii. 2, 3 Matt. viii 20. 2 Cor. viii 9.——z xviii 43. xxii. 27—31. lxxxix. 26, 27. xci. 14—16. Eph. i. 21, 22 Phil. ii. 9—11.

—In the garden, "his soul was exceedingly sorrowful, "even unto death," and in "his agony he prayed more "earnestly:" but so far from having any one to condole with him or comfort him, the apostles themselves could not "watch with him one hour." Having then been betrayed by Judas, denied by Peter, and forsaken by all, he was nailed to the cross, surrounded by his cruel enemies, who reproached and insulted him to the utmost; and in this extremity he exclaimed also, "My God, my God, why "hast thou forsaken me?" He had not at this crisis the comfort of his Father's manifested loving-kindness, which he knew to be good, yea, better than life: but he "hid his "face from him." And while he suffered for sinners, that the multitude of God's mercies might be shown to them; he was excluded from mercy: men showed him no mercy, and he was smitten with the sword of divine justice. But he prayed with strong crying and tears; and he was heard speedily, and rescued from his foes and from death.

V. 21. The word rendered *gall*, signifies any thing either poisonous, or exceedingly bitter. The literal accomplishment of this verse in the case of our Lord, is one instance out of many of the particularity with which the circumstances of his passion were described by "holy men "of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy "Ghost." But the vinegar and the gall were but a feeble emblem of that bitter cup which he exhausted, that we might drink the cup of salvation. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 22—28. Some commentators read this awful passage entirely in the future tense, as *a prediction* and not *an imprecation:* but many of the verbs are in the imperative; and what is more, the apostles quote the passage as an imprecation. (*Acts* i. 20. *Rom.* xi. 9, 10.) If we consider the passage as the language of Christ, denouncing the doom of his implacable enemies, and as recorded to be a warning to others, no reasonable objection can be made to this interpretation: for in reading it, we only assent to the justice of the sentence. (*Notes, Deut.* xxvii. 15.) As our example, Christ on the cross prayed for his crucifiers; and his prayer was answered in the conversion of numbers of them: but being exalted upon his throne, he asks of the Father, and receives from him, authority to break in pieces with his iron rod all obstinate opposers, as well as to save all humble supplicants. The case of the Jewish nation is here prophetically described. Not only were their temporal advantages made an occasion of mischief to them: but depending on those sacrifices and institutions, which were originally appointed for the good of their souls; and ensnared in their own counsels, they persisted both in enmity to Christ, and in resistance to the Romans. Being shut up in Jerusalem, when they were assembled to eat the passover, "their table became their "snare:" infatuated beyond all example, and disunited among themselves, the horrors of intestine massacres weakened and terrified them: at length the Romans, the instruments of the Lord's indignation, got possession of the city with most dreadful slaughter, destroyed the temple, (*the palace* here mentioned: *Marg.*) and desolated their city and habitations, so that none of them were left to dwell there. The remnant of the nation were cast out of the church, and left in *judicial* darkness to add iniquity to iniquity, without obtaining an interest in God's righteousness. Thus they have been blotted out of the register, in which the true people of God, the heirs of heaven, are enrolled, and are no longer written among the righteous: and all this was laid on them for rejecting and crucifying the Messiah, with the most determined contempt and cruelty. The twenty-fifth verse is applied by St. Peter to the traitor Judas, "who was guide to them that took Jesus;" and thus a proper representative of the apostate but hypocritical nation, that as with one voice demanded, even while celebrating the passover, the crucifixion of their Prince and Saviour. But the original word rendered *habitation*, meaning a *palace*, the destruction of the temple, that pride of the nation, seems also predicted: and when our Lord said, "Your house is left unto you desolate;" he may be supposed to have referred to this passage. Some render the words, translated "Add iniquity unto their iniquity," *add punishment to their iniquity:* but the original does not properly admit of that construction, and the marginal references will show, that to be given up to wickedness is the punishment often in awful justice awarded to obstinate transgressors. 'It were to be wished,' (says Dr. Horne on the twenty-sixth verse,) 'that the sorrows of the penitent, when wounded with a sense of sin, never subjected 'him to the scorn and contempt of those who would be 'thought Christians.'

30 [a] I will praise the name of God with a song, and will [b] magnify him with thanksgiving.

31 *This* [c] also shall please the LORD better than an ox *or* bullock, that hath horns and hoofs

32 [d] The * humble shall see *this, and* be glad: and your heart shall live that seek God.

33 For [f] the LORD heareth the poor, and despiseth not [g] his prisoners.

34 [h] Let the heaven and earth praise him, the seas, and every thing that † moveth therein.

35 For [i] God will save Zion, and will [k] build the cities of Judah: that they may dwell there, and have it in possession.

36 [l] The seed also of his servants shall inherit it: and [m] they that love his name shall dwell therein.

a xxviii. 7. xl. 1—3. cxviii. 21. 28, 29.
b xxxiv. 3
c l. 13, 14. 23. Hos. xiv. 2. Eph. v. 19, 20. Heb. xiii. 15. 1 Pet. ii 5.
d xxxiv 2. John xvi. 22. xx. 20.
* Or, *meek* xxv. 9. Is. lxi. 1—3.
e xxii. 26. 29. Is. lv. 6, 7.
f x. 17. xxxiv. 6. lxxii. 12—14. cii. 17. 20 Is. lxvi. 2. Luke iv. 18.
g cviii. 10. cxlvi. 7. Zech. ix. 11, 12. Acts v. 18, 19. xii. 4—11. Eph. iii. 1. Rev. ii. 10.
h xcvi. 11. xcviii. 7, 8. cxlviii. 1, &c. cl. 6. Is. xliv. 22, 23. xlix 13 lv. 12. Rev. vii. 14.
† Heb. *creepeth.* Gen. i. 20. *Marg.*
i li. 18. cii. 13. 16. cxlvii. 12, 13. Is. xiv. 32. xliv 26. xlvi. 13. Rev. xiv. 1.
k xlviii. 11—13. Jer. xxxiii. 10, 11.
l xc. 16, 17 cii. 28. Is. xliv. 3, 4. lxi. 9. Acts ii. 39.
m xci. 14. Rom. viii. 28. Jam. i. 12. ii. 5.

V. 29. *Let*, &c. Or, "Thy salvation, O God, shall "set me up on high." Thus the Saviour, in the depth of his passion and humiliation, anticipates his exaltation "far "above all heavens, that he might fill all things."

V. 30, 31. 'Here, as in the twenty-second and 'many other psalms, the scene changes from sorrow to 'joy; from suffering to triumph; from the passion to the 'resurrection.' (*Horne.*) The praises of the great Redeemer and of his redeemed church; and indeed his whole work, with the eternal glory thence redounding to the God of salvation, are far more acceptable to him than the sacrifices of the law ever had been in themselves: but when the Jews rejected Christ, and preferred their sacrifices; these, even though clean animals offered according to the law, became abominable; because a declaration of their unbelief and their refusal to submit to the righteousness of God.

V. 32. (*Note*, xxii. 26.) The meek and humble, hearing of the Saviour's sufferings and exaltation, will rejoice; and the souls of all that seek the Lord, shall through his atonement be made partakers of life spiritual and eternal. —In how many millions of instances hath this already been fulfilled!

V. 33. *His prisoners.* Those who are bound in prison, as enslaved to sin and condemned for their crimes, when awakened, (by God's preventing grace as his elect,) to seek deliverance, shall not be despised; but on the contrary shall, through the Redeemer's intercession, be brought into "the glorious liberty of the children of God."—Some explain the words, of those who were cast into prison, by such as persecuted the preachers of the Gospel and those who follow them. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 34. 'The mercies of God in Christ are such, 'that they cannot worthily be praised by any thing less, 'than an universal chorus of the whole creation.' (*Horne.*)

V. 35, 36. Zion seems to denote the church at large, the cities of Judah, the several divisions of the church throughout the world; evangelical blessings being predicted under allusions taken from the then existing state of things. —God will preserve his church, and every sound part of it, and all true Christians; continuing to them, and entailing on their posterity, the blessings of the new covenant.—Yea, all that love God shall dwell for ever in Zion, in the church militant on earth, without being finally overcome by any enemy, and in the church triumphant in heaven. Perhaps the future conversion of the Jews also was here foretold.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—21.

It behooves us carefully to examine, whether the things that pertain to the Lord Jesus form as important a part of our religion, as they do of the holy scriptures? And, whether our judgment, experience, and affections, are, as it were, imbued with them, as the word of God is in all its parts? that whilst the prophecies, as compared with the accomplishment, confirm our belief that the Bible is a divine revelation: our hope may rest on the foundation laid, and our conduct be influenced by the motives proposed therein. We cannot too often be called to contemplate the scene, here again presented to our minds. We should frequently consider the person of the Sufferer spoken of; and inquire *wherefore*, as well as *what*, he suffered? That beholding the son of God incarnate, overwhelmed by his inexpressible sorrows; bereft of comfort, *seeming* in vain to cry for relief, conflicting with Satan's horrid temptations, and even bearing the wrath of God for us; that viewing him hated without cause, and apparently left in the power of cruel enemies, treated as a stranger and an alien by his brethren and people, reproached, insulted, derided, condemned by the rulers, and made the sport of the soldiers and the vilest of the multitude; betrayed, denied, or forsaken by his disciples; nailed to the cross, and mocked, when athirst, with vinegar mingled with gall to drink: that meditating on these scenes, we may be led to deeper humiliation for sin, to a greater admiration of the justice and mercy of our God, a higher valuation of our immortal souls, a clearer conviction of our danger, and the vanity of every other dependence except on his great atonement; a fuller perception of our infinite obligations to our gracious Redeemer, and a more lively gratitude and love constraining us to live to his glory. Let us further learn hence to expect the enmity of the many and the mighty, of our relatives, and of those whom we have most served. We may perhaps plead that they hate us wrongfully and without cause: but our foolishness and our sins are not hidden from God; and, alas! they too often appear to man, and give malice that occasion which it sought against us. We need not, however, be discouraged, when reproached and put to shame for the Lord's sake; if our zeal for the truths, precepts, and worship of God, in some small measure resembling that of our Redeemer, should disgust and exasperate our neighbours, and make our former friends treat us as strangers: if they, whose words and

PSALM LXX.

David prays for speedy help, to the confusion of his foes, and the triumph of the righteous, 1—5.

To the chief Musician, *A Psalm* of David, [a] to bring to remembrance.

a xxxviii. *title.*

MAKE haste, [b] O God, to deliver me; make haste * to help me, O LORD.

b xl 13, &c. lxix. 19 lxxi. 12 cxliii. 7. * Heb. *to my help.*

2 [c] Let them be ashamed and confounded that seek after my soul: let them [d] be turned backward, and put to confusion, that desire my hurt.

c vi. 10. xxxv. 4. 26. lxxi 13 cix. 29. Is. xli. 11.

d Is. xxviii. 13. John xviii. 6.

3 Let them be [e] turned back for a reward of their shame, that say, [f] Aha, aha.

e xl. 15. Acts i. 18.

f xxxv. 21. 25. Prov. xxiv. 17, 18. Ez xxv. 3. xxvi. 2 xxxvi. 2.

4 [g] Let all those that seek thee, rejoice and be glad in thee: and let such as love thy salvation say continually, Let God be magnified.

g v. 11. xxxv. 27. xl 16. Is lxv. 13, 14. John xvi 20.

5 But [h] I *am* poor and needy: make haste unto me, O God: thou *art* my Help and my Deliverer; [i] O LORD, make no tarrying.

h xl. 17 lxix. 29. cix. 22.

i xiii 1, 2 Heb. x. 37. Rev. xxii. 20.

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works reproach the Lord, should despise and revile us for his sake; if even judges and rulers should speak against us, and if drunkards should make their songs of us, and turn our godly sorrow, our tenderness of conscience, our deadness to the world, and even our prayers for them, into derision and mockery. Whatever deep waters of affliction or temptation we are sinking into; whatever floods of trouble, or ungodly men, seem ready to overwhelm us; we should persevere in prayer, and in waiting on our God to save us; though we be weary, and as it were hoarse, with crying for help, and our eyes be ready to fail with looking for deliverance: and the more men despise and desert us, the more earnest should be our cries unto the Lord to help and comfort us. Such extremities will be found acceptable times of approach to God, if we plead with him the multitude of his mercies, and the truth of those promises which secure the believer's salvation: but we should in these emergencies remember others, who seek the Lord; and pray for them, that they may not be ashamed or discouraged through our afflictions or misconduct. He who brought the Redeemer from the grave, and exalted him above all his enemies, will hear those who come in his name: he will deliver them out of temptation and affliction: and with his refreshing loving-kindness he will turn unto them and comfort them, and that speedily: and he will at length receive their souls, and raise their bodies from the grave, and thus rescue them from every enemy. Indeed reproach and contempt are hard to bear, and fill our hearts with heaviness; and we may, at some times, look in vain for compassion or comfort from our fellow-creatures. But the Redeemer exhausted that cup of wrath, which contained nothing but vinegar and gall; and he will infuse sweetness into all our sorrows. We need not therefore fear suffering with or for him.

V. 22—36.

Now, in this acceptable time, we should all fear coming short of the salvation set before us; and lest any of us should suffer as the enemies of Christ from his awful indignation. For many, besides the nation of the Jews, have had their table made their snare, and the things which should have been for their welfare, a trap to them; because they have opposed or neglected his salvation; many are given up to judicial blindness and to desperation: the hot displeasure of God pursues them from their habitation on earth; and being driven away in their wickedness, they add iniquity to iniquity, and that for ever; for they are "blotted out of the book of the living, and are not "written among the righteous." Let us then fear lest this should be our case, and be careful not to "persecute "those whom God hath smitten: or to *speak* to the grief "of those whom he hath wounded." Let us call upon the Lord in the present acceptable time, without further delay: and then, though we be not only poor and sorrowful, but guilty and defiled, the salvation of God will set us up on high. And not only the atonement of the Redeemer, but the praises of the redeemed, who magnify the name of the Lord with thanksgiving, are more pleasing to him than bullocks with horns and hoofs. The humble will perceive and rejoice in these encouraging truths, and the souls of those who seek the Lord according to this blessed gospel shall live for ever. Through our exalted Advocate he will hear the prayers of those who have been the prisoners of Satan, when they long for liberty and salvation; and he will not despise the poorest or the vilest who trust in him. "Let then heaven and earth praise him, the "sea, and every thing that moveth therein:" for God will protect and save his church, and enlarge her borders; that his people may dwell there, and have it in possession. He will bless them and their children after them; a seed shall serve him on earth, and his servants shall inherit his heavenly kingdom; and they that love his name, shall dwell before him for ever. "He that spared not his own "Son, but delivered him up for us all; how shall he not "with him also freely give us all things?"

NOTES.

PSALM LXX. V. 1—5. (*Notes*, xl. 13—17.) This psalm is, for substance, the same as the concluding verses of the fortieth psalm: yet there are verbal alterations in every part of it, though none that materially affect the sense. Some think that it was parted from the fortieth psalm, (with some variation,) as suggesting general hints for prayer to pious persons, under very afflictive circumstances.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

No worldly possessions or distinctions can prevent the humbled sinner from feeling himself to be poor and needy: hence his entire dependence upon a merciful God, and his

PSALM LXXI.

The Psalmist professes his trust in God, and prays for help to the end, and for the confusion of his enemies 1—13. *He resolves to confide in God and praise him,* 14—16. *He renews his petitions, that he may not be cast off in the decline of life,* 17, 18. *He exults in the prospect of complete deliverance, joy, and triumph,* 19—24.

IN thee, O LORD, [a] do I put my trust: [b] let me never be put to confusion.

2 Deliver me [c] in thy righteousness, and [d] cause me to escape: [e] incline thine ear unto me, and save me.

3 Be thou * my strong Habitation, whereunto I may continually resort: [f] thou hast given commandment to save me; for thou *art* [g] my Rock and my Fortress.

4 Deliver me, O my God, [h] out of the hand of the wicked, out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man.

5 For [i] thou *art* my hope, O LORD GOD: *thou art* [k] my trust from my youth.

6 [l] By thee have I been holden up from the womb: [m] thou art he that took me out of my mother's bowels: [n] my praise *shall be* continually of thee.

7 I am [o] as a wonder unto many; but [p] thou *art* my strong refuge.

8 [q] Let my mouth be filled *with* thy praise, *and with* thy honour all the day.

9 [r] Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not [s] when my strength faileth.

a xxii. 5 xxv. 2, 3 cxxv. 1. cxlvi. 5. 2 Kings xviii. 5. 1 Chr. v. 20 Rom. ix. 33. 1 Pet. ii. 6.
b Is. xlv. 17. Jer. xvii 18.
c xvii. 2. xxxi. 1. xliii. 1. cxliii 1. 11. Dan ix. 16
d 1 Cor. x. 13.
e x. 17, 18. xvii. 6. cxvi. 1, 2.
* Heb. *to me for a rock of habitation* xxxi. 2, 3. xci. 1, 2.
f Prov. xviii. 10. Is. xxxiii. 16.
g xliv. 4. lxviii. 28. xci. 11, 12. Ez. ix. 6. Rev. xii. 2, 3.
h xvii. 8, 9. 13. lix. 1, 2. cxl. 1—4. 2 Sam. xvi. 21, 22. xvii. 1, 2. 12—14. 21.
i xiii. 5. xxxix. 7. xlii. 11. cxix. 81. 166. Jer. xvii 7. 13 17. Rom. xv. 13.
k 17. xxii. 9, 10. 1 Sam xvi. 6. xvii. 33—37. 45—47. Ec xii 1. Luke ii. 40. 1 Tim. iii 15
l Prov. viii 17. Is. xlvi. 3, 4. Jer. iii 4
m cxxxix. 15, 16. Is. xlix. 1. 5. Jer. i. 5. Luke i. 31, 32. Gal. i. 15.
n 14. xxxiv. 1. Eph. v. 20.
o Is. viii. 18. Zech. iii. 8. Luke ii. 34. Acts iv. 13. 1 Cor iv. 9. 2 Cor. iv. 1—12. vi 8—10.
p lxii 7. cxlii. 4, 5 Jer. xvi. 19.
q 15. 24. xxxv. 28. li. 14, 15. cxiv. 1, 2. cxlv. 1, 2.
r 18. xcii. 13—15 Is. xlvi. 4. 2 Tim. iv. 12. iv. 18.
s lxxiii 26. xc. 10. 2 Sam. xix. 35. xxi. 15—17. Ec. xii. 1—7.

fervent applications to him on all occasions; whilst the proud can only pray formally and hypocritically. But the poor in spirit have God for their Helper and Deliverer; and shame must be the portion of all who seek after their souls, desire their hurt, or rejoice in their calamities. Sometimes these are so ashamed as to repent and seek forgiveness: but unless this be the case, they will be treated as the enemies of Christ; as they tread in the steps of those who persecuted him, in his poverty and humiliation; for they hate his image and his cause in his poor disciples. But they who seek the Lord and love his salvation, have the prayers of all God's people on earth, and the intercession of Christ in heaven in their behalf. Joy and gladness will therefore be vouchsafed them: and they will eternally magnify the God of their salvation.

NOTES.

PSALM LXXI. V. 1. The name of David is not prefixed to this beautiful psalm: yet there can be no doubt but he wrote it during Absalom's rebellion; and probably at the crisis when he heard of the sanguinary counsel which Ahithophel had given respecting him. (2 *Sam.* xvii. 1—3. 21.) This verse may be rendered, "In thee, O "LORD, do I put my trust; I shall never be put to con-"fusion."

V. 2. *Thy righteousness.* "It is a righteous thing "with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble "his people, and to them which are troubled, rest," and deliverance. This kind of appeal to the justice of God in David's circumstances seems the most natural interpretation. But some suppose the faithfulness of God to his promises to be meant, and others explain the words as spoken of that "righteousness of God which is unto all and "upon all them that believe."

V. 3. The idea of an impregnable fortress, in a country liable to be invaded by powerful enemies, with a ready admission on any emergency, and habitual residence in it, admirably illustrates the believer's privilege of access to God at all times; with the security and confidence which spring from a due improvement of it. The promises which God had made to David and his posterity by Solomon, were such express declarations of his purposes, as amounted to a commandment to save him, which all the servants of God in heaven and earth ought to concur in performing. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 4. *The unrighteous and cruel man.* That is, Ahithophel.

V. 5, 6. David was conscious that he had trusted God from his early youth; and the recollection of the numerous instances, in which the Lord had answered his expectations and prayers through a long course of years, not only encouraged his confidence, but animated him to praise and gratitude amidst all difficulties. In this he was a feeble type of Christ, who with infinite condescension passed through the state of childhood and youth for our sakes, and without the least spot of sin.

V. 7. Numbers no doubt wondered that David should meet with such uncommon afflictions, and perhaps suspected him of some prodigious wickedness which he contrived to hide from men: many might wonder at his unabated confidence in God; and be anxious to know, whether he would be delivered or not: and others might be astonished to see him protected and comforted under his afflictions, and especially at the wonderful deliverances he had experienced. 'Christ in his state of humiliation upon 'earth was "a sign every where spoken against." 'The 'Christian who quits possession for reversion, and who 'chooses to suffer with his Saviour here, that he may 'reign with him hereafter, appears to the men of the world 'as a monster of folly and enthusiasm. But God is the "strong Refuge" of all such.' (*Horne.*)

V. 8, 9. Or, "My mouth shall be filled, &c." "Thou "wilt not cast me off, in my old age, nor forsake me, "&c." 'Such is my full purpose and unabated confi-'dence.' This literal rendering seems more animated, than translating the verses merely as a prayer, which con-

10 For mine enemies speak against me; [t] and they that * lay wait for my soul [u] take counsel together,

11 Saying, [x] God hath forsaken him: persecute and take him; [y] for *there is* none to deliver *him*.

12 [z] O God, be not far from me: O my God, [a] make haste for my help.

13 [b] Let them be confounded *and* consumed that are adversaries to my soul; let them be [c] covered *with* reproach and dishonour that seek my hurt.

14 But [d] I will hope continually, and will yet [e] praise thee more and more.

t x. 9. lvi. 6. Prov. i. 11.
* Heb. *watch* or *observe*. xxxvii. 32, 33. 1 Sam xix. 11. Jer. xx. 10.
u ii. 2. lxxxiii. 3. 2 Sam. xvii. 1, &c. Matt. xxvi. 3, 4 xxvii. 1
x iii. 2 xxxvii. 25 28. xli. 7, 8 xlii. 10. Matt. xxvii. 42, 43. 46 49.
y vii 2 l. 22. 2 Chr. xxxii 13, 14. Dan. iii. 15.
z xxii 19. xxxv. 22. xxxviii. 21, 22. lxix. 18
a lxx. 1, 2. cxliii. 7
b 24 vi 10. xxxv. 4. 26. xl 14. 15. Is. xli. 11 Jer xx 11
c cix. 29 cxxxii 18. 1 Pet v. 5. 1 John iii 3.——d xliii. 5. Job xiii. 15. Lam. iii. 21 26. Heb. x. 35. 1 Pet. i. 13.
e 6. Phil. i 9. 1 Thes. iv. 1. 10 2 Pet. iii. 18.

15 [f] My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness *and* thy salvation [g] all the day; for [h] I know not the numbers *thereof*.

16 I will go [i] in the strength of the Lord GOD: [k] I will make mention of [l] thy righteousness, *even* of thine only.

17 O God, [m] thou hast taught me from my youth: and [n] hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works.

18 [o] Now also, † when I am old and gray-headed, O God, forsake me not; [p] until I have shewed thy ‡ strength unto *this* generation, *and* thy power to every one *that* is to come.

f 8 24 xxii. 22—25. xxx 12. xl. 9, 10. cxlv. 2. 5—11.
g xxxv. 28. lxxxix. 16.
h xl. 5. 12. cxxxix. 17, 18.
i xxix. 11. Deut. xxxiii. 25. Is. xl 31. xlv. 24. Zech x. 12. Eph iii. 16. vi. 10. Phil. iv. 13. 1 Tim. ii 1.
k Is. xxvi. 13. lxiii. 7.
l 2 15. 19. 24 li. 14. Matt. vi. 33. Rom. i 17 iii. 21. x. 3. Phil. iii. 9. 2 Thes. i. 6.
m 5. cxix 9. 102.
n lxvi. 16. 1 Sam. xvii. 36, 37. 2 Sam. iv. 9. xxii. 1, &c. 1 Chr. xvi 4, &c.——o 9. Gen xxvii. 1 1 Sam iv. 15. 18. Is. xlvi 4.——† Heb. *unto old age and gray hairs*——p lxxviii. 4—6. cxlv. 4, 5. Ex xiii. 8. 14—17. 1 Chr. xxix. 10, &c, Acts xiii 36.——‡ Heb. *arm*. Is. li. 9. liii 1.

veys the idea of doubt and discouragement. It was a prayer indeed; but couched in the language of assured hope. David had long served God and been useful to Israel; but he was not capable of such services as formerly, and his rebellious son and ungrateful people rejected and despised his authority. He was, however, fully persuaded that God, who had favoured and helped him all his life long, would not cast him off in his old age.

V. 10, 11. Absalom, Ahithophel, and the other conspirators, while they consulted together to destroy David, may be supposed to have excused their own detestable wickedness, by charging him with many real or supposed crimes: and it is probable they spoke most virulently of his conduct in respect of Uriah and Bathsheba. Persuading themselves, therefore, that David had, by that scandalous folly, forfeited the divine protection, which they could not deny that he had formerly enjoyed, when he slew Goliath, was delivered from Saul, and made victorious over the surrounding nations; they concluded that God had forsaken him; and that they might proceed in persecuting him, with confidence of success, for there was now no Deliverer. But David, while submissively enduring the correction of his heavenly Father, was conscious that he had deeply repented, and had obtained forgiveness. He was also aware, that impious contempt of God united with enmity to himself, in the conduct of his foes: and thence he deduced arguments to strengthen his assurance, that God would for his own glory rescue his persecuted servant from his impious persecutors. They who consulted to put our Lord to death, and tried to find accusations against him, could not but own that he had wrought many miracles; yet when they prevailed so far as to get him nailed to the cross, they insulted him, as if God had finally forsaken him. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 12. 'O my God, who hast hitherto so wonderfully 'preserved me, let this vain-confidence and insulting lan-'guage of my subjects, incline thee to make the greater 'speed to relieve me.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The first clause is future, "Thou wilt not be far from me; haste thee to "help me." As if David had said, 'I know that thou 'wilt not finally forsake me; but the extremity of my 'case makes me earnest for speedy deliverance.'

V. 13—15. These verses throughout are in the future tense; the language of *prediction*, or confident expectation, and not necessarily of *imprecation*. It might not be so material to observe this if many had not taken occasion, from the latter interpretation, to charge the man after God's own heart with malevolence and a revengeful spirit; and to represent the Old Testament as sanctioning such a spirit, though unsuitable to the evangelical dispensation. Nay, some very pious and respectable persons have admitted charges of this kind to a very great extent: but they are highly dishonourable to God. His perfections and commandments, his holiness, and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, are unchangeably the same. And there is no reason to think, that David has recorded one *prayer* in the psalms, which St. Paul would in similar circumstances have scrupled. When he spake as the type of Christ, or by the Spirit of prophecy, he might very properly either predict or denounce destruction on those that persisted in opposing him; as the apostle says, "If any man love not "the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Mara-"natha!" And when he was engaged in devotion or meditation, he might, in assured faith, foresee the ruin of his own wicked persecutors, such as Saul and Ahithophel, and even pray for their confusion, as the apostle said of Alexander the coppersmith, "The Lord reward him ac-"cording to his works;" being fully persuaded that he was given over to a reprobate mind, and if not restrained would do a great deal of mischief to the church of God.—'Because thy benefits to me are innumerable, I cannot 'but continually meditate upon and rehearse them.'

V. 16. The Psalmist, in the sharp and perilous contest in which he was engaged, determined to trust in the power of God for deliverance; and to mention his righteousness alone. He had not deserved from his son and subjects the ill usage which he received from them: he would not, however, attempt to justify himself before God; but would submit to, yea, adore his righteousness under this heavy trial; committing his cause to him as a righteous Judge, without the least reserve. The Christian also goes forth to conflict with his enemies, in the strength of the Lord; and mentions the righteousness of Christ, the righteousness of God by faith, as the only meritorious cause of his acceptance: and many think David here spoke of that righteousness as the ground of his confidence. Others interpret it of the Lord's faithfulness to his promises: but the foregoing sense seems most to agree with the context.

19 [q] Thy righteousness also, O God, *is* very high, [r] who hast done great things: O God, [s] who *is* like unto thee?

20 *Thou,* [t] which hast shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt [u] quicken me again, and [x] shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth.

21 Thou shalt [y] increase my greatness, and [z] comfort me on every side.

22 I will also praise thee with the * psaltery, [a] *even* thy truth, O my God: unto thee will I sing with the harp, [b] O thou Holy One of Israel.

23 [c] My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee; and [d] my soul which thou hast redeemed.

24 [e] My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long: [f] for they are confounded, for they are brought unto shame, that seek my hurt.

q xxxvi. 5, 6 lvii. 10. cxxxix 6. Prov. xv. 24. xxiv 7 Is v. 16. r lxxii. 18, cxxvi. 2, 3. Job v 9. s xxxv. 10. lxxxvi. 8. lxxxix. 6—8. Ex. xv. 11. Is. xl. 18. 25. Jer. x. 7. t xl. 1—3. lx. 3. lxvi. 10—12. lxxxviii. 6, &c. cxxxviii. 7. 2 Sam. xii. 11. Mark xiv. 33, 34 xv. 34. 2 Cor. xi. 23, &c Rev. vii. 14. u lxxx. 18. Is. xxvi. 19. Hos xxxviii. 17. Ez. xxxvii. 12, 13. Jon ii. 6. Eph. iv. 9.——y lxxii. 11. 2 Sam. iii. 1. Is. ix. 7 xlix. 6. Rev. xi. 15.——z xxxii. 10. 2 Cor. i. 4, 5. ii. 14. vii. 6. 13. 1 Thes. iii. 9.

* Heb. *instrument of psaltery.* xcii. 1—3 cl 3—5. Hab. iii. 18, 19. a xxv. 10. lvi. 4. lxxxix. 1, 2. xcviii. 3. cxxxviii. 2 Mic. vii 2 Rom. xv 8. b lxxxix. 18. 2 Kings xix 22 Is v. 16. 19. 24. xii. 6. xxx 11, 12 xliii 3 lvii 15 lx. 9 c lxiii 5. civ. 33. Luke i. 46, 47 d ciii. 4 Gen. xlviii. 16 2 Sam iv. 9. Rev v. 9. e 15 xxxvii 30 Deut. xi 19. Prov. x. 20, 21. Matt. xii. 35. Eph. iv. 29.——f 13 xviii. 37—43 xcii. 11. 1 Cor xv. 25.

V. 17, 18. David had early been taught by the Spirit of God the way of truth and holiness, and been employed in many useful services during a long course of years; especially by declaring the wondrous works of God as the sweet Psalmist of Israel: and he prayed in the language of confident expectation, that he might be preserved in his old age, till he had completed this work, and shown more fully the power of God, and his glorious perfections and kingdom, not only to that but all future generations.—The usefulness of his psalms to the whole church, in all successive ages, is a most wonderful performance of this, whether considered as a prayer or a prediction; for many of his psalms, especially some of those which conclude them, seem to have been written, and the complete arrangement of the Psalmody at the tabernacle to have been made, after this time.

V. 19. The methods by which God governs the world in righteousness, are so high that man cannot comprehend them. This is peculiarly the case in respect of the harmony of mercy and truth with justice in the mediatorial government of Jesus Christ, and the way in which believers are made the righteousness of God in him.

V. 20, 21. David had already been carried through many and sore troubles; and now in the depth of his present distress he was like one that is dead and buried: but he expected that God would revive him; and not only restore him to his former comforts, but abundantly increase them; nor was he disappointed. He likewise seems here to have spoken as the type of Christ, under his deepest humiliation, expecting his resurrection and exaltation to the throne of glory.

V. 22—24. This exulting anticipation of the high praises which, with heart-felt joy and gratitude, the Psalmist expected to sing to his great Deliverer and Benefactor, using every method of making them more solemn and triumphant, when it is considered as his language in the depth of distress, is very remarkable; and shows the strength of his faith, the confidence of his hope, and the fervency of his piety. The *truth* or *faithfulness* of God is here mentioned distinctly, as well as his *righteousness.* David had grounded his confidence on the divine promises, and referred the cause between him and his rebellious subject to the decision of divine justice, both of which he would celebrate continually, when he had received that merciful deliverance and redemption which he was hourly expecting.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is very honourable to the mercy of God, that his word encourages even sinners to plead their confidence in him, as a reason why he should save and help them. He always inclines his ear to the prayer of faith: and they who trust in him, and seek all their happiness from him, shall never be put to shame. His power, truth, and love, will be their residence and fortress, to which they may always resort; and in which they will be secure and comfortable even amidst troubles and alarms. He hath given commandment to save them, not only from unrighteous and cruel men, but from the wicked and cruel enemies of their souls. Happy therefore are all who make the Lord their hope: but most happy they who have been taught by him, and so have trusted him from their youth; and who with advancing years have acquired increasing experience of his faithfulness and mercy. As he formed each of us, and took us out of our mother's womb, and by him we have been holden up ever since; our praise *ought* to be always of him: but, alas, how few grow up in his fear, and spend their lives to his glory! It is, indeed, a great mercy to young people to be early instructed in the things of God: parents have an important obligation upon them in this respect; and children who are thus favoured have additional reasons to love, honour, and requite their parents. Yet let none of us expect much quiet in this world: they who, from their earliest youth, have loved the Lord and declared his wondrous works, and walked before him in truth and equity, have often been showed sore troubles, and have been exceedingly hated and persecuted: nay, they have been "men wondered at," for their principles, their conduct, and their trials. Their enemies have often thought that God had forsaken them, and that they could crush them with ease and impunity: but reproach and dishonour have at length come upon those that laid wait for their soul, while *they* have hoped continually, and praised God more and more. Indeed *their* leading desire is, that their "mouths might be filled with his praise and honour all "the day long:" in their best moments, they only wish to live on earth, to show forth the righteousness and salvation of God, to his glory, and the encouragement of his people: and the subject is so copious, and the blessings and the instances of his love are so numerous, that they can never recount them all. They, therefore, who would recommend this salvation to others, as well as ensure it to themselves, must "go forth in the strength of the Lord

PSALM LXXII.

David prays for Solomon; and predicts the peace, righteousness, honour, extent, and duration of his kingdom, as typifying that of the Messiah, 1—17. *He blesses God on these accounts, and prays that the earth may be filled with his glory,* 18—20.

A Psalm * for Solomon.

GIVE the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto [a] the king's son.

2 [c] He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and [d] thy poor with judgment.

3 [e] The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and [f] the little hills, [g] by righteousness.

4 [h] He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall [i] break in pieces [k] the oppressor.

5 [l] They shall fear thee [m] as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations.

6 He shall come down [n] like rain upon the mown grass; as showers *that* water the earth.

* Or, *of* cxxvii. *title.*
a 1 Kings i. 39, &c. 1 Chr. xxii. 12, 13. xxix. 19, 2 Chr. i 10. Is. xi. 2. John iii. 34. Heb. i 8, 9.
b 1 Kings i. 47, 48. ii. 1—4. Jer. xxiii. 5-7.
c 12—14. xlv. 6, 7. 1 Kings iii. 5—10. Is. xi. 3—5. xxxii. 1. Jer. xxxiii 15. Rev. xix. 11.
d xii. 5. lxxxii. 3, 4. Job xxxiv. 19.
e 16. Is. xxxi. 16. 17. lii. 7. Ez. xxxiv. 13, 14. Joel iii. 18.
f lxv. 12.
g lxxxv. 10, 11. xcvi. 11—13. xcviii. 9, 10. Dan. ix. 24. 2 Cor. v. 19—21.
h 12—14. cix. 31. Is. xi. 4. Ez. xxxiv. 15, 16. Zech. xi. 7. 11. Matt. xi. 5.
i ii. 9. xciv. 5. Job xix. 2. xxxiv. 24. Prov. xx. 26. Jer. li. 20—22.
k Is. ix. 4. Dan. ii 34, 35. Zech. ix. 8—10. Rev. xviii. 6—8. 20. 24. xix. 2.
l 1 Sam. xii. 18. 1 Kings iii. 28.
m 17. lxxxix. 29. 36, 37. Is. ix. 7. Dan. ii. 44. vii. 14. 27. Luke i. 32, 33. 1 Cor. xv. 24, 25. Eph. iii. 21. Rev. xi 15.——n Deut. xxxii. 2. 2 Sam. xxiii. 4. Prov. xvi. 15. xix. 12. Is. v. 6. xliv. 3—5. Ez. xxxiv. 23—26. Hos. vi. 3. xiv. 5, &c.

"GOD, and make mention of his righteousness only." Indeed as old age approaches, our strength in many respects will fail us: but God will not cast off his gray-headed servants, when they are no longer capable of labouring as they have done. And his people should imitate his example, in their conduct towards such as have spent their health and strength in their service. He, indeed, often favours his aged servants with peculiar vigour in their souls, when nature is sinking into decay; that their faith, hope, love, and joy, may show to all around them what a faithful Friend He is to his people. The experienced believer in such circumstances ought to speak of the perfections and works of God, to his neighbours; and if able he will do well to leave some testimony of his happy experience and decided judgment upon record for posterity; to show his "strength to the present generation, "and his power to all them who are yet for to come." But God is so exalted, that it is far above our ability to praise him worthily: he hath done great things, and there is none like unto him: yet the everlasting righteousness which was brought in when the Redeemer had passed through his great and sore troubles, and was raised again from the depths of the earth, and exalted to the throne of glory, demands our most admiring gratitude and praise. Resting our hopes on that foundation, we may bear up under our lighter trials, and even go down with confidence into the grave: for the Lord will receive our souls, which he hath redeemed; and will quicken our bodies also, and raise them from the dust of the earth again, and thus increase our greatness, and comfort us on every side. Anticipating this final deliverance and victory, let us here spend our days, whilst waiting the approach of death, in praising the Holy One of Israel with all our powers and attainments: and whilst we are speaking of his righteousness, and singing unto him, we shall rise superior to our fears and infirmities, and have sweet earnests of the joys of heaven.

NOTES.

PSALM LXXII. *Title.* 'David had the satisfaction 'to see all the great men do homage to Solomon before he 'died: and thereupon the spirit of this holy man being 'transported with an extraordinary joy, he indited this 'psalm, in which he recommends Solomon to the divine 'benediction, and instructs him how to make his people 'happy; which he carries in so high a strain that the 'words had not a full accomplishment, till the appearing 'of that great King, Christ, of whose kingdom his father 'David here prophecies.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) 'The aged 'monarch of Israel, being about to resign the kingdom 'into the hands of his son Solomon, makes unto God the 'request of a wise father for him. He asks such a portion 'of wisdom and integrity from above as might enable the 'young Prince to govern the people of God, and exhibit 'a fair resemblance of the Messiah.' (*Horne.*) The prayer of Solomon, for wisdom to govern Israel, was evidently grounded on the instructions of this psalm, which shows how deeply he was impressed by it. (*Notes,* 1 *Kings* iii.)

V. 1, 2. Solomon was both *king* and the *king's son;* which no king of Israel had before been; and his pious father ardently desired, that "the wisdom of God might "be in him to do justice;" that he might understand the statutes and laws of God, and copy his righteousness in his administration; especially in exercising his authority to defend and redress the wrongs, and relieve the distresses of the poor: that so his reign might be an apt resemblance, as it was an evident type of the kingdom of the Messiah; of whom the whole psalm must be considered as a prophecy, and many of the expressions in it can be interpreted of no other.

V. 3. The peace and righteousness of Solomon's reign were visible in the mountains and hills, covered with vines, corn, and cattle; the people quietly gathering in their abundance, and enjoying it, without fear of invasion or oppression; and the magistrates, both superior and inferior, being exact in administering justice. Thus the Redeemer's kingdom, established in mercy, and governed in peace and righteousness, produces abundantly the fruits of holiness, in all places where it is truly established.

7 [o] In his days shall the righteous flourish; and [p] abundance of peace * so long as the moon endureth.

8 [q] He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto [r] the ends of the earth.

9 [s] They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and [t] his enemies shall [u] lick the dust.

10 [x] The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.

11 Yea, [y] all kings shall fall down before him: [z] all nations shall serve him.

12 For [a] he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and [b] *him* that hath no helper.

13 He shall spare the poor and needy, and [c] shall save the souls of the needy.

14 He [d] shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and [e] precious shall their blood be in his sight.

15 And [f] he shall live, and [g] to him † shall be given of the gold of Sheba: [h] prayer also shall be made for him continually; *and* [i] daily shall he be praised

o cxxxii 15—18. Is. xi 6—9. xxxii. 3—8. 15—20 xxxv. 1, &c. liv. 11, &c lv. 10—13. lx. 1. 22 lxi. 3—6. 10, 11. Mal. iv. 2. Acts iv. 32.
p 1 Kings iv. 25. 1 Chr. xxii. 8, 9. Is. ii 4. ix. 6, 7 Luke ii. 14. Eph. ii. 14—17.
* Heb. *till* there be *no moon.*
q ii 8 lxxx. 11. lxxxix. 25. Ex. xxiii 31. 1 Kings iv. 21—24. Zech. ix. 10. Rev. xi. 15.
r xxii. 27, 28.
s 1 Kings ix. 18. 20, 21. Is. xxxv. 7.
t ii. 9. xxi. 8, 9. cx. 1. 6. Luke xix. 27.——u Is. xlix. 23. Mic. vii. 17.——x 1 Kings. x. 1. 10. 25. Is. xliii. 6. xlix 7. lx. 3. 6. 9.——y Is. xlix. 23. Rev. xi. 15. xvii. 14. xxi. 24. 26.

z lxxxvi. 9 Is. xi. 9 liv. 5 Rom. xi 25 Rev xx. 1—3.
a 4. x. 17. lxxxii. 4, 5 cii. 17. 20. Job xxix. 12 Is. xli. 17. Luke iv. 18. vii. 22. 2 Cor. viii. 9. Rev. iii. 17, 18.
b Ec. iv. 1. Is. lxiii. 4, 5
c cix 31. Job v. 15, 16. Ez. xxxiv. 16. Matt. v. 3. xviii 11. Jam. ii. 5, 6.
d xxv 22. cxxx. 8. Gen. xlviii. 16. 2 Sam iv. 9. Luke i. 68—75. Tit ii. 14
e cxvi 15. Matt. xxiii. 30—36. 1 Thes. ii. 15, 16. Rev. vi. 9—11 xviii. 6. xviii. 20—24. xix. 2.——f xxi. 4. John xi. 25. xiv. 19. 1 John i. 2. Rev. i. 18.
g 1 Kings x. 14. Matt ii. 11.——† Heb one *shall give.*——h 19. xlv. 4. Matt. vi. 10. xxi. 9. John xvi. 23, 24. 1 Cor i 2, 3. 2 Cor. xiii. 14. 1 Thes iii 11. 2 Tim. iv. 22. Heb. x. 19—22.——i 2 Chr. ii. 11, 12. ix. 4—8. 23, 24. John v. 23. Phil. ii. 11. 2 Pet. iii. 18 Rev. i. 5, 6. v. 8—14. vii. 9—12.

V. 4—7. 'As this is true of godly kings, so it is 'chiefly verified in Christ, who, with his heavenly dew, 'maketh his church ever to flourish.' 'But he showeth 'wherefore the sword is committed to kings: to wit, to 'defend the innocent and suppress the wicked.' Solomon reigned only forty years, and his kingdom lost much of its splendour when left to his descendants; and even the kingdom of Judah, as continued to them, terminated in a few centuries: but Christ shall reign through all generations to the end of time. Solomon's peaceful and equitable administration was refreshing and beneficial, as the gentle showers upon the new mown-grounds, or on the grass when parched by the burning sun. But the effects of the Gospel of Christ, accompanied by the influences of the Holy Spirit, are thus aptly described. By it the distressed conscience is comforted, the barren heart made fruitful, and the beauties of holiness communicated, where before vice and deformity alone were visible. If then the righteous flourished and were multiplied in Solomon's peaceful reign, much more has this been, and will this be, the effect of the setting up of the kingdom of our Prince of Peace; and more especially in the latter ages of the world; when it is foretold that men "shall learn war no more."

V. 8—11. Solomon reigned from the river of Egypt, and the coast of the Mediterranean sea, to the Euphrates, and perhaps to the Persian gulf, into which the Euphrates runs. The inhabitants of the desert countries that lay betwixt submitted to him, and opposition as it were lay prostrate before him. The queen of Sheba came to Jerusalem with munificent presents, and all the kings round about brought tribute or gifts to him. Yet this faintly shadowed forth the Redeemer's kingdom. The prophet Zechariah, however, uses these very words in foretelling the extent of it. (*Marg. Ref.*) The wise men from the East first with their presents hailed the new-born King of the Jews, (15.) His kingdom hath already been set up in many nations, and a full completion of these predictions will at length take place; when all "kings shall indeed fall down before "him, (as his worshippers,) all nations shall serve him." —It is absurd to interpret this of the forced submission, which even the wicked will make to Christ at the day of judgment: for how will they *serve him* by "going away "into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his "angels?" No doubt the millennium is here foretold.

V. 12, 13. 'They shall be induced to these submissions —by the fame of his justice, mercy, and compassion, '(wherein he shall resemble the Lord Christ:) for no 'sooner shall any miserable wretch who hath no friend in 'the world, implore his protection, but he shall instantly 'succour him.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The verses, however, more properly express the spiritual blessings of Christ's kingdom, than any temporal effects of the very best government on earth.

V. 14. Solomon, as a wise and good king, was tender of the blood of his subjects: he put none to death by the sword of justice when mercy could safely be exercised: and he did not waste their blood in needless wars. But the Redeemer shed his own blood to save the souls of his people; he does not expose them to unnecessary sufferings; and when they shed their blood for his sake, it is precious in his sight, and will be abundantly recompensed to them, and avenged on their persecutors.

V. 15. During the course of a long and prosperous reign, Solomon received tribute from the Arabians and other nations; and they who solicited his favour brought him presents. The continuance of his life was prayed for by his pious subjects; and numbers joined them in bestowing daily the highest commendations on him. (*Marg. Ref.*) But in these things he was no more than a type of the Messiah. The ancient church from the beginning prayed for his coming: his church now prays for the success of his Gospel; prayers are continually ascending *through* him *for* the blessings of his salvation; while praises and adorations are presented before him, by his people in every part of the world, yea, by all the inhabitants of heaven.—The clause rendered "Prayer also shall be rendered for him con-"tinually," is translated in the common prayer-book, "Pray-"er shall be made even *unto* him;" and by the Septuagint, 'They shall pray continually *concerning* him." The original seems exactly to mean *on account of him:* and thus may be understood, either of the prayers offered for his coming, and the success of his Gospel; and those daily presented through his intercession, and on the grounds of his merits and atonement. No doubt prayer as well as praise is daily offered to him, throughout the whole church: but this does not appear to be the meaning of the words.

16 [k] There shall be an handful of corn in the earth [l] upon the top of the mountains; [m] the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and *they* [n] of the city shall flourish like the grass of the earth.

17 [o] His name * shall endure for ever: his name shall † be continued as long as the sun: and [p] *men* shall be blessed in him: [q] all nations shall call him blessed.

18 [r] Blessed *be* the LORD God, the God of Israel, [s] who only doeth wondrous things.

19 And [t] blessed *be* his glorious name for ever: [u] and let the whole earth be filled *with* his glory. [x] Amen, and amen.

20 [y] The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.

k Job viii. 7. Is. xxx 23. xxxii. 15. 20. Matt. xiii. 31—33. Mark xvi. 15,16. Acts i 15. ii 41 iv. 4. 1 Cor. iii. 6—9. Rev. vii. 9.
l Is ii. 2, 3.
m xcii. 12—14 Is. xxix 17 xxxv. 2 Hos xiv. 5—7.
n 6 1 Kings iv 20 Is. xliv. 3—5.
o Jer. xxxiii. 22 Rev. vii. 4.——o xlv. 17. lxxxix. 36. Is. vii. 14 Matt. i 21, 22. Luke i. 31—38 Phil. ii 10——* Heb. *shall be*.——† Heb. *shall be as a son to continue his father's name for ever*. Eph. iii. 14. Col. i. 3. 1 Pet. i. 3.——p Gen. xii. 3. xxii. 18. Acts iii. 26. Gal. iii. 14 Eph. i. 3.
q Jer. iv. 2. Luke i. 48 Rev. xv. 4.
r xli. 13. lxviii. 35. cvi. 48. 1 Chr. xxix 10. 20—22.
s lxxvii. 14. lxxxvi. 10 cxxxvi. 4. Ex. xv. 11. Job ix. 10 Dan iv 2, 3.
t Neh ix. 5.
u Num. xiv. 21. Is. vi. 3 xi. 9. Hab. ii. 14. Zech. xiv. 9. Mal i. 11. Matt. vi. 10 13.
x xli. 13. lxxxix. 52. Num. v 22. 1 Kings i. 36.
Jer. xxviii. 6. Rev. i. 18. xxii. 20——y 2 Sam. xxiii. 1. Job xxxi. 40. Jer. li. 64. Luke xxiv. 51.

V. 16. A handful of corn sown on the ridge of a mountain, the least fertile part of the country; yet producing a crop so strong and thick, that when waving in the wind, it would resemble the forests of Lebanon, is the allusion here used to illustrate the fruitfulness of Canaan in this favoured reign. In consequence, the inhabitants of Jerusalem would become numerous as the blades of grass. The old translation of the last clause runs thus, "the *children* shall "flourish out of the city, like the grass of the earth." It is a prediction of a vastly increased population, and all abundantly provided for. The rapid promulgation of christianity, from small beginnings, among the Gentiles as well as Jews; the numerous converts raised up, strong in faith, holy in their lives, and filled with consolation; and the continual increase and abundant provisions made for these inhabitants of the new Jerusalem, were thus, in a striking manner, typically predicted.

V. 17—19. These verses contain a most extraordinary prediction of Christ and his kingdom; and notwithstanding Solomon's durable and extensive renown, they can scarcely be at all applied to him, without enervating their energy. "Behold a greater than Solomon is here!" The clause rendered, "*Men* shall be blessed in him; all nations shall "call him blessed," seems to mean, "All nations, while "blessed in him," or finding happiness in him, "shall "call him blessed," or celebrate his praises. The wonderous things which God alone hath done and will do, in blessing the nations of the earth, by the kingdom of Christ, entirely eclipse the glory of the wonders he wrought for Israel in placing Solomon over them:—The last clause is future; and may be exactly rendered, "The whole earth "shall be filled with his glory;" being a prediction of the universal prevalence of the kingdom of Christ, and the display of the glory of God in him. (*Marg. Ref.*) To this the Psalmist and all the people added Amen, Amen. Be it so—Be it so; 'Let the whole earth be filled with the glory 'of God and of Christ. (*Notes*, 1 *Chr.* xxix.) Blessed, 'therefore, be thou, O Lord Jesus, for thou art the Lord 'GOD, even the God of Israel, who hast wrought such mi-'racles of mercy for the salvation of thy church: and bless-'ed by the tongues of men and angels be thy holy and glori-'ous name: and let the whole earth be filled with thy most 'excellent glory. So be it, So be it.' (*Horne.*) Perhaps the eighteenth verse may be considered as addressed to the God and Father, of our Lord Jesus, and the beginning of the nineteenth to the divine Saviour.

V. 20. The dying Psalmist, having thus prayed for, and foreseen his son's prosperous reign; and having looked forward to the coming of the Redeemer, and viewed the whole earth filled with his glory, had no more to ask or to do, but to lie down and rest in hope.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Pious parents will be the more earnest in prayer for their children, in proportion to the importance of those stations which they are to occupy in society, and in the church of God: and they who have faithfully served their generation, and are going to rest, will be equally attentive to the interests of posterity, especially with respect to true religion. As it is in every way so important to mankind, that rulers should be men of wisdom and righteousness, protectors of the industrious poor, and terrors to evil-doers of every degree: it becomes the duty of every man, to pray that God would give the king, and all legislators and magistrates, his judgments and righteousness, that "they "may judge the people with righteousness and the poor "with judgment." And princes should be reminded by such as have access to them, that they are the vicegerents of God, to whom they must give an account of their authority, and that they ought to imitate him in their government. Whilst we therefore meditate on the nature of the Redeemer's kingdom, let it be observed, that in this respect he is especially an example to all rulers, and will be imitated by all such as are wise and righteous. The wisdom and justice, as well as authority, of God are in him. He is the King of righteousness and of peace: and having once "made peace by the blood of his cross," he brings all spiritual blessings on sinners, as a harvest springing forth in every part of the earth. The poor in spirit, the broken hearted apply for and obtain from him peace of conscience, that peace of God which passeth understanding: but he will crush the obstinate, the proud, and the impenitent. By the warnings and encouragements of his gospel, multitudes through successive generations are brought to fear, submit to, and worship God: and this shall be more and more the case, as long as the sun and moon endure. His gracious truths, attended by the influences of his Spirit, distil like the refreshing and fructifying rain upon the parched earth; and holiness, comfort, and usefulness are the never-failing effects. Thus in his days the righteous flourish, and, whilst they enjoy abundance of peace, are multiplied exceedingly. His people are taught to behave with such equity, truth, and love; and so to bear with and forgive each other, and to follow peace with all men; that as far as his kingdom is really set up, discords and contentions cease, in families, churches, and nations: and he defends his harmless subjects, against those who would

PSALM LXXIII.

The Psalmist, assured that God is good to his people, shows that his faith had almost failed, on seeing the prosperity of the wicked, 1—14. *He overcomes the temptation by learning their dreadful end,* 15—20. *He, with deep humility, avows his unreserved dependence on God, and determines to cleave to him, expecting present support and future glory,* 21—28.

A Psalm * of Asaph.

† TRULY [a] God *is* good to Israel, *even* [b] to such as are ‡ of a clean heart.

2 But [c] as for me, [d] my feet were almost gone; [e] my steps had well nigh slipped.

3 For [f] I was envious at the foolish, *when* I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

4 For *there are* [g] no bands in their death; but their strength *is* § firm.

5 [h] They *are* not in trouble ‖ *as other* men: neither are they plagued * like *other* men.

6 [i] Therefore pride compasseth them about [k] as a chain; [l] violence [m] covereth them *as a* garment.

7 Their [n] eyes stand out with fatness: they † have [o] more than heart could wish.

8 [p] They are corrupt, and [q] speak wickedly *concerning* oppression: [r] they speak loftily.

9 They [s] set their mouth against the heavens, and [t] their tongue walketh through the earth.

* Or, *for Asaph.* 1. lxxiv.lxxxiii. *titles.* 1 Chr. vi. 39. xv. 17 xvi. 7. 37 xxv. 1—6. 2 Chr. xxix 30.
† Or, *Yet.* ii. 6. xlii. 11
a lxxxiv. 11 Is. lxiii 7—9. Luke xxii. 32
b John i.47. Rom. ii. 28, 29 iv. 16. ix 6, 7.
‡ Heb. *clean of heart.* ii. 10. Jer. iv. 14 Matt. v. 8. Tit iii. 5. Jam iv. 8
c v. 7. xvii 15. xxxv 13. Josh. xxiv. 15 1 Sam. xii. 24. 1 Chr. xxii 7. Job xxi. 4.
d cxvi. 8. 1 Sam. ii. 9. Rom. vii. 23, 24.
e xvii. 5. xxxviii. 16. xciv. 18. Job xii. 5.
f xxxvii 1 7. Prov. i 31. xii. 2. Jer. xii. 1. Jam. iv 5.
g xvii 14. Job xxi.23, 24 xxiv. 20. Ec. ii. 16. vii 15. Luke xvi. 22.
§ Heb. *fat.* xvii. 10.
h 12 Prov. iii. 11, 12. Jer. xii. 1, 2. 1 Cor. xi 3. Heb. xii. 8. Rev. iii. 19.
‖ Heb. *in the trouble of* other *men.*
* Heb. *with.*
i Deut. viii. 13, 14 xxxii 15. Esth iii 1. 5. 6, v 9—11 Job xxi. 7—15. Ec. viii. 11. Jer. xlviii. 11 29. Ez xxviii. 2—5. Dan iv. 30.
k Judg. viii. 26. Prov i. 9. Cant. iv. 9. Is. iii. 19. Ez. xvi. 11.
l Prov. iii. 31. iv. 17. Mic. ii. 1, 2. iii. 5 Jam. v. 4—6.
m cix. 29. 1 Pet. v. 5.
n xvii. 10. cxix. 70 Job xv. 27. Is. iii. 9 Jer. v. 28. Ez. xvi. 49.——† Heb. *pass the thoughts of the heart.*
o 12 xvii. 14. 1 Sam xxv. 2 36. Luke xii. 16—19.——p liii 1—4. Prov. xxx. 13, 14.
q x 2 10, 11. xii. 4, 5 Ex. i. 9, 10. 1 Sam. xiii. 19. 1 Kings xxi. 7, &c. Jer. vii. 9——11.
r 2. Pet. ii. 18. Jude 16.——s Ex v. 2. 2 Chr xxxii. 15. Job xxi. 14. Dan. iii. 15. vii. 25. Rev. xiii 6.——t liii. 4. Luke xviii 4. Jam. iii. 6.

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treat them with deceit and violence. He delivers the needy perishing sinner, when he crieth unto him, from the tyranny and oppression of Satan: he spares believers though they deserve punishment, and saves their souls from destruction; he redeems them from all their enemies, "and "precious shall their blood be in his sight." Thus he becomes precious to their hearts, and love of him constraineth them to live devoted to his service and glory. The good seed of his Gospel, being, as it were, but a handful, sown upon the before barren mountains of the Gentile world, hath already produced an immense increase of believers, fruitful in good works, to the glory of God, and the benefit of mankind: and they shall still increase more and more. His dominion hath already extended very wide; many kings and nations have become his subjects; and many of his enemies have licked the dust. In due time "all kings "shall fall down before him, all nations shall do him ser-"vice:" he shall crush the head of the great oppressor, and destroy all who withstand his cause: his name and glory shall endure as long as the sun; and men shall be blessed in him, and agree to call him blessed for evermore. May we then submit to his authority, and partake of his righteousness and peace: may we daily celebrate his praises, and bless the God of Israel for the wonders of redeeming love! May we spend our days, and end our lives, praying for the success of his Gospel, and longing for that time when the whole earth shall be filled with his glory! Amen and Amen.

NOTES.

PSALM LXXIII. *Title.* This and several of the following psalms are ascribed to Asaph, in the same mode of expression by which others are ascribed to David: yet some think that David wrote them, and only delivered them to Asaph to be set to music or sung; while others think that another Asaph, in later ages, wrote some of them.

V. 1. The Psalmist, after much consideration, and a sharp conflict with temptation, thus abruptly expressed his assurance that, notwithstanding appearances, the Lord was kind to his true people who served him in uprightness of heart. The same distinction between an Israelite by nation, and the true Israelite, which is often made in the New Testament, is here explicitly established.

V. 4. Wicked men often spend their lives without much sickness, and end them without great pain: whilst many pious persons scarcely know what health is, and die with great sufferings. Nay, numbers of the wicked are so hardened in presumption, that they die without terror or remorse. The original may be rendered, "They have no "bands *till* their death." They are not put in chains for execution like condemned criminals; but are let alone, till they are taken out of the world like other men. 'There 'are neither pangs of body, nor remorse and terror of soul, 'in their death.' (*Bp. Hall.*)

V. 5. 'The wealthy sinner,—far from poverty, and 'free from disease, seems to pass his days exempted from 'the miseries of mankind, without labour and anxiety; and 'not so much as to think of those who, distressed on all 'sides, can scarcely earn their bread by the sweat of their 'brows.' (*Horne.*)

V. 6—9. The haughtiness of these prosperous ungodly men appeared in their external decorations; nay, they counted that display of their pride, which is falsely called magnificence, their highest ornament; as conquerors and other eminent persons wore chains of gold round their necks for decoration and distinction. (*Marg. Ref.*) At the same time, their whole conduct was so notorious for violence and oppression, that they were covered with them as with a garment. Perhaps it is also implied, that their violence bore the expense of their ostentation, which they gratified in rich garments and costly ornaments. They likewise indulged and pampered their bodies in the most luxurious

10 Therefore his people return hither: and [u] waters of a full *cup* are wrung out to them.

11 And they say, [x] How doth God know? and [y] is there knowledge in the Most High?

12 Behold, [z] these *are* the ungodly, who prosper in the world; [a] they increase *in* riches.

13 Verily [b] I have cleansed my heart *in* vain, and [c] washed my hands in innocency.

14 For [d] all the day long have I been plagued, and * chastened every morning.

15 If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should [e] offend *against* [f] the generation of thy children.

16 [g] When I thought to know this, it *was* † too painful for me.

17 [h] Until I went into the sanctuary of God; [i] *then* understood I their end.

18 [k] Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: [l] thou castedst them down into destruction.

u lxxv 8. x 9. x. 11. xciv. 7. Job xxii 13, 14. Ez. viii 12. Zeph i. 12 y xliv 21. cxxxix. 1—6. Hos. vii 2. z xxxvii. 35. lii. 7. Jer xii. 1, 2. Luke xvi. 19. Jam. v. 1—3 a xvii. 14. lxii 10. Jer. v. 27, 28. Hos. xii. 7, 8. b Job xxi 15. xxxiv. 9. xxxv. 3 Mal iii. 14. c xxiv. 4. xxvi. 6. 1. 10. Heb. x. 19—22. Jam. iv. 8 d xxxiv. 19. xciv. 12. Job vii. 3, 4. 18 x. 3. 17. Jer xv 18. Am. iii 2. Heb. xii. 5. 1 Pet i 6.

* Heb. *my chastisement* was.

e 1 Sam. ii 24. Mal ii 8 Matt. xviii. 6, 7 Rom. xiv. 15 21. 1 Cor. viii 11—13. f xxii 30. xxiv. 6. 1 Pet ii 9. g xxxvi. 6 lxxvii. 19. xcvii. 2 Pro. xxx 2 Ec viii. 17 Rom. xi. 33

† Heb. *labour in mine eyes*. xxxix. 6. Luke xviii. 32—34. John xv 18, 19

h xxvii. 4. lxiii. 2. lxxvii. 13 cxix. 24. 130. i xxxvii 37, 38. Job xxvii. 8. Ec. viii. 12, 13. Jer. v. 31. Luke xii 20. xvi. 22, 23. ——— k xxxv. 6. Deut. xxxii. 35. Jer. xxiii. 12. l xxxvii. 20. 24. 35—38. lv. 23. xcii. 7. xciv. 23. 2 Thes. i. 9.

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manner: and their looks discovered their excessive sensuality and voluptuousness. Yet they reserved more from their enormous expenses, than a wise man would wish for; or more than they formerly could have thought of: such unexpected success attended them!—But instead of being thankful for their abundance, their corrupt passions were thus exceedingly strengthened and inflamed: and, so far from restraining or concealing them, they openly gloried in them, avowing their designs and politic methods of oppressing the poor, and crushing opposition: despising the laws of man, and even those of Almighty God; and haughtily uniting to their licentious, selfish, and unfeeling conversation, the language of infidelity or atheism; saying, not "within themselves," but openly, I neither "fear God "nor regard man;" thus setting the Judge of the world at defiance, and propagating far and wide their pernicious and impious principles. Alas! how many are there in modern times, that seem to have set for the odious and detestable portrait here exhibited. 'A circle of fawning dependents 'is never wanting, to whom the vain and ignorant wretch, 'exalted in his own conceit above the level of mortality, 'may, from the chair without controul, dictate libertinism 'and infidelity.' (*Horne.*)

V. 10. This verse is generally allowed to be very difficult, and a variety of discordant interpretations have been given of it. The original may literally be rendered, "On "this account his people shall return thither, and waters "of fulness shall be wrung out to them." *His people* seems to mean the people of God, who witnessing the prosperity of the wicked, and experiencing many sorrows and hardships, were tempted to "return thither," (i. e. to the company of the ungodly) in order to share their ease and pleasure: but the consequence in general was, that "waters "of a full cup were wrung out to them;" they brought many chastisements and sorrows on themselves, and were oppressed with sorrow for their guilt and folly. 'Not only the 'reprobate, but also the people of God, fall back seeing 'the prosperous state of the wicked, and are overwhelmed 'with sorrows: thinking that God considereth not aright 'the state of the godly.'—The verse is in the future, and it seems most natural to explain it, as the Psalmist's apprehension, that the prosperity of daring sinners would eventually prove an invincible temptation, and a great source of sorrow to believers. The clause, "waters of a full cup "are wrung out to them," probably refers to the cups of liquor mingled with poison, which were in those days given to criminals: but whether it refer to the inordinate sorrow of tempted believers under their own sufferings, contrasted with beholding the success and indulgence of the wicked; or to the painful consequences of yielding to the temptation, and imitating those whom they envied, must remain doubtful.

V. 11. This verse is by some interpreted in connexion with the foregoing, as the language of the tempted believer, who is even induced by what he feels and witnesses, to adopt the language of the ungodly, and to question, Whether God do indeed know, and take cognizance of human affairs. This interpretation rises naturally from the words: but as it is by others thought that pious persons cannot well be supposed to use such infidel language, they conclude that the Psalmist here returns to his subject, and that the profligates above described are again introduced.

V. 12—14. 'These blasphemous wretches—are the 'men that prosper in the world—What then are we to 'think of God, of his providence, and his promises?—'All my faith, my charity, and devotions, all my watch-'ing and fastings,—all the labour and pains I have taken '—have been altogether vain and fruitless.' (*Horne.*)—The clause, "Washed my hands in innocency," seems equivalent to St. Paul's words, "Herein do I exercise my-"self to have a conscience void of offence towards God "and man."

V. 15—17. The Psalmist having related the progress of his temptation till it came to the crisis; next shows how by faith and grace he prevailed against it. In his greatest despondency, he could not but respect and wish well to the generation of God's children; and he considered, that if he gave utterance to such sentiments as had arisen within him, they would grieve, condemn, or deceive them, and so cause them to offend. He therefore purposed to acquire a full understanding of the mystery in Providence; and in the mean while to keep silence: but the more he reflected and reasoned on the subject, the deeper was his conviction, that it was too difficult for him, and the greater perplexity he experienced: until he went at length into the sanctuary of God, to consult the priests, the Lord's ministers, and examine his word, and spread the case before him in prayer; and then he was enabled to understand the end and final doom of prosperous sinners, so that he could no longer envy them, or complain of his own condition.

19 [m] How are they *brought* into desolation, as in a moment! [n] they are utterly consumed with terrors.

20 [o] As a dream when *one* awaketh; *so*, O LORD, [p] when thou awakest, thou shalt despise [q] their image.

21 Thus [r] my heart was grieved, and I was pricked [s] in my reins.

22 [t] So foolish *was* I, and * ignorant: I was [u] *as* a beast † before thee.

23 Nevertheless [x] I *am* continually with thee: [y] thou hast holden *me* by my right hand.

24 [z] Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward [a] receive me *to* glory.

m lviii. 9 Job xx. 5. Is. xxx 13. Acts xii. 23. 1 Thes. v. 3. Rev. xviii. 10.
n Num xviii. 12, 13. 1 Sam xxviii. 20. Job xv. 21. xx 23—25. Pro. xxviii. 1. Is. xxi. 3, 4. Dan v 6.
o xc 5. Job xx. 8. Is. xxix 7, 8.
p vii. 6. lxxviii. 65.
q xxxix. 6.
r 3. xxxvii. 1. 7.
s Job xvi 13. Lam. iii. 13.
t lxix. 5. xcii. 6. Pro xxx 2. Ec. iii. 18.
* Heb. *I knew not.*
u xxxii. 9. Is. i. 3.
† Heb *with thee*
x xvi. 8. xxiii. 4. cxxxix. 1—12.
18. Gen. xvii. 1. Matt. i. 23. xxviii 20. Heb. xiii. 5.
y xxxvii. 17. 24. lxiii. 8 Is xli. 10. 13. xlii 1.——z xvi 7. xxv. 9 xxxii. 8. xlviii 14. cxliii. 8—10. Prov. iii. 5, 6. viii. 20. Is. xxx. 21. xlviii. 17. lviii. 8. 11. Luke xi. 13. John xvi. 15. Jam. i. 5 ——a xlix 15. lxxxiv. 11. Luke xxiii. 46. John xiv. 3 xvii. 5. 24. Acts vii. 59. 2 Cor. v. 1. 1 Pet. i. 4, 5.

25 [b] Whom have I in heaven *but thee?* and *there is* [c] none upon earth *that* I desire beside thee.

26 [d] My flesh and my heart faileth: [e] *but* God *is* the ‡ Strength of my heart, and [f] my Portion for ever.

27 For lo, [g] they that are far from thee shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them [h] that go a whoring from thee.

28 But [i] it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, [k] that I may declare all thy works.

b xvi. 5 11. xvii. 15. xxxvii. 4. xlii. 4. lxiii 3. lxxxix. 6. Mat. v 8. 1 John iii. 2. Rev. xxi. 3. 22, 23.
c xlii. 1, 2. civ. 34. cxliii. 6—8. Is. xxvi. 8, 9. Hab. iii. 17, 18 Matt. x. 37. Phil iii 8.
d lxiii. 1. lxxxiv. 2. cxix. 81, 82. Job xiii. 15. 2 Cor iv 8—10. 16—18 Phil i. 21. 2 Tim. iv. 6—8. 2 Pet. i. 14.
e xviii. 2 xxvii. 14. cxxxviii 3. Is. xl. 29—31. 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10.
‡ Heb. *Rock.*
f xvi. 5, 6 cxix. 57. cxlii. 5 Lam. iii. 24. Rev. xxi. 3, 4. 7. xxii 5.
g Job xxi. 14, 15. Is. xxix. 13. Jer. xii. 2. Matt. xv 7, 8. Eph ii. 13. 17 ——h Ex. xxxiv. 15 Num. xv. 39. Jam. iv. 4. Rev. xvii. 1—5 ——i lxv. 4. lxxxiv. 10. cxvi 7. Lam iii. 25, 26. Luke xv. 17—20. Heb. x. 19—22 Jam. iv 8. 1 Pet. iii. 18.——k lxvi 16. lxxi. 17. 24. cviii. 22. cxviii. 17.

V. 18—22. By the light of truth and the eye of faith, the Psalmist clearly saw, that prosperous ungodly men stand on the slippery summit of a tremendous precipice; whence in the appointed time God casts them down by death, with a fall equal to the height to which they were mounted. In a moment they were desolated and ruined, and overwhelmed with terrors. The dread of death and judgment spoiled their enjoyment; and the death of one, terrified the survivors. So that their happiness was but a transient disturbed dream of pleasure: and God poured contempt upon this lifeless image of felicity: when arising to take vengeance, he by death awakened them to see substantial good for ever lost, and real misery unavoidable and eternal. These considerations made him sensible of his sin and folly in envying such wretched men. He was deeply ashamed, on recollecting the ferment of his heart, and the effect produced even upon his animal frame without any sufficient cause. And he appeared to himself, and knew that he must appear in the sight of God, to be ignorant and stupid as a beast, which has no conception of any other good than present sensual enjoyment.

V. 23—28. Emerging from his temptation, the Psalmist found his heart humbled, and his valuation of spiritual blessings greatly enhanced. He reflected with pleasure and gratitude on his privileges as a believer. He was persuaded that he was under the immediate care of an ever-present, wise, and faithful Friend, who had hitherto upheld him, especially under this urgent temptation, as a tender parent holds his child by the hand, lest he should fall and hurt himself. He was assured that the Lord would guide him in wisdom through life, and at death receive him to glory: nor could any thing in heaven or on earth be worthy of being put in competition with his favour, or necessary to his happiness in accession to it. He relied on none of the real or supposed inhabitants of heaven: he expected not his future happiness from the society of the most exalted or excellent creatures; he did not *delight* even in his earthly friends and comforts, when compared with the Fountain of felicity, who was in every respect his All in all. He was aware that his body would speedily decay, his natural spirits fail, and his heart no longer beat; but God would strengthen and support his soul in that last conflict, which would terminate all his sorrows, and then He would be his eternal Portion: whilst the most prosperous of those, who were alienated from God and under his wrath, must perish; and Israelites especially, who brake their national covenant, by apostacy, idolatry, and rebellion against God, would be more severely punished than others. But for his part, he was satisfied that it was *good*, (advantageous, pleasant, and honourable,) for him to wait upon God, and walk with him, confiding in his mercy, and celebrating his praises, whatever should be his outward circumstances and situation. Thus the psalm concludes with the language of assured hope and joyful anticipation of future and eternal glory in heaven: and as the sinners above described, are supposed to prosper even to the end of life; the firm belief of a future state of punishment and perdition to ungodly men, is likewise as explicitly avowed, as almost in any part of the New Testament. 'He who a little while ago seemed to 'question the providence of God over the affairs of men, 'now exults in happy confidence of the divine mercy;—'nothing doubting, but that he would ever continue to 'guide him on earth, till glory should crown him in 'heaven. Such are the blessed effects of "going into the "sanctuary," and consulting "the lively oracles," in all 'our doubts, difficulties, and temptations.' (*Horne.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14.

The distinction has been obvious in every age, betwixt mere professors of religion, and those who are inwardly sanctified by the Holy Spirit: and it has always been an undisputed maxim in the church, that the Lord is kind to his true people, whose hearts are upright with him. Yet appearances have often been against this truth; and Satan hath had his advantage in exciting the impatience and unbelief even of pious persons, and causing them to torment themselves and dishonour God by their surmises: so that many of them have had cause to say, "My feet were "almost gone, my steps had well nigh slipped; for I was "envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the

PSALM LXXIV.

Heavy complaints to God, that in anger he had left his congregation, without any encouraging token, while insulting conquerors desolated the sanctuary, 1—9. Earnest pleas, that he would help his people according to his former powerful works for Israel, and in remembrance of his covenant; and thus silence the blasphemies and reproaches of his enemies, 10—23.

* Maschil of Asaph.

O GOD, [a] why hast thou cast *us* off for ever? *why* doth thine anger [b] smoke against [c] the sheep of thy pasture?

* Or, A Psalm *for Asaph to give instruction.* lxxviii. *title.*
a x. 1. xlii. 9. xliv. 9. lx. 1. 10. lxxvii 7. Jer xxxi. 37. xxxiii. 24—26. Rom xi 1, 2.
b lxxix. 5. Deut. xxix 20.
c lxxix. 13. xcv. 7 c. 3. Jer. xxiii. 1. Ez. xxxiv. 8. 31. Luke xii 32. John x. 26—30.

"wicked." It is indeed, at first sight, a mystery in Providence, that the wicked so often prosper, and the righteous are so much afflicted. Health, long life, affluence, and an easy death, are often granted to the basest of men. Thus their pride, ambition, covetousness, and sensuality are increased; they grow more daring in impiety and iniquity: and by their example and discourse widely diffuse contagion and misery around them: while their impunity emboldens them to infidelity, and they say, "How doth "God know, and is there knowledge in the Most High?" The mischief which these prosperous infidels and scorners occasion in the world is indeed very great; many professed Christians are by them drawn into apostacy; and even believers are often much discouraged, so that at some times they are ready to think that their repentance, faith, love, zeal, watchfulness, and conscientiousness have been in vain. For being chastened from time to time, they are apt to call this being "plagued all the day long." But though temptations may thus darken and perplex a true Christian, and very rebellious thoughts may be stirred up: yet there is a holy engrafted principle within, which will counteract them, prevent their effects, and at length gain the ascendency: and when he has escaped the snare, he will be the better able to counsel and comfort his brethren.

V. 15—28.

Sometimes when the fire burns within, an unwillingness to grieve or stumble his fellow-Christians, or to gratify the malice of the wicked, imposes silence on the tempted believer: for he must perceive, on reflection, that if outward prosperity were of great importance, the generation of God's children in every age have acted most imprudently, in enduring so many afflictions for the Lord's sake. We shall, however, never get ground against such temptations by merely speculating; and shall rather find our minds perplexed with new difficulties and objections, till we bring the whole matter and weigh it in the balance of the sanctuary. But attention to the sacred Scriptures, and fervent prayer, will soon extricate us from these labyrinths: we shall then be led to look off from things seen and temporal to things unseen and eternal: and when we consider the end of wicked men, we shall be convinced of their folly and misery; and clearly perceive that they are no more to be envied, than a state criminal, bound in chains of gold till he be put to some tormenting death. We shall then see that their wealth and prosperity were given them in anger, as a punishment of their impiety and enmity against God; and that they were treasuring up wrath, until the time when they were to be cast down headlong from their slippery pre-eminence into eternal destruction; of which in the mean-while they are often tortured with the apprehension. Thus their happiness is only a dream; speedily they will awake, and the enchantment will be dissolved, and they will too late perceive their own misery. If we have ever envied such ruinous prosperity, or complained of the salutary corrections of our heavenly Father; if our hearts have rebelled against his appointment: surely on reflection we must be ashamed of our folly and brutish stupidity, as well as of our perverseness and ingratitude. And indeed we do not gain a complete victory over the enemy, unless his buffetings prove the occasion of our deeper humiliation before God. (2 *Cor.* xii. 7.) Surely, that man hath no right or reason to complain, or to envy, who hath God for his Friend and Father, to provide for, comfort, and uphold him, to guide him here with his counsel, and then to receive him to eternal glory. Indeed heaven itself could not render us happy without his presence and love: much less could earth and all its possessions satisfy the desires of an immortal soul. And if the Lord is our Portion, we need desire no more besides him; for he is all-sufficient and everlasting. The world and all its glory vanisheth; our flesh and hearts will soon fail; but God will be the strength of our hearts, and our happiness for ever. By sin we are all indeed far off from God, in the temper of our minds and the state of our souls; and at this distance, misery is inevitable: but by the Gospel we are invited to draw nigh to him; and as nothing but preferring other portions and confidences to him and his salvation can prevent our happiness; so the ruin of such as refuse this gracious offer is most certain; and a profession of Christianity, if men go on in sin or return back to it, will increase their condemnation. May we then "choose that good part which can never be taken from "us." May we prefer those enduring riches, those holy pleasures, and that genuine honour, which God bestows on his people. May we draw near, and keep near, to Him by faith and prayer, and find it good to do so. That, putting our trust in the Lord, and declaring our experience of his love, patiently bearing our cross, and despising worldly objects; we may encourage our brethren to resist, and teach them by our counsel and example to overcome, these dangerous temptations of the enemy of our souls.

NOTES.

PSALM LXXIV. *Asaph.* This psalm seems so adapted to the case of the Jews during the Babylonish captivity, that if Asaph, who lived in the time of David, were the writer of it, he must have composed it by the Spirit of prophecy. But it is far more probable, that it was

2 Remember thy congregation, [d] *which* thou hast purchased of old; † the rod of [e] thine inheritance, [f] *which* thou hast redeemed, [g] this mount Zion, wherein thou hast dwelt.

3 [h] Lift up thy feet unto [i] the perpetual desolations: *even* [k] all *that* the enemy hath done wickedly in the sanctuary.

4 [l] Thine enemies roar in the midst of thy congregations; [m] they set up their ensigns *for* signs.

5 *A man* [n] was famous according as he had lifted up axes upon the thick trees.

6 But now they break down [o] the carved work thereof at once, with axes and hammers.

7 [p] They have * cast fire into thy sanctuary, [q] they have defiled *by casting down* [r] the dwelling place of thy name to the ground.

8 [s] They said in their hearts, Let us † destroy them together: they have burned up [t] all the synagogues of God in the land.

9 [u] We see not our signs: *there is* [x] no more any prophet; neither *is there* among us any that knoweth how long.

d Ex. xv. 16. Deut. ix. 29. Acts xx. 28.
† Or, *tribe*.
e xxxiii. 12. cvi. 40. cxxxv. 4. Deut. iv. 20 xxxii. 9. Jer. x. 16.
f Is li. 11. lxii. 12. Tit ii. 14. Rev. v 5
g xlviiii. 1, 2. lxxviii. 68, 69 cxxxii. 13, 14.
h xliv. 23. 26. Josh. x. 24. 2 Sam xxii 39. 43. Is. x 6. xxv. 10. lxiii. 3–6. Mic i. 3.
i cii. 13, 14 Neb. i. 3 ii. 3. 13. Is. lxiv. 10, 11. Dan. ix. 17. Mic. iii 12. Luke xxi. 24. Rev. xi. 2.
k lxxix. 1. Jer. iii. 13. Lam. i. 10. Dan. viii. 11—14. ix 27. xi. 31. Mark xi. 17——l 2 Chr. xxxvi 17. Lam. ii. 7. Luke xiii 1 Rev. xiii. 6.——m Jer. vi. 1—5. Matt. xxiv. 15 Luke xxi. 20.——n 1 Kings v. 6. 2 Chr. ii. 14. Jer. xlvi 22, 23.

c 1 Kings vi. 18. 29. 32. 35.
p 2 Kings xxv. 9. Is. lxiv. 11. Matt. xxii. 7.
* Heb *sent thy sanctuary into the fire.*
q lxxxix. 39. Ez. xxiv. 21.
r Ex. xx. 24. Deut. xii. 5. 1 Kings viii. 20.
s lxxxiii. 4. cxxxvii. 7. Esth. iii. 8, 9.
† Heb *break.*
t 2 Kings ii. 3—5. iv. 23. 2 Chr. xvii. 10. Matt. iv. 23.
u Ex. xii. 13 xiii. 9, 10. Judg. vi. 17. Ez. xx. 22. Heb. ii. 4.
x 1 Sam. iii. 1. Am. viii 11, 12 Mic. iii. 6.

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written by some other Asaph, who lived at the time of the captivity, or, as some think, by one of Asaph's descendants.

V. 1, 2. Israel as a nation was typically, (what true Christians are really,) the sheep of God's pasture, his purchased congregation and ransomed inheritance, whom he redeemed by desolating Egypt, and among whom he dwelt, by the ark, the symbol of his presence; which from the days of David to the captivity was stationed on mount Zion, and then was finally lost or destroyed. Both the ten tribes and the kingdom of Judah had given abundant cause for the hot displeasure of God; and even deserved to be cast off for ever: yet the pious remnant of the nation, remembering what the Lord had formerly done for their ancestors, and how he had repeatedly pardoned their rebellions, especially when they humbled themselvss before him; knowing also that the promises and prophecies of the Messiah were not yet accomplished, and witnessing the insults of idolaters over the worshippers of the true God, were emboldened thus to plead, and as it were expostulate, with him, for seeming finally to cast off his people, and to retain his anger for ever. The church, under persecution or oppression, though deserving worse than all that is inflicted, may on similar grounds plead for deliverance.

V. 3. The idolatrous Chaldeans had wickedly burnt the temple, and left it to perpetual desolations; and God himself seemed to stand at a distance, and pay no regard to it: but the Psalmist called on him to come speedily, that he might survey and restore his ruined Sanctuary.—Some render the last clause, 'that thou mayest destroy 'every enemy which hath done evil in thy Sanctuary.'

V. 4. The Chaldeans, rushing into the temple, shouting for victory amidst the affrighted worshippers, and setting up their standards, or erecting trophies of their success, seem to be here described. Antiochus Epiphanes afterwards profaned the temple, and dispersed the worshippers, but he did not burn it. The prevalence of infidelity and the triumphs of heathen infidels, and antichristian persecutors and corrupters of Christianity, are events equally lamentable; and the proper directory for prayer on such occasions is here given.

V. 5, 6. 'It was heretofore thought an employment 'of much honour and merit in those men, who did cut 'down and square the timber-trees for the building of the 'holy Sanctuary. But now every man thinks himself to 'deserve most thanks, that can do most havock to thy 'holy place.' (*Bp. Hall.*) 'As a skilful person lifteth 'up the axe in the thick wood; so now men set themselves 'to work, to demolish the ornaments and timbers of the 'Sanctuary.' (*Horne.*) '*He that lifted up* the axes upon 'the thick trees, was crowned as one that brought a thing 'to perfection: but now they break down, &c.' (*Old Version.*) The word rendered *thick*, not denoting the largeness of the trees, but the intricate density of the forest, may be supposed to be a figurative description of the complicated workmanship of the temple, and then the following will be the meaning: 'Each of them is ac-'counted famous, according as he hath lifted up the axes 'on the curious workmanship, (of the temple.) Even 'now do they beat down the carved work with axes and 'hammers.' The eagerness of the destroyers, and the honour they acquired by the work of destruction, are evidently intended.

V. 8. The word rendered *synagogues*, is in the fourth verse translated *congregations*. It means, according to the context, either the stated seasons of assembling, the places in which the people met statedly, or the congregations collected together at the solemn feasts, or the solemn feasts themselves. As it is doubtful whether synagogues, in the common sense of the word, had become general before the captivity, it is probable that the courts of the temple in which the people assembled were intended; and that the passage might be rendered, "They have burned God's "places of assembling even to the ground." The Septuagint translates the clause, 'They have caused the feasts 'of the Lord to cease through the land.' (*Notes, 2 Kings* iv. 23. 2 *Chr.* xvii. 7—9.)

V. 9. The constant sacrifices on the altar, and the observance of the solemn feasts, were signs of the Lord's presence with his people, which ceased during the captivity: neither had they any miraculous interpositions in their favour. They had little encouragement from prophets, were destitute of prudent counsellors, and could not well determine when these calamities should cease. Jeremiah indeed prophesied in Jerusalem before, and in

10 O God, [y] how long shall the adversary reproach? shall the enemy blaspheme thy name for ever?

11 Why [z] withdrawest thou thy hand, even thy right hand? [a] pluck *it* out of thy bosom.

12 For [b] God *is* my King of old, [c] working salvation in the midst of the earth.

13 [d] Thou didst * divide the sea by thy strength: thou [e] brakest the heads of the † dragons in the waters.

14 Thou brakest the heads of [f] leviathan in pieces, *and* gavest him *to be* [g] meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness.

15 Thou didst [h] cleave the fountain [i] and the flood: thou driedst up ‡ mighty rivers.

16 [k] The day *is* thine, the night also *is* thine: thou hast [l] prepared the light and the sun.

17 Thou hast [m] set all the borders of the earth; thou hast § made summer and winter.

18 [n] Remember this, *that* the enemy hath reproached, O LORD, and *that* [o] the foolish people have blasphemed thy name.

19 O deliver not the soul of [p] thy turtle-dove unto the multitude *of the wicked*: [q] forget not the congregation of thy poor for ever.

20 [r] Have respect unto the covenant: for [s] the dark places of the earth are full of the [t] habitations of cruelty.

y xiii. 2 lxxix. 4, 5. lxxxix. 46 50, 51. Dan xii. 6. Rev. vi. 10.
z Is. lxiv. 12. Lam. ii. 3
a xlv. 23. lxxviii. 65, 66.
b xliv. 4. Ex. xix. 5, 6. Num xxiii. 21, 22. Is. xxxiii 22.
c Ex. xv. 2–15. Judg. v. 14. 1 Sam. xix. 5. Is. lxiii. 9. Hab. iii. 12–14.
d lxvi. 6. lxxviii. 15. cvi. 8, 9. cxxxvi. 13–15. Ex. xiv. 21. Neh ix. 11. Is. xi. 15, 16.
* Heb. *break.*
e Ex. xiv. 28. Is. li. 9. 10. Ez. xxix. 3.
† Or, *whales.* Ez. xxii. 2.
f civ. 25, 26 Job iii. 8. *Marg.* xli. 1, &c Is. xxvii. 1. Rev xx. 2.
g Ex. xii 35, 36. xiv. 30. Num. xiv. 9.——h cv. 41. Ex. xvii. 5, 6. Num. xx 11. Is. xlviii 21.——i Josh iii. 13, &c 2 Kings ii. 8, 14. Is. xi. 16. xliv. 27. Hab. iii. 9. *Marg.* Rev. xvi. 12——‡ Heb. *rivers of strength.*

k cxxxvi. 7–9. Gen. i. 3–5.
l viii. 3 xix. 1–6. cxxxvi. 7–9. Gen. i. 14–18. Matt. v. 45.
m xxiv. 1, 2. Deut. xxxii. 8. Acts xvii. 26.
§ Heb. *made them summer*, &c. Gen viii. 22. Acts xiv. 17.
n 22 lxxxix. 50, 51. cxxxvii 7. Is lxii 6, 7. *Marg.* Rev. xvi. 19.
o xiv 1. xxxix. 8. xciv. 2–8. Deut xxxii. 27. Is. xxxvii. 23, 24 Ez. xx 14.
p lxviii. 13. Cant. ii. 14. iv. 1, vi. 9. Is. lx. 8. Matt x. 16.
q lxviii. 10. lxxii. 2. Zeph iii 12. Jam. ii. 5, 6.
r lxxxix. 28. 34–36. 39. cv. 8. cv. 45 Gen. xvii. 7. Ex. xxiv. 6–8 Lev. xxvi. 40–43. Deut ix. 27. Jer xxxiii. 20–26. Luke i. 72–75.——s Deut. xii. 31. Rom. i. 29–31. Eph. v. 17, 18. v. 8.——t Gen. xlix 5–7.

Egypt after the destruction of the temple; and Ezekiel and Daniel in Babylon: yet they were often silent for a good while together, and the case of the pious Jews was very discouraging and their prospect gloomy. The predictions, likewise, of all these prophets, after the destruction of Jerusalem, related chiefly to other nations and to distant periods: and though Daniel, and doubtless many others, understood from Jeremiah's predictions, when to expect some favourable crisis; yet it is evident that even these eminent persons had considerable difficulty in knowing what that crisis would be, and when the nation would be restored to prosperity. Consequently the pious remnant dispersed in distant places must in general have been greatly at a loss on these subjects, and have deeply regretted the want of prophets, bringing them explicit and encouraging messages from God, suited to their distressed condition.—The passage, however, is still more aptly descriptive of the state of the Jews in their present long continued dispersion: and we may well suppose, that when numbers of that nation shall be led to inquire, on what account they have been left in captivity and oppression, for a term of years so vastly exceeding the duration of the Babylonish captivity, without priest, prophet, or token for good, or indication how long it will be before they are restored; this psalm will direct or even express their complaints and devotions. It may also suit the state of the Christian church, under the tyranny of antichrist, the entire termination of which cannot yet be precisely ascertained.

V. 10, 11. The reproaches and blasphemies which insulting idolaters incessantly poured out against God and his worshippers, seem to have more grieved these supplicants, than their own distresses; and this was their principal plea in prayer. The last clause is literally, "Out of thy bo-"som; and consume them." A highly figurative expression.

V. 12. 'Why should we despair of it, since the great 'God, whom they deride, has many ages ago undertaken 'the government and protection of us,' (the nation of Israel,) 'working for us such deliverances in this land, 'which now lies waste, as astonished all the world?' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 13—17. Pharaoh, as the great Leviathan, (*Notes, Job* xli.) and his captains and soldiers as *sea-monsters* of inferior size, were ready to devour Israel in the Red Sea; but were themselves entirely destroyed: and the people were enriched and armed by the spoils of their enemies, as well as encouraged for their march through the wilderness. There the rock was cleft to give them water, and then Jordan's flood was dried up to open their passage into Canaan. These had been the tokens of JEHOVAH's care of them and his power displayed in their behalf: and the appointment of the succession of night and day, and of summer and winter, through all the borders of the earth, by Israel's God, was a most encouraging demonstration of his omnipotence; and an emblem of the favourable change which the afflicted Jews hoped he would effect in their circumstances. The word rendered *the people inhabiting the wilderness*, is in some places used for the wild beasts which live in deserts; and the clause may mean, that the bodies of Pharaoh and his captains, being thrown on shore, were devoured by beasts of prey.

V. 19. The word, rendered first *multitude* and then *congregation*, signifies *living*, or *a living creature*. It is often translated *beast*, or collectively *beasts*: but in many places it evidently means *a living multitude*. Some read this verse in connexion with the foregoing, 'O deliver not the 'life of thy turtle into the hand of *that* multitude,' namely, the multitude of the foolish people that blasphemed God.—The church, as faithful and loving, pure and harmless, destitute and defenceless, and silently mourning under the displeasure and at the absence of her Beloved, is described under this beautiful image. Surely the Lord valued his turtle-dove too much, to leave her to be devoured by the hawks and eagles which surrounded her.

V. 20. Though Israel was unworthy of God's regard, and had broken their *national covenant*: yet even that covenant gave intimation of returning favour to the nation, when brought to confess their sins and seek humbly to God, even from the ends of the earth; and of a reinstatement in Canaan, after their dispersions. And the covenant with Abraham and his seed, and that with David and his

u ix. 18. xii. 5. cii. 19–21. cix. 22. Is. xlv. 17. Jer. xxxiii. 11

21 u O let not the oppressed return ashamed: let the poor and needy praise thy name.

x ix 19, 20 lxxix. 9, 10. y 18. lxxv. 4, 5. lxxxix. 50, 51. Is. lii. 15.

22 x Arise, O God, plead thine own cause: y remember how the foolish man reproacheth thee daily.

z x. 11, 12. xiii. 1. a 4. ii 1, 2. Is. xxxvii. 29 Lam. ii.16. Rev. xvii. 14.

23 z Forget not the voice of thine enemies: a the tumult of those that rise up against thee * increaseth continually.

* Heb *ascendeth.*

seed, were in full force. (*Marg. Ref.*) The coming of the promised Messiah from that race was thus unalterably secured: and how should the dark places of the earth, which were filled with the habitations of cruelty, be enlightened and converted, or the worship of God be at all maintained, if Israel were destroyed before the coming of that Redeemer, who was to be a "Light to the Gentiles, "and the Glory of his people Israel?" 'All places where 'thy word shineth not, there reigneth tyranny and ambi-'tion:' what a different view does this verse give us of those countries where the oracles of God are not known, to that which some travellers and speculators draw of them! But the view here given is found on examination to accord with the real state of things all over the earth; and should stimulate Christians to exert themselves in endeavouring to send the light of truth to the regions of darkness, and the habitations of cruelty.

V. 21, 22. "The oppressed shall not return ashamed; "the poor and needy shall praise thy name: Arise, O Lord, "&c." 'It is thy own cause, as well as ours, therefore, 'though thou waitest to be called on by us; yet thou wilt 'certainly and effectually plead it in due time.'

V. 23. 'While speaking, she seems to hear the tumul-'tuous clamours of the approaching enemy growing every 'minute louder, and we leave the turtle-dove, without 'the divine assistance, ready to sink into the talons of the 'rapacious eagle.' (*Horne.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Churches and nations professing true religion, have often provoked God finally to cast them off; so that he would no longer acknowledge them as his flock or inheritance. But *the sheep* whom he hath purchased and brought into his pasture, and made to answer in character to this instructive emblem, and in whom he dwelleth by his Spirit, shall never be thus cast off. Yet the rod of his fatherly correction may sometimes be mistaken for the sword of his vengeance; the purification of his church, by the destruction or dispersion of degenerate professors, may make his people think that he intends to make a full end with them; and the methods used for the mortification of the lusts of believers sometimes seem to threaten the destruction of their souls. But God will never utterly forsake any individual who turneth to him when he smiteth, by penitent faith; or any church, whilst there is a considerable remnant of such as wrestle with him in fervent prayer to spare and deliver them: nor can the gates of hell prevail against his cause. Infidels, persecutors, and heretics, who do wickedly in God's sanctuary, may make grievous desolations; they may erect their trophies, and glory in the mischief they have devised; they may run down the truth, silence faithful ministers, shut up places of worship, and persecute Christians; and they may say in their hearts, Let us destroy them and their religion together. In the mystery of Providence they may for a time prosper in these attempts: and the oppressed servants of God may complain, that they see no tokens of deliverance, have none to encourage or counsel them, and cannot tell how long these calamities will last. But this remnant is the seed of a future harvest: they pray with fervent zeal for the glory of God, that he would not withdraw his hand, or delay his powerful interposition; but that he would pluck his right hand out of his bosom, to defend the cause of his people, and to vindicate his own insulted honour. Such prayers have hitherto prevailed, and the despised church has survived numbers of those assailants who once triumphed over her, but are now perished as the dung of the earth. Indeed we cannot be too confident that the cause of God will prevail: we are allowed to expostulate with him freely, according to our feelings, when we are grieved to hear his name blasphemed and his truth reviled: and every former mercy to his church constitutes a cogent argument, why he should again interpose to perfect what he hath so gloriously begun. The triumph of Christ over Satan, by his crucifixion and resurrection, and the consequent success of his gospel among the Gentiles, may be urged as a far greater display of his power and mercy, than any of the miracles wrought for the deliverance of Israel. If this God, who thus wrought salvation in the midst of the earth, be our King whom we willingly obey, he will make every assault of Satan, that great leviathan, and of all his progeny, to be profitable to our souls. If we drink of those waters which flow from our smitten Rock, even the sanctifying influences of the Spirit of Christ, he will also divide Jordan's flood before us, that we may pass comfortably from this wilderness to the inheritance prepared for us. The vicissitudes of day and night, summer and winter, (through the changing of our situation in respect of the sun, the fountain of light which God hath prepared,) are emblematic of those changes in our circumstances and experiences which must take place on earth; and should remind us neither to be secure nor to despond. But in the world above we shall have no more changes: "our Sun shall no more go down, and the "days of our mourning will be ended." Whilst in faith, and hope, and patience, we wait for this completion of our personal felicity; we may also confidently expect a glorious event of all the oppressions, persecutions, and corruptions, which have hitherto harassed the Christian church. We may indeed well inquire of the Lord, with astonishment, How long he will permit his adversaries to blaspheme his name? But it shall not be for ever: and the folly of such as reproach him and his servants, will at length be as visible to all men as it now is to the remnant of despised believers. The true church is as amiable and pleasant to the Lord as a turtle-dove, though poor and despicable in the world's estimation. His covenant with the Redeemer engages for more extensive blessings than have yet been vouchsafed. Ere long the Jews shall be

PSALM LXXV.

The people bless God for the tokens of his presence, 1. *The Psalmist determines to judge uprightly,* 2, 3. *He expostulates with the wicked, warning them of the power and righteous vengeance of God,* 4—8. *He resolves to praise God, and to administer justice impartially,* 9, 10.

To the chief Musician, * Al-taschith, A Psalm *or* Song of † Asaph.

UNTO thee, O God, do we give thanks, *unto thee* do we give thanks: [a] for *that* thy name *is* near [b] thy wondrous works declare.

2 [c] When I shall ‡ receive the congregation I will judge uprightly.

3 [d] The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are dissolved: [e] I bear up [f] the pillars of it. Selah.

4 [g] I said unto the fools, Deal not foolishly: and to the wicked, [k] Lift not up the horn:

5 Lift not up your horn on high: [i] speak *not* with a stiff neck.

6 For promotion *cometh* neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the § south.

7 But [k] God *is* the Judge: [l] he putteth down one, and setteth up another.

8 For [m] in the hand of the LORD *there is* a cup, and the wine is red; [n] it is full of mixture: and he poureth out of the same: [o] but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring *them* out, *and* drink *them.*

9 But [p] I will declare for ever; I will sing praises to the God of Jacob.

10 [q] All the horns of the wicked also will I cut off; *but* [r] the horns of the righteous shall be exalted.

* Destroy not lvii. lviii. *titles.*
† Or, *for Asaph.*
a lxxvi. 1. cxxxviii. 2. Ex. xxiii. 21 xxxiv. 6, 7. Jer. x. 6.
b Deut. iv 7. 33, 34.
c lxxviii. 70—72 ci. 2. 2 Sam ii. 4. v. 3. viii. 15. xxiii. 3, 4.
‡ Or, *take a set time.* Ec. iii. 17. John vii. 6. Acts i. 7. xvii. 31.
d lx.1—3. lxxviii. 60—72. 1 Sam. xxxi. 1—7. Is. xxiv 1—12.
e 1 Sam xviii 7. xxv. 28. 2 Sam. v. 2. Is xlix. 8. Heb. i. 3.
f 1 Sam. ii. 8.
g lxxxii. 2, &c. xciv 8. Pro. i. 22 viii. 5 ix. 6.
h lxxxix 17. cxlviii. 14 Dan. vii. 20. 21. Zech. i 21.
i Ex xxxii 9. Deut. xxxi. 27. 2 Chr xxx. 8. Is. xlviii. 4. Ez. ii 4. Acts vii. 51.
§ Heb *desert.*
k 1. 6 lviii. 11.
l cxiii 7, 81. Sam. ii. 7, 8. xv. 23. 28. xvi 1. 2 Sam. iii. 17, 18. v. 2. vi 21. Jer. xxvii 4—8. Dan. ii. 37. v. 18 Luke i. 52. John xv. 16. Rom xi. 15. Gal. i. 15.
m xi 6 lx. 3 Job xxi 20. Is. li. 17. 22. Jer. xxv. 15 17. 27, 28. Rev. xiv. 10. xvi. 19.
n Pro xxiii. 30. Is. v. 22.
o lxxiii. 10.
p ix 14. civ. 33. cxlv. 1, 2. cxlvi. 2.
q ci. 8. Jer xlviii 25. Zech. i. 20, 21.
r lxxxix. 17. xcii. 10. cxlviii. 14. Luke i. 69.

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converted, the visible church purified, antichrist destroyed, and the fulness of the Gentiles called. This time approaches: let us then call upon our God to have respect unto his covenant; to enlighten all the dark nations of the earth, which are filled with cruelty and wickedness; and to rescue his people from shame and dishonour, that the poor and needy may praise his name. Let us call upon him to arise and plead his own cause, and to silence effectually and finally the boastings and clamours of his enemies which increase continually. This is our duty and privilege; and all the prayers, offered in this behalf, will at length terminate in loud acclamations of praise and thanksgiving.

NOTES.

PSALM LXXV. *Title.* If Asaph wrote this psalm, it is probable, that he did it by the desire of David upon his accession to the throne over all Israel: and the psalm seems well suited to that occasion. Some however think, that another Asaph wrote it, in the days of Hezekiah.

V. 1. *Thy name,* &c. JEHOVAH exercising all the perfections of his glorious *name,* or character, was evidently nigh unto his people; as appeared by his wondrous works for them, which excited their fervent gratitude.

V. 2. The foregoing verse is the language of the congregation; this, and those which follow, of a single person, even of a ruler. Some suppose, that the Lord himself is the speaker; who declares, that when his appointed time came, he would execute judgment in righteousness. (*Marg. reading, Note* lxxiv. 8.) But others think that David, as the type of Christ, engages to rule in equity when placed over the congregation of the Lord.

V. 3. The land of Israel was reduced to great distraction towards the close of Saul's reign; every thing in church and state was unhinged; and the defeat at Gilboa, with the intestine divisions which followed, increased the confusion: but David had been anointed by God's command to uphold and establish the estate of Israel. Even before his accession, he had been the chief stay of his country; and when the whole nation willingly submitted to his government, he soon brought their affairs to a happy settlement.

V. 4. The words rendered *fools,* and *deal not foolishly,* seem properly to denote *mad persons,* and *acting in an infatuated manner.* Saul of Tarsus was exceedingly mad against the church of Christ; but when he came to himself, and was endued abundantly with heavenly wisdom, men began to think him mad.

V. 5. (*Marg. Ref.*) The last clause may be rendered, "Ye will speak with a stiff neck," or, perhaps "Will "ye, &c.?"

V. 6, 7. God, the supreme Judge, had put down Saul's family, and appointed David to the throne: and his promotion had come from no other quarter or cause. It would be madness therefore to oppose any longer the sovereign appointment of JEHOVAH. (*Notes, Psalm* ii.)

V. 8. Heavenly blessings are in Scripture represented by a cup full of wholesome exhilarating wine: but the wrath of God is represented by a cup of wine mingled with ingredients of that kind which tend to produce fear, distress, and despondency; and if drunk to excess, horror, infatuation, anguish, and despair. From this cup the Lord dispenseth as he pleaseth to sinners in this world: and even his people drink some of the purer wine contained in it, when chastened in his fatherly displeasure: but the dregs of it will be the portion of all the impenitent hereafter, who will wring them out, and drink them, to all eternity.

V. 10. Before David came to the throne, he warned the wicked not to proceed in their evil courses: but he purposed, now that he had acquired authority, effectually

PSALM LXXVI.

The Psalmist praises God, who had defended his people and crushed their enemies, 1—10. He exhorts all to serve God reverently, 11, 12.

To the chief Musician on [a] Neginoth, A Psalm *or* Song * of Asaph.

IN Judah [b] *is* God known: [c] his name *is* great in Israel.

2 In [d] Salem also is his tabernacle, and [e] his dwelling-place in Zion.

3 [f] There brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle. Selah.

4 Thou *art* more glorious *and* excellent than [g] the mountains of prey.

5 [h] The stout-hearted are spoiled, [i] they have slept their sleep; [k] and none of the men of might have found their hands

6 [l] At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, [m] both the chariot and horse are cast into [n] a dead sleep.

7 Thou, [o] *even* thou, *art* to be feared: and [p] who may stand in thy sight [q] when once thou art angry?

8 Thou [r] didst cause judgment to be heard from heaven; the earth feared, [s] and was still.

9 When [t] God arose to judgment, [u] to save all the meek of the earth. Selah.

a iv. liv. lxi. lxvii *titles.* * Or, *for* b xlviii 1—3. cxlvii. 19, 20. Deut iv. 34—36. Acts xvii. 23. Rom. ii. 17, &c. iii. 1, 2. c xcviii 2, 3. cxlviii. 13. 14. 1 Chr. xxix. 10—12. 2 Chr ii. 5, 6. Dan. iii. 29 iv. 1, 2. d Gen. xiv. 18. Heb vii. 1, 2. e cxxxii. 13, 14. 2 Chr vi. 6. Is. xii. 6. f xlvi. 9. 2 Chr. xiv. 12, 13. xx. 25. xxxii. 21. Ez. xxxix. 3. 9, 10. g Jer. iv. 7 Ez. xix. 1—4. 6. xxxviii. 12, 13. Dan vii. 4—8. 17, &c. h Job xl 10—12. Is. xlvi. 12. Dan. iv. 37. Luke i. 51, 52. i xiii. 3. Is. xxxvii. 36. Jer. li. 39 Nah. iii. 18. k Is xxxi 8. Ez. xxx 21—25. l xviii. 15. lxxx. 16. civ. 7 m Ex xiv. 27, 28. xv. 4—6. 19. 2 Sam. x. 18. Is. xxxvii. 36. Ez. xxxix 20. Nah. ii. 13. iii. 18. Zech xii. 4. n 1 Sam. xxvi. 12. Jer. li. 39. 57. o lxxxix. 7. Jer. x. 7—10. Matt. x. 28. Rev. xiv. 7. xv. 4. p xc. 11. Nah. i. 6. 1 Cor. x. 22. Rev. vi. 16, 17. q ii. 12. r Judg. v. 20 2 Chr. xxxii. 20—22 Ez xxxviii. 20—23 ——s xlvi 10. 2 Chr. xx. 29, 30. Hab ii. 20. Zech. ii. 13.——t ix 7—9 lxxii. 4. lxxxii. 2—5. Is. xi. 4. Jer. v. 28. u xxv. 9. cxlix. 4. Zeph. ii. 3. Matt. v. 5. 1 Pet. iii. 4.

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to break the power of triumphant wickedness, and to encourage and prefer the righteous; as an apt representative of that righteous King whom he typified.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The whole church, militant and triumphant, unite in thanksgivings to God for exalting the Redeemer to his mediatorial throne; and this wonderful dispensation especially declareth his presence with his people. Without Him the earth and all its inhabitants would rush impetuously into universal confusion, impiety, iniquity, and ruin: he alone bears up the pillars of it; and all the present hopes and future happiness of any of the human race, spring from the work and authority of the incarnate Son of God. Having received his congregation of redeemed sinners, and the kingdom over all for their sake, he judges uprightly: and by his ministers he warns such as proudly rebel and exalt themselves against him, not to deal foolishly, or to harden their hearts to their own destruction. That God, who exalted the Redeemer to his throne, is the Fountain of honour, as well as the Judge of all: none can prosper who do not submit to him; He will account all to be his enemies who will not have his beloved Son to be their Lord and Saviour; and such must for ever drink of the cup of his dreadful vengeance. But whilst all the horns of the wicked shall be cut off, and their ruin completed, his church of believers shall inherit the throne of glory. Let sinners then submit to him: let believers rejoice in and obey him: and let Christian magistrates remember their obligations to copy him, from whom they have their authority; that they may judge righteously, maintain the cause of piety, crush the haughty oppressor, and protect, and advance, and exalt the righteous. And let the people recollect from whom their rulers have their authority; that they "may be subject not only for wrath, "but also for conscience sake."

NOTES.

PSALM LXXVI. *Title.* The Septuagint adds to this title *against the Assyrian.* The deliverance from Sennacherib indeed seems to have been celebrated in this psalm.

V. 1. In Judah and Israel God was known and worshipped, and his name was honoured; but in no other part of the world, except as Jews or Israelites were dispersed through other nations. Indeed to this day, all the genuine knowledge of the one living and true God which is found on earth, may be traced back to writers and teachers of this despised nation. Where neither they nor their writings have come, God is still unknown; and if there be any religion, it is idolatry. This assertion admits of no exception or qualification!

V. 2. *Salem* here evidently means *Jerusalem.* (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 3. The enemies of Judah had marched to besiege Jerusalem with every kind of warlike preparation: but by the power of God, their formidable apparatus became entirely useless, and they were unable to join battle with them.

V. 4. *Zion,* the chosen residence of JEHOVAH, was vastly more glorious and excellent than Babylon, or Nineveh; and the kingdom of Judah than those successively renowned monarchies, which contended with each other, to the destruction of the human species, as the beasts of prey on the mountains devour the feebler animals. Their successes in these destructive contests for power, were deemed their glory and excellency: but the church, beloved and protected by the Lord, and devoted to his service, had a glory and excellency of a nobler kind.

V. 5, 6. These verses fix the date of this psalm to the time of the destruction of Sennacherib's army before Jerusalem. Then, his stout-hearted captains and soldiers were suddenly deprived of life; and so far from being able to destroy Jerusalem, as they had boasted they would, they could make no more resistance to the power of the destroying angel, than if their hands had been cut off: for at the rebuke of that God whom they had blasphemed, they who rode in chariots and on horses, as well as the common soldiers, were cast into a dead sleep. They went to sleep in the evening as in security; but they awoke no more in this world: and thus they were left to be plundered by those whom they came to plunder.

10 Surely [x] the wrath of man shall praise thee: [y] the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.

11 [z] Vow, and pay unto the LORD your God: [a] let all that be round about him bring presents * unto him that ought to be feared.

12 [b] He shall cut off the spirit of princes: *he is* [c] terrible to the kings of the earth.

x Gen xxxvii 18—20 26—28. 1. 20. Ex ix 16, 17 xv. 9—11 Acts iv. 26—28. Rev. xi. 18.
y xlvi. 6. lxv. 7 civ. 9. Matt. ii. 13—16. xxiv. 22. Acts xii 3, &c.
z l 14. cxix. 106. Num. xxx. 2 Ec. v. 4—6.
a lxviii 29 lxxxix. 7. Deut xvi 16. 2 Chr. xxxii. 22, 23.
* Heb. *to fear.* Gen xxxi 42.
b xlvii. 4—6. lxviii. 12 35. Josh. v. 1. 2 Chr. xxxii. 21. Zeph. iii. 6.
c Is xiii. 6—8. xxiv. 21. Rev. vi. 15. xix. 17—21.

PSALM LXXVII.

The Psalmist relates, what a sharp conflict he had sustained, under his affliction, against despondency, 1—9. *And how he baffled the temptation, by meditating on the wondrous works of God for Israel,* 10—20.

To the chief Musician, to [a] Jeduthun, A Psalm * of Asaph.

[b] I CRIED unto God with my voice, *even* unto God with my voice; [c] and he gave ear unto me.

a xxxix. lxii. *titles* 1 Chr. xvi. 41, 42. xxv. 3. 6.
* Or. *for.* l. *title.*
b iii. 4. xxxiv. 6. lv 15. 16, cxlii. 1—3.
c cxvi. 1, 2.

V. 8, 9. Hezekiah referred his cause to God by fervent prayer; who by the prophet Isaiah gave judgment from heaven against the blasphemous invaders: and then the angel carried the sentence into execution. Thus the Lord saved his humble and afflicted people throughout the land; and the nations of the earth, being intimidated, silently desisted from their designs of destroying or enslaving them.

V. 10. The rage and malice of the most mighty persecutors and tyrants were always rendered subservient to the display of the Lord's glory, and to the good of his people. And if they designed any thing of contrary tendency, he failed not to restrain or destroy them. This he had exemplified in the case of Sennacherib, who, being "ordained for correction, and sent against an hypocritical nation," was successful in his undertakings till he had fulfilled the part of the divine counsel which had been allotted him; but when he attempted to exceed his commission, he was suddenly and effectually restrained from proceeding any further. And this must be considered merely as a specimen of the divine conduct in all similar cases. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 11, 12. As the Lord had shown himself terrible to the kings of the earth, by intimidating the most courageous, and crushing the most powerful and haughty; so he ought to be worshipped with reverence and awe by all that approached him: and his late interposition in behalf of his people, should excite them to pay the vows which they made in the day of their distress, and to accompany their prayers with vows on all similar occasions; being liberal as well as fervent in expressing their gratitude to their gracious Benefactor.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

God is more fully known, in the harmony of his attributes, under the Christian dispensation, than he was in Judah: and his glory is greater, as dwelling in human nature and in the hearts of his people, than it was formerly, when he had his tabernacle on mount Zion, and was the Protector of Jerusalem. In vain do Satan and his servants wage implacable war, with tremendous preparations against the church: the Lord hath often confounded their devices, marred their weapons of war, and destroyed their armies. His peaceful, harmless, and holy people have frequently been shown to be formidable by their prayers, as well as more honourable and excellent, than the most successful scourges of mankind: and happy is that nation, which is well fortified with these bulwarks: for what is valour, strength, or numbers against the Almighty? At his rebuke they tremble, stumble, and are not! He "alone is to be feared: for who may stand in "his sight when once he is angry?" Yet puny mortals dare madly through their whole lives to defy the vengeance of that God, whose angel in one night destroyed a hundred and eighty-five thousand men! But if temporal judgments excite such consternation, what will be the case when the Lord shall arise to judgment at the last day! Happy they who are now *meek* and "poor in "spirit," who trust in his mercy and submit to his will, who vow allegiance to him, and dedicate their all to his service. Man may despise or be enraged at them, and the powers of darkness may excite storms around them: but all shall turn to the glory of God in their salvation: and when their enemies attempt any thing, which would do them real harm, God will restrain this remainder of their wrath. Let us then seek his favour as our portion; and commit all our concerns to his wise, powerful, and gracious care; who can dispirit or destroy the most courageous and mighty, and is terrible to the ungodly kings of the earth.

NOTES.

PSALM LXXVII. *Title.* 'A Psalm composed by 'Asaph, and sent by him to that Song-master, who was 'over the children of Jeduthun.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) It is, however, uncertain, when the psalm was written, and whether it refers to the personal trials of the Psalmist, or to public calamities, or to both combined. Some conjecture that it was composed as expressive of Hezekiah's feelings, during his sickness; and others that it was written during the captivity: but as no reference is made to any of God's dealings with Israel subsequent to their deliverance out of Egypt, it seems more likely that it was written as early as the time of David, and by that Asaph who was his contemporary.

V. 1. The abruptness of the original is very expressive of the agitation of mind, which the Psalmist had experienced. "My voice unto God, and I cried; my voice unto "God, and he gave ear unto me." Till his prayer received a gracious answer, this agitation of mind continued, and he proceeds to describe it, and to show how he struggled against impatience and unbelief.

2 [d] In the day of my trouble I sought the LORD: [e] my * sore ran in the night, and ceased not: [f] my soul refused to be comforted.

3 [g] I remembered God, and was troubled: [h] I complained, and [i] my spirit was overwhelmed. Selah.

4 Thou [k] holdest mine eyes waking: [l] I am so troubled that I cannot speak.

5 [m] I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times.

6 I call to remembrance [n] my song in the night: [o] I commune with mine own heart; [p] and my spirit made diligent search.

7 [q] Will the LORD cast off for ever? and [r] will he be favourable no more?

8 [s] Is his mercy clean gone for ever? [t] doth *his* promise fail † for evermore?

9 Hath [u] God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger [x] shut up his tender mercies? Selah.

10 And I said, [y] This *is* my infirmity: *but I will remember* [z] the years of the right hand of the Most High.

11 I will [a] remember the works of the LORD; surely I will remember thy wonders of old.

12 I [b] will meditate also of all thy work, [c] and talk of thy doings.

13 [d] Thy way, O God, *is* in the sanctuary: [e] who *is so* great a God as *our* God!

d xviii. 6. l. 15. lxxxviii 1—3. cii. 1, 2 cxxx 1, 2. Gen xxxii. 7 — 12. 28 1 Kings xix. 3, 4. 15—20. Is xxvi 9 16. Jon ii. 1, 2. 2 Cor. xii. 7, 8 Heb. v. 7.
e vi.2, 3. xxxviii. 3—8. 2 Chr. vi. 28. Is. i. 5, 6. Hos. v 13. vi. 1.
* Heb *hand.*
f Gen. xxxvii 35 Esth iv 1—4. Prov xviii. 14 Jer xxxi. 15. John xi 31
g Job vi 4 xxiii. 15, 16. xxxi 23 Jer. xvii 17
h lxxxviii. 3, &c. cii 3. &c. Job vii. 11 Lam iii 39.
i lv 4, 5. lxi. 2 cxliii. 2, 3. cxliii. 4.
k vi. 6 Esth. vi. 1. Job vii. 13—15. ——l Job ii. 13. vi 3.——m lxxiv. 12—18 cxliii. 5. Deut. xxxii. 7. Is. li. 9 lxiii 9—15. Mic. vii. 14, 15 ——n xlii. 8. Job xxxv 10. Hab iii. 17, 18 Acts xvi. 25.
o iv. 4 Ec. i. 16.——p cxxxix 23, 24. Job x 2. Lam. iii. 40. 1 Cor. xi. 28—32.
q xiii. 1, 2. xxxvii. 24. lxxiv. 1. lxxxix. 38. 46. Jer. xxxiii. 24—26. Rom. xi. 1, 2.

r lxxix. 5 lxxxv. 1 5.
s Is xxvii 11. Luke xvi.25. 26.
t Num xiv. 34. xxiii.19 Jer xv. 18 Rom ix 6.
† Heb *to generation and generation*
u Is xl. 27 xlix. 14, 15 lxiii. 15.
x Luke xvii 25—28 Rom xi. 32. *Marg.* 1 Joh iii 17
y xxxi.22.lxxiii. 21. cxvi. 11. Job xlii. 3.Lam. iii. 18—23. Marg ix 24
z 5 Ex xv. 6. Num xxiii 21, 22. Deut. iv. 34. Hab. iii 2—13
a 10 xxviii. 5. lxxviii.11.1 Chr. xvi 12. Is. v.12.
b civ 34. cxliii.5.
c lxxi. 24 cv. 2. cxlv. 4 11. Deut. vi. 7. Luke xxiv. 14—32.
d xxvii. 4 lxiii 2. lxxiii 17.
e lxxxix. 6—8. Ex. xv. 11. Deut. xxxii. 31. Is. xl. 18. 25. xlvi. 5.

V. 2. *Sore.* According to this translation, the Psalmist represents his affliction, whatever it was, as a wound which bled or ran incessantly, wasting his strength during the night, whilst others were recruiting theirs by sleep. But the original word is *my hand;* and it is probable the following is a just paraphrase of the passage. "In the day of "my distress" 'I have restlessly implored help from the 'Lord. In the night, when men are wont to bury their 'troubles in sleep, I have with unwearied diligence, *spread* '*out my hands* unto him; resolving to admit of no conso-'lation, till I had obtained a gracious answer.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 3. "I remembered God, and was greatly disturbed "in mind; I meditated, and my spirit was overwhelmed." —'He showeth that we must patiently abide, although God 'deliver us not out of our troubles at the first cry.' The Psalmist describes his inward perturbation by a word expressive of the tumult of the waves in a storm, or that of an enraged disorderly multitude. It is probable that conscious guilt gave Satan the occasion of exciting in him dismay and distress, when he reflected on the divine perfections; and that impatience and despondency thus combined in rendering his soul like the troubled sea: insomuch that the thoughts of the Lord's mercy and truth, his former kindnesses, and the comfort he had experienced in religion on other occasions; instead of giving him encouragement, served to enhance his disquietude, now that God hid his face from him, and seemed to have become his enemy.

V. 4. Our Lord was kept watching during that dreadful night, in which being "sore amazed and very heavy," he said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death;" just before he stood silent in the presence of Caiaphas, Herod, and Pilate: and the language in this part of the psalm is so emphatical, that the attentive reader can hardly fail to recollect that of Christ during the depth of his humiliation.

V. 5—12. In these verses the Psalmist describes his inward struggle against unbelief and despair. In the depth of his distress he applied his mind to meditate on ancient times, when God had wonderfully interposed in behalf of his people, and shown himself most ready to pardon their sins, compassionate their sorrows, and hear their prayers. He also determined to recollect his own experience of such mercies and deliverances as had led him to spend a part of the night in singing praises to God: and likewise to call himself to strict account, and diligently to examine and inquire, 'both the causes why he was chastened, and 'when his sorrows should have an end.' He was however tempted to think that God had cast him off for ever, and would show him no more favour. 'But,' says he, 'Can this 'be? Can he who was known to delight in mercy cease to be 'merciful? Will he break his own promise? Is he so angry, 'as no more to pardon the penitent and pity the miserable? 'This cannot be. I will reject with abhorrence the dishonourable thought. It is the disease and weakness of my 'soul, that I ever harboured it. Whatever appearances may 'be, God continues merciful and faithful, ready to forgive, 'and plenteous in goodness and compassion. "The years "of the hand of the Most High;" the time when he lifted up 'his right hand to deliver his people, prove this; I will therefore fix my attention on those ancient works of JEHOVAH, 'and thus endeavour to encourage my desponding heart, and 'to calm my conflicting passions.' Most expositors seem to think that the Psalmist's alarm and distress were occasioned by public calamities, in great measure at least. But there is no intimation of this; and personal trials and temptations might be so great and complicated, as to excite the sharp conflict which he so affectingly describes.

V. 13. The Psalmist's faith and grace now obtain the ascendency over his rebellious will, his unbelief, and his temptations; and he is satisfied, that the *way of God,* (or the exercise of his sovereign authority, over the world, the church, and every individual,) is under the direction of infinite wisdom, and ordered in perfect justice, truth, and goodness. It is *in holiness;* and so consists with his testimonies, his promises, and his covenant. It is in the sanctuary; and being beyond the reach of man's wisdom, cannot be understood, except by those who enter into the sanc-

14 Thou *art* [f] the God that doest wonders: [g] thou hast declared thy strength among the people.

15 Thou hast [h] with *thine* arm redeemed thy people, [i] the sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah.

16 [k] The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee; they were afraid: the depths also were troubled.

17 The clouds * poured out water: the skies sent out a sound: [l] thine arrows also went abroad.

18 [m] The voice of thy thunder *was* in the heaven: [n] the lightnings lightened the world: [o] the earth trembled and shook.

19 [p] Thy way *is* in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and [q] thy footsteps are not known.

20 [r] Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron

f lxxii. 18 lxxxvi. 10. cv. 5. cxxxvi. 4. Ex. xv. 11. Rev. xv. 3.
g Ex. xiii. 14 xv. 6. Josh. ix. 9, 10. Is. li. 9. lii. 10. Dan. iii. 29. vi. 27.
h cxxxvi. 11, 12. Ex vi. 6. Deut ix. 26. Is. lxiii. 9.
i Gen. xlviii. 3. 20.
k cxiv. 3—6. Ex. xiv. 21. Josh. iii 15, 16. Hab. iii. 8—10. 15.
* Heb. *were poured forth with water.* lxviii. 8, 9.
l lxviii. 14. cxliv. 6. Hab. iii. 11.
m xxix. 3—9 Ex. xix. 16. Job xxxvii. 1—5. Rev xi. 19.
n xcvii. 4. Hab. iii 4. Rev. xviii. 1.
o Ex. xix. 18. 2 Sam. xxii. 8. Mat. xxvii. 52. xxviii. 2. Rev. xx 11
p xxix 10. xcvii. 2 Neh. ix. 11. Nah. i. 3, 4. Hab iii. 15.
q Ex. xiv 28. Rom. xi. 33
r lxxviii 52 lxxx. 1. Ex. xiii. 21. xiv. 19. Is. lxiii. 11, 12 Hos. xii. 13. Acts vii. 35, 36.

tuary, and weigh all things in the balances of the sanctuary. For his unrivalled, his infinite greatness seems to cloud the glory of his justice and goodness, to the sinful children of Adam.

V. 14, 15. 'Thou art the mighty God, who canst do 'miracles, as easily as the most ordinary works: having 'delivered thy people descended from Jacob, and miracu- 'lously preserved by Joseph, from Egyptian bondage.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 16—18. The waters, even to the bottom of the Red Sea, are here most poetically described, as affrighted, and as rendered sensible of the presence of God with Israel, and as obedient to his will; nay, all nature is represented as put into consternation and violent commotion before him. It is probable that the destruction of the Egyptians was attended by most tremendous and destructive tempests, thunders, lightnings, and earthquakes.

V. 19, 20. All the dispensations of God towards his people are in mercy: but, like Israel's passage through the Red Sea, they are often attended with circumstances of dismay. His ways of dealing with them can no more be traced, than the path of Israel, when he led them as a flock, through the Red Sea; and they are called to trust in him, whilst he conducts them by a way with which they are wholly unacquainted, and which is displeasing and discouraging to the flesh. By these meditations the Psalmist at length found his heart encouraged; and therefore he left them upon record for the benefit of posterity.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In this world our praises are often interrupted by complaints. Sin, temptation, affliction, the calamities of the church, and the miseries of the world, must cause us to "groan, being burdened." When the heart is greatly pained, *nature* expresses that pain by the voice: but *grace* will teach us to send our cries to heaven with earnest importunity for relief. Yet sometimes even they who are instant in prayer, may be tempted to despond, and to overlook the sources of comfort which are pointed out to them; and a deep sense of their own unworthiness may afford Satan an opportunity of suggesting such gloomy apprehensions, that even thoughts of God may increase their disquietude and horror. Thus the eyes may be holden from sleep, and the mouth may be closed, whilst sorrows too big for utterance distend and distract the heart. But this will not last very long with the upright believer: the troubled fountain will work itself clear again; and even the recollection of former times of more joyful experience, though it cause his wounds to bleed afresh, will often suggest a hint, or inspire a hope, tending to his relief. It is however always good to commune with our own hearts; and to make diligent search, concerning the cause, the intention, and the remedy of our distresses; especially, that we may ascertain, whether, notwithstanding our unworthiness, we be indeed truly humbled believers. And if the enemy could lead us to suspect that the "Lord will cast "off his people for ever," and be no more favourable to them, we should reject the injurious suggestion with horror and indignation. What! Will God no more favour those who have walked with him, and are now mourning after him? Hath his everlasting mercy come to an end? Has his faithful promise failed? Hath God forgotten to be gracious, and in anger shut up his tender mercy? And will he dishonour himself, by leaving the humble, penitent, praying soul to perish? It is our *infirmity*, for which we should rebuke ourselves, if we have for a moment entertained such thoughts: and we should without delay turn our minds to more encouraging meditations. The years of ancient times, and the Lord's wonders for his people of old, form proper subjects for our contemplation and discourse on such occasions; as they are illustrious evidences of his power, and mercy, and love to his church. But the mysteries of redeeming love, and the great events which attended the Saviour's sufferings and exaltation to his glorious throne, should be our favourite theme. There all the divine perfections are displayed; and the sinner, who understands and believes the testimony of Scripture on this subject, will be encouraged to expect every thing from the power, truth, and love of that God, who "spared not his own Son, but "delivered him up for us all, that with him he might "freely give us all things." It is true, that the Lord's way is *in the sea*, but it is also *in the sanctuary*: he leads his people through deep waters of affliction or temptation; but he goes with them, and brings them forth, when he hath thus destroyed their enemies. We cannot trace his footsteps, nor understand the reasons of his dispensations: but we are called to believe that he will guide us by his counsel; and that those things, which we are tempted to ascribe to his having "forgotten to be gracious," are the result of his unsearchable wisdom choosing for us, in order to our good, what we should never have chosen for ourselves. If he see proper, he can soon raise up such instruments as Moses and Aaron, to lead his people, like a flock, through intervening seas and deserts, to their inheritance: and if the under shepherds neglect their charge, he

PSALM LXXVIII.

An exhortation to the people to consider the works and word of God; that what they had learned from their fathers, they might teach their children, for the benefit of their remote posterity, 1—8. *An abstract of the history of Israel's deliverance from Egypt, passage through the wilderness, settlement in Canaan, and the subsequent events; in which the mercies of God to them are contrasted with an account of their unbelief, apostacies, and idolatries,* 9—66. *God at length chooses Judah, Zion, and David,* 67—72.

* Maschil of Asaph.

* Or, a Psalm *for Asaph to give instruction.* lxxiv. *title*

a GIVE ear, O my people, *to* my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

2 b I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter c dark sayings of old;

3 d Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.

a xlix. 1—3 Judg. v. 3. Prov. viii. 4—6. Is. li. 4. lv. 5 Matt. xiii. 9.
b xlix. 4. Matt. xiii. 34, 35
c Prov. i. 6. Matt. xiii. 11—13 Mark iv. 34.
d xliv. 1 xlviii 8. Ex. xii. 26, 27 xiii. 8. 14, 15.

4 e We will not hide *them* from their children, f shewing to the generation to come g the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.

5 For h he established i a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, k that they should make them known to their children;

6 l That the generation to come might know *them, even* the children *which* should be born, m *who* should arise and declare *them* to their children:

7 That they might n set their hope in God, and o not forget the works of God, but p keep his commandments:

8 And might not be q as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation *that* * set not their heart aright, and r whose spirit was not steadfast with God.

9 s The children of Ephraim, *being* armed, *and* † carrying bows, t turned back in the day of battle.

10 u They kept not the covenant of God, and refused to walk in his law;

e cxlv. 4—6. Deut. iv. 9. vi. 7. Joel i. 3.
f lxxi. 18. Deut. xi. 19 Josh. iv. 6, 7. 21—24.
g lx. 14 cv. 1—5 cxlv 5, 6. Is. lxiii. 7, &c.
h lxxxi 5. cxix. 152. cxlvii. 19. Deut. iv. 45. Is. viii. 20. Rom. iii 2. 1 John v. 9—12.
i Ex. xxv. 16. 21. xl 3. 20.
k 3, 4. Gen xviii. 19. Is. xxxviii. 19. Eph. vi. 4.
l xlviii. 13 lxxi. 18. cii. 18. cxlv. 4. Esth. ix. 28.
m xc. 16. Deut. iv. 10. Josh. xxii. 24, 25. Joel i. 3.
n xl. 4. lxii. 5. xci. 14. cxxx. 6, 7. cxlvi. 5 Jer. xvii. 7, 8. 1 Pet. i. 21.
o lxxvii. 10—12. ciii. 2. cv. 5. Ex. xii. 11—13. Deut. iv. 9. vii. 18, 19. viii. 2. 11. Esth. ix. 27, 28 1 Cor. xi. 24.
p Deut. v. 29. John xiv. 21—24. 1 John iii. 22—24. v. 3. Rev. xiv. 12.
q cvi. 7. Ex. xxxii. 9. xxxiii 5. xxxiv. 9. Deut. ix. 6. 13. xxxi. 27. 2 Kings xvii 14. Ez xx. 8. 13. Matt. xxiii. 31—33. Acts vi 51.
* Heb. *prepared not their heart.* 37. 2 Chr. xii. 14. xix. 3. xx. 33. xxx. 19.——r 37. Deut iv. 4. Josh. xiv. 8, 9. Acts xi 23——s Deut. i. 41—44 Josh. xvii. 16—18. 1 Sam. iv. 10 xxxi. 1.——† Heb. *throwing forth.*——t Judg. ix. 28. 38—40. Luke xxii. 33 56—60.——u Deut. xxxi 16. 20. Judg ii. 10—12. 2 Kings xvii. 14, 15 Neh. ix. 26—29. Jer. xxxi. 32.

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will feed and guide them himself. "Happy then are the "people who are in such a case: yea, blessed are the people, who have the Lord for their God."

NOTES.

PSALM LXXVIII. V. 1. The word rendered *law*, in this connexion, evidently means the *doctrine*, or the *instruction*, which the Psalmist was divinely inspired to set before the people. It is probable that Asaph wrote this psalm some years after the death of David.

V. 2. The Evangelist says that this was fulfilled, when Christ spake to the people in parables; (*Marg. Ref.*) Yet the psalm contains nothing but a plain narrative of facts, without any thing of parable or *riddle* in it; except as the history of Israel, like the parables of Christ, was a picture or similitude of heavenly things; and these records would remain, *in this respect*, dark sayings to those who understood not the typical meaning of them.

V. 3—8. The Israelites were frequently and earnestly instructed to make their children, by every means, familiarly acquainted with the works and commandments of God: and as the Psalmist and his contemporaries had derived the benefit of this most useful information from their ancestors, he was determined, and aimed to induce others also, to deliver down the same to the rising race, and through them to the next generation, and thus successively to the end of time: as this was the proper method of bringing them to trust in God and obey him; to imitate the faith and holiness of their pious ancestors; and to take warning not to copy the rebellion, unbelief, and ungodliness of such as had brought the judgments of God upon them by their sins. The word *testimony* is used for the ark, and for the law written on tables of stone put within the ark, and covered with the mercy-seat. This testified the Lord's gracious presence with his people, and seemed to point out to them both the way of access and acceptance, and the standard or rule of their duty. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 9, 10. Nothing is recorded in the history of Israel, concerning the cowardice of the Ephraimites, as distinct from that of the other tribes: some therefore think, that "the children of Ephraim" are put by a figure of speech, for the nation in general. Others suppose, that this tribe greatly influenced their brethren, when they refused to go up and possess the land, at the express command of God, who promised to fight for them: and then, after the sentence of exclusion was irrevocably passed, they armed themselves, and presumptuously would go up, contrary to the warning of God by Moses; but when the Amorites came out against them, they fled, and were chased like bees to Hormah. But the passage may relate to the defeat of Israel by the Philistines, when the ark of God was taken. —Shiloh, which was then desolated, was situated in the lot of Ephraim: and perhaps the men of that tribe, led on the battle; but giving way, their misconduct brought on a

11 And [x] forgat his works, and his wonders that he had shewed them.

12 ¶ [y] Marvellous things did he in the sight of their fathers, in the land of Egypt, *in* the field of [z] Zoan.

13 [a] He divided the sea, and caused them to pass through; and [b] he made the waters to stand as an heap.

14 [c] In the day-time also he led them with a cloud, and all the night with a light of fire.

15 He [d] clave the rocks in the wilderness, and gave *them* drink as *out of* the great depths.

16 He [e] brought streams also out of the rock, and caused waters to run down like rivers.

17 ¶ And [f] they sinned yet more against him, by provoking the Most High in the wilderness.

18 And they tempted God in their heart, [g] by asking meat for their lust.

19 Yea, [h] they spake against God; they said, [i] Can God * furnish a table in the wilderness?

20 Behold, [k] he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; [l] can he give bread also? can he provide flesh for his people?

21 Therefore, [m] the LORD heard *this*, and was wroth: so [n] a fire was kindled against Jacob, and anger also came up against Israel;

22 [o] Because they believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation:

23 Though [p] he had commanded the clouds from above, and [q] opened the doors of heaven.

24 And [r] had rained down manna upon them to eat, and had given them of the corn of heaven,

25 † Man did eat angels' food: [s] he sent them meat to the full.

26 [t] He caused an east wind to ‡ blow in the heaven: and by his power he brought in the south wind.

27 [u] He rained flesh also upon them as dust, and § feathered fowls like as the sand of the sea.

28 And he let *it* fall in the midst of their camp, round about their habitations.

29 So they did eat, and were well filled: [x] for he gave them their own desire;

30 They were not estranged from their lust. [y] But while their meat *was* yet in their mouths,

31 The wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them, and ‖ smote down the * chosen *men* of Israel.

x 7. cvi. 13. 21, 22. Deut. xxxii. 18. Jer. ii. 32.
y 42—50 cv 27—38. cxxxv. 9. Ex vii. — xii Deut. iv. 34. vi. 22. Neh ix. 10.
z 43. Num. xiii 22. Is. xix 11 13. Ez. xxx. 14.
a lxvi. 6. cvi. 9, 10. cxxxvi 13—15. Ex xiv xv Is lxiii. 13. 1 Cor. x. 2, 3.
b xxxiii. 7. Josh. iii 16 Hab iii. 15
c cv. 39. Ex. xiii. 21, 22. xiv. 24. xl. 35—38 Neh ix. 12. 19
d cv. 41 cxiv. 8. Ex. xvii 6. Num. xx. 11. Is xli 18. xliii. 20. John vii. 37, 38. 1 Cor. x. 4 Rev. xxii 1 17
e Deut. viii. 15. ix. 21.
f 32. xcv 8—10. cvi. 13—32. Deut. ix 8. 12—22. Heb. iii. 16.
g cvi. 14, 15 Ex. xvi. 2, 3. Num. xi. 4. 1 Cor. x. 6. Jam. iv. 2, 3.
h Ex. xvi. 8—10. Num. xxi 5. 2 Chr xxxii 19. Job xxxiv. 37. Rom ix. 20. Rev xiii. 6.
i Num xi. 4. 13.
* Heb. *order.*
k Ex xvii. 6, 7 Num. xx. 11.
l 41. Gen. xviii. 12—14. Num xi. 21—23.
m 31. Num. xi. 10. 1 Cor. x. 5. 11. Jude 5.
n Num. xi. 1—3. Deut xxxii. 22. Heb xii. 29.
o cvi. 24. Is. vii. 9. Heb. iii. 12. 18, 19. xi. 6. 1 John v. 10.
p xxxiii. 9. Is. v. 6
q Gen. vii. 11. 2 Kings vii. 2. 19. Mal iii. 10.
r lxviii. 9. cv. 40. Ex xvi. 4. Deut. viii. 3 Neh. ix. 15. 20 John vi. 31, &c. 1 Cor. x. 3.
† Or, *Every one did eat the bread of the mighty.* ciii. 20.
s Ex. xvi. 8 Matt. xiv. 20. xv. 37.
t cxxxv. 7. Num. xi. 31.
‡ Heb. *go.*
u Ex. xvi. 12, 13. Num. xi. 18, 19. 32
§ Heb. *fowl of wing.*
x cvi. 15. Num. xi. 20.
y Num. xi 33, 34. xxii 20—22. Prov i. 32 Luke xvi. 19—23.
‖ Heb. *made to bow.*
* Or, *young men.*

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general defeat. In either case, the cowardice of the people was the effect of their unbelief and disobedience. They answered not the expectations formed of them; "they kept not the covenant of God, and refused to walk "in his law."

V. 12. The reader must once for all be referred to the notes, &c. upon the parts of the preceding history, pointed out in the margin, in which all the events here recapitulated have been fully considered. This poetical abstract would greatly assist the people in becoming acquainted with their most instructive history, and preserving a ready remembrance of it.—These miracles were wrought in the most public manner, near Zoan, a principal city of Egypt, in which it seems Pharaoh kept his court.

V. 13—16. These verses are read in some versions in the pluperfect tense. "He had divided, &c." He had wrought these miracles for Israel, before those rebellions which the Psalmist was enumerating; and this rendered their unbelief and disobedience the more inexcusable.—Two rocks were smitten in the wilderness. (*Notes, Ex.* xvii. *Num.* xx.)—'Let us,' saith Bishop Taylor, by the aids of memory and fancy, consider the children of Israel in the wilderness, "in a barren and dry land "where no water was," marching in dust and fire, not wet with the dew of heaven, but wholly without moisture, save only what dropped from their brows:—suppose, I say, these thirsty souls, hearing Moses promise that he would smite the rock, and that a river should break forth from thence: observe how presently they run to the foot of the springing stone, thrust forth their heads and tongues to meet the water, impatient of delay, crying out that the water did not move, like light, all at once: then suppose the pleasure of their drink, the insatiableness of their desire—they took in as much as they could, and they desired much more. This was their sacrament, and this their manner of receiving it. And if that water was a type of our sacrament, or a sacrament of the same secret blessing, then is their thirst a signification of our duty.'

V. 17—31. (*Notes, &c. Num.* xi.) Sometime after the manna and the water from the rock had been vouchsafed, the people began again to murmur and rebel against God; and some of them were consumed by lightning; "and yet for all this his anger was not turned away," because they murmured still more. The table that they insolently required was not the manna, for that had been sent before the water from the rock; and they loathed and despised it as light bread: but they wanted such provisions as the inhabitants of cultivated countries live upon, and these they thought God could not provide in the desert.

32 ¶ For all this [z] they sinned still, and [a] believed not for his wondrous works.

33 Therefore [b] their days did he consume in vanity, and [c] their years in trouble.

34 [d] When he slew them, then they sought him: and they returned and inquired early after God.

35 And [e] they remembered that [f] God *was* their Rock, and the high God [g] their Redeemer.

36 Nevertheless [h] they did flatter him with their mouth, and [i] they lied unto him with their tongues.

37 For [k] their heart was not right with him, neither were they [l] steadfast in his covenant.

38 But [m] he, *being* full of compassion, forgave *their* iniquity, and destroyed *them* not: yea, [n] many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath.

39 For [o] he remembered that they *were but* flesh; [p] a wind that passeth away; and cometh not again.

40 [q] How oft did they * provoke him in the wilderness, *and* [r] grieve him in the desert!

41 Yea, [s] they turned back and tempted God, and [t] limited the Holy One of Israel.

42 They [u] remembered not his hand, *nor* [x] the day when he delivered them from † the enemy.

43 How [y] he had ‡ wrought his signs in Egypt, and his [z] wonders in the field of Zoan;

44 And had [a] turned their rivers into blood; and their floods, that they could not drink.

45 He [b] sent divers sorts of flies among them, which devoured them; and [c] frogs, which destroyed them.

z Num. xiv. xvi. xvii. xxi. 1—6 xxv. Ez. xx. 13. a 22. Luke xvi. 31. John xii. 37. b xc. 7—9. Num. xiv. 29. 35. xxvi. 64, 65. Deut. ii. 14—16. c Gen. iii. 16—19. Job v. 6, 7. xiv. 1. Ec. i. 2, 13, 14. xii. 8, 13, 14. d Num. xxi. 7. Judg. iii. 8, 9. 12—15. iv. 3. x. 7—10. Jer. xxii. 23. Hos. v. 15. vii. 14. e 7. 11. 42. cvi. 13. 21. f Deut. xxxii. 4. 15. 30, 31. g Ex. vi. 6. xv. 13. Deut. vii. 8. xv. 15. Is. xli. 14. xliv. 6. xlvii. 17. lxiii. 8, 9. Tit. ii. 14. h cvi. 12, 13. Is. xxix. 13. Ez. xxxiii. 31. Hos. xi. 12. i xviii. 44. *Marg.* k cxix. 80. Hos. vii. 14. 16. x. 2. Acts viii. 21. l P. xliv. 17. 18. Deut. xxxi. 20. Hos. viii. 1. m cvi. 43—45. Ex. xxxiv. 6—9. Num. xiv. 18—20. xvi. 44—48. Is. xliv. 21, 22 —— n Is. xlviii. 9. Ez. xx. 8, 9. 13, 14. 17. 21, 22.

o ciii. 14—16. Gen. vi. 3. p Job vii. 7. 16. Jam. iv. 14. q 17. xcv. 8—10. cvi. 14—33. Num. xiv. 11. Deu. ix. 21, 22. *Or, *rebel against.* r Is. vii. 13. lxiii. 10. Eph. iv. 30. Heb. iii. 15—17. s Num. xiv. 4. 22. Deut. vi. 16. Acts vii. 39. Heb. iii. 8—11. 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21. t 19, 20. Mark v. 35, 36. u 11. 21. 22. cxxxvi. 10—15. Ex. xiii. 9. Is. xi. 11. Jer. xxxii. 21. x cvi. 7—13. Ex. xiv. 12. 30, 31. † Or, *affliction.* y cv. 27—38. cxxxv. 9. Ex. iii. 19, 20. Deut. iv. 34. vi. Neh. ix. 10. ‡ Heb. *set.* z 12. a cv. 29. Ex. vii. 17—21. Rev. xvi. 3—6. b cv. 31. Ex. viii. 21—24. c cv. 30. Ex. viii. 2—15. Rev. xvi. 13.

Perhaps they endeavoured to persuade themselves, that the manna and the water from the rock, were supplied from natural resources; and only directed or regulated in a supernatural manner by JEHOVAH's power: but they supposed it to be impossible even for Him to furnish bread and flesh to so vast a multitude. This conclusion, after all the works of God which they had witnessed, and his special favours and express promises to them, was exceedingly provoking: he therefore determined to vindicate the honour of his own name, by showing that he was able to *feast*, as well as to *feed* them, in the wilderness: and then, amidst their excessive indulgence, to punish their unbelief and rebellion, by cutting off the most powerful, healthy, and luxurious among them. (*Notes, Num.* xi.) Manna, descending from the clouds, is here called *the corn of heaven*, and *angel's food*, or *the bread of the Mighty*; perhaps because it rendered the people healthy, and vigorous for their marches and wars. But it typified "that "Bread which came down from heaven, and giveth life to "the world;" by which man is brought to feed on angels' food, and to participate their felicity.

V. 32, 33. Here that instance of unbelief and rebellion, which provoked God to exclude the whole generation from the promised land, is peculiarly adverted to: as for that sin, they were condemned to die in the wilderness, without ever enjoying or witnessing the comforts of a cultivated country, a settled abode, and a competent regular provision. Their lives, even more than those of other men, were indeed spent in vanity; and as scarcely any of that vast multitude had arrived at the age of sixty, when their wanderings were ended, ("for indeed the hand of "the LORD was against them to consume them;") it might well be said, according to the original, "their years" were consumed "in an hurry." (*Notes, &c. Num.* xiv.) 'Though they travelled up and down, very long and very 'much, yet it was to no purpose; for they were never the 'nearer their journey's end.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 34. 'Who, that hath been conversant in the house 'of mourning, and about the bed of sickness, but must 'have seen frequent instances of a temporary and deceit-'ful repentance?' (*Horne.*)

V. 35. *Redeemer.* That is, *from Egyptian bondage;* for the bulk of the people understood not that spiritual redemption which was typified by that transaction.

V. 36, 37. 'Such was their hypocrisy, that they sought 'God for fear of punishment, though in their heart they 'loved him not.—Whatsoever cometh not from the pure 'fountain of the heart is hypocrisy.'

V. 38. 'Had God stirred up all his wrath, the Israel-'ites must have been exterminated in the wilderness. But 'then the promises made to Abraham, &c. must have 'failed. Therefore they were not destroyed; judgment 'was executed from time to time upon offenders; but the 'nation subsisted, till the Seed came to whom the promise 'was made. Nay, the race is yet marvellously preserved, 'and we trust in mercy.' (*Horne.*)

V. 39. (*Marg. Ref.*) The frailty of man, as incapable of enduring the wrath of God, is here emphatically described, as well as the divine compassion for such feeble worms: but it is not to be supposed, nor can the language be fairly interpreted to mean, that God considers man's sinful nature as a palliation of his actual rebellions: yet the passage is often thus explained.

V. 41. *Limited, &c.* The Israelites did not believe that God could and would destroy the Anakims before them, and give them the land of Canaan.

V. 45. *Devoured.* This word shows, that besides the loathsomeness of flies and their maggots, a variety of venomous insects, reptiles, or animals, were sent among

46 He [d] gave also their increase unto the caterpillar, and their labour unto the locust.

47 He * destroyed their vines [e] with hail, and their sycamore-trees with † frost.

48 He ‡ gave up their cattle also to the hail, and their flocks to § hot thunderbolts.

49 He [f] cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, [g] by sending evil angels *among them.*

50 He ‖ made way to his anger; [h] he spared not their soul from death, but gave their * life over to the pestilence;

51 And [i] smote all the first-born in Egypt; [k] the chief of *their* strength in [l] the tabernacles of Ham;

52 But [m] made his own people to go forth like sheep, and guided them in the wilderness [n] like a flock.

53 And he led them on safely, [o] so that they feared not: [p] but the sea † overwhelmed their enemies.

54 And he brought them [q] to the border of his sanctuary, *even to* this mountain, *which* [r] his right hand had purchased.

55 He [s] cast out the heathen also before them, and [t] divided them an inheritance by line, [u] and made the tribes of Israel to dwell in their tents.

56 [x] Yet they tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his testimonies;

57 But [y] turned back, and dealt unfaithfully like their fathers: [z] they were turned aside like a deceitful bow.

58 For they provoked him to anger with [a] their high places, and [b] moved him to jealousy [c] with their graven images.

59 When [d] God heard *this,* he was wroth, [e] and greatly abhorred Israel:

60 [f] So that he forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent *which* he placed among men;

61 And delivered [g] his strength into captivity, [h] and his glory into the enemy's hand.

62 He [i] gave his people over also unto the sword; and was [k] wroth with his inheritance.

63 [l] The fire consumed their young men; and [m] their maidens were not ‡ given to marriage.

64 [n] Their priests fell by the sword; [o] and their widows made no lamentation.

d cv. 34 35. Ex. x. 12—15. Joel i. 4—7. ii. 25. Am. vii. 1, 2. Rev. ix 2—11.
* Or, *killed.*
e cv. 32, 33. Ex. ix. 18—34.
† Or, great *hailstones.*
‡ Heb *shut up.*
§ Or, *lightnings.* Ex. ix. 28.
f xi. 6 Job xx. 23. Is. xlii. 25. Lam. iv. 11. Zeph. iii 8. Rom. ii 8, 9.
g 1 Kings xxii 21, 22. Job i. 12. ii. 6, 7.
‖ Heb. *weighed a path.*
h Job xxvii. 22. Ez. v. 11. vii. 4. 9. viii. 18. ix. 10. Rom. viii. 32 2 Pet ii 4, 5.
* Or, *beasts to the murrain* Ex. ix. 3—6.
i cv. 36 cxxxv 8 cxxxvi. 10. Ex. xii. 12. 29, 30. xiii. 15. Heb. xi. 28.
k Gen. xlix. 3.
l cv. 23. cvi. 22. Gen. ix. 22—25. x. 6.
m lxxvii. 20. cv. 37. Neh. ix. 12. Is. lxiii. 11—14.
n xcv. 7. c. 3 Is. xl. 11. Jer. xxiii. 2—4 Ez. xxxiv. 11, &c. Luke xv. 4—6. John x. 11, &c.
o Ex. xiv. 19, 20. Heb. xi. 29.
p cxxxvi. 15. Ex. xiv. 27. xv. 10.
† Heb. *covered.*
q Ex. xv. 13. 17. Dan ix. 16. 20. xi. 45.
r xliv. 3. Eph i 14.
s xliv. 2 cv. 44, 45. cxxxv. 10—12. cxxxvi. 18—22. Josh. vi 21. Neh. ix. 22—25.
t Num xxxiii. 54. Josh. xiii. 7. xix. 51.
u Deut. vi. 10—12.
x 40. 41. Deut. xxxi. 16—20. xxxii. 15—21. Judg. ii. 11, 12. 2 Kings xvii. 7, &c. Neh. ix. 25, 26, Ez. xvi. 15—26.
y 41 Judg. iii. 5—7 12.
z 8—10. 37. Hos. vii. 16.
a Lev. xxvi. 30. Num. xxxiii. 52. Ez xx. 28, 29.
b lxxix. 5 Ex. xxxiv. 14. Deu. xxxii. 16, 17. 21. Ez. viii. 3—5. 1 Cor. x. 22.
c xcvii. 7 Ex. xx. 4, 5. Deut. iv. 16—25. xxvii. 15 Judg. ii. 11. 17. x. 6. 1 Kings xi. 10. Jer viii. 19. Hos xiii. 2.
d xi. 4. xiv. 2—5. Gen. xviii. 20, 21.
e cvi. 40 Lev. xx. 23 xxvi. 44. Lam. ii. 7. Zech. xi 8.
f Josh xviii. 1. 1 Sam. i. 3. iv. 4. 11. Jer. vii. 12—14. xxvi. 6—9.
g cxxxii. 8. Judg. xviii 30. 1 Sam. v. 1, 2. 2 Chr. vi 41.
h xxiv 7. Ex. xl. 34. 1 Sam. vi. 21. 22.
i 1 Sam. iv. 2 10.
k lxxxix. 38. Is. lxiv 9.
l 21. Deut. xxix. 20. xxxii 22.
m Is iv. 1. Jer. vii 34. xvi. 9.

xxv. 10.——† Heb. *praised.*——n 1 Sam. ii. 33. iv. 11. 17. xxii. 18, 19.——o 1 Sam iv. 19, 20. Job xxvii. 15. Ez. xxiv. 23.

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the Egyptians, to bite, and sting, and harass them; and that in many instances their bite or sting was mortal. Indeed the word rendered *divers sorts of flies,* is so general, that even devouring wild beasts may be meant by it as well as insects and reptiles.

V. 49. Perhaps evil angels terrified the Egyptians, during the plague of darkness: they were, however, permitted to deceive and harden them to their destruction. 'A fire kindled of itself very dreadful; they were scared 'with beasts that passed by, and hissing of serpents; they 'were vexed with monstrous apparitions, so that they 'fainted and died for fear; while over them was spread a 'heavy night, an image of that darkness which should 'receive them.' (*Book of Wisdom.*) Such were the traditions of the Jews on this subject, when that apocryphal book was written.

V. 50. *Made a way.* The preceding miracles and judgments, during which the long suffering of God had given the Egyptians space for repentance, had only proved an occasion to them of filling up the measure of their sins; and this made way for the execution of his vengeance.

V. 54. *Purchased.* Or, *claimed,* and *taken possession of,* for the inheritance of his chosen people. The whole land of Canaan seems to have been intended. Notwithstanding Israel's multiplied rebellions, and the terrible judgments inflicted on them, mercy at last prevailed, and the nation enjoyed the promised inheritance.

V. 56—60. The history of Israel, from the death of Joshua, to that of Eli, forms the best comment on these verses. (*Marg. Ref.*) The continually repeated apostacies of the Israelites to idolatry rendered them like a deceitful bow, that never sends the arrows to the mark, but always disappoints the archer's expectations.

V. 61. *Strength,* &c. That is, *The ark,* the symbol of JEHOVAH's protecting presence with his people, and which, as typifying the harmonious display of his perfections in the salvation of Christ, is also called his *glory,* or his *beauty.*

V. 63. The wrath of God gave up the army of Israel into the hands of the Philistines to be consumed as by fire. Thus their young men perished, their enemies triumphed, and their virgins were not *praised,* (according to the custom of commending them in songs, when they were married.) Either they remained single; or in a time of public calamity, amidst the insulting oppressions of their enemies, all the customary tokens of joy were omitted.

V. 64. The wife of Phinehas, hearing of his death, soon expired, and so did not survive to lament her loss: others, perhaps, had been previously taken off; or they were made captives, and dared not lament, lest they should enrage their conquerors.

65 Then [p] the Lord awaked as one out of sleep, [q] *and* like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine.

66 And [r] he smote his enemies in the hinder part: [s] he put them to a perpetual reproach.

67 Moreover [t] he refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim:

68 But [u] chose the tribe of Judah, [x] the mount Zion, which he loved.

69 And [y] he built his sanctuary like [z] high *palaces*, like [a] the earth which he hath * established for ever.

70 He [b] chose David also his servant, [c] and took him from the sheepfolds:

71 † From following [d] the ewes great with young, [e] he brought him to [f] feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance.

72 So he fed them [g] according to the integrity of his heart: and [h] guided them by the skilfulness of his hands.

p vii. 6. xliv. 23. Is. li. 9.
q Is. xlii 13, 14.
r 1 Sam. v 6—12. vi. 4. Job xl. 12.
s Jer xxiii. 40.
t 1 Sam. vi. 21. vii. 1, 2. 2 Sam. vi. 2 17.
u Gen xlix. 8—10. Ruth iv. 17—22. 1 Sam. xvi. 1. 2 Chr. vi. 6.
x lxxxvii. 2. cxxxii 13—14.
y 1 Kings vi. 2. ix. 8. 2 Chr. iii. 4.
z 1 Chr xxix. 1. 19. 2 Chr. ii. 9.
a cii. 25 civ. 5. cxix. 90, 91. 1 Sam. ii. 8. Job xxvi. 7. Is. xlviii. 13 li. 6. Col. i. 16, 17. Rev. xx. 11.

* Heb. *founded.*
b lxxxix. 19, 20. 1 Sam. xvi. 11. 2 Sam. iii. 18. vi. 21. Acts xiii. 22.
c Ex. iii. 1. 10. 1 Sam. xvii. 15, &c. 2 Sam. vii. 8. 1 Kings xix. 19, 20. Am vii. 14, 15. Matt. iv. 18—22.
† Heb *from after.*
d Gen. xxxiii. 13. Is. xl. 11.
e lxxv. 6, 7 cxiii. 7, 8. 1 Sam. ii. 7, 8 Jer. xxvii. 5, 6.
f 2 Sam. v. 2. 1 Chr. xi. 2. Ez. xxxiv 23, 24. Mic. v 2—4.
g lxxv. 2 ci. 1—8.
h 1 Kings iii. 6—9.

Zech. xi. 4, &c Matt ii. 6. *Marg* John xxi. 15—17. 1 Pet. v. 2.—2 Sam. viii. 15. 1 Kings ix. 4. xv. 5 Is. xi. 2—4. Acts xiii. 22. 36.—28. Zech. xi 15—17. 2 Cor. iii. 5, 6. 2 Tim ii 15 Jam. i. 5.

V. 65, 66. While the Philistines were inflicting deserved punishment on the Israelites, the Lord seemed like one asleep, and as not regarding either his people, or even "the Ark of his strength:" but when their resentment or ambition had accomplished his purposes, he suddenly and effectually interposed to rebuke the impious triumphs of the idolaters, and to put them and their idol to a perpetual shame: even as a mighty man of valour would rest, or refresh himself, notwithstanding the advance of the enemy, till the moment arrived for executing his own plan; and then he would burst forth on them with unexpected and irresistible fury. By the emerods, the Lord disgraced as well as discomfited the Philistines; and he constrained them to send back the ark; and by the golden images of the emerods and of the mice that marred the land, they were led to publish and perpetuate their own disgrace.

V. 69. This verse shows that the psalm was written after the building of the temple, and consequently not sooner than eleven or twelve years after the death of David: for the language cannot suit the tabernacle he placed on mount Zion; as that was soon to be superseded by a magnificent temple, which was at length erected so strong, that it appeared likely to stand as long as the earth endured. It was, however, destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar; and though Zion continued the centre of JEHOVAH's worship, till the coming of Christ; yet it has now been trodden under foot of the Gentiles for above seventeen hundred years.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

The instructions of the sacred word are dark sayings to the inattentive and self-confident: and yet they are very plain to the humble, diligent, and obedient inquirer, who earnestly prays for the teaching of the Holy Spirit, and reduces to practice, and realizes in his experience, what he learns from thence. The truths, precepts, and works of God, which have been recorded and transmitted to us by our progenitors, form a sacred deposit, which we must hand down to posterity: "Showing to the generation to "come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his "wonderful works that he hath done; that they too "should arise, and declare them to their children; that "they might set their hope in God, and not forget the "works of God, but keep his commandments." To perform this important duty to good purpose, we must enforce our instructions by a consistent example: and it is awful to think how many parents, by their negligence and wickedness, become the murderers of the souls of their children. But should any young persons read these observations, who cannot but know that their parents are stubborn and rebellious: let them remember, that, though they must not expose their faults, or neglect to submit to them in all things lawful; yet they must neither obey their sinful orders nor copy their examples. On the contrary, they are bound to requite their kindness in things temporal, by earnestly praying for their conversion; and by recommending the profession of the Gospel to them, with the most respectful, obliging, and affectionate behaviour; and by such modest hints, as may consist with the honour due to that superior relation. The lax principles, the disobedience, and the apostacy of many professed Christians, show that they never set their hearts aright, and that their spirit was never steadfast with God: they were never duly humbled and set against sin; they never were weaned from the world, or prepared for the cross and the conflict; they never cordially received the Lord for their Portion and Salvation, counting all but loss in comparison of him. In time of temptation, therefore, like the cowardly Ephraimites, though armed as soldiers, they basely turn their backs on the enemy; "they renounce the covenant of God, and "refuse to walk in his law."

V. 12—55.

We cannot avoid repeating, that in Israel's history we have a picture of our own hearts and lives, and a compendium of the history of the world, and of the church: (*P. Obs. Neh.* ix.) The common benefits afforded by the Creator to the whole human race, when viewed in connexion with our conduct towards him, evidently leave us without excuse. His sun rises to give us light, his rain descends to make the earth fruitful, and the seasons in succession pour forth an exuberance for our use and indulgence: yet these blessings are generally received with unthankfulness, and abused in intemperance; few are content with meat for their use, but almost all crave provision for their lusts, and are unwilling to trust the power and goodness of God for the future. Insensible of the protecting hand of Him, "in whom they live, and move, and are," most men spend their lives in rebellion: and when He is provoked

PSALM LXXIX.

The Psalmist complains to God of the desolations of Jerusalem, and the cruel insults of the heathen, 1—5. He prays for deliverance and forgiveness; and that the Lord would glorify himself, by avenging his people on their oppressors, 6—13.

to bring them into troubles and dangers, there are but few who seem to return to and inquire after him; and the event proves, that most of these few only "flatter him "with their mouth, and lie unto him with their tongues." So that God's patience, and the warnings and mercies which he sends, "to lead men to repentance," embolden them to harden their hearts, and treasure up wrath, until the measure of their iniquities is full; and then he casts upon them the fierceness of his wrath, and gives them up to be hardened and destroyed. The history of kingdoms, is much the same. God hath not indeed dealt with any nation, in every respect, as he did with Israel: but we constantly find that increasing affluence and prosperity have produced proportionable pride, luxury, licentiousness, and impiety: and that judgments and mercies have generally been neglected, or very superficially attended to, until the measure of their sins was filled; and then some other people were employed to execute the vengeance of God upon them. This hath appeared with peculiar evidence, in nations favoured with the word of God and professing his truth. The outward means of grace have been to them like the pillar of cloud and fire, and the Bread and Water of life; and manifold providential favours have been vouchsafed. But where is that nation professing Christianity, which hath not copied Israel's example? Certainly Britain is no exception to this rule. On us the manna hath been rained all around our habitations: and wells of salvation have been opened, and the waters of life have flowed, in almost every corner of our land. We have been equally favoured by an indulgent Providence, and have experienced many former and latter extraordinary deliverances: but neither judgments nor mercies have prevented the rapid increase of infidelity, profligacy, impiety, and oppression. And if under any pressing calamities we have seemed sensible of our obligations and dependence, and have returned, and inquired after God, our Rock and our Redeemer; the event hath detected our base hypocrisy. Hitherto, the Lord, being full of compassion, hath spared us: but if we still forget his mercies, and neglect and abuse his Gospel, what can we expect but that he will cast us off, and number us with the hardened Egyptians, and make a way for his anger, and glorify himself by inflicting judgments on us as singular as our mercies have been?—Even in those collective bodies, which have made a stricter profession of his truth, the case has been similar. Distinguished advantages have not prevented churches, one after another, from degenerating into formality or heresy, from forsaking the covenant and casting off the commandments of God. The profession and knowledge of the truth have in many instances only increased pride and presumption; men have administered the sacred ordinances as mere external forms; and they have rested upon the baptism of water, and the sacramental bread and wine, without the inward and spiritual grace signified by them. (1 *Cor.* x. 1—12.) Many religious societies have split into parties, and turned aside unto vain jangling; many have evidently returned back into the world; and others have declined to superstition and will-worship, and provoked God to jealousy with their high places and graven images: and neither warnings, mercies, nor judgments, have stopped their course, till their candlesticks have been removed, and their privileges given to others. Nor has any collective body yet been found, that hath been durably preserved from such declensions. Let those "which think they "stand, take heed lest they fall." Even true believers are not unconcerned. Many of *them* can recollect, that for years they abused the kindness of Providence into an occasion of sin. The Lord's patience emboldened them in their evil courses; his bounty increased their self-indulgence; and even the warnings of his word, and their convictions of conscience, served to discover their obstinacy in rebellion. Perhaps a near prospect of death sometimes frighted them to their devotions, but upon recovery they relapsed into ungodliness. They must therefore now admire the Lord's compassion and forbearance, in that he did not stir up all his wrath against them and destroy them. At length he came with an out-stretched arm for their deliverance: and he found them slaves of Satan and in love with their bondage, nor could they be persuaded to accede to his invitations; nay, they hated and resisted his truths and convictions, until his new-creating grace had powerfully made them willing. Then he broke off their chains and rescued them from their oppressor; he forgave their sins, and supplied their wants, and opened their way to liberty: and their salvation, in its full latitude, far exceeded in love and power, that which Israel experienced when brought up out of Egypt. Since that time of mercy, he hath guided and guarded them: they have fed upon the Bread of heaven, and drunk water from the wells of salvation. But though many of them have been preserved from scandalous offences; yet how often have they grieved his Holy Spirit, and provoked his chastening rod! Frequently they have been discontented with their temporal provision, and craved meat for their lusts: they have secretly murmured at his appointments, and distrusted his power and love; they have limited him to their methods, and doubted whether he could otherwise provide or deliver! Alas! we have all provoked him by our unbelief, forgetfulness, and ingratitude; and have often been chastened, by having our inordinate desires granted in anger. Severe afflictions have been necessary to recover us from our backslidings; and though we were not mere hypocrites in returning to the Lord, yet we have soon forgotten the salutary lesson: if our hearts have perhaps been *sincere*, yet they have not been *steadfast* with him. So that it is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed with our fellow-sinners; and we have cause to review with shame and gratitude, every stage of our journey through the wilderness. And when we shall come to our inheritance, how shall we admire the Lord's patience and mercy, who

A Psalm * of Asaph.

O GOD, [a] the heathen are come [b] into thine inheritance; [c] thy holy temple have they defiled; [d] they have laid Jerusalem on heaps.

2 [e] The dead bodies of thy servants have they given *to be* meat unto the fowls of the heaven, the flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth.

3 [f] Their blood have they shed like water round about Jerusalem; [g] and *there was* none to bury *them*.

4 We are [h] become a reproach to our neighbours, [i] a scorn and derision to them that are round about us.

5 [k] How long, LORD? [l] wilt thou be angry for ever? shall [m] thy jealousy burn like fire?

* Or, *for*. lxxiv. *title*.
a lxxix. 3, 4. lxxx. 12, 13. 2 Kings xxi 12—16. xxv. 1, &c. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 3, &c. Luke xxi. 24. Rev xi 2.
b lxxiv. 2. lxxviii. 71. Ez. vii. 21. ix. 11.
c lxxiv. 7, 8. 2 Kings xxiv. 13 Lam. i. 10 Ez ix. 7.
d 2 Kings xxv. 9, 10. 2 Chr. xxvi. 19. Jer. xxvi. 18 xxxix. 8. lii. 13. Mic. ii. 12
e Jer. vii. 33. xv. 3. xvi. 4. xxxiv. 20.
f 10. Matt. xxiii 35. Rom viii. 36. Rev xvi 6. xvii. 6. xviii. 24.
g cxli. 7. Jer vi 1, 2. xiv 16. xv 3. xxv. 33. Rev xi. 9.
h xliv. 13, 14 lxxx. 6 lxxxix 41. Jer. xxiv. 9 xxv. 18 xlii. 18. Lam. ii. 15, 16. v 1. Ez. xxxv 12. xxxvi. 3. 15.
i 1 Kings ix. 7 Neh. ii. 19 iv. 1—4
k xiii. 1, 2. lxxiv. 10 lxxx. 4. lxxxix. 46. Rev. vi 10.
l lxxxv. 5. ciii 9. Is lxiv. 9. Mic. vii. 18
m Deut. xxix. 20. xxxii. 15. 22. Ez. xxxvi. 25. Zeph i. 18 iii. 8.

led us forth like a flock, safely, and without cause of fear; who destroyed our enemies, and brought us through every intervening difficulty to the purchased possession of his heavenly kingdom! Then indeed we shall no more distrust or dishonour our God; we shall no more rebel or be ungrateful. In the mean time we should walk humbly and watchfully; trusting only in his mercy, and cheerfully submitting to the discipline and chastisement, which our remaining perverseness renders necessary, and praying daily that we may profit by all our trials and all our miscarriages.

V. 56—72.

The church at large is also concerned in this review. God's power and mercy have been as conspicuous, in preserving her from being ruined by intestine corruptions, as in protecting her against external violence. Her history from the beginning, to the coming of the Redeemer, hath appeared to be a constant succession of gracious interpositions of God in her behalf, requited with continual rebellions and apostacies. Often did the Lord pour contempt upon the externals in which his professing people confided; and even delivered the ark of his glory and strength into captivity, and suffered their priests to be massacred by the heathen: yet in due time he arose again for their help, and put their enemies to shame, or cast them down into destruction. This appears very remarkably in the history of Israel till the days of David, whom he took from the sheep-folds to rule and feed his people, and to promote their prosperity and religious advantage. And their consequent history, until the coming of the Son of David, is of the same kind. Then Christianity succeeded to the Mosaic dispensation; and Jerusalem being desolated, the Jews were cast out of the church: and under the rule and guidance of the good Shepherd, who feeds his flock with the most perfect integrity and skilfulness, one would have expected a better state of affairs. Yet the history of the Christian church hitherto hath been of the same cast; and nothing but the patience of God could have borne with the abominations which have prevailed among men who are called by the name of Christ. Nor are matters yet much mended: and the experimental trial, which God hath made of human nature, under every dispensation, confirms his testimony, "that the heart is deceitful above all "things, and desperately wicked:" and that nothing but a new creation by the power of the Holy Ghost, can cure any of the human race, of their propensity to ungodliness and iniquity. May the Lord then arise as one awaked out of sleep, and put his enemies to a perpetual reproach! may he purify and unite his church; and raise up kings and pastors like David and like Christ, under whom his work may prosper, and true religion spread throughout the earth! And let us not limit our God: He can do all things, and can easily form proper instruments and make them successful, and render true piety as universal as iniquity hath hitherto been. But let every reader fear the doom of his enemies, and read with reverent attention, in the history of the Egyptians, and of those Israelites whose days were consumed in vanity and their years in trouble, the power of the wrath of God against the workers of iniquity. Let us all diligently seek the privileges of his true people, whom he spares and pities, as a father doth his children; "for he remembereth that they are but flesh; a wind that passeth away and cometh not again:" but let us be careful not to grieve our kind Friend, by distrust and ingratitude, and forgetfulness of his mercies, which will tend to our own loss. And if we would be useful and honourable in our generation, we must learn to stoop, to labour, to deny ourselves, and to be faithful and diligent in lower situations. For persons of this character have often been advanced to more eminent stations: and if as magistrates or ministers they feed the Lord's flock with integrity and skill, in the judgment of candid and liberal men, it will prove no real objection or reproach to them, though they have been educated with Moses, with Amos, and with David, in tending sheep; with Elisha in following the plough, or with the apostles in the fisherman's boat, or even at the receipt of custom.

NOTES.

PSALM LXXIX. V. 1—5. This psalm unavoidably leads our thoughts to the Babylonish captivity: yet some think that it was written long before; the Holy Spirit directing the Psalmist thus to furnish the church with proper meditations, in all such seasons of public calamity. (*Notes, &c. Deut.* xxxii. *Ps.* xliv. lxxiv.)—When Judah was desolated by hostile armies, the heathen possessed the inheritance that God had given his people. When Jerusalem was taken, the temple was profaned and destroyed; part of the inhabitants were buried in the ruins of the city; and others of them, whose blood was shed abundantly on every side, were left to be devoured by birds and beasts of prey: thus God's people were exposed to reproach and contempt, because they had provoked him to jealousy by their idolatries. The case hath often been similar, when persecutors and corrupters of the faith have profaned the church, and murdered the saints of God. 'To behold, or even to imagine, heaps of slaughtered bodies, lying unburied, and

6 [n] Pour out thy wrath [o] upon the heathen that [p] have not known thee, and upon the kingdoms [q] that have not called upon thy name.

7 For [r] they have devoured Jacob, and [s] laid waste his dwelling-place.

8 [t] O remember not against us * former iniquities; [u] let they tender mercies speedily prevent us: for [x] we are brought very low.

9 Help us, O God of our salvation, [y] for the glory of thy name; and deliver us, [z] and purge away our sins, [a] for thy name's sake.

10 [b] Wherefore should the heathen say, Where *is* their God? [c] let him be known among the heathen in our sight, [d] *by* the † revenging of the blood of thy servants *which is* shed.

11 Let [e] the sighing of the prisoner come before thee; [f] according to the greatness of ‡ thy power preserve thou those that are § appointed to die;

12 And [g] render unto our neighbours sevenfold into their bosom their reproach, [h] wherewith they have reproached thee, O Lord.

13 So we [i] thy people and sheep of thy pasture will give thee thanks for ever: [k] we will shew forth thy praise to ‖ all generations.

n lxix 42. Is. xlii. 25 Rev. xvi. 1. &c.
o Is xlii. xxiii. xlv. Jer. x. 25 xxv. 29. xlvi. li.
p ix. 16, 17. Is. xlv. 4, 5. John xvi 3. xvii 25. Acts xvii. 23. Rom. i. 28 2 Thes. i. 8.
q xiv 4. cxlv. 18. Rom. x. 12—14. 1 Cor. i 2.
r lxxx. 13. Is. ix. 12. Jer. l. 7 li. 34. 35. Zech. i. 15.
s 2 Chr. xxxvi. 21 Is. xxiv. 1—12 lxiv 10.
t xxv 7. Ex. xxxiv. 9. 1 Kings xvii. 18. Is. lxiv. 9. Hos. viii. 13. ix. 9. Rev. xviii. 5.
* Or, *the iniquities of them that were before us.* Gen xv. 16. Ez. ii. 3. Dan ix. 16 Matt. xxiii 32, 33.——u xx. 13. lxix. 16, 17.
x cvi. 43. cxvi. 6. cxlii 6. Deut. xxviii 43.——y cxv. 1. 2 Chr. xiv. 11 Mal ii. 2. Eph. i. 6.——z xxv. 11. lxv. 3. Dan. ix. 9. 19.——a Josh. vii. 9. Is. xliii. 25 xlviii. 9 Jer. xiv. 7. Ez. xx. 9. 14——b xlii. 3. 10. cxv. 2. Joel ii 17 Mic. vii. 10
c ix 16. lviii. 11. lxxxiii. 17, 18. Ex. vi. 7. vii. 5. Ez. xxxvi. 23. xxxix. 22
d Jer. li. 36. Rev. xviii 20
† Heb *vengeance.* Rom xii 19.
e xii. 5. lxix. 33. cii. 20. Is. xlii. 7
f cxlvi. 6, 7. Num. xiv. 17—19. Matt. vi. 13. Eph iii. 20.
‡ Heb. *thine arm.* Is. xxxiii 2.
§ Heb. *the children of death.* cii. 20
g Gen iv. 15. Lev. xxvi. 21. 28 Is lxv. 6, 7. Jer xxxii 18. Luke vi. 38.
h xliv. 16 lxxiv. 18 22.
i lxxiv. 1. xcv. 7. c. 3
k xlv. 17. cxlv. 4. Is. xliii. 21
‖ Heb. *generation and generation.*

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exposed to birds and beasts of prey, is inexpressibly shocking to humanity: but with what unconcern are we accustomed to view on all sides multitudes dead in trespasses and sins, torn in pieces, and devoured by wild passions, filthy lusts, and infernal spirits, those dogs and vultures of the moral world? Yet to a discerning eye and a thinking mind, the latter is by far the more melancholy sight of the two.' (*Horne.*)

V. 6, 7. The Jews deserved their sufferings from God; but their ravagers were extremely unjust, cruel, and impious. As the church cannot be delivered without the confusion and destruction of implacable persecutors; so we cannot pray for the one, without at least implying the other. Jeremiah has the same prayer with little variation; but whether he took it from this psalm, or the Psalmist from him, is not agreed; though the latter is most probable. The Chaldeans, whose destruction God had foretold, were especially meant: and so far from worshipping JEHOVAH, they blasphemed him, and cruelly oppressed his worshippers.

V. 8—13. The Psalmist does not plead, as in some other places, that his people, though oppressed and persecuted, were free from the guilt of idolatry and other atrocious crimes: but supposing them and their fathers to have been so criminal as to deserve extirpation, (to which they seemed fast approaching;) he draws all his pleas from the compassion and tender mercies of God; from his *regard*, or rather *zeal*, for the honour of his name, which the idolaters would insolently blaspheme, if Israel should be destroyed; from the abject condition to which they were reduced, in which, unless prevented by speedy help, they must perish; from the greatness of his power; and that he might still have a people to praise his name to the end of time. The word rendered *purge away* our sins, means *cover them with an atonement.* No sacrifices were offered during the captivity, but this was a prayer for the restoration of the temple, and those expiatory oblations that typified the great atonement of Christ, which purgeth away the guilt of all believers, to the praise of the glory of God. Some expressions toward the close are so like those used by the martyrs and saints in St. John's prophetical vision, or revelation, that it seems obvious to conclude, the captivity of the church, under the New Testament-Babylon to have been specially intended by the Holy Spirit. (*Marg. Ref.*) The plea, taken from the greatness of JEHOVAH's power, exactly resembles that doxology which concludes the Lord's prayer. "For thine "is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever "and ever. Amen."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We ought to be thankful, that we are not called to resist unto blood, and that the murderous rage of persecution is suspended for a season. Yet it is grievous to consider how many, who are *heathens* in their tempers and conduct, occupy important stations in the visible church, by which the holy temple is defiled, and Christianity is exposed to the reproach and scorn of infidels. It is also lamentable that the horrors and carnage of war are so much known, betwixt nations professing themselves the disciples of the Prince of peace, and that ambition and avarice shed the blood of Christians like water on every side, and render Jerusalem as it were a heap of ruins. The believer has also continual cause to lament, that the revival of indwelling sin, and the incursions of temptation, often pollute his body and soul, which are "the temple of God." But every trouble, personal or public, springs from the anger of God, whom we often provoke to jealousy by our idolatrous attachments to earthly objects. We should therefore first deprecate his wrath, and seek the forgiveness of our iniquities; and beseech the God of our salvation to cleanse away the pollution and the guilt of our sins: and then he will prevent us with his tender mercies, and deliver us, however low we may be brought. When our calamities, or those of the church, give occasion to infidels and blasphemers to reproach the gospel, or to inquire, "Where is our God?" we have a prevailing plea in prayer; for wherefore should such persons have cause given them to triumph over the Lord's servants? But we have no cause to be uneasy on our own account, if we be reproached for our piety or our sufferings: we should chiefly fear being reproached for acting inconsistently with our profession. We ought, however, to pray for the deli-

PSALM LXXX.

The Psalmist prays for the tokens of God's special presence with his people, and deprecates his displeasure, 1—7. The former and present state of Israel is represented by a vine, planted, and flourishing heretofore, but now wasted and trodden down, 8—13. A prayer that the Lord would cause this vine again to prosper, 14—19.

[a] xlv. lx. *titles.* To the chief Musician upon [a] Shoshannim Eduth, a Psalm * of Asaph.

[b] GIVE ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that [d] leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that [e] dwellest *between* the cherubims, [f] shine forth.

2 [g] Before Ephraim, and Benjamin, and Manasseh, [h] stir up thy strength, and † come *and* save us.

3 [i] Turn us again, O God, and [k] cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

4 O LORD God of hosts, [l] how long wilt thou ‡ be angry against the prayer of thy people?

5 Thou [m] feedest them with the bread

* Or, *for Asaph.*

[b] v. 1. lv. 1. [c] xxiii. 1. Is. xl. 11. Ez. xxxiv. 23. John x. 14. Heb. xiii. 20. 1 Pet. ii. 25. [d] lxxvii. 20. lxxviii. 52. Is. xlix. 9, 10. lxiii. 11. John x. 3, 4. [e] xcix. 1. Ex. xxv. 20—22. 1 Sam. iv. 4. 2 Sam. vi. 2. 2 Kings xix. 15. Ez. ix. 3. x. 4. [f] 3, 7, 19. 1 2 Deu. xxxiii. 2. Job x. 3. Is. lx. 1. Ez. xliii. 2. Dan. ix. 17. Rev. xxi. 23. [g] Num. ii. 18—23. x. 21—24. [h] xxxv. 23. xliv. 23—26. lxxviii. 38. Is. xlii. 13, 14.

† Heb. *come for salvation to us.* Is. xxv. 9. xxxiii. 22.——[i] 7, 19. lxxxv. 4. 1 Kings xviii. 37. Jer. xxxi. 18, 19. Lam. v. 21.——[k] 1. iv. 6. lvii. 1. cxix. 135. Num. vi. 25, 26.——[l] lxxxv. 5. Is. lviii. 2, 3. 6—9. Lam. iii. 44. Matt. xv. 22—28. Luke xviii. 1—8.——‡ Heb. *smoke.* lxxiv. 1. Deut. xxix. 20.——[m] xlii. 3. cii. 9. Job vi. 7. Is. xxx. 20. Ez. iv. 16, 17.

verance of the church from the contempt, as well as oppressions, of her enemies; and in so doing, should our prayers for *their* conversion not be granted, they will eventually be answered in the ruin of all such as "devour "Jacob, and lay waste his dwelling place." The blood of God's servants will at length be avenged seven-fold upon those who shed it, and do not repent: and his wrath will be poured out upon all kingdoms, families, and persons, who have not known, or called upon, his name. But by the greatness of his power, and for the glory of his name, he will rescue his oppressed people: their sighing in captivity and in imprisonment come before him; and he will either preserve the lives of those whom persecutors appoint to die, or he will receive them to glory. So that the harmless sheep of his pasture will give him thanks for ever, according to the desire of their hearts; a succession of believers shall praise him to all generations; and the cause of God, however now run down, will finally triumph upon earth, as well as eternally in heaven.

NOTES.

PSALM LXXX. *Title.* Many are of opinion, that this psalm was written at the time when Jerusalem was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar: but some think that it relates to the desolations made by Sennacherib. Because, after the destruction of the city and temple by Nebuchadnezzar, God no longer "dwelt between the cherubim," above the mercy-seat; as the ark and the mercy-seat, and the cherubim of gold, were destroyed, and never replaced: nor is the Lord, ever after that event, thus spoken of in Scripture; but Hezekiah, praying against Sennacherib, addressed God by this very title. (*Is.* xxxvii. 16, 17.) The Septuagint also expressly calls this, "A psalm "against the Assyrian." Again, Ephraim, and Manasseh, (2) seem to have had little concern in the affairs of Judah, at the time of the Babylonish captivity: but during the reign of Hezekiah, many of these, and the other tribes constituting the kingdom of Israel, accepted of his invitation, joined the Jews in keeping the passover, and afterwards assisted in breaking down the idolatrous high places and altars, not only in Judah, and in Benjamin as connected with Judah; but likewise in Ephraim and Manasseh, (2 *Chr.* xxxi. 1.) Yet just afterwards Sennacherib invaded the land, reduced the remnant of the ten tribes to abject slavery, over-ran Judah, and threatened to destroy Jerusalem and the temple. It was therefore natural, at this crisis, to implore, that God would stir up his strength, and come to save Judah; and thus show his glory, in the presence of Benjamin, in whose lot part of Jerusalem and of the temple was situated, and also before Ephraim and Manasseh, to encourage them, and to show that God approved Hezekiah's zeal for reformation.

V. 1. The Psalmist seems to have offered this prayer, not for Judah only, but for the whole nation of Israel, including the ten tribes, which were subjugated, carried captive, and scattered by the Assyrians. JEHOVAH "the "Shepherd of Israel," the Protector, Ruler, and Guide of that favoured nation, had led Joseph, as well as Judah, like a flock, out of Egypt, through the desert and into Canaan: and there he dwelt between the cherubim, at Shiloh, in the tribe of Ephraim, before the ark was stationed at Jerusalem. The Psalmist therefore, remembering these ancient displays of the glory of God in the midst of his people, implores him again to shine forth in the splendour of his power, truth, and love, to dismay their enemies, and to rescue and cheer his worshippers. This divine interposition is represented by the breaking forth of the sun after a dismal tempest, and that pleasing change which ensues.

V. 2. These three tribes marched immediately after the ark and the cherubim by divine appointment in the wilderness, which seems to be here alluded to.

V. 3. In order to renewed prosperity and comfort, the Psalmist was well aware, that a revival of pure religion was necessary; and therefore he repeatedly prayed, and thus taught the people to pray, for renewing or converting grace, in order that God might cause "his face to shine "on them, &c." (*Note*, iv. 6.)

V. 4. This verse seems to mark out the time of Sennacherib's invasion, and his rapid success, notwithstanding the zeal of Hezekiah, Isaiah, and others for reformation, and their continual prayers for the interposition of God in behalf of his people. 'The faithful fear God's anger, 'when they perceive that their prayers are not forthwith 'heard.'

of tears; and givest them tears to drink in great measure.

6 [n] Thou makest us a strife unto our neighbours: and [o] our enemies laugh among themselves.

7 [p] Turn us again, O God of hosts, and cause thy face to shine; and [q] we shall be saved.

8 ¶ Thou hast brought [r] a vine out of Egypt: [s] thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it.

9 Thou [t] preparedst *room* before it, and didst cause it [u] to take deep root, [x] and it filled the land.

10 The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof *were like* the * goodly cedars.

11 [y] She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river.

12 Why hast thou *then* [z] broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her?

n Jer. xv. 10.
o xliv. 13, 14. lxxix. 4. Judg. xvi. 25. Is. xxxvi. 8. 12—20 xxxvii. 23. Jer. xlviii. 27. Ez. xxxvi. 4. Rev. xi. 10.
p 3. 19. li. 10. Luke i. 16, 17.
q Is. xxx. 15. lxiv. 5. Jer. iv. 14. Mark iv 12.
r Is. v. 1—7 xxvii. 2, 3. Jer. ii. 21 Ez. xv. 6. xvii. 6. Matt xxi. 33, &c. John xv. 1.
s xliv. 2. lxxviii. 55. Jer. xviii 9, 10.
t cv 44. Ex. xxiii. 28—30. Josh xxiv. 13—15 Neh ix. 22—25.
u Is xxvii. 6. xxxvii. 31. Jer. xii. 2
x 1 Kings iv. 20 25 1 Chr. xxi 5 xxvii. 23. 24.
* Heb. *cedars of God.* civ. 16.
y lxxii. 8 Gen. xv.18. Ex. xxiii. 31. 1 Kings iv. 21. 24. 1 Chr. xviii. 3.
z lxxxix. 40, 41. Is.v. 5. xxiii. 5, 6. Nah. ii. 2. Luke xx. 16.

18 [a] The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it.

14 [b] Return, we beseech thee, O God of hosts: [c] look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine;

15 And [d] the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, and [e] the Branch *that* thou madest strong for thyself.

16 *It* [f] *is* burned with fire, *it is* cut down: [g] they perish at the rebuke of thy countenance.

17 Let thy hand be upon [h] the man of thy right hand, upon the son of man *whom* thou madest strong for thyself.

18 [i] So will not we go back from thee: [k] quicken us, and we will call upon thy name.

19 [l] Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts, [m] cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

a 2 Kings xviii. xix xxiv. xxv. 2 Chr. xxxii. xxxvi. Jer. iv. 7. xxxix. 1—3. li. 34. lii. 7. 12—14.
b vii 7. xc. 13. Is. lxiii. 17. Joel ii. 14. Mal. iii. 7. Acts xv. 16.
c xxxiii 13. Is. lxiii. 15 Lam. iii. 50. Dan. ix. 16—19.
d 8. Is. v. 1, 2 Jer. ii. 21. Mark xii. 1. John xv. 1
e lxxxix. 21. Is. xi. 1. xlix. 5. Jer. xxiii 5, 6. Ez xvii. 22—24. Zech vi. 12.
f lxxix. 5 Is. xxvii. 11. Ez. xx 47, 48. John xv. 6.
g xxxix. 11. lxxvi. 6, 7. xc. 7. 2 Thes. i. 9
h 15. cx. 1. Dan vii. 13, 14. John v 21—29.
i lxxix. 13. John vi. 66—69. Heb x. 38, 39.
k lxxxv. 6. cxix. 25. 37 40. 107. 154. 156. Cant. i. 4 Phil ii. 12, 13.
l 3 7. Jer. iii 22, 23.
m 1. xxvii. 4, 9. xxxi. 16. xliv. 3.

V. 5, 6. The afflictions of Israel were so heavy and of such long continuance, that their bread seemed to be dipped in, and their cup filled to the brim with, their tears; whilst their neighbours contended about dividing their spoil, and derided their miseries. The original word for *great measure*, means a large cup, and much larger than those which were commonly used to drink from.

V. 8—13. The nation of Israel, brought out of Egypt, planted in Canaan, (whose ancient inhabitants were extirpated to make room for it,) and favoured with many great advantages, temporal and spiritual, above all other nations, is here represented under the emblem of a vine planted in a well-cultivated vineyard. The people so multiplied and prospered, especially in the days of David and Solomon, that this vine, having taken deep root, overspread the whole country, from the Mediterranean sea to the river Euphrates; and its luxuriant branches grew strong like cedars, or covered the cedars to the top, by clinging to them. But nothing is here said of its fruitfulness; for it brought forth wild grapes; which was the reason why the heathen were allowed to desolate the land, as the wild boar would waste a vineyard; and why the Romans were afterwards permitted to destroy Jerusalem; and why the Lord took from the Jews their peculiar privileges, and conferred them on the Gentile churches: (*Note.*)—The vine is a constant emblem of the church of Christ, under every dispensation. It is a feeble tree, which needs support, and is of no value except for its excellent fruit. It produces a vast quantity of luxuriant branches, which not only yield no grapes, but must be pruned away, or they will hinder those upon the fruitful branches from ripening. Thus mere professors of Christianity are branches of the true Vine which must be taken away, and cast into the fire, in order that true believers may become more abundantly fruitful. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 15. The family of David, (which God had advanced and prospered, for the good of Israel, and for his own glory,) as typical of Christ, was perhaps meant by this Branch. Yet Christ himself, even the promised Messiah, seems to have been principally intended. The Septuagint translates the word, 'The Son of Man.'

V. 16. The vine above described, (or the nation which God had brought out of Egypt and planted in Canaan,) was in great measure cut down and burned with fire, by the dispersion of the ten tribes, and the success of the Assyrians in Judah; and though a remnant still remained, and a strong branch of David's race; yet if the anger of God were not turned away from them, they likewise must soon perish.

V. 17, 18. This may imply a request that God would strengthen and protect his king of David's race on the throne of Judah, for the protection of his people and the maintenance of true religion. But "the Man of God's "right hand," "the Son of man, &c." point out the promised Messiah very clearly, and may be considered as a prayer of the church for his coming, as "the power of "God," for the conversion of sinners, and the salvation of his people. Those who refer the psalm to the Babylonish captivity, interpret the preceding verse of the subversion of the kingdom, in the family of David after the death of Josiah: and these as a prayer for another king of the same race to be advanced to the throne; in order that the people might be induced and encouraged to adhere to the worship of God, and to call on him in every time of trouble.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

He who dwelleth on the mercy seat is the good Shepherd of his people, and leads them as a valued flock with all attention and tenderness. In all troubles and dangers let us beseech him to shine upon our souls and upon our path, that we may be cheered and directed by his presence

PSALM LXXXI.

An exhortation to praise God with Psalms and musical instruments, especially on the solemn feasts, 1—3. *God demanded this, because of his kindness to Israel,* 4—7. *He commands the people to renounce idolatry, and trust in him alone; and complains of their disobedience, which had turned to their own loss,* 8—16.

To the chief Musician upon [a] Gittith, *A Psalm* * of Asaph.

[a] viii. *title.*
* Or, *for Asaph.*

[b] SING aloud unto God [c] our Strength: [d] make a joyful noise unto [e] the God of Jacob.

2 Take [f] a Psalm, and bring hither the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psaltery.

3 [g] Blow up the trumpet [h] in the new moon, in the time appointed, on [i] our solemn feast-day.

4 For this *was* a statute for Israel, *and* a law of the God of Jacob.

5 This he ordained [k] in Joseph [l] *for* a testimony, when he went out † through [i] the land of Egypt: [m] *where* I heard a language *that* I understood not.

b lxvii. 4. Jer. xxxi. 7.
c xviii. 1, 2. xxviii. 7. lii. 7. Phil. iv. 13.
d xxxiii. 1—3. xlvii. 1—7. lxvi. 1. c 1, 2.
e xlvi. 11. Gen. l. 17. Mat. xxii. 32.
f xcii 3. xcv. 1, 2. cxlix. 1—3. Mark xiv. 26. Eph v. 19. Col. iii. 16. Jam. v. 13
g xcviii 6. Num. x. 1—9. 1 Chr. xv. 24 xvi. 6. 42 2 Chr. v. 12. xiii. 12, 13.
h Lev. xxiii. 24. Num. x. 10. xxviii. 11. 2 Kings iv 23. Col. ii. 16.
i Num. xv. 3. Deut xvi. 15. 2 Chr. ii 4 viii 13. Lam. ii. 6. Nah. i. 15
k lxxvii 15 lxxx. 1, 2 Am. vi 6.——l lxxviii. 5. Ex. xiii. 8, 9 14—17. Deu iv. 45. Ez. xx. 20.——† Or *against.* Ex. xii. 12 27. 29.——m cxiv. 1. Deut xxxii. 29. Is. xxviii. 11. Jer. v. 15. 1 Cor. xiv 21, 22

and favour: and let us entreat him continually to stir up his strength, and come and save us. But we can neither expect the comforts of his love, nor the protection of his powerful arm, except we are partakers of his converting grace. When we discover our need of this invaluable blessing, we ought to pray earnestly for it: the same must be our conduct when we have lost our comfort, and are exposed to rebukes by having relapsed into sin, and are become sensible of the necessity of returning to the Lord our Rest: and in all public calamities, of churches or nations, we must observe the same order, and pray to be prepared by renewing grace for returning comfort and prosperity. The Lord is *really angry* at the prayers of the hypocrite, who employs them as a cloak for his iniquity: but not with those of any sinner, however vile, who sincerely seeks his mercy and grace. Yet whilst He proves our sincerity, and increases our humility and fervency, by delays, we often think that he is *angry* against our prayers, and will not accept them: but we shall certainly find the contrary, if we persevere in asking and seeking. The church of God in times of grievous oppressions, and the believer in times of darkness and distress, (especially when occasioned by sin,) may for a while be sunk in sorrows, and exposed to contempt and reproach: but when this leads to repentance, having sown in tears they will reap in more abundant joy. When we, in this favoured land, consider our manifold advantages, and our very disproportionate improvement of them, we shall perceive great cause for humiliation. We are planted, as in a well cultivated enclosure, with every means of being fruitful in the works of righteousness: but, alas! the useless leaves of profession, and the empty boughs of notions and forms abound far more than substantial piety and charity. The Christian religion, also, as planted by the apostles and primitive evangelists, took deep root, and hath spread very wide, so that it hath filled many nations: but it hath too generally proved an empty vine. The Lord's zeal for the honour of his own truth, precepts, and ordinances, may be pleaded with him as a reason, why he should not break down the hedges, and permit infidels and heretics to root up the vineyard; and may suggest an inquiry why he permits them so long to practise and prosper? But when we consider the state of the purest parts of the visible church, we cannot wonder that we are visited with sharp corrections. He, however, who is not only the strongest Branch, but the Root and Stem of the vine; who is the man of God's right hand, "the Son of man whom the Father hath "made so strong for himself," hath been carried through his work for his church, and is possessed of all power in heaven and earth *for* her benefit. The vine cannot therefore be ruined, nor can any fruitful branch perish: but the unfruitful will be cut off and cast into the fire. Let us then come to him and abide in him, "without whom we "can do nothing;" let us beg of him to uphold and strengthen us, that we may not go back from him: and let us still call upon his name, in behalf of ourselves and of the whole church: "Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts, "cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved."

NOTES.

PSALM LXXXI. V. 1—5. It is probable that this psalm was composed in the time of David, when the ark had been removed to mount Zion; and that it was especially intended for the new moons, and that in particular which began the seventh month, called the feast of trumpets, or the new year according to the old computation. (*Notes, Ex.* xii. 2. *Lev.* xxiii. 24, 25. *Num.* x. 2—10. xxix. 1—6.) Some think that on this day Moses came down from the mount the second time, with the tables of the law, and full orders to erect a tabernacle, in the most sacred place of which these tables might be placed in the ark of the covenant, and covered with the mercy-seat, over which the glory of God, as dwelling among his people, was displayed; and that this day was observed as a *memorial* of that event, and a *testimony* of the relation which subsisted between God and Israel. The word rendered *psalm*, may signify *the instruments of psalmody*, some of which are afterwards enumerated—'Joseph's family was counted the 'chief before that of Judah was preferred.' No doubt the descendants of Joseph were counted the chief, during most of the time that the Israelites continued in Egypt; as Joseph had there been the protector of the whole family.—God went *through* the land of Egypt destroying all the first-born; or *against* the land in all the plagues he inflict-

6 [n] I removed his shoulder from the burden: his hands * were delivered [o] from the † pots.

7 [p] Thou calledst in trouble, and I delivered thee; I answered thee in [q] the secret place of thunder: [r] I proved thee at the waters of ‡ Meribah. Selah.

8 [s] Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto thee: O Israel, [t] if thou wilt hearken unto me;

9 [u] There shall no [x] strange god be in thee; neither shalt thou worship any strange god.

10 [y] I *am* the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: [z] open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.

11 But [a] my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel [b] would none of me.

12 So [c] I gave them up unto § their own hearts' lust: *and* [d] they walked in their own counsels.

13 [e] Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, *and* Israel had walked in my ways!

14 [f] I should soon have subdued their enemies, and [g] turned my hand against their adversaries.

15 [h] The haters of the LORD should have ‖ submitted themselves unto him: but [i] their time should have endured for ever.

n Ex. i. 14. vi 6. Is. ix. 4. x. 27. Matt. xi. 29.
* Heb. *passed away.*
o lxviii. 13.
† Or, *baskets.*
p l. 15. xci 14, 15. Ex. ii 23. xiv. 10 30, 31.
q Ex. xiv 24. xix. 19. xx. 18—21.
r Ex. xvii. 6, 7. Num. xx 13. 24. Deut. xxxiii. 8.
‡ Or, *strife.*
s l. 7. Deu xxxii. 46. Is. lv. 3, 4. John iii. 11. 32, 33. Acts xx. 21.
t 1 John v. 9.
u 13. xiv. 7. Ex. xv. 26. Deut. v. 27. Is. i. 19.
x Ex. xx. 3—5. 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6.
y Deut. vi. 14. xxxii. 12 Is. xliii. 12. Mal. ii. 11.
z Ex xx. 2 Jer. xi 4 xxxi. 31—33.——z xxxvii. 4. John vii. 37 xv. 7. xvi 22. Eph. iii. 19, 20. Rev. xxi. 6 xxii. 17.

a cvi. 12, 13 Jer. ii. 11—13. vii. 23, 24. Zech. vii. 11.
b Ex. xxxii. 1. Deut. xxxii. 15. Pro i 30. Heb. x. 29
c Gen. vi 3. Acts vii 42. xiv. 16. Rom. i. 26, 28. 2 Thes. ii. 9—11.
§ Or, *the hardness of their hearts,* or, *imaginations.*
d Ex xi 9 Is. xxx. 1. Jer. vii. 24 xliv. 16, 17.
e Deut v. 29 x. 12, 13 xxxii 29. Is. xlviii 18. Matt xxiii 37. Luke xix 41, 42.
f Num xiv 9. 45. Josh xxiii 13. Judg. ii. 20—23.
g Am. i. 8 Zech xiii. 7.
h lxxxiii 2, &c. Ex xx. 5. Deu vii 10 John xv. 22, 23. Rom. i. 30. viii. 7.——‖ Or, *yielded feigned obedience.* Heb. *lied.* xviii. 44. lxvi. 3. *Marg.* i cii. 28. Is. lxv 22. Joel iii. 20.

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ed: yet the feast of trumpets did not take place till almost seven months after Israel left Egypt; for their deliverance was in some sense incomplete, till Moses descended the second time from the mount, with the tokens of God's reconciliation to his offending people. In the last clause, the Psalmist evidently speaks in the name of the nation, or the church of God, a corporate body from age to age. It seems that the Israelites understood not the language of their haughty oppressors, which would tend to render their bondage more distressing. (cxiv. 1.)

V. 6. It is evident that the Lord himself speaks through the remainder of the psalm, though the change of person is not noticed. Some suppose that the voice of God, with which Israel in Egypt was unacquainted, was meant by *the language which he understood not;* and then this and the following verses may be considered as a recapitulation of God's messages to the nation by Moses during the events attending its deliverance. God then said to them; "I re-" move thy shoulder, &c." It is not certain what is meant by *the pots:* whether any earthen vessels which the Israel ites were employed to make; or the kilns in which the bricks were burnt; or the brazen pots, in which the food for this immense number of slaves was prepared, the flesh-pots which they afterwards regretted.

V. 7. *The secret,* &c. Some think that this refers to the cloudy pillar, from the *hidden recess* of which JEHOVAH spake in mercy to his people, and as in thunder to his ene mies. But perhaps mount Sinai is meant, from whose inaccessible summit, out of the midst of the thunder and lightning, the Lord spake the ten commandments; the first of which is afterwards referred to. (*Notes, Ex.* xix. xx.)

I proved, &c. (*Notes, Ex.* xvii. *Num.* xx. 1—13.)

V. 8—10. The old translation of these verses seems as literal as the present version, and more expressive. "Hear, " O my people, and I will protest unto thee; O Israel, if " thou wilt hearken unto me; and wilt have no strange " god in thee, neither worship any strange god; (*For* I am " the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land " of Egypt;) Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." 'If ' thou adherest to the worship of JEHOVAH alone, according ' to the terms of the national covenant; I will grant the ' largest desires of thy heart and requests of thy lips.'—According to the present translation of the ninth verse, the future is evidently put for the imperative: and it means " Let no strange God, &c." 'There will be no need, I will ' abundantly supply all thy wants:' and the larger their desires and expectations, and the more copious and comprehensive their prayers were, the more abundantly would they receive from his all-sufficiency. It is almost impossible not to think in this place of our Lord's address to the Jews, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and " drink." (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 11, 12. Though Israel, as a nation, were the people of God, by profession, covenant, and the strongest obligations; they were not so by their own choice of him. They would not have him for their *Portion* and their Lord; but expected more advantages from their dumb idols than from Him! and therefore they were left to be judicially deceived, hardened, and ruined, as the just punishment of their sins. Thus Wisdom, (that is, Christ) complains, that men would have none of her counsel; yea, they despised and hated her, and this was the cause of their destruction.

V. 13. (*Note, Deut.* xxxii. 29.) Such expressions denote the Lord's willingness to receive returning sinners, and the delight which he takes in showing mercy and doing good, and in the faith and obedience of his people: and they prove, that the ruin of sinners is altogether the effect of their own pride and obstinacy. But it would be absurd to draw inferences from them, which cannot consist with other parts of Scripture. 'One cannot help observing the ' similitude between the complaint here uttered, and one ' which hath since been breathed forth over the same peo- ' ple;' "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have " gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth " her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." (*Horne.*)

V. 15. 'All that maligned their prosperity, and set ' themselves against the design of the LORD to make them ' victorious over their enemies, should have been so daunt- ' ed, that they should have dissembled their hatred, and ' been forced at least to a counterfeit submission: but his ' people should have seen most blessed days, and enjoyed ' a substantial and durable happiness without any interrup-

16 He should have [k] fed them also with the * finest of the wheat: and with [l] honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee.

k cxlvii. 14. Deut. xxxii. 13, 14. Joel ii. 14.
* Heb. *fat of the wheat.* Judg. xiv. 8, 9. 18.
l 1 Sam. xiv. 25, 26. Job xxix. 6.

PSALM LXXXII.

The Psalmist reminds magistrates of God's authority over them, and urges them to do their duty, 1—4. *He reproves their ignorance and wickedness, and warns them of their approaching doom,* 5—7. *He prays for the establishment of God's kingdom,* 8.

A Psalm * of Asaph.

[a] GOD standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among [b] the gods.

2 [c] How long will ye [d] judge unjustly, and [e] accept the persons of the wicked? Selah.

3 † Defend the poor and fatherless: [f] do justice to the afflicted and needy.

4 [g] Deliver the poor and needy: [h] rid *them* out of the hand of the wicked.

5 They [i] know not, neither will they understand; [k] they walk on in darkness: [l] all the foundations of the earth are ‡ out of course.

* Or, *for Asaph.*
a Ex. xviii. 21. 2 Chr. xix. 6, 7. Ec. v. 8.
b 6, 7. cxxxviii. 1. Ex. xxii. 26. John x. 35.
c lxii. 3. Ex. x 3. 1 Kings xviii. 21. Matt. xvii. 17.
d lviii. 1, 2. Ex. xxiii. 6, 7. Lev. xix. 15. Mic. iii. 1—3. 9—12.
e Job xxxiv. 19. Prov. xviii. 5. Gal. ii. 6.
† Heb *Judge.* x. 18. Deut. x. 18. Is. i. 17. 23.
f Jer. v. 28. xxii. 3. 16. Jam. i. 27
g lxxii. 12—14. Job xxix. 12. 16, 17. Prov. xxiv. 11, 12.
h cxl. 12. Neh. v. 1—13. Job v. 15, 16.
i liii. 4. Prov. i. 29. Mic. iii 1. Rom. i. 28.
k Prov. ii. 13. iv. 19. Ec. ii. 14. John iii. 19. xii. 35.——l xi. 3. lxxv. 3. Ec. iii. 16. Is. v 7.——‡ Heb *moved.*

'tion.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The nation of Israel, if they had been obedient, would have possessed their privileges to the coming of Christ, and have been then incorporated into his church, which shall continue on earth to the end of time, and in heaven to all eternity.

V. 16. (*Note, Deut.* xxxii. 13, 14.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is our duty and privilege to attend on God's ordinances, and to abound in praise and thanksgiving: and we should excite one another to these pleasant services, embracing every opportunity for them, and improving all our ability in them. For the Lord is the Strength of his people; and all the worship which we can render, is far beneath his glorious excellencies and our immense obligations to him, especially in our redemption from wrath and sin. When therefore he commands, and intimates his acceptance of this reasonable service, he testifies his mercy and condescending love to us. For we ought never to forget the base and ruinous drudgery to which Satan had reduced us; or our rebellions against God, for which we deserved to have been left the bond-slaves of this cruel tyrant, and to have had our final portion with him. But when in distress of conscience we are led to cry for deliverance, the Lord answereth our prayers and sets us at liberty. As the giving of the law from mount Sinai, and the trials of Israel in the wilderness, were proofs of the Lord's peculiar regard to that people: so, humiliating convictions of sin and sharp afflictions are generally, and the law written in our heart is always, evidential of the love of God to our souls. But he speaks to many, both by the awful requirements and sanctions of his law, and by the invitations and promises of his Gospel, and even to many who profess themselves his people, who yet will not hearken to his voice or have him for their Portion; for they foolishly expect more satisfaction from their lusts, than from the all-sufficient God. Thus they provoke him to give them up to their own hearts' lust, and to leave them to their perverse choice; and then, whilst they prosper in wickedness, and are envied by their fellow-sinners, they ripen apace for eternal ruin. But the Lord delighteth in the conversion of sinners, and in the faith and obedience of his people. They may desire and ask as much as they will; and he will answer and exceed their expectations: their enemies shall be subdued, their souls satisfied with those unspeakable blessings which flow from the Rock of salvation: their bodies shall be fed with food convenient for them, and their eternal inheritance be secured to them; whilst all the haters of the Lord shall fall under his power and perish for ever. May He then incline our hearts to obey his call, and walk in his ways: and may he enlarge and assist our prayers; that being delivered from our enemies, we may open our mouths wide, to take in the waters of life and salvation, and so drink and live for ever.

NOTES.

PSALM LXXXII. V. 1. JEHOVAH, who judgeth the principalities and powers of the invisible world, will call to account the greatest of those who exercise dominion over their fellow-creatures on earth. They seem as gods to their subjects, and they indeed are the Lord's appointed vicegerents: but they are the subjects of his kingdom, even as other men: and He is especially at all times present in their courts, to animadvert on the justice or injustice of their decisions, to receive appeals from their sentence when unrighteous, and to call them to a strict account, if they abuse their power. It is not known by whom, or when, this psalm was written; some date it in David's time, and others in that of Hezekiah.

V. 2. 'Is it not time to leave off your partiality; and 'no longer to favour a bad cause, because a man is rich and 'great; and can either give you a large bribe, if you will 'judge it for him, or do you mischief if you give sentence 'against him?' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 3, 4. (*Notes, Ex.* xxiii. 7, 8. 2 *Chron.* xix. 6, 7.) 'Your duty is to do equal justice to all men that come be- 'fore you; and to take particular care, that the poor and 'the fatherless, who have no money to give, nor any friend 'to solicit,—and men of low condition, be not unjustly 'condemned.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 5. 'They will not study the laws of God: or if 'they do, will not think it their interest to be governed by 'them;—insomuch, that the foundations of the kingdom,

m 1 Ex. xxii 9. 23. John x. 34—36.
n xlix. 12. Job xxi. 32. Ez. xxxi. 14.
o lxxxiii. 11.
p vii. 6. xcvi 13. Am vii. 2—7. 17. Zeph. iii. 8.
q ii 8 xxii. 28 Rev xi. 15. xv. 4.

6 m I have said, Ye *are* gods; and all of you *are* children of the Most High.
7 But n ye shall die like men, and fall o like one of the princes.
8 p Arise, O God, judge the earth: for q thou shalt inherit all nations.

PSALM LXXXIII.

The Psalmist appeals to God concerning a formidable conspiracy of the enemies of Israel, 1—8. *He prays that they may be confounded for a warning to others, and for the honour of God,* 9—18.

A Song *or* Psalm * of Asaph.

* Or, *for Asaph.*

a xxviii 1 xxxv. 22. xliv 23. l. 3. cix 1, 2.
b Is xlii. 14.

a KEEP not thou silence, O God: b hold not thy peace, and be not still, O God.

2 For, lo, c thine enemies make a tumult: and they d that hate thee have e lifted up the head.
3 They f have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against g thy hidden ones.
4 They have said, h Come, and let us cut them off from *being* a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.
5 For i they have consulted together with one † consent; k they are confederate against thee:
6 The tabernacles of l Edom, and the Ishmaelites; of Moab, and m the Hagarenes;
7 n Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek;

c ii. 1, 2. lxxiv. 4. 23 2 Kings xix. 28. Jer l. 10. Matt. xxvii 24. Acts iv. 26, 27. xvi. 22. xvii. 5. xix. 28, &c xxi. 30. xxii. 22. xxiii. 10.
d lxxxi. 15.
e lxxv. 4, 5. xciii. 3 Is xxxvii. 23. Dan v. 20—23.
f x. 9. lvi 6 lxiv. 2. 1 Sam. xiii. 19. Is. vii. 6, 7. Luke xx. 20—23.
g xxvii 5 xxxi. 20. xci. 1. Col. i. iii. 3.
h Ex. i. 10. Esth. iii. 6—9. Prov. i. 12 Jer. xi. 19. xxxi. 36. Dan. vii 25. Matt xxvii. 63—65. Acts iv. 17. ix. 1, 2.
i Prov. xxi. 30. Is. vii. 5—7. viii. 9, 10. John xi. 47—53 Acts xxiii. 12, 13. Rev. xvii 13.

xix 19.——† Heb. *heart* ——k Josh. x. 3—5. 2 Sam. x. 6—8. Is vii. 2 ——l 2 Chr. xx. 1. 10, 11.——m Gen xxv. 12—18. 1 Chr. v 10 19, 20.——n Josh. xiii. 5. Ez. xxvii. 9.

'which are justice and truth, are shaken; all things are in 'confusion and in danger to come to utter ruin.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 6. The rulers of Israel, as especially appointed by the Lord to be his representatives, to judge according to his law, and to be types of his Anointed, were honoured with this high title; in which other magistrates shared in proportion to their religious advantages. But though outwardly honoured as gods, as children of the Most High, and as representing the Son of God himself: yet, as they in general abused these distinctions, the Lord would soon show them their weakness, as mean mortal men, and leave them to be cast down from their dignity, like one of the princes whom Israel crushed when they came up out of Egypt. (*Note, John* x. 32—37.)

V. 8. 'Seeing no amendment, he desireth God to 'undertake the matter, and do justice himself.' This verse however seems to be a prophetical prayer for the coming of the Messiah, and the conversion of the nations to him.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The authority of God is to be acknowledged, honoured, and submitted to, in those governors whom his providence places over us. But *they* also should be reminded, that they are only viceroys of the King of heaven, bound to do his will and copy his example; that he witnesseth the use which they make of their authority, and will judge them for it; and that if, with present impunity, they "judge "unjustly and accept the persons of the wicked," they will have a severe sentence denounced on them at last. These plain truths are too generally forgotten or discredited by those in authority: they know not, because they *will* not understand, therefore they walk on still in darkness: and the perversion of law and justice, through their impiety and iniquity, subverts the foundations of social felicity, and enhances exceedingly the miseries of mankind. God hath indeed honoured rulers, (especially those placed over his people,) by entrusting to them, as it were, a share of his authority, and favouring them as children with a portion of his inheritance: and honourable and happy are they who, out of a regard to him, "defend the poor and father-"less," do justice to the afflicted and needy, and deliver them out of the hands of the wicked. But as for ungodly rulers, their disgrace and misery will equal their present abused distinctions; and they will feel the insignificancy of that pre-eminence, which made them forget that they were men, when death shall arrest them and hurry them to judgment; and they shall be condemned with those princes who made war against Israel of old. We should however be thankful for the blessings of civil government, which, with all its defects, is of great advantage to mankind. And we should pray for our rulers: and leave such as misbehave to the judgment of God. But considering the state of affairs in the world, from the beginning hitherto; we have need, even on that account, to pray that the Lord Jesus would arise and take possession of his inheritance, and rule over all nations, in truth, righteousness, and peace.

NOTES.

PSALM LXXXIII. V. 1—4. It is generally and with probability conjectured, that this psalm was written, (perhaps by some of Asaph's descendants,) in the reign of Jehoshaphat, when a most formidable confederacy was formed against him, and when Judah was invaded by a very large army composed of many nations, of whom the Moabites and Ammonites seem to have been the principal, and the others their allies: and it appears, that enmity to God and religion, excited by Jehoshaphat's zeal for reformation, had a considerable effect in exciting them against him. So that it was, in fact, the cause of God that they opposed; uniting crafty policy with powerful exertions entirely to destroy his people, and blot out the memorial of them from the earth. The term *hidden ones*, seems to denote the Lord's peculiar people, who were hidden under his immediate protection from the devices of their enemies.

the Philistines with the inhabitants of Tyre;

8 [o] Assur also is joined with them: they have * holpen [p] the children of Lot. Selah.

9 Do unto them [q] as *unto* the Midianites; [r] as *to* Sisera, as *to* Jabin, at the brook [s] of Kison:

10 *Which* perished at [t] En-dor: they became [u] *as* dung for the earth.

11 Make their nobles like [x] Oreb, and like Zeeb: yea, all their princes as [y] Zebah, and as Zalmunna:

12 Who said, [z] Let us take to ourselves the houses of God in possession.

13 [a] O my God, make them [b] like a wheel: [c] as the stubble before the wind.

14 [d] As the fire burneth the wood, and as [e] the flame setteth the mountains on fire;

15 So [f] persecute them with thy tempest, and make them afraid with thy storm.

16 [g] Fill their faces with shame; that they may seek thy name, O LORD.

17 [h] Let them be confounded and troubled for ever: yea, let them be put to shame, and perish:

18 [i] That *man* may know that thou, [k] whose name alone *is* JEHOVAH, *art* [l] the Most High over all the earth.

o Gen. x. 11 xxv. 3.
* Heb. *been an arm to*, &c. Is. xxxiii. 2
p Gen. xix. 37, 38.
q Num xxxi 7,8. Judg. vii. 22—25 Is. ix. 4. x. 26
r Judg. iv. 15—24.
s Judg. v. 21. *Kishon.*
t Josh xvii 11. 1 Sam xxviii 7.
u 2 Kings ix 37. Jer. viii 2 xvi 4. Zeph i. 17.
x Judg. vii. 25.
y Judg. viii. 12. 21
z 4. lxxiv. 7, 8. 2 Chr. xx. 11.
a xxii. 1. xliv. 4. lxxiv. 11, 12.
b Is. xvii. 12—14.
c lxviii. 1, 2 Ez. xv. 7. Job xiii. 25. xxi. 18 Is. xl 24. xli. 2. Jer. xiii. 24
d Is. xxx. 33. xxxiii. 11, 12. lxiv. 1, 2 Ez. xx. 47, 48. Mal. iv. 1.
e Deut xxxii 22. Nah. i 6 10.
f xi 6 l. 3. lviii. 9. Job ix. 17. xxvii 20—23. Is. xxviii. 17. xxx.30. Ez.xiii. 11—14. Matt. vii 27. Heb. xii. 18.
g vi 10. ix. 13, 19. xxxiv 5.
h xxxv. 4. 26 xl. 14. 15. cix. 29.
i ix. 16. lix. 13. 1 Kings xviii 37. 2 Kings xix 19. Is. v. 16. Jer. xvi. 21. Ez xxx. 19. xxxviii 23.
k Gen. xxii. 14. Ex. vi. 3.
l xcii. 8. Is 5. liv. Dan iv. 25. 32. Mic. iv. 13. Zech. iv. 14

V. 6—8. (*Marg. Ref.*) Assur, (or the Assyrians,) was called in by the other confederates, as a powerful ally, to ensure the destruction of the hated nation.

V. 9—11. (*Notes, Judg.* iv.—viii.)

V. 12. *The houses of God* seems to denote, not only the temple and its out-buildings; but also the palaces and houses, in which the princes, priests, and chief persons of God's people dwelt. It is not certain, that any buildings for the public worship of God, (like the synagogues of later ages,) were at this time erected. But perhaps these idolaters might consider the high places as houses of God, especially such as were not used in idolatry.

V. 13—18. So many of the verbs in this passage are imperative, that it must be interpreted as a prayer: but it should be observed, that the persons prayed against were the enemies and haters of God, who sought with implacable malice to extirpate his people, and destroy the true religion; and that the honour of God and the interests of truth and righteousness required this example of severity. —The images employed are very striking, and are best explained by the marginal references. The expression "that they may seek thy name," implies that the imprecation was only meant, in the strongest sense, on the supposition that the invaders remained incorrigible in enmity to God, in which case "let them be confounded and troubled for "ever, &c." that men of other nations may take warning, and learn by their doom, that JEHOVAH the God of Israel, is the Almighty Lord of the whole earth.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Enmity to the holiness and authority of God is the real cause of the hatred borne to his people. Men of different nations, interests, parties, humours, and sentiments, readily unite against the church. The precise Pharisee, the time-serving Herodian, and the infidel Sadducee, agreed to hate and oppose Christ: Herod and Pilate, though before at enmity, were made friends, as being of one mind to treat Jesus with contempt: and hypocrisy and profaneness, superstition and skepticism, and even enthusiasm and atheism, often confederate against his humbling doctrine and holy cause. For the consultation has been from the beginning, how to extirpate the church, that neither preacher nor professor of the truth should be left, and "that the name of "Israel should be had no more in remembrance." But whatever arrogance, tumult, subtlety, or resolution may be found among those who hate the Lord, and would lay their hands on his worshippers, and "take to themselves "his houses in possession;" their intentions must ultimately be frustrated. His people, whose "life is hid with "Christ in God," and whose excellency is equally hid from the carnal eye, are safe under his protection. Whilst the Lord is still and keeps silence, and persecutors insult and triumph, the apparent danger often excites believers to greater fervency in prayer; and then in due time he arises to plead their cause; so that the doom of the ancient enemies of the church will be that of all others to the end of the world, or else one still more dreadful. For such are "vessels of wrath fitted for destruction," even as a bowl is fitted to roll impetuously down a declivity, as stubble to be driven before a vehement wind, or as the dry wood, thorns, and brambles upon the mountains are fitted to be consumed by the flames: and the stormy tempest of divine vengeance will persecute them with dreadful consternation into "the "fire prepared for the devil and his angels;" unless they be so humbled, and ashamed of their sins, as to repent and seek the pardoning mercy of their offended Lord; for assuredly all impenitent sinners shall be troubled, and ashamed, and shall perish for ever. The Lord will be glorified in the punishments which he inflicts: if present judgments fail of bringing those who suffer them to repentance, they are often so evidential of his power and justice, as to warn others to flee from his wrath and seek his favour: and doubtless the final punishment of the wicked will answer most important purposes, throughout the universal and everlasting kingdom of God. But may we so know, that "He, whose name is JEHOVAH, is most high over all the "earth," as to fear his powerful wrath, seek his inestimable favour, trust his mercy and grace, and yield ourselves to be his willing and devoted worshippers and

PSALM LXXXIV.

The Psalmist expresses his strong affection for the courts of God, 1—3. He shows the blessedness of those who attend there, or cordially resort thither, 4—7. He prays to be restored to them; and celebrates the great goodness of God to his people, 8—12.

To the chief Musician upon [a] Gittith, A Psalm * for the sons of Korah.

[b] HOW amiable *are* thy tabernacles, [c] O LORD of hosts!

2 [d] My soul longeth, yea, even faintеth, for the courts of the LORD: [e] my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.

3 Yea, [f] the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, *even* thine altars, O LORD of hosts, my King and my God.

4 [g] Blessed *are* they that dwell in thy house: [h] they will be still praising thee. Selah.

5 Blessed *is* the man [i] whose strength *is* in thee; [k] in whose heart *are* the ways *of them.*

6 [l] *Who* passing through the valley of * Baca, make it a well; [m] the rain also † filleth the pools.

7 [n] They go from ‡ strength to strength, *every one of them* [o] in Zion appeareth before God.

a viii lxxxl. *titles.* * Or, *of.* b xxvi. 8. xxvii. 4. xlviii. 1, 2. lxxxvii. 2, 3. cxxii. 1. Heb. ix. 10. 23, 24. Rev. xxi. 2, 3. 22, 23. c ciii 20, 21. 1 Kings xxii 19. Neh. ix. 6. Is. vi. 2, 3. d xlii. 1, 2. lxiii. 1, 2 lxxiii. 26. cxix. 20. 81 cxliii. 6 Cant ii. 4, 5 v. 8. e Job xxiii. 3. Is. xxvi. 9. lxiv 1.

f xc. 1. xci. 1. cxvi. 7. Matt. xxiii. 37. g xxiii. 6. xxvii. 4. lxv. 4. cxxxiv. 1—9. h lxxi. 8. 15. cxlv. 1, 2 21. Is xlii. 4, 5. Rev. vii. 15. i xxviii. 7, 8. Is. xlv. 24. Zech. x. 12 Phil. iv. 13. k xl 8. xlii. 4. lv 14. Is. xxvi. 9 Jer xxxi. 33. l. 4, 5. Mic. iv. 2 l lxvi 10—12. John xvi. 33. Acts xiv. 22. Rom. v 3—5. viii 37. 2 Cor. iv. 17. Rev. vii. 14 * Or, *mulberry-trees, make him a well,* &c. 2 Sam. v 23, 23 m lxviii. 9. 2 Kings iii. 9—20. † Heb *covereth.* n Job xvii 9. Prov iv. 18 Is. xl. 31. John xv. 2. 2 Cor iii. 18 2 Pet. iii. 18. ‡ Heb. *company to company.* o xliii. 3. Deut xvi. 16. Is xlvi. 13. Jer. xxxi. 6. Zech. xiv 16. John vi 39, 40. xiv. 3. 1 Thes. v. 17.

servants; and may we chiefly seek the destruction of those tumultuous and confederated enemies, our "fleshly lusts, "which war against the soul."

NOTES.

PSALM LXXXIV. V. 1, 2. It is not said by whom, or on what occasion, this psalm was written; but it is generally supposed that David composed it, when driven from Jerusalem by Absalom's rebellion. (*Notes*, xlii. xliii. lxiii.) Yet this is by no means certain: and some think that it was made by some pious Levite, in the days of Hezekiah, when kept from the temple by the Assyrian army. The Psalmist, however, reflecting with regret on the beauties of the sanctuary, and the delight he had taken in attending on the ordinances there administered; not only breaks out in the language of strong and ardent desire to be restored to the courts of God: but declares that his soul so earnestly longed after God himself and the enjoyment of his love, that his body also was affected by it. Or he may mean, that he longed to "present his body as "a living sacrifice," by such external acts of worship, as would most suitably express the fervent affections of his soul.

V. 3. The Psalmist seems here to envy the birds their privilege of building their nests at or near to the altars of God; (meaning the tabernacle or temple, where were the altar of burnt-offering and the altar of incense,) while he was driven as an exile to a great distance from them. Yet, as it can scarcely be conceived that the birds were left unmolested in their nests to hatch and brood their young, at the altar of God, in the days of David, it has been supposed that he only meant that the birds found in their nests that tranquillity, repose, and satisfaction, which the ordinances of God had afforded him, but of which he was now deprived.

V. 4. Some of the priests and Levites dwelt continually at the sanctuary, which to a carnal mind might appear a wearisome confinement: but the Psalmist deemed them very happy; and those also who resided so near to the courts of God, that they could constantly join in the praises and adorations there presented, and who counted this their delightful employment. The Septuagint renders the latter clause, "They will praise thee for ever and ever," by the strongest term for *eternity* contained in the Greek language: and no doubt the Psalmist counted those happy who perpetually praised God at the sanctuary on earth; because this was both a preparation for the eternal worship of heaven, and an earnest of it.

V. 5. 'Happy also is that man, (how mean soever his 'outward condition be,) who, relying on the divine protec-'tion, (*Ex.* xxxiv. 24.) goes up three times a year to the 'solemn feasts at Jerusalem; or when—debarred that li-'berty,—is one of those devout persons, whose hearts are 'more in the high-ways that lead thither, than at their own 'home.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The man who, trusting in God for strength and protection, pressed through dangers and difficulties, from cordial love to the courts of God, aptly represented those who, being strong in the Lord, walk with alacrity in his ways, aspiring and longing for the joys of heaven.

V. 6, 7. 'The valley of Baca, or of mulberry-trees, 'was a barren place: so that they which passed through 'must dig pits for water; signifying that no lets can 'hinder them that are fully bent to come to Christ's church, 'neither yet will God ever fail them.' Some translate *Baca, weeping*, or *misery*: and probably it was a dreary valley, through which from some parts of the land the people must pass, in going up to Jerusalem: but in one way or other, they who, from regard to the ordinances of God, encountered the difficulty, were carried well through it. The word rendered *the pools*, signifies also *blessings*; and the clause may well be rendered, "The rain of blessings "covereth them;" not only refreshing rain, in plenty, to cool the ground and supply them with waters, but also showers of "blessings," or heavenly consolations. (*Ez.* xxxiv. 26.) Thus they were enabled to proceed with increasing vigour and alacrity; till each of them appeared before God in his courts on mount Zion; or till, "the God

8 O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer; give ear, O God of Jacob. Selah.

9 Behold, O God [p] our Shield, and look upon [q] the face of thine Anointed.

10 For [r] a day in thy courts *is* better than a thousand. * I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than [s] to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

11 For the Lord God *is* [t] a Sun and [u] Shield: [a] the Lord will give grace and glory: [y] no good *thing* will he withhold from them that [z] walk uprightly.

10 O Lord of hosts, [a] blessed *is* the man that trusteth in thee.

p 11. xcviii. 1. Gen xv. 1. Deu. xxxiii 29. q ii. 2. 6. *Marg.* lxxxix. 20. 1 Sam. ii. 10. 2 Sam. xxiii. 1. 2 Chr. vi. 42. Acts iv. 27. r 1, 2. xxvii. 4. xliii. 3, 4. lxiii 2. Luke ii. 46. Rom. viii. 5, 6. Phil. iii. 20.

* Heb. *I would choose rather to sit at the threshold.* Jam. ii. 3.

s xvii. 14, 15. xxvi 8 — 10. cxli 4. 5. t xxvii. 1. Is. lx. 19, 20. Mal iv 2. John i. 9. 10 viii. 12. Rev. xxi. 23. u 9. iii. 3. xlv 9. cxv. 9—11 cxix. 114. Gen. xv. 1. Pro. ii 7. x John i 16. Rom viii. 16 — 18

2 Cor iii 18 iv 17. Phil i. 6.——y xxxiv 9, 10. lxxxv. 12. Mat vi 33 Phil. iv. 1. z xv. 2. Prov. ii 7. x. 9. xxviii. 6 18 Mic ii 7. Gal. ii 14.——a ii. 12. xxxiv * lxxii 8. cxlvi. 5, 6. Is. xxx 18. l. 10 Jer. xvii 7, 8.

"of gods appeared to them in Zion," manifesting his glory and communicating spiritual blessings through his holy ordinances. The whole description may be fairly accommodated to the Christian's pilgrimage through this vale of tears to the felicity of heaven.

V. 8, 9. The power of the Lord God of hosts to repel every enemy, and remove every obstacle, and his readiness to hear the requests of the partriarch Jacob and his descendants, encouraged the Psalmist's earnest prayer, to be permitted, according to the desire of his heart, to return to the courts of God. He also entreated him to "look on the face of his Anointed;" 'his Christ, the 'king, as the type of Christ:' or 'for Christ's sake, whom 'I represent.' If David wrote the psalm, he might mean to request God, that he would favour his king, whom he had expressly chosen and ordered to be anointed; and not suffer a rebel and an usurper to prevail against him. But he is generally supposed to have looked forward to, and presented his prayer in, the name of the promised Messiah, of whom he was the type and progenitor: and indeed he might plead it, as a powerful argument why the Lord should rescue him from his enemies, that the Messiah was to descend from him; and expect that the root should be preserved for the sake of that illustrious Branch.

V. 10. 'I would rather choose to be in the lowest and 'basest room in thy holy tabernacle, than to be settled in 'whatsoever dignity out of the bounds of thy church.' (*Hall.*)

V. 11, 12. The sun enlightens, warms, enlivens, and fructifies the face of the earth: thus the Lord gives light, comfort, and fruitfulness to those on whom he shines with the beams of his saving grace. This sun may indeed be clouded or eclipsed: but it remains unchanged, and will soon burst forth again as if with increased splendour. (2 *Sam.* xxiii. 4.) In this world the Lord gives *grace*, which, as a Sun, he ripens into *glory* in the world above: while as a Shield he protects the happy man who trusts in him, against all assailants, however formidable; and withholds nothing truly good from any who walk before him in truth. This the Psalmist knew, which cheered his spirits amidst his tribulations, and while he waited the answer to his prayers.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Divine ordinances are the believer's solace in this evil world; because in them he communes with the living God, and enjoys his gracious presence. This renders his tabernacles so amiable in his eyes and dear to his heart: this causes him to value the privilege of attending them; and to regret, as the greatest calamity, the banishment or confinement from them. Indeed the Lord himself is the *Rest* of his people: but on earth, they cannot approach him, except through his appointed means of grace: so that these are to their souls, as the nest to the bird, which resorts thither and is contented and easy, but is unsettled when absent: yet this is only an earnest of the happiness of heaven, where the blessed inhabitants are always praising their God. But how can *they* dream of entering that holy habitation, and sharing its pure pleasures and society, who complain of the worship of God on earth as a tedious and wearisome task! who think those wretched, that spend all their days in his service; because they share not the carnal pleasures and dissipations, which themselves prefer to the employment of angels! But not only are they happy, who have arrived at heaven; they likewise may be congratulated, who have set out with the desire of their hearts, in search of that felicity; and who, making the Lord their Strength, walk with pleasure in his ways, and approve them in their hearts. They may have to pass through many a valley of weeping, and many a thirsty desert: but wells of salvation shall be opened for them, and consolations sent for their support. The journey itself, and the prospect of its happy end, will revive their hearts: they shall go from strength to strength, with increasing cheerfulness and confidence, till every one of them arrives safe in the holy city, to appear before God, to see him as he is, and to be for ever with him, and like unto him. May the Lord then incline the heart of every one of us to set out and proceed with alacrity in this pilgrimage, and may he defend us through it: may we pray without ceasing, (through the great Mediator, the Lord's Anointed; whose face he beholds, and whose intercession he delights in,) for ourselves and for all our fellow-travellers. Thus we shall learn to count one day in God's courts better than a thousand spent elsewhere; to value the little time we have employed with him, more than all the rest of our lives; and to deem the meanest place in his service preferable to the highest preferments in the tents, or even in the palaces of the ungodly. If we do not choose in this manner, we are *carnally-minded*, and "to be carnally-minded is death:" but what can all the honours, riches, and distinctions of the world do for us, compared with the blessings of His favour, who is the Sun and the Shield of his people? If he gives us grace here, and glory hereafter, he will not withhold any thing truly good from us. And though he hath not engaged to give riches and temporal dignities: yet he hath promised to give grace and glory to every one, who seeks for them in his appointed way; and he delighteth in fulfilling this promise. What is grace, but heaven begun below, in the knowledge, love, and service of God? What is glory but the completion of this felicity, in perfect conformity to him, and the full enjoyment of him for ever? And if he hath begun to give us grace, his grace will be sufficient for us, and will certainly ripen into glory. Let us then seek this true happiness; and desire to be fruitful, through the benign influences of

PSALM LXXXV.

Thankful recollections of former mercies from God to Israel, 1—3. Earnest prayers for grace, mercy, and peace, 4—7. Prophetical assurances of a gracious answer, especially by the coming of the Messiah, and in his glorious salvation, 8—13.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm * for the sons of Korah.

LORD, [a] thou hast been † favourable unto thy land: [b] thou hast brought back the captivity of Jacob.

2 Thou hast [c] forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou hast covered all their sins. Selah.

3 Thou hast [d] taken away all thy wrath: thou hast ‡ turned *thyself* from the fierceness of thine anger.

4 [e] Turn us, [f] O God of our salvation, [g] and cause thine anger toward us to cease.

5 [h] Wilt thou be angry with us for ever? wilt thou [i] draw out thine anger to all generations?

6 Wilt thou not [k] revive us again; [l] that thy people may rejoice in thee?

7 [m] Shew us thy mercy, O LORD, and grant us thy salvation.

8 [n] I will hear what God the LORD will speak: [o] for he will speak peace unto his people, and [p] to his saints: [q] but let them not turn again to [r] folly.

9 Surely [s] his salvation *is* nigh them that fear him; that [t] glory may dwell in our land.

10 [u] Mercy and truth are met together; [x] righteousness and peace have kissed *each other.*

11 [y] Truth shall spring out of the earth; and [z] righteousness shall look down from heaven.

12 Yea, [a] the LORD shall give *that which is* good; and [b] our land shall yield her increase.

13 [c] Righteousness shall go before him; and [d] shall set *us* in the way of his steps.

* Or, *of.* xlii. *title*
a Lev. xxvi. 42. Joel ii. 18. Zech. i. 16.
† Or, *well pleased with* lxxvii. 7.
b xiv. 7. cxxvi. 1, 2. Ezra i. 11. ii. 1. Jer. xxx. 18. xxxi. 23. Ex. xxxix. 25. Joel iii. 1.
c xxxii. 1. lxxix. 8, 9. Jer. l. 20. Mic. vii. 18. Acts xiii. 39.
d Is. vi. 7. xii. 1. liv. 7—10. John i. 29.
‡ Or, *turned thine anger from waxing hot.* Ex. xxxii. 11. 22. Deut. xiii. 17.
e lxxx. 3. 7. 19. Jer. xxxi. 18. Lam. v. 21. Mal. iv. 6.
f xxv. 2. xxvii. 1. Mic. vii. 7. 18—20. John iv. 22.
g lxxviii. 38. Is. x. 25. Dan. ix. 16.
h lxxiv. 1. lxxvii. 7. lxxix. 5. lxxxix. 46. Is. lxiv. 9—12. Mic. vii. 18.
i Luke xxi. 24. Rev. xviii. 21—23.
k lxxx. 18. cxxxviii. 7. Ezra ix. 8, 9. Is. lvii. 15. Hos. vi. 2. Hab. iii. 2.
l liii. 6. Ezra iii. 11. 13. Jer. xxxiii. 11.
m l. 23. xci. 16. Jer. xlii. 12.
n Hab. ii. 1. Heb. xii. 25.
o xxix. 11. Is. lvii. 19. Zech. ix. 10. John xiv. 27. xx. 19. 26. Acts x. 36. 2 Cor. v. 18—20. Eph. ii. 17. 2 Thes. iii. 16.
p l. 5. Eph. i. 1, 2.
q John v. 14. viii. 11. Acts iii. 26. Gal. iv. 9. 2 Tim. ii. 19. Heb. x. 26—29. 2 Pet. ii. 20—22. Rev. ii. 4, 5. iii. 19.
r Gen. xxv. 7. 1 Sam. xxxiv. 25. Prov. xxvi. 11. xxvii. 22.
s xxiv. 4, 5. l. 23. cxix. 155. Is. xlvi. 13. Mark xii. 32—34. John vii. 17. Acts x. 2—4. xi. 13, 14. xiii. 26.
t Is. iv. 5. Hag. ii. 7—9. Zech. ii. 5. 8. Luke ii. 32. John i. 14.
u lxxxix. 14. c. 5. Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. Mic. vii. 20. Luke i. 54—56. John i. 17.
x lxxii. 3. Is. xxxii. 16—18. xlv. 22. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. Rom. ii. 25, 26. v. 1—21.
y Is. iv. 2. xlv. 8. liii. 2. John xiv. 6. 1 John v. 20, 21.
z Is. xlii. 21. Mat. iii. 17. xvii. 5. Luke ii. 14. 2 Cor. v. 21. Eph. i. 6.
a lxxxi. 10, 11. Mic. vi. 8. 1 Cor. i. 30. Eph. i. 3. Jam. i. 17.
b lxvii. 6. lxxii. 16. Is. xxx. 23, 24. xxxii. 15. Acts ii. 41. xxi. 20. 1 Cor. iii. 6—9.
c lxxii. 2, 4. lxxxix. 14. Is. lviii. 8.
d Mat. xx. 27, 28. John xiii. 14—16. 34. 2 Cor. iii. 18. Gal. ii. 20. Eph. v. 1, 2. Phil. ii. 5—8. Heb. xii. 1, 2. 1 Pet. ii. 21—24. iv. 1. 1 John ii. 6.

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the Sun of righteousness, as well as safe and cheerful under the protection of the Shield of salvation. Let us study to walk uprightly in his ways, and trust in his mercies: let us thankfully receive what he gives, and be well satisfied to be without what he withholds or takes away; for we may be sure that he sees it evil for us: and let us hold it fast, as an indisputable principle, notwithstanding all possible tribulation, that "the man is happy who trusteth in "the LORD of hosts, the God of Jacob."

NOTES.

PSALM LXXXV. V. 1—3. This psalm seems to have been written either during the Babylonish captivity, or before the people were re-established in their own land. 'It might be much better used by them, (the Jews,) after 'their return from the captivity of Babylon than at any 'other time; when they were infested with many enemies, 'who disturbed the peaceable enjoyment of their country 'and religion.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The Lord had formerly been favourable unto their fathers, and had often brought back their captivity, having pardoned those sins for which they had been sold into the hands of their enemies: and this gave the captive Jews encouragement again to expect deliverance. Or, 'we have received the beginnings of deli-'verance as a token of thy forgiveness and reconciliation: 'therefore perfect what concerneth us.'

V. 4. 'Our sins indeed deserve worse than all our 'sufferings, and retard our re-establishment; but turn and 'convert us to thyself by thy special grace, and make way 'for the more complete effects of thy reconciliation to us.'

V. 7. 'He confesseth that our salvation cometh only 'of God's mercy.'

V. 8. The prophet, having prayed for mercy and salvation, waited to hear what message God the Lord would send by him; being assured that He had thoughts of peace towards the nation of Israel, whom he had taken for his people and specially favoured; and that a Peace-maker would at length be sent to them. But as folly, or idolatry and wickedness, had brought on them their former miseries, he warned them to beware, that when again favoured and prospered, they did not return to the same foolish and rebellious conduct. After the captivity, the nation was preserved from idolatry till the Redeemer came; and he both went himself and sent his apostles and ministers, first to speak peace to Israel, and to bless them by turning every one of them from his iniquities: but the nation rejected him and his message, and, returning to rebellion and folly, was deprived of its peculiar privileges; and then peace was spoken in Christ's name to the Gentiles, who became the people and saints of God by faith in Christ Jesus, and returned no more to their dumb idols and evil courses. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 9. The temple and ordinances of God had been *the glory* of Israel; and that glory in some measure dwelt among them again after the captivity. But the Redeemer, who appeared in that land, was its chief Glory; his coming approached, and his salvation was always nigh those who feared the Lord. Christ himself, "the Salvation of God," and the glory of his people Israel, was evidently predicted; and the expectation of this great Deliverer was intended to be the support of true believers under their trials, through successive ages; even as the expectation of his coming to make his cause triumphant, and at length to raise the dead and judge the world is, under the New-Testament dispensation.

PSALM LXXXVI.

David pleads his need, and the fervour of his devotion, in imploring help from the God of grace and mercy, 1—7. *He praises God, as alone worthy of universal adoration,* 8—10. *He prays for teaching and grace, renders thanks for former mercies, complains of his haughty foes, and craves some token of divine favour,* 11—17.

V. 10—13. When God restored the captive Jews, he *mercifully* fulfilled his *faithful* promises to them. He had glorified his justice in their sufferings, and he might consistently return unto them in peace. Thus while *truth* was preferred on earth, *righteousness* looked down from heaven with approbation. The Lord conferred manifold benefits on his people: their land again gave its increase, both of the fruits of the earth, and of the fruits of righteousness; for the justice and holiness of God, which had been so conspicuous in those dispensations, had a powerful effect to attach the people to his ordinances and commandments, and to teach them to copy the example of his equity, truth, and mercy. Thus this passage may be explained; but the interpretation is comparatively uninteresting, and falls below the energy of the expressions made use of. It is therefore generally, and justly, no doubt, interpreted in a far higher and fuller sense, of the harmony of the divine attributes in the redemption of sinners by Jesus Christ. The *truth* of the promises is manifested by the *mercy* of God in sending the Redeemer; and the *truth* of the types and prophecies in his person, miracles, obedience, and atonement: but especially the *truth* of the threatenings now consists with the exercise of mercy to sinners, through the great Surety, "who bare their sins in "his own body on the tree." The *justice* of God, which renders to all their due, demanded the punishment of the transgressor, and seemed to preclude all hope of his obtaining favour: but it is now satisfied by the great atonement, and amicably embraces and unites with *peace;* and entirely approves of the believing sinner being treated as a righteous person by a reconciled Judge. Thus Christ, the Truth, and Life, sprang out of the earth, when he was born of a woman: and *justice* looked down upon his character, obedience, and atonement, well-pleased and satisfied. For his sake the father giveth all *good things*, especially his Holy Spirit, to those who ask him; and by his influence every land where the Gospel is preached produces an increase of believers and of holiness to the glory of God. *Righteousness*, as a harbinger, marched before and marked out the Redeemer's path, which he pursued without deviation through his whole course; his *righteousness* went before to prepare his mediatorial throne; and when it is discovered to the believer for his justification, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, it becomes also his example, and he learns to walk in the steps of Christ, as well as to rely on his merits. This harmony of the divine perfections in man's salvation is the grand peculiarity of the Christian religion, by which it displays the glory of God in full perfection. No other religion, no other view of Christianity, but that for substance here stated, makes any provision for the honour of the divine justice in the exercise of mercy; and this accords to the language of the prophets and apostles in many places. (*Marg. Ref.*).

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The mercies shown to Israel, in their deliverance from bondage and captivity, were external signs of that redemption afforded in all ages to the remnant of believers, in setting them free from the bondage of sin and Satan, which always accompanies the covering of their sins, and the turning away the fierce wrath of God from them. The awakened sinner, when distressed in conscience, should attend to this report, and cry earnestly to the God of salvation, to convert him by his grace, and mercifully to cause his anger to cease from him; nor will that anger endure for ever against any but the impenitent and unbelieving. Even the true people of God, when they commit sin, may expect sharp and tedious afflictions: but when they return to him, humbly praying, that he would "show "them his mercy, and grant them his salvation;" he will in due time revive their comforts, and make them again to rejoice in him. Having spoken unto the Lord in prayer, we should compose ourselves to hear him speak to us by his word; and to expect an answer by his Spirit, or in his providence. He will certainly speak peace to his people, whom he hath separated and sanctified to himself. Yet let them take warning that they do not turn again to folly, forgetful of his rebukes and corrections, and abusing his mercy; for this conduct so much resembles that of hypocrites, that it must bring them into uncertainty and distress; and the Lord will resent it greatly, if their falls do not teach them watchfulness, and their recoveries gratitude. The preaching of the Gospel, and the lively ordinances of God, confer more honour on any land, city, or village, than all external distinctions can do: and "his "salvation is nigh those who fear" his wrath, reverence his authority, and humbly seek his mercy. For in the Redeemer's person and work, all things are ready for the reception of every one whose heart is prepared to accept of mercy: all the Persons and perfections in the Godhead will be eternally glorified in the salvation of sinners: and the application of redemption to their souls, when they repent and believe the Gospel, is a continuation of the display which was made of the divine truth, justice, and mercy, when the Redeemer paid the all-sufficient ransom. Through him the sinner asks and receives all things pertaining to life and godliness, and thus becomes fruitful in every good work: and by looking unto the Saviour's righteousness, he finds his feet set in the way of his steps. May this salvation be communicated to our hearts, and appear in our lives; that as the divine attributes harmonize in our redemption, so all Christian graces may harmonize in our characters. May this glory dwell in our land, and yield a large increase of truth and goodness, of purity and equity, through successive generations. May the Lord revive his church throughout all the earth, that his people may rejoice in him; may he grant that

* Or, *A Prayer*, being a Psalm *of David*. xc. cii. cxlii. *titles*.

* A Prayer of David.

[a] BOW down thine ear, O LORD, hear me: [b] for I *am* poor and needy.

2 [c] Preserve my soul: for I *am* † holy: O thou my God, [d] save thy servant that [e] trusteth in thee.

3 [f] Be merciful unto me, O LORD: [g] for I cry unto thee ‡ daily.

4 [h] Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O LORD, [i] do I lift up my soul.

5 For [k] thou, LORD, *art* good, and [l] ready to forgive; and [m] plenteous in mercy [n] unto all them that call upon thee.

6 [o] Give ear, O LORD, unto my prayer: and attend to the voice of my supplications.

a xxxi. 2. Is. xxxvii. 17. Dan. ix. 18.
b x. 14. xxxiv. 6. xl. 17. lxxii. 12—14. cii. 17. cix. 22 cxl. 12. Is. lxvi. 2 Matt. v. 3. Luke iv 18. Jam i. 9, 10. ii. 5.
c iv 3. xxxvii. 28. cxix. 94. 1 Sam ii. 9. John x. 27—29. xvii. 11. 1 Pet. v. 3—5.
† Or, *one whom thou favourest* xviii. 19. Deut. vii. 7, 8. Rom. ix. 18 23, 24
d cxix 124 125. cxliii. 12 John xii. 26.
e xiii. 5 xvi. 1. xxxi 1. Is xxvi. 3, 4. Rom xv. 12, 13. Eph. i. 12, 13.
f lvii. 1.
g lv. 17 lxxxviii. 9. Luke ii 37 xi 8—13. xviii. 7. Eph. vi 18.
‡ Or, *all the day*. xxv. 5.
h li. 12 Is lxi. 3. lxv 18. lxvi. 13, 14.——i xxv. 1. lxii. 8. cxliii 8.——k 15. xxv. 8. xxvi. 7. lii 1 lxix. 16. cxix 68. cxlv. 8, 9. Ex. xxxiv. 6. 1 John iv. 8, 9.——l Neh ix. 17. Is. lv 7. Dan ix. 9. Mic. vii 18——m ciii 8. cxxx. 4 7. Joel ii. 13. 18. Rom v. 20, 21. Eph i. 6—8 ii. 4.——n cxlv. 18. Jer xxxiii 3. Ez. xxxvi. 33. 37. Joel ii. 13. Luke xi. 9, 10. John iv. 10.——o Acts ii. 21. Rom. x. 12.

7 [p] In the day of my trouble I will call upon thee: for thou wilt answer me.

8 [q] Among the gods *there is* none like unto thee, O LORD; [r] neither *are there any works* like unto thy works.

9 [s] All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O LORD; and shall [t] glorify thy name.

10 For [u] thou *art* great, and doest wondrous things: [x] thou *art* God alone.

11 [y] Teach me thy way, O LORD; [z] I will walk in thy truth: [a] unite my heart to fear thy name.

12 [b] I will praise thee, O LORD my God, [c] with all my heart: and [d] I will glorify thy name for evermore.

13 For [e] great *is* thy mercy toward me: and thou [f] hast delivered my soul from the lowest ◊ hell.

p xviii. 6. xxxiv. 4—6. l. 15 lv. 16—18. lxxvii 1, 2. xci. 15. cxlii 1, 2 Is xxvi. 16. Lam. iii 55—57. Jon. ii. 2 Luke xxii 44. Heb v. 7.
q lxxxix. 6. 8. Ex. xv 11. Is. xl. 18, 25. Jer. x. 6, 7. 16. Dan. iii. 29
r cxxxvi. 4. Deut. iii. 24. iv. 34.
s xxii. 27—31. lxvi. 4. lxvii. 7. lxxii 8, 19. cii. 15 Is. ii. 2—4. xi. 9. lix. 19. lxvi. 23. Zech. xiv. 9. Rom xi 15. 25. Rev. xi. 15 xv. 4. xx. 3.
t Rom. xv. 9. Eph i. 12. 1 Pe. ii. 9.
u 8. lxxii 18 lxxvii 14. cxlv 3—5. Job xi. 7. Dan. vi. 26, 27. Acts ii 19—22. iv. 30 Rom. xv. 18, 19. Heb ii 4.
x Deut vi 4. xxxii. 39. Is. xxxvii. 16 20 xliv. 6 8. Mark xii. 29. 1 Cor. viii. 4. Eph. iv. 6.——y v. 8 xxv. 4. 12. xxvii. 11. cxix. 33 73. cxliii 8—10. Job xxxiv. 32 John vi 45, 46. Eph. iv 21.——z xxvi 3. cxix. 30 Mat ii. 6. 2 John 4. 3 John 3, 4.——a Jer. xxxii 38, 39. Hos. x 2. xiv. 8. Zeph. i. 5 Matt. vi. 22—24 Acts ii 46. 1 Cor. x. 21. 2 Cor. xi 3 Col. iii. 17. 22, 23.——b xxxiv 1. ciii. 1—3. civ. 33. cxlv 1—3. cxlvi. 1, 2. 1 Chr. xxix. 13 20 Is xii. 1 Rev. v. 9—13 xix 5, 6——c ix 1. Deut. vi 5. Prov. iii. 5, 6. Acts viii 37 Eph v 19.——d Rom. xv. 6 1 Cor. vi 20 x 31.——e lvii. 10 ciii. 8—12. cviii. 4. Luke i. 58.——f xvi 10. lvi. 13. lxxxviii 6. cxvi. 8 Job xxxiii. 18. 22. 24. 28. Is. xxxviii. 17. Jon. ii. 3—6.——◊ Or, *grave*

all, who are called Christians, may be led into the way of 'truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of 'peace, and in righteousness of life:' and may he put an end to every remain of idolatry and vice, and fill the world with truth and righteousness.

NOTES.

PSALM LXXXVI. *Title.* It is not certain, whether David offered this prayer when persecuted by Saul, or when driven out of the land by Absalom; though the latter seems most probable.

V. 2. *Holy. One whom thou favourest, hast set apart for thyself*, and *made partaker of sanctifying grace:* one who has found favour and learned mercy. It is the same word which in the sixteenth psalm is translated holy *One*, and it is generally rendered *a saint.* When St. Paul spoke of himself, as "less than the least of all saints," he, (as David does here,) united the deepest poverty of spirit, with the fullest confidence that he was in a state of grace, and an accepted servant of God.

V. 3—5. David prayed not only *every day*, but *all the day*, that is, frequently, constantly, and importunately: and he not only lifted up his voice, but his soul, his most earnest desires, unto God: and therefore he expected that he should be made joyful by an answer to his supplications; because, though conscious of sin, in many instances, yet he firmly believed that God was kind, propitious, and compassionate to all who thus called on him.

V. 8. The Gentiles indeed might call on their gods, and yet perish in their perils and miseries; as the objects of their idolatry had no power to save them: but the God whom David worshipped was not like them, but infinitely powerful as well as merciful; and his former works for his people encouraged the expectation of effectual aid to all his upright worshippers.

V. 9. It is probable, David hoped that God's interposition in his behalf, and his celebration of his glory, would bring many of the neighbouring nations to renounce idolatry and worship their Creator; but "the Spirit of God "which spake by him, and whose words were in his "tongue," evidently predicted the calling of the Gentiles by the gospel, and the universal prevalency of Christianity. The original is expressly *a prediction;* and is generally thus translated. 'This proveth that David prayed in the name 'of the Messias, of whose kingdom he doth here pro-'phesy.'

V. 11. *Unite*, &c. Naturally all the powers of our mind are "out of course." The judgment is darkened, the will perverted, and the affections, instead of cheerfully following the directions of the higher powers of the soul, tumultuate and rebel against them. The effect of grace is, to correct this disorder: and to subject the passions to the dominion of right reason, by subjecting the whole soul to the authority of God. But its operations are never in this world carried to perfection. Still the mind which loves God, and "delights in his law after the inner man," "finds another law within warring against the law" which it would fain obey. "It cannot therefore do the things "which it would:" still the affections are apt to wander after forbidden objects: and too often the consent of the will is, for the time, drawn over to that which it habitually rejects. The harmony of holiness is broken, or not yet perfectly restored: the flesh lusteth against and is contrary to the spirit. Thus the heart is divided and an inward strife maintained, to the deep affliction of the believer.—Thus is he prepared oftentimes to cry, "O wretched "man that I am:" and at all times to pray, "*Unite* my "heart," so liable to distraction, so prone to division between God and the world, "to fear thy name."

V. 13. Many confine the meaning of these words to the imminent danger of death from which God had deli

14 O God, [f] the proud are risen against me, and [h] the assemblies of * violent *men* have sought after my soul; [i] and have not set thee before them.

15 [k] But thou, O LORD, *art* a God full of compassion, and gracious, long-suffering, and plenteous in [l] mercy and truth.

16 O [m] turn unto me, and have mercy upon me; [n] give thy strength unto thy servant, and save [o] the son of thine handmaid.

17 [p] Shew me a token for good; [q] that they which hate me may see *it*, and be ashamed: because [r] thou, LORD, hast holpen me, and comforted me.

f xxxvi. 11. liv. 3. cxix. 51. 69. 85. cxl. 5. 2 Sam. xv. 1, &c.
h 2 Sam. xvi. 20—23 xvii. 1—7. 14 Matt. xxvi. 3, 4. xxvii. 1, 2. Acts iv. 27, 28.
* Heb *terrible.*
i x. 4. 11. 13. xiv. 4. xxxvi. 1. Ez. viii. 12. ix. 9
k 5. ciii 8. cxxx. 4. cxiv. 8. Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. Num. xiv. 18. Neh. ix. 17. Joel ii. 13. Mic. vii. 18. Rom. v. 20., 21. Eph. i 7. ii. 4—7.——l xcviii 3. John i. 17. Rom xv. 8, 9
m xxv. 16. lxix. 16, xc. 13. cxix. 132,
n xxviii. 7, 8. lxxxiv. 5 cxxxviii 3. Is. xl. 29—31. Zech. x. 12. Eph. iii. 16. vi. 10. Phil. iv. 13. Col. i. 11.
o cxvi. 16. cxix. 94 Luke i. 38.
p xlv. 10, 11. lxxiv. 9. Is. xxxviii. 22.
q lxxi. 9—13. cix. 29. Mic. vii. 8—10.——r xl. 1. lxxi. 20, 21.

vered his servant: but perhaps David referred to the guilt of murder and adultery, which he had contracted, and which merited the severest vengeance, temporal and eternal; yet the Lord of his great mercy had pardoned those as well as all his other sins, and had thus delivered his soul from the lowest hell. It is the same word that is used concerning Christ, and translated *hell.* It means the invisible state, whether of the body in the grave, or the soul in the world of spirits: but the word *lowest* favours the latter interpretation. Some think that David here also spake as the type of Christ; which was certainly the case in the sixteenth psalm.

V. 14, 15. Many a time God had rescued his servant from the most extreme danger: but again he stood in urgent need of the same powerful aid. Absalom, Ahithophel, and the other conspirators, being proud, violent, cruel, and impious men, sought to murder him; and perhaps were encouraged to hope for success by an idea that David's crimes had provoked God to forsake him. And indeed David seems here to allow that would have been the case, had the Lord dealt with him in rigorous justice: but the abundant mercy of God to the most guilty and miserable, and his faithfulness to his promises, gave the humble penitent a firm ground of confidence that he was pardoned, and should be delivered from such haughty and impious assailants.

V. 16. *The son*, &c. David seems here to plead that his pious mother had brought him up in the fear of God, and offered many prayers for him; and therefore he was devoted to him from his birth, and intrusted to his keeping, having been brought up as a servant in his family: as the children of the female slaves brought up in their master's family, were considered as his property, and were entitled to his protection. The Lord Jesus was the Son of her who said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be "it unto me according to thy word."

V. 17. If God would show some evident token of favour, and so evidently interpose that all might see his determination to help and comfort his servant; David seems to have hoped that even his virulent enemies might be put to shame, and brought to repentance, and so share the plenteous mercy of God. The resurrection of Christ and the descent of the Holy Spirit were tokens for good to the church; which put all those who had crucified the Lord of glory to shame and confusion, and many of them were likewise brought to repent and believe the Gospel.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The condescension of our God, in bowing down his ear to receive the prayers of us wretched sinners, is very wonderful: yet our very poverty and wretchedness, when felt and acknowledged, form a powerful plea at the throne of grace. —It is a great encouragement in prayer, to be conscious that we have experienced the converting grace of God, and have learned to trust in him and to be his servants; for, once we served other masters, and leaned on other dependences; but he hath mercifully effected the important change. If we cry unto the Lord *daily*, and lift up our souls unto him, we may hope that he will both preserve and rejoice our souls. Yet our defective holiness, our scanty services, and our imperfect prayers, would be no ground of confidence, if we had not a God of infinite mercy to approach unto. His readiness to forgive, through that great atonement which he hath provided, and his plenteous mercy to all that call upon him, are the original source of our encouragement: and our own consciousness of integrity and most devoted obedience, are merely evidential of the reality of our faith, and of the grace of God bestowed upon us. The abundance of his mercy, to pardon all the sins and to supply all the wants of those who call upon him, how many soever they may be, are sufficient to encourage all who come with the desire of their hearts to pray before him: yet even this plenteous mercy will not profit those who remain too careless, proud, carnal, and unbelieving, to call on him for grace and salvation. The vanities of the heathen could not assist their deluded votaries; angels and saints cannot relieve those who worship them; our God alone possesses omnipresence and omniscience, almighty power, and infinite love; without which none can know or help us in all our necessities, and bear with all our provocations. None of the works ascribed to idols, are at all like the works of JEHOVAH, among which that of redemption stands preeminent. Nor can those worldly objects which men idolize give them any assistance in the hour of distress, at the approach of death, or at the day of judgment. All nations, therefore, whom God hath made, are bound, in interest as well as duty, to come and worship before him, and to glorify his name; seeing "He is great, and doeth wonderous things, and is God alone:" and the time approacheth, when they shall understand their interest, and do their duty in this respect. The gracious soul is often more desirous to be taught the way and truth of God, in order to walk in them, than to be delivered out of severe distress. —The most upright believers find it difficult to attain to that simplicity and singleness of heart which they long for, and they still find cause to pray, "Unite my heart to fear "thy name, O LORD." Nay, the most eminent Christian will most readily confess that he hath deserved "the "lowest hell," and expects deliverance from it only by the rich mercy of God: and being thus humbled, and taught to trust in Him for salvation, and prepared to "praise him for it with his whole heart, and to glorify

PSALM LXXXVII.

Zion honourable above the rest of the land, 1—3; *and the church above the nations of the earth,* 4—7.

A Psalm *or* Song * for the sons of Korah.

1 [a] HIS foundation *is* in [b] the holy mountains.

2 [c] The LORD loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.

3 [d] Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. Selah.

4 I will make mention of [e] Rahab and [f] Babylon to them that know me: behold Philistia, and [g] Tyre, with [h] Ethiopia; [i] this *man* was born there.

5 And [k] of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and [l] the Highest himself shall establish her.

* Or, of.
a 2 Chr iii. 1. Is. xxviii. 16 Matt. xvi. 18. 1 Cor. iii. 10, 11 Eph. ii. 20—22. 1 Pet. ii 4—8.
b xlviii 1, 2. lxviii 16. cxxi. 1 Is ii. 2. 3. lvi. 7 Zech. viii. 3. 2 Pet. i. 18
c lxviii. 68, 69 cxxxii. 13, 14. Deut. xii. 5. 2 Chr vi. 6. Is. xiv. 32. Joel ii 32.
d xlviii. 2, 3 11. 13. cxxv. 1, 2. Is. xii. 6 xlix. 14, &c. lix 20, 21. lx. 1, &c. lxi. 3, &c. lxii. 1, &c. Jer. iii. 14, &c. xxxi 12, 13. Ez. xxxiii.2. 11, &c. xxxvii. 27, 28. xl. — xlviii. Heb. xii. 22, 23. Rev. xiv. 1. xxi. 10—27
e lxxxix. 10. Is li. 9.
f cxxxvii. 1, &c. 2 Kings xx 17, 18 Is xiii 1, &c. xiv. 4—6 Jer xxv. 9. l. li. Dan ii. 37, 38. iv. 30. Rev. xvii. 5. xviii. 2—
g xlv. 12 Is. xxiii Ez. xxvii. xxviii.—
h 1 Kings x. 1, &c. Acts viii 27 —
i 1 Sam xvii 8 2 Sam. xxi. 22, &c Is. xix. 11. Ez. xxviii. 2. &c —
k Is. xliv. 4, 5 John i 12—14 iii 3—5 Gal. iii 26—28. Heb. xi. 32—40 xii. 1, 2. 22—24. 1 Pet. i 23, 24.
l Ez. xlviii. 35 Matt xvi 18. Rom viii. 31.

"his name for evermore," he possesses an evidence, that he is indeed "delivered from the wrath to come." But men of this character will often have reason to complain, that the proud, the violent, and those who set not God before them, have arisen against them to conspire their hurt, and especially, that the powers of darkness seek after their souls. Still, however, the compassion, long-suffering, and plenteous mercy and truth of God, will be their refuge and consolation: to him will they look for help and strength, as well as for pardon; and they will wait on him to give them from time to time some token for good, in their own experience from his comforting Spirit, and in the sight of others from his providential interpositions; that they who hate them may see and be ashamed, and either converted or intimidated. It is an encouragement to us, when we pray, to recollect that others have prayed, or are praying for us: and they whose parents were the servants of the Lord, and brought them up for him, may urge that as a plea why he should hear and help them.—But in considering David's experience, and that of the believer, as corresponding with it; we must not lose sight of Him "who, though he was rich, for our sakes became "poor, that we through his poverty might be rich." He most perfectly served and continually called upon his heavenly Father; and through him the plenteous mercy of our God is exercised towards the chief of sinners. Being raised from the dead, he is made triumphant over the assemblies of proud and violent men who sought after his soul; and all nations shall come and worship before him, and glorify the name of the Lord; but all who hate him shall be ashamed and perish for ever. May we trust his merits and copy his example, and learn from him to bear poverty, hardship, or persecution, with cheerfulness and resignation; and to hope and wait for a happy issue out of all our tribulations.

NOTES.

PSALM LXXXVII. V. 1. Some think that this psalm was composed to be sung when the foundation of the temple on mount Moriah was laid; or when David fixed on the spot where the temple was to be erected. (*Marg. Ref.*) Mount Moriah seems to have been a part of mount Zion. "It is his," or God's, "foundation in the "mountains of holiness." The abruptness of the beginning shows how full the Psalmist's mind was of joy and admiration. The tabernacle placed, and the temple afterwards built, by express divine direction on these holy mountains, were typical of Christ as the Foundation, and his church, as "builded on this Foundation, for an habitation of God "through the Spirit."

V. 2. Because of the temple and its typical ordinances, the Lord delighted in Zion more than in all the dwellings of Jacob, and in all the secret and social worship performed by that people, who were selected from the nations of the earth to be near unto him.

V. 3. 'Though thy glorious state do not yet appear; 'yet wait with patience, and God will accomplish his 'promise.' 'Pleasant for situation and magnificent in 'its buildings, Jerusalem was the joy of the whole earth. 'There was the royal residence of the kings of Judah; 'there was the temple and the ark, and the glory; and 'the King of heaven dwelling in the midst of her. Her 'streets were honoured with the footsteps of the Re-'deemer; there he preached,—and died, and rose again; 'thither he sent down his Spirit, and there he laid the 'foundations of his church.' (*Horne.*) The glorious things spoken by the Spirit of prophecy concerning Zion, certainly related to future ages, to the coming of Christ, the Gospel sent forth from Jerusalem to all the nations, the establishment of the church, and to that church itself, both as militant on earth, and triumphant in heaven. "For even that which was made glorious," (in Zion the type and feeble shadow,) "hath no glory in this respect, "by reason of the glory that excelleth." (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 4. This is generally understood as a prediction of the calling of men from all these nations into the church by the Gospel: but it seems rather to be a comparison between the most eminent characters, which other nations had produced, and in whom they gloried; and the worthies of Zion, or the church, 'I am wont to make honourable 'mention among my acquaintance of Egypt and Baby-'lon, &c. bidding them observe that such a notable per-'son was born there.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 5. 'But what is this to Zion, of whom it shall 'be said in future times, that "this and that man" a 'great many worthies,—were born in her: for she hath 'no meaner instructor than the Most High, who shall 'settle her in a flourishing estate, by educating and form-'ing her inhabitants to the most excellent qualities.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The word rendered *man*, is generally used for a person of eminence; and the clause "this and that "man," is simply a repetition of that word, "a Man, "a Man," which, some think, is used as a peculiar superlative, and means, *the most eminent of men*, even the Lord Jesus Christ, and they suppose that He, in his divine nature, is "the most Highest" that "shall estab-

m xxii. 30 Is. lv. 3. Ez. ix. 4. xiii. 9. Luke x. 20. Phil. iv 3 Rev. xiii. 8.
n Jer. iii. 19. Gal. iv. 26—31. Rev. xx. 15.
o lxviii. 24, 25. 1 Chr. xv. 16, &c xxv 1, &c. Rev. xiv. 1—3.
p xlvi. 4. Is. xii. 3. John i. 16. iv. 10. 14 vii. 37. Rev. xxi. 6. xxii. 17.

6 The Lord shall count, [m] when he writeth up the people, *that* [n] this *man* was born there. Selah.

7 [o] As well the singers as the players on instruments *shall be there:* [p] all my springs *are* in thee.

PSALM LXXXVIII.

The Psalmist bewails before God his complicated sufferings, with great energy of expression; and pleads earnestly for deliverance, 1—18.

A Song *or* Psalm * for the sons of Korah, to the chief Musician upon [a] Mahalath Leannoth, † Maschil of [b] Heman the Ezrahite.

O [c] Lord God of my salvation, [d] I have cried day *and* night before thee:

2 [e] Let my prayer come before thee: incline thine ear unto my cry;

* Or, of
a liii. *title.*
† Or, A Psalm *of Heman the Ezrahite, giving instruction.*
b 1 Kings iv. 31. 1 Chr ii 6.
c xxiii. 1. li. 14. lxii. 7. lxv 5. lxviii. 19, 20 lxxix. 9. cxl. 7. Gen xlix. 18. Is xii 2. Luke i. 47. ii 30. Tit. ii. 10 13. iii. 4—7.
d xxii 2 lxxxvi. 3. Neh i 6. Is. lxii. 6 Luke ii. 37. xviii. 7. 1 Thes. iii. 10. 2 Tim. i. 3
e lxxix. 11. cxl 1, 2. 1 Kings viii. 31. Lam iii. 8.

"lish the church." No doubt He is the glory of the church and of his people Israel: but his crucifixion was the deepest disgrace imaginable to Jerusalem itself. It should be remembered, that all the sacred writers, (with very little exception,) belonged to Zion, or that despised nation which met to worship at Zion; and no nation on earth, or part of a nation, has been preserved or delivered from idolatry, but through the revelation which God made by the prophets and apostles of Israel!

V. 6. *Writeth.* 'When he calleth by his word them 'into his church, whom he hath elected and written in 'his book.' Or rather, the Lord will number up at the last day all the true children of the church; show the eminence and excellency of their characters; and contrast them with all that the world hath admired and celebrated in ungodly men.

V. 7. The literal version seems to be, "They shall "sing, as those that lead up the dance," that is, most 'joyfully: and the burden of the song will be, "All my "springs are in thee." (*Horne.*) 'The prophet setteth 'his whole affections and comfort in the church.' The Psalmist himself evidently decides for the church, and against the world; because all the springs of life and salvation are in the church, and none elsewhere. For "the "Lord dwelleth in Zion," as "God in Christ reconciling "the world unto himself:" and from his fulness all believers in every age, "have received;" as "drawing water with "joy from the wells of salvation." Perhaps the singing and music at the sanctuary were mentioned, as external expressions of that joy and praise, which would most abound in the church after the coming of the Messiah.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We ought to build all our hopes on that Foundation on which God hath built his church, and his whole plan of manifesting the glory of all his perfections in complete harmony: and "other foundation can no man lay, than "that is laid, even Jesus Christ." They who build on this holy foundation, thence derive sanctifying grace, and become a holy temple and priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through him. Public worship, properly conducted, is most honourable, and therefore most acceptable to the Lord; and ought not by any means to be neglected by those who would be accounted denizens of the city of our God. And when we consider the glorious things which are spoken of her pleasant situation, her holy temple, her royal palaces, her fortifications, her righteous King, and his wise, just, and merciful government, the character of her inhabitants, and all their privileges, immunities, and durable advantages, we can do no other than desire to be enrolled among her citizens.—After all the encomiums that have been lavished on the heroes, statesmen, orators, poets, and philosophers, of which Egypt, China, Greece and Rome, and all other nations have boasted; impartiality must allow, that the despised church of God hath produced an illustrious and numerous catalogue of worthies, who have done vastly more to render mankind wiser, holier, and happier, than all that have appeared on earth besides. They are therefore justly deserving of superior esteem, applause, and gratitude. But no one expects that they will receive due honour, who reflects how the Son of God, and his prophets and his apostles were treated, as they severally appeared on earth, and performed their respective services to mankind. But in the records of heaven the meanest of those who are born again stand registered: the Lord himself, when he writeth up the people, will allow them all the privileges of citizens of Zion, and honour them before the assembled world: and this honour and happiness alone are worthy of the ardent desires of all men, in every age and every clime. For the Highest himself shall establish Zion: a vast and eternal revenue of praise will redound to him from his church of redeemed sinners, and their joy to eternity shall equal their largest capacities. All the springs of consolation are in the church alone: and they, who draw not from these wells of salvation, will most certainly be for ever put off with broken cisterns that can hold no water.

NOTES.

PSALM LXXXVIII. *Title.* Heman the Ezrahite, so distinguished according to the general opinion of learned men as a descendant of Zerah, the son of Judah, was a different person from Heman the chief singer, in the days of David, who was a Levite. But it is not at all certain, at what time, or on what occasion, the psalm was composed.—Some think the word *Leannoth* signifies, *for dejection,* as almost the whole psalm is the emphatic language of the deepest despondency: but others suppose the word to mean no more than that the psalm was to be sung responsively, and that it is merely a musical term.

V. 1, 2. Probably the Psalmist wrote this psalm under great distress of soul, and meant to describe his own case: yet the language unavoidably leads the thoughts of the attentive reader to the Redeemer, who was doubtless intended by the Holy Spirit; and the history of his closing scene

3 For [f] my soul is full of troubles: and
[g] my life draweth nigh unto the grave.
4 [h] I am counted with them that go
down into the pit: I am [i] as a man *that*
hath no strength:
5 [k] Free among the dead, like the
slain that lie in the grave, [l] whom thou
rememberest no more: and they are
[m] cut off * from thy hand.
6 Thou hast laid me [n] in the lowest
pit, [o] in darkness, [p] in the deeps.
7 [q] Thy wrath lieth hard upon me,
and thou hast afflicted *me* [r] with all thy
waves. Selah.
8 [s] Thou hast put away mine acquaint-
ance far from me, [t] thou hast made me
an abomination unto them: [u] I *am* shut
up, and I cannot come forth.
9 [x] Mine eye mourneth by reason of
affliction: LORD, [y] I have called daily
upon thee, [z] I have stretched out my
hands unto thee.
10 [a] Wilt thou shew wonders to the
dead? [b] shall the dead arise *and* praise
thee? Selah.
11 Shall thy loving-kindness be de-
clared in the grave? *or* thy faithfulness
[c] in destruction?
12 Shall thy wonders be known [d] in
the dark? and thy righteousness [e] in the
land of forgetfulness?
13 But unto thee have I cried, O
LORD; [f] and in the morning shall my
prayer prevent thee.

f 14, 15. xxii 11. – 21 lxix. 17—21. lxxvii 2. cxliii 3, 4. Job vi. 2–4 Is. liii. 3. 10, 11. Lam. iii.15–19 Matt. xxvi. 37 — 39 Mark xiv.33, 34
g cvii. 18. Job xxxiii 22.
h xxviii.1.xxx 9. cxliii 7 Job xvii. 1. Is.xxxviii 17, 18. Ez xxvi 20 Jon. ii. 6. 2 Cor. i. 9.
i xxxi. 12. cix. 22 — 24. Rom. v. 6.
k Is. xiv. 9—12. xxxviii. 10—12. Ez. xxxii. 18—32.
l cxxxvi.23. Gen. viii. 1 xix. 29.
m 16. xxxi. 22 Job vi. 9 xi. 10.
* Or, *by thy hand.*
n xl 2.lxxxvi 13. Deut. xxxii. 22.
o cxliii. 3. Prov iv. 19. Lam. iii. 2. John xii. 46. Job vi. 4. x 16.
s 18. xxxi. 11 cxlii. 4. 1 Sam. xxiii 18—20. Job xix. 13—19. John xi. 57.——t Is xlix. 7. liii. 3. Zech. xi. 8. Matt. xxvii 21—25. John xv 23, 24
u Job xix 8. Lam. iii. 7—9.
x xxxviii.10 xlii. 3. cii. 9. Job xvi. 20. xvii. 7. Lam. iii 48, 49. John xi. 35.
y l. lv. 1— lxxxvi. 3.
z lxviii 31. cxliii 6 Ex. xvii. 11. Job xi. 13.
a vi. 5 xxx. 9. cxv. 17. cxviii. 17. Is. xxxviii. 18, 19. Mark v. 35, 36.
b Job xiv. 7—12. Is. xxvi. 19 Ez. xxxvii 11—14. Luke vii 12—16. 1 Cor. xv. 52—56.
c lv. 23.lxxiii 18. Job xxi. 30. xxvi. 6 Prov. xv 11. Matt. vii. 13. Rom ix. 22. 2 Pet. ii. 1.
d cxliii 3 Job x. 21, 22 Is viii. 22. Matt. viii. 12 Jude 13
e 5. xxxi. 12 Ec. viii 10. ix. 5.
f v. 3. cxix. 147, 148. Mark i. 35.

forms the best comment upon it. It is called by many a *penitential psalm:* but there is not one confession of sin or prayer for pardon contained in it; nor one comfortable word, except the address, "O LORD God of my salvation," which may be applied to Christ with reference to his deliverance from his sufferings and enemies. 'Though many 'cry in their sorrows; yet they cry not earnestly to God 'for remedy; as *he* (the Psalmist,) did to him whom he 'confessed to be the Author of his salvation.'

V. 3. (*Notes*, xxii. lxix. *Matt.* xxvi. 36—39.) "Full "indeed of troubles," was thy soul; O blessed Jesus, 'in that dreadful hour, when, under the weight of our sins 'and sorrows, thou wert sinking into the grave. Let us 'judge of thy love by thy sufferings, and of both by 'the impossibility of our fully comprehending them.' (*Horne.*)

V. 4. Christ 'died, to all appearance, like the rest of 'mankind; nay, being forcibly put to death as a malefac-'tor,—he seemed in the hands of his executioners "as a "man that had no strength." The people shook their 'heads at him, saying, "He saved others, himself he can-"not save." (*Horne.*)

V. 5. A dead man has done with and is *freed* from the concerns of this world. So long as he lived, he was the object of God's providential care: but when he is laid in the grave, he seems forgotten and cut off from his hand, that is, until the resurrection. Thus the Psalmist thought that he had done with life, and all its interests, employments, comforts, and cares; and should no more be regarded by Providence than the dead corpses of men slain in battle, and thrown into one common grave, appear to be: and thus Christ, when expiring on the cross, seemed to be deserted and forgotten by God; and when he was laid in the sepulchre, the Jewish rulers concluded that by sealing and guarding his body, they should cause his name and doctrine to be speedily forgotten.

V. 6—9. Many of the emphatical expressions here employed are nearly similar to those which more evidently relate to the sufferings of Christ, in the awful season in which his enemies, urged on by the powers of darkness, nailed him to the cross, insulting him when expiring, and rejoiced when they had shut his body up in the dark and dreadful sepulchre: but, in accession to all that they could do, "it pleased the LORD to bruise him," and to make his "soul a sacrifice for sin; yea, he was made a curse for "us." Thus he was laid by the Lord himself, "in the "lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps:" because "the "wrath of God lay hard on him, and he was afflicted with "all his waves." In the mean while his disciples forsook him, Peter denied him, Judas betrayed him, all were afraid or ashamed to own him; and he was left bound and in confinement without redress; though he just before "had "offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying "and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death; "and was heard, in that he feared."

V. 10—12. It is not to be expected that the dead should arise from the grave, or the soul return from the place of departed spirits, to praise God in his congregations on earth, and celebrate among them his power, truth, and mercy: and therefore the Psalmist may seem to plead for present deliverance, as Hezekiah and many others did. But considering the psalm as the language of our suffering Redeemer, these verses may be explained as his earnest prayer to be carried through his arduous work; that "his "soul might not be left in hell, nor his flesh see corrup-"tion;" but that he might make known to men the way of salvation, to the praise of God's power, mercy, and truth; and as the first-fruits of the resurrection, not only preserve their souls from destruction, but also raise their bodies from the grave, that land of darkness and forgetfulness. The word rendered *destruction*, is *Abaddon*, which St. John gives as the name of the devil, that great *destroyer*. It seems therefore to denote the pit of destruction, as the other words do the grave. Without the mercy of God in Christ, the bodies of all sinners must have finally been left in the grave, and their souls in hell: For "He is the "Resurrection and the Life."

V. 13. 'Thus I cry in the anguish of my soul, which 'keeps me awake, to present my prayers unto thee before 'the morning-light.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

g xliii. 2. lxxvii. 7—9. Matt. xxvii. 46.
h xiii. 1. xliv. 24. lxix. 17. Job xiii. 24.
i lxxiii. 14. Job xvii. 1. 11—16. Is. liii. 3.
k xxii. 14, 15. Job vi. 4. vii. 11—16. Is. liii. 10. Zech. xiii. 7. Luke xxii 44.
l xxxviii. 1, 2 lxxxix. 46. xc. 7. 11. cii. 10. Is. liii. 4—6. Rom viii. 32. Gal iii 13.——m Is. liii. 8 Dan ix. 26.——n xxii. 16. xlii 7. lxix 1, 2. cxvi. 3 Job xvi. 12, 13. xix. 14, 15. Lam. iii. 5—7. Matt. xxvii. 39—44.
* Or, *all the day.*

14 LORD, [g] why castest thou off my soul? [h] *why* hidest thou thy face from me?

15 [i] I *am* afflicted and ready to die from *my* youth up: [k] *while* I suffer thy terrors I am distracted.

16 [l] Thy fierce wrath goeth over me; thy terrors have [m] cut me off.

17 [n] They came round about me * daily like water; they compassed me about together.

18 [o] Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, *and* mine acquaintance into darkness.

o 9. xxxi. 11 Job xix. 13—15.

PSALM LXXXIX.

The Psalmist praises God for his covenanted mercies to David: celebrating

V. 14. *Castest off?* "About the ninth hour Jesus cried "with a loud voice,—My God, my God, why hast thou "forsaken me?"

V. 15. By a trivial change in the pointing, this verse may be rendered, "I am afflicted and expiring: from my "youth I suffer thy terrors; I am distracted." 'I am 'now in the greatest anguish and about to expire. From 'my youth, I looked forward to this dreadful season, 'knowing what I had to endure from thy wrath against 'the sins of men. Thus I have been a man of sorrows all 'my life. And I am now so distressed, that I am at a 'loss what to do.' The original words in the Gospel of St. Mark, respecting our Lord's agony in the garden, seem exactly to convey the meaning of the word here rendered *distracted.* (*Mark* xiv. 33.) He was filled with amazement, horror, anguish, and dejection, beyond all utterance and conception.

V. 16, 17. "He was cut off from the land of the "living." "It pleased the LORD to bruise him." "He "spared not his own Son." The terrors that pursued, and environed, and overwhelmed the suffering Redeemer, in that hour and power of darkness, cannot be known, even by those who know most of "the terrors of the "Lord."

V. 18. 'His disciples and acquaintance were put far 'from him; they "all forsook him and fled," to hide 'themselves from the fury of the Jews, "in darkness," 'that is, in secret places.' (*Horne.*) But the darkness and distress of their minds at this doleful crisis, seem likewise to have been predicted.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The sacred Scriptures, if carefully investigated, will continually remind us of the apostle's words: "Lay aside "every weight,—and run with patience the race set before "you; looking unto Jesus, who for the joy set before "him endured the cross and despised the shame." When his life drew nigh unto the grave, his soul was full of trouble; and his gloom was as deep as could consist with the perfect exercise of faith, and hope, and love. The enmity and insult of those who "counted him with them "that go down into the pit" of destruction, and despised him as one deprived of strength and help; his confinement, bonds, and stripes, and dying pains; the treachery, cowardice, and neglect of his disciples, professed friends, and acquaintance, who either stood aloof from his sufferings, or turned away from him as an abomination, while his enemies compassed him about like floods of water, and all the hosts of hell assaulted his soul; formed a vast aggregate of sufferings, beyond what human language can express. But the wrath of God infused the greatest bitterness into his cup: this lay hard upon him, and weighed him down into "the lowest pit, into darkness and the deeps." The very prospect of this indignation afflicted him, and made him ready to die, from his youth up: and when he actually suffered these terrors he was as one distracted. Still however the Redeemer cried day and night unto his heavenly Father, and stretched out his hands unto him, as in the utmost extremity of distress: in his agony he prayed more earnestly, and his prayer was indeed heard and accepted; (*Heb.* v. 7;) though he seemed to be cast off, and no more remembered than a dead man who is laid in the grave. Yet there was no reason for the Saviour's unequalled sorrows, in any part of his own conduct: perfectly free from sin himself, and infinitely dear to his heavenly Father, "he was wounded for our transgressions," and bare the heavy wrath of God due to our sins. Whilst therefore we hear him plead to be delivered and exalted, that he might show forth the loving-kindness, righteousness, faithfulness, and wonderful works of God, in the salvation of his people: let us consider what our case would have been, if we had been left to bear this wrath of God for ourselves; or what they will endure who neglect such great salvation; that we may know the value of his love, and feel the vastness of our obligations. And should any of us wretched sinners be left to experience anguish of spirit, terrors of conscience, and horrible temptations; should we suffer tribulation from the world, in such various forms, and with so many embittering circumstances, as to be constrained to appropriate some of the expressions of this doleful psalm: still let us remember, that we are not yet in the depths of hell; and may therefore yet hope in the Lord God of salvation. Let us persevere in earnest prayer, and plead the glory which will arise to him from saving us rather than from destroying us; whilst we desire to be monuments of his mercy, that we may be employed in celebrating his praises. Let us remember, that every affliction comes from his hand, from whom alone we expect relief; and that all creatures are his instruments. Let us not yield to impatience or to despair; but still expect a day of comfort after the darkest and most tedious nights of temptation. And even if we should be forced to conclude one prayer after another, without a glimpse of encouragement, let us begin again, and still hope against hope; and we shall at length prevail. But if we are exempted from such dreadful trials, let us bless the Lord for it, and sympathize with, and pray for, our afflicted and tempted brethren.

his greatness, excellency, and wonderful works; and showing the felicity of his people, 1—18. *He enlarges on the promises of the covenant made with David and his Seed,* 19—37. *He complains of the afflicted state of David's kingdom, with earnest prayers and expostulations,* 38—51. *He concludes with blessing the Lord,* 52.

* Maschil of [a] Ethan the Ezrahite.

[b] I WILL sing of the mercies of the LORD for ever: [c] with my mouth will I make known [d] thy faithfulness to † all generations.

2 For I have said, [e] Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy faithfulness [f] shalt thou establish in the very heavens.

3 [g] I have made a covenant with [h] my chosen, [i] I have sworn unto David my servant,

4 [k] Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne ‡ to all generations. Selah.

5 And [l] the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O LORD: thy faithfulness also [m] in the congregation of the saints.

6 For [n] who in the heaven can be compared unto the LORD? *who* among [o] the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the LORD?

7 [p] God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all *them that are* about him.

8 O [q] LORD God of hosts, who *is* [r] a strong LORD [s] like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee?

a Or, a Psalm *for the Ezrahite, to give instruction.* a 1 Kings iv. 31. 1 Chr. ii. 6. b lxxxvi. 12, 13. ci. 1. cvi. 1. cxxxvi. 1, &c. c xl. 9, 10. lxxi. 8. 15—19. d 5. 8. 33—49. xxxvi. 5. xcii. 2. Is. xxv. 1. Lam. iii 23. Mic. vii. 20. Tit. i 2. † Heb. *generation and generation.* 4. cxix. 90. *Marg.* e xxxvi. 5. ciii. 17. Neh. i 5 ix. 17. 31. Luke i. 50. Eph i. 6, 7. f 5. 37. cxix 89. cxlvi. 6. Num. xxiii. 19. Matt. xxiv. 35. Heb. vi 18 g 28. 34. 39. 2 Sam. vii. 10—16. xxiii. 5 Is. lv. 3. Jer. xxx. 9 xxxiii. 20, 21. Ez. xxxiv. 23, 24. Hos. iii. 5. Luke i. 32. 33. h 19 lxxviii. 70 Is. xlii 1. Mat. iii. 17. xii. 18—21. i 35. cxxxii. 11. 2 Sam. iii. 9. Acts ii. 30. Heb. vii. 21. k 29. 36 lxxii. 17. cxxxii. 12. 2 Sam. vii. 12—16. 29. 1 Kings ix. 5. 1 Chr. xvii. 11—14. xxii. 10. Is. ix. 6, 7. Zech. xii. 8. Luke i. 32, 33. xx. 41—44. Acts xiii. 32—37. Rom. i. 3, 4. xv. 12. Phil. ii. 9—11. Rev. xxii. 16. ‡ Heb. *generation and generation.* l xix. 1. l. 6. xcvii. 6. Is xliv. 23. Luke ii 10—15. Eph. iii. 10. 1 Pet. i. 12. Rev. v. 11—14. vii. 10—12. m 7 Deu xxxiii. 2. Dan. vii. 10. 2 Thes. i. 7. Heb xii. 22. 23. Jude 14, 15. Rev. xix. 1—6. n 8 xl. 5. lxxi. 19. lxxiii 25. lxxxvi 8. cxiii. 5. Ex. xv. 11. Jer. x 6.——o xxix. 1 *Marg* lii. 1.——p lxxvi. 7—11. Lev. x 3. Is. vi. 2—7. lxvi. 2. Jer x. 7. 10. Matt. x 28. Luke xii 4, 5. Acts v 11. Heb xii. 28, 29 Rev. xv. 3, 4.——q lxxxiv. 12. Josh xxii 22. Is. xxviii. 22——r 13. xxiv. 8 cxlvii. 5. 1 Sam. xv 29. Job ix. 19 Is. xl. 25, 26. Jer xxxii 17. Matt. vi. 13.——s lxxi. 19. Deut. xxxii. 31. 1 Sam. ii. 2.

NOTES.

PSALM LXXXIX. *Title.* Many learned men are of opinion that this psalm was written during the Babylonish captivity, when, the family of David being entirely dethroned, the promises of God seemed to be made void: but if it were composed at so late a period, no account can be given why it was ascribed to Ethan the Ezrahite. Indeed, it seems to contain internal evidence that it belongs to earlier times: for none of the deliverances vouchsafed to the kings or people of Judah, after the days of David, are mentioned in it: and the Psalmist, in complaining of the degraded and deplorable condition of David's family, is silent as to the desolations of Jerusalem, and the temple, and the captivity and dispersion of the people; which the psalms evidently relating to Nebuchadnezzar's devastations particularly insist upon. It seems therefore to have been written on occasion of some events, in which the honour and power of the kings of David's race were fallen and apparently ruined; but without either the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, or the captivity of the people: and what period so exactly suits this view of the subject as the reign of Rehoboam? Ten of the tribes of Israel had revolted from him; Jeroboam, the king placed over them, was his powerful adversary; and Shishak, king of Egypt, so entirely reduced and impoverished him, that he only seems to have retained the kingdom by the clemency, and perhaps contempt, of his haughty conqueror. It is probable, that Ethan the Ezrahite lived in the reign of Solomon; and if he survived him, and witnessed these events, (after having seen the glory and power of Solomon's kingdom;) it would be very natural for him to lament the change in the language made use of towards the close of the psalm. As the preceding psalm, ascribed to Heman, seems to have been occasioned by his private trials and distresses, and yet was an evident prophecy of the sufferings of Christ: perhaps this psalm, occasioned by the calamities which had befallen David's race, may likewise be considered as a prophecy of the afflictions and persecutions, to which the Christian Church has been exposed, especially the triumphs of the Roman Antichrist.

V. 1—4. The Psalmist, being about to deplore the *apparent* failure of the covenant made with David, begins with praising the mercies and faithfulness of God, which he desired to make known to all future generations. Indeed he was assured that his words, being dictated by the Holy Spirit, would continue through all generations, as a testimony to this effect. For he had said, and he would not retract it, however appearances might then be, that the mercy, of which the foundation had been laid in the covenant with David, would be built up for ever; and that God's faithfulness to his promises would be established *in the heavens*, or like them, that is, above the reach of the changes which take place in this lower world. These emphatical expressions are literally verified in the kingdom of Christ, the promised Seed of David, whose throne is established in heaven, and whose true subjects will all be exalted thither. The Psalmist then introduces JEHOVAH himself declaring the purport of this covenant with his chosen servant David and his posterity. (*Marg. Ref.*) "I "will be his Father, and he shall by my Son." 'These 'words are cited by the apostle (*Heb.* i. 5.) as spoken of 'Christ, to evince his superiority over the angels. Yet 'that the whole passage does, in the letter, relate to So-'lomon, can admit of no doubt; he being the seed and 'immediate successor of David, and appointed to "build "an house for God's name:" Here then we have an in-'contestible proof that the covenant with David had Mes-'siah for its object; that Solomon was a figure of him; 'and that the Scripture has sometimes a double sense.' (*Horne.*)

V. 5. Notwithstanding present difficulties, the Psalmist was confident that God would perform such wonders in fulfilling his covenant, as would excite the praises of all the inhabitants of heaven, as well as cause his saints on earth in their assemblies to celebrate his faithfulness.

9 Thou [t] rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them.

10 [u] Thou hast broken * Rahab in pieces, as one that is slain: [x] thou hast scattered thine enemies with † thy strong arm.

11 [y] The heavens *are* thine, the earth also *is* thine: *as for* the world and the fulness thereof, thou hast founded them.

12 [z] The north and the south thou hast created them: [a] Tabor and [b] Hermon shall [c] rejoice in thy name.

13 Thou hast ‡ a mighty arm: strong is thy hand, *and* high is thy right hand.

14 [d] Justice and judgment *are* the ◊ habitation of thy throne: [e] mercy and truth shall go before thy face.

15 Blessed *is* the people that [f] know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O LORD, [g] in the light of thy countenance.

16 [h] In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and [i] in thy righteousness shall they be exalted.

17 For [k] thou *art* the glory of their strength; and in thy favour [l] our horn shall be exalted.

18 [m] For the ‖ LORD *is* our defence; and [n] the Holy One of Israel *is* [o] our King.

19 ¶ Then [p] thou spakest in vision to [q] thy Holy One, and saidst, [r] I have laid help upon *one that is* mighty, [s] I have exalted *one* chosen out of the people.

20 [t] I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him;

21 [u] With whom my hand shall be established: [x] mine arm also shall strengthen him.

22 [y] The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor [z] the son of wickedness afflict him.

23 And [a] I will beat down his foes before his face, and [b] plague them that hate him.

24 But [c] my faithfulness and my mercy *shall be* with him: and [d] in my name shall his horn be exalted.

t xxix. 10. lxv. 7. lxvi. 5, 6 xciii. 3, 4. cvii. 25—29. Job xxxviii. 8—11 Nah. i. 4. Mat. viii 24—27. xiv. 32.
u lxxviii 43, &c. cv. 27, &c. Ex. vii—xv.
* Or, *Egypt.* lxxxvii. 4 Is. li. 9.
x lix. 11. lxviii. 30. cxliv. 6. Is. xxiv. 1.
† Heb *arm of thy strength* Ex. iii. 19, 20. Deut. iv. 34
y xxiv. 1, 2 1 12. cxv. 16. Gen. i. 1. ii 1. 1 Chr. xxix. 11. Job xli. 11. 1 Cor. x. 26 28.
z Job xxvi. 7.
a Josh. xix. 22. Judg iv. 6.
b cxxxii. 3 Deu. iii 8, 9. Josh. xii 1
c lxv. 12, 13. Is. xxxv 1, 2 xlix. 13. lv. 12, 13.
‡ Heb. *an arm with might.* 10. lxii 11. Dan. iv. 34, 35. Matt. vi. 13.
d xlv. 6, 7. xcvii. 2. xciv. 4 cxiv. 17. Deut. xxxii. 4. Rev. xv. 3.
◊ Or, *establishment.* Pro. xvi. 12.
e 2. lxxxv. 13. John i. 17.
f xcviii 4—6. c 1 Lev. xxv 9. Num. x. 10. xxiii 21 Is lii. 7, 8. Nah. i. 15 Luke ii. 10—14 Rom. x. 15.
g iv. 6. xliv. 3 Num. vi 26 Job xxix. 3. Prov. xvi. 15. Is. ii 5 John xiv. 21—23. Acts ii. 28 Rev xxi. 23.———h 12 xx. 5. 7. xxxiii. 21. xliv. 8 Luke i. 47 Phil. iv. 4
i xl. 10 lxxi. 15, 16. Is. xlv. 24, 25. xlvi. 13. Jer. xxiii. 6. Rom. i. 17 iii 21—26 2 Cor. v. 21. Phil. iii. 9.

k xxviii. 7. 1 Cor. i. 30, 31. 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10. Phil iv. 13.
l 24. lxxv. 10. xcii. 10. cxii. 9. cxxxii. 17. cxlviii. 14. 1 Sam. ii. 1. 10.
m lxii. 1, 2 6. xci. 1, 2. Deu. xxxiii. 27—29.
‖ Or, *Our shield is of the LORD, and our king is of the Holy One of Israel.* xlvii. 9. lxxxiv. 11. Gen. xv. 1.
n lxxi 22. Is. i. 4. xii. 6. xxix. 19. xxx. 11. xliii. 3. 14
o xliv. 4. Is. xxxiii. 22.
p 1 Sam. xvi 1. 2 Sam vii. 8—17. Luke i. 70. 2 Pet. i. 21. iii. 2.
q Mark i. 24 Rev. iii. 7.
r 2 Sam. xvi. 18. Is. ix. 6. Jer. xxx. 21.
s 3. Phil ii. 6—11. Heb. ii. 9—17.
t 1 Sam. xvi. 1. 12, 13. Is. lxi. 1—3. John iii. 34
u xviii. 32—39. lxxx. 15—17. Is. xlii. 1. xlix. 8.
x 13. Is. xli. 10. Ez. xxx. 24, 25. Zech. x. 12.
y 1 Chr. xvii. 9. Matt. iv. 1—10.
z John xvii. 12. 2 Thes. ii. 3.
a 2 Sam. iii. 1. vii 1. 9 xxii. 40—44 ——b ii. 1—6. xxi. 8, 9. cix. 3; &c. cx. 1 cxxxii. 18. Luke xix. 14. 27. John xv. 23 ——c 2—5. 28. 33. lxi. 7. John i. 17. 2 Cor. i. 20.
d 16, 17. xx. 1. 5. xci 14. 1 Sam. ii. 1. John xvii. 6. 11. 26.

V. 6—12. The majesty, holiness, wisdom, and power of God, (infinitely excelling all the endowments of the noblest creatures,) demand the reverential fear of all the assembled saints on earth, and of the angels who surround his throne in heaven; and accordingly all the holy worshippers in heaven dread his indignation, stand in awe of him, and worship with the most profound veneration of his manifested glory: and his saints on earth ought, in the same spirit, to wait the event of their difficulties and trials. By his *power* he would certainly manifest his *faithfulness*: as he ruleth and boundeth the raging ocean, which none else can govern; so would he restrain the progress of those enemies who seemed about to swallow up his church with irresistible force and fury. As he had formerly broken Rahab, (or Egypt,) and delivered his people, and afterwards crushed the nations of Canaan; so with his strong arm he was able to scatter their present enemies: and being the Creator and Proprietor of heaven and earth, and having chosen Israel as his people; he would certainly make that land in all its parts (which Tabor and Hermon, two distant mountains, represented,) to rejoice in his name and resound with his praise.

V. 14. *Habitation.* Or *establishment*, or *basis*. JEHOVAH's throne is *established* in justice and judgment: his almighty power and sovereign authority are always exercised in perfect justice and wisdom, and in entire consistency with his mercy and truth; and these mark out the path in which he walketh with his people. 'Thou dost not rule 'the world merely by thy absolute power; but hast placed 'thy principal glory in justice and equity, mercy and fidelity, from which thou never swervest.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) (*Note, Psalm* xxv. 10.)

V. 15—18. (*Notes*, &c. *Lev.* xxv. *Num.* x. 2—10.) The sound of the sacred trumpets calling the people to their solemn feasts, and announcing the year of Jubilee, seems here alluded to. If the difference between that typical dispensation and the clear light of Christianity be duly considered; it will be allowed, that they who attentively hear, who understand, believe, and obey the Gospel, who experience its efficacy upon their hearts, and bring forth the fruits of it in their lives, are the people that know the joyful sound. Such persons walk in the comfort of God's manifested presence and favour; they rejoice in his *name*, or perfections, as their security and felicity: they are "made the righteousness of God in Christ," and even the justice of God ensures their exaltation; they glory in him as their Strength, and give him the glory of all they are enabled to do; and his favour will exalt them above all their enemies, and be their ornament and honour: for they are now the subjects of the Holy One of Israel, their King, and entitled to his protection.—The old translation renders the eighteenth verse more literally, "For our shield ap-"pertaineth to the Lord, and king, to the Holy One of "Israel." 'Though the kings of David's race be at present enfeebled and unable to defend us: yet their cause, as placed over the people of God, is his cause, and he will not suffer it to be permanently run down. The LORD, the Holy One of Israel, will take care of our king, that he may be the shield of his true worshippers.' (*Note*, 2 *Chron.* xiii. 4—12.)

25 [e] I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers.

26 He shall cry unto me, [f] Thou *art* my Father, [g] my God, and [h] the Rock of my salvation.

27 Also [i] I will make him *my* first-born, [k] higher than the kings of the earth.

28 [l] My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and [m] my covenant shall stand fast with him.

29 [n] His seed also will I make *to endure* for ever, and [o] his throne as [p] the days of heaven.

30 [q] If his children [r] forsake my law, and [s] walk not in my judgments;

31 If they * break my statutes, and keep not my commandments;

32 [t] Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes,

33 [u] Nevertheless my loving-kindness will I † not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to ‡ fail.

34 [x] My covenant will I not break, [y] nor alter the thing *that is* gone out of my lips.

25 [a] Once have I sworn by my holiness, § that I will not lie unto David.

36 [a] His seed shall endure for ever, [b] and his throne as the sun before me.

37 It shall be established for [c] ever as the moon, and *as* [d] a faithful witness in heaven. Selah.

e ii 8 lxxii 8—11. lxxx. 11. 1 Kings iv. 21. Rev. xi. 15.
f 2 Sam vii. 14. 1 Chr. xxii. 10. Matt. xxvi. 39. 42. Luke xxiii. 46. John xi 41. xx. 17. Heb i 5.
g xliii. 4. Mark xv 34.
h xviii. 46 lxii. 2. 5, 6 xcv. 1 Is. l. 7—9.
i ii 7 Rom. viii. 29. Col. i. 15. 18
k ii 10—12. lxxii, 11. Num. xxiv 7. 2 Chr i. 12. ix. 23, 24 Is xlix 7. Rev. xxi. 24.
l 2 Sam. vii 15, 16 Is liv 10. lv 3. Acts xiii. 32—34.
m 34 cxi. 5. 9. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Jer xxxiii. 20, 21.
n 4. 36 cxxxii. 11. 1 Chr xvii 11, 12 Is lix. 21. Jer. xxxiii. 17. 26 ——o xlv. 6 1 Chr. xxii. 10. Is. ix. 7. Ez. xxxvii 24, 25. Dan ii 44. Luke i 32, 33 ——p xxi. 4. Deut xi. 21
q cxxxii. 12. 2 Sam vii 14 1 Chr. xxviii 9 2 Chr. vii 17, &c. ——r cxix 53, Prov. iv. 2. xxviii. 4 Jer. ix. 13.——s Ez xviii. 9. 17. xx. 19. Luke i. 9.

* Heb. *profane.* Iv. 20. *Marg*
t Ex. xxxii. 34. 1 Kings xi. 6. 14. 31. 39. Pro. iii. 11, 12 Am iii. 2. 1 Chr xi. 31. 32. Heb. xii. 6—11.
u 2 Sam. vii. 15. 1 Kings xi. 13. 32. 36. Is. liv. 8—10. Jer. xxxiii. 20—26. 1 Cor. xv 25.
† Heb. *not make void from him.*
39 1 Sam. xv. 29.
‡ Heb. *lie* Heb vi. 13.
x Lev. xxvi. 44. Jer. xiv 21.
y Num. xxiii. 19. Mal. iii. 6 Mat. xxiv 35 Rom. xi. 29. Jam. i 17.
z Ps cx. 4 cxxxii. 11 Am. iv. 2. viii. 7. Heb. vi. 13. 17
§ Heb. *If I lie.* 2 Tim. ii. 13. Tit. i. 2.
a 4 29. 2 Sam. vii. 16 Is. liii. 10. lix. 21. John xii. 34.
b lxxii. 5 17. Is ix 7. Jer. xxxiii 20. Luke i 33.——c lxxii. 7. civ. 19. Gen. i 14—18. Jer. xxxi 35, 36 ——d Gen. ix. 13—16. Is. liv. 9, 10.

V. 19—37. Samuel seems to be here meant as *the holy one*, or the saint and prophet of God, to whom He spake in vision respecting David, for "holy men of God "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." The Lord had made trial of several others to govern his people, but had laid them aside again. After Saul's rejection, he found David and chose him from among the people, and endued him with courage and might, that he might exalt him to the throne, and lay help upon him for the deliverance and prosperity of Israel: but especially, that he might be a type of Christ, that Mighty One, who in human nature is chosen and qualified to fill the mediatorial throne, for the salvation of his people. The Lord by the hands of Samuel anointed David with the holy oil; not only as an emblem of the graces and gifts conferred upon him; but as a type of Christ, the King, Priest, and Prophet, which the Father provided for us, and anointed with the Holy Spirit without measure. After David was anointed, he was exposed to severe trials and persecutions, especially from Saul, that son of wickedness: But none could obtain any advantage against him, either by policy or power; for the Lord powerfully established and strengthened him, and finally made him victorious over every enemy, and brought terrible plagues on those who hated him. He also established his authority over Israel, and extended his dominion from the Mediterranean Sea to the Euphrates: and while David adhered to the worship of the Lord, as "his Father, his "God, and the Rock of his salvation:" he was treated as his first-born or favourite son, and made more honourable than the kings of the earth. Yet all this was but a faint shadow of the Redeemer's sufferings, deliverance, and consequent glory and authority, in whom alone all these predictions and promises are fully accomplished. The promises of the covenant to the posterity of David were in some measure performed to Solomon, and to the long succession of kings which reigned over Judah till the captivity: yet in Christ and in his spiritual seed, they have their complete accomplishment. From the Redeemer and his church, which is one with him, the loving-kindness of the Father will never be utterly removed. God hath pledged the honour of his own holiness, that he will exactly perform the covenant made with Christ, whom David typified. So that the Saviour and his church shall remain, as the sun and moon, to the end of time, and continue, (like the rainbow, "that faithful witness in the heavens," to the truth of God in his covenant with Noah,) a constant witness that God hath fulfilled his covenant with the Redeemer. (*Notes*, &c. *Gen.* ix. 12—17. *Isaiah* liv. 9, 10.) And as the Lord by various corrections visited upon the posterity of David their transgressions of his law, but did not utterly cut them off, continuing them in regal authority over Judah till the captivity, and afterwards preserving the family till Christ descended from it and received the kingdom: so he will correct his people, but never finally cast them off. No doubt the emphatical language used in the covenant of God with his servant David, as it is here brought together and enlarged on, must have excited in believers at that time very high expectations, which Solomon's unprecedented prosperity was calculated to confirm: but it is probable that most of them, (like the apostles in respect of the Redeemer's kingdom,) interpreted the promises in a manner different from their real meaning; and so entertained unwarranted hopes of temporal prosperity, under the kings of David's line, without duly considering, what had also been repeatedly declared concerning them, in case they forsook the worship of God; and without properly looking forward to Christ the Son of David, in whom all the promises were to have their full accomplishment. (*Marg. Ref.*) When, therefore, they saw a king of David's race deprived of a very large part of his dominions; opposed by Jeroboam, vanquished, plundered, and put under tribute by Shishak, in a very short time after Solomon's death; and perceived little hope of his emerging from his difficulties; it is not at all wonderful, if they were tempted to conclude, that the promises and covenant of God, (though confirmed with an oath by his own holiness, or all his moral perfections,) had failed and would come to nothing. This was the temptation; yet the Psalmist evidently resisted it,

38 ¶ [e] But thou hast cast off [f] and abhorred, thou hast been [g] wroth with thine anointed.

39 Thou hast [h] made void the covenant of thy servant: [i] thou hast profaned his crown *by casting it* to the ground.

40 Thou hast [k] broken down all his hedges; thou hast [l] brought his strong holds to ruin.

41 [m] All that pass by the way spoil him; [n] he is a reproach to his neighbours.

42 Thou hast [o] set up the right hand of his adversaries; thou hast made all his enemies to rejoice.

43 Thou hast also [p] turned the edge of his sword, and [q] hast not made him to stand in the battle.

44 Thou [r] hast made his * glory to cease, and [s] cast his throne down to the ground.

45 [t] The days of his youth hast thou shortened: [u] thou hast covered him with shame. Selah.

46 [x] How long, LORD? [y] wilt thou hide thyself for ever? shall [z] thy wrath burn like fire?

47 [a] Remember how short my time is: [b] wherefore hast thou made all men in vain?

48 [c] What man *is he that* liveth, and shall not [d] see death? [e] shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? Selah.

49 LORD, [f] where *are* thy former loving-kindnesses, *which* [g] thou swarest unto David in thy truth?

50 [h] Remember, LORD, the reproach of thy servants; *how* I do bear in my bosom *the reproach of* all the mighty people;

51 Wherewith thine enemies have reproached, O LORD; wherewith [i] they have reproached [k] the footsteps of thine anointed.

e xliv. 9, &c. lx. i. 10. lxxvii. 7. Jer. xii. 1
f lxxviii. 59. cvi. 40. Deut. xxxii. 19. Lam. ii. 7. Zech xi. 8.
g 51. lxxxiv. 9. 2 Sam. i. 21. xv. 26. 2 Chr. xii. 1—12. Lam. iv. 20. Zech xiii. 7.
h 34—36 lxxvii. 10. cxvi. 11. John xiii. 7.
i 44. lxxiv. 7. cxliii. 3. Is. xxv. 12. xliii. 28. Lam v. 16.
k lxxx. 12. Job i. 10 Is. v 5.
l 2 Chr. xii 2—5 xv 5. Lam. ii. 2. 5. Rev xiii. 1—7.
m xliv. 10—14. lxxx. 13. Is. x. 6. Jer. l 17.
n lxxiv 10. lxxix. 4. Deut xxviii. 37. Neh v. 9. Jer xxiv. 9. xxix. 18. xlii. 18. xliv 8 12 Lam. v. 1. Ez. v. 14, 15. Dan. ix. 16.
o Lev xxvi. 17. 25. Deut. xxviii. 25. 43. Lam. ii 17. John xvi. 20. Rev. xi. 10.
p Ez xxx. 21—25.
q Lev. xxvi. 36, 37. Num. xiv. 42. 45 Josh. vii 4, 5 8—12. 2 Chr. xxv. 8.——r 1 Sam. iv. 21, 22. 1 Kings xii 16—20. xiv. 25—28. Lam. iv. 1, 2. 2 Thes. ii. 3—10.——* Heb. *brightness*.——s 39. Dan. vii. 20—25.——t 28, 29. 2 Chr. x.

u xliv. 15 cix 29. Mic. vii. 10.
x xiii. 1, 2 lxxix. 5. lxxxv. 5 xc. 13.
y x. 1. lxxxviii. 14. Job xxiii. 9. Is. viii. 17 xlv. 15.
z Jer. iv. 4. xxi. 12 2 Thes i. 8. Heb xii. 29.
a xxxix 5, 6. cxix. 84. Job vii. 7. ix 25, 26. x. 9.
b cxliv. 4. Job xiv. 1. Jam. iv. 14.
c xlix. 7—9. Job xxx. 23. Ec iii. 19, 20. viii. 8. ix. 5. xii. 7. Heb ix. 27.
d John viii. 51. Heb xi. 5.
e xlix. 15. Acts ii. 27. 2 Cor. iv. 14.
f lxxvii. 9, 10. Is. lxiii 7—15.
g 3, 4. 35. cxxxii. 11, 12. 2 Sam. iii. 9. vii. 15. Is. lv. 3. Heb vii 21.
h xliv. 13—16. lxix. 9. 19, 20. lxxiv. 18. 22. lxxix. 10—12. Rom. xv. 3.
i Matt. v. 10—12. Acts v. 41. 1 Cor. iv. 12, 13. Heb. x. 33. xi. 36.
k lvi. 5, 6. lvii. 3. 2 Sam xvi. 7, 8 Matt. xii. 24. xxvi. 61. John viii. 48 1 Pet. ii. 20, 21. iii. 16. iv. 14—16.

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strenuously and successfully; and taught his people to do the same.

V. 38—45. 'Because of the horrible confusion of 'things, the prophet complaineth unto God, as though 'he saw not the performance of his promise; and thus 'discharging his cares on God, he resisteth doubt and im-'patience.'—'He meaneth the horrible dissipation, and 'renting of the kingdom under Jeroboam.'—'He showeth 'that the kingdom fell before it came to perfection or was 'ripe.'—'In joining prayer with his complaints, he show-'eth that his faith never failed.' When the calamities above mentioned befel Rehoboam, it seemed as if the Lord had been provoked to abhor and cast off his anointed king: the covenant with David appeared to be made void, his crown trampled upon in disgrace, and the divine protection withdrawn. The Israelites spoiled and reproached the house of David, the Egyptians were victorious and triumphant; and in the early days of that royal race, it was put to shame and reduced to the brink of ruin: and how could this consist with the faithfulness of God to his covenant? Doubtless the Psalmist meant to urge this as a plea with him, to return in mercy and restore the family of David to prosperity: and likewise to propose it to the distressed prince and people of Judah, for their instruction; that they might consider the dispensation as a chastisement for their sins, and so be led by it to repentance. And probably he also meant to lead their thoughts to the promised Seed of David, whom the covenant principally respected. 'When the faithful few beheld the true Son of David—'delivered over to a shameful, as well as painful death; 'they began to think the covenant made void, and the pro-'mises at an end. "We trusted," said they, "that it had "been he which should have redeemed Israel." (*Horne.*) —The early corruption of Christianity by "damnable here-"sies," the lamentable schisms which have rent it, and the oppressive persecutions and multiplied corruptions to which it hath so long been exposed, have precisely the same effect on Christians in general, in respect of the promises and predictions concerning an universal propagation and triumph of the Gospel, contained in the sacred Scriptures.

V. 47, 48. The Psalmist here seems to have personated the family of David, or one of the kings of that race, or to have formed the psalm for the use of his afflicted prince. The reigns of David and Solomon were soon over; the glory of their kingdom had been very transient, if it were thus to terminate; and they seemed almost to be made in vain: for the short glimpse of Israel's prosperity was now extinguished: and indeed as every one must die, if the prosperity of the church depended upon the life of any man, it would soon be buried in his grave. Probably the prophet looked forward to Him, who indeed saw death, and went down into the grave; but was able to deliver his life from the power of it, and rose again, and liveth from age to age to perpetuate the safety and provide for the happiness of his people. With this he might also comfort himself, under the prospect of his own death, though he had survived the external glory of David's kingdom, and expected soon to die and leave it in disgrace and distress.

V. 51. 'They laugh at us who wait patiently for the 'coming of thy Christ.' 'They reproached the footsteps 'of Christ; or the slowness of his footsteps.' Other constructions are put on this expression: but they do not seem equally satisfactory. We know, however, that the enemies of the family of David, invidiously traced the *footsteps* of those princes; that is, they examined every part of their conduct, in order to find matter of accusation against them; they overlooked all their eminent services, and aggravated every slip they made, and even reproached them

1 xli. 13. lxxii. 18, 19. cvi. 48. Neh. ix. 5. Matt. vi. 13. 1 Tim. i. 17.

52 [1] Blessed *be* the LORD for evermore. Amen, and Amen.

PSALM XC.

The Psalmist comforts himself, by considering the favour of the eternal God to his people, 1, 2. *He laments the frailty, sufferings, and shortness of human life, as the effects of the wrath of God against the sins of men,* 3—11. *He prays that these considerations may be wisely improved by him and his people; for the comforts of God's mercy: and for a sensible experience of his power, glory, and favour with them and their children,* 12—17.

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with such things as they had never done; thus they slandered the Anointed of God. Perhaps they also ridiculed the expectations which were formed of returning prosperity to the family of David, and of the Messiah descending from him. We remember also who sought for false witnesses against Jesus the Anointed of God, to put him to death; and persons of the same stamp will revile those who tread in his steps.

V. 52. 'But let them laugh on; neither their scoffs nor 'our calamity shall hinder us from praising the Lord, and 'speaking good of him continually, in assured hope that 'he will at last deliver us. Let it be so, we beseech thee, 'let it be so, as we desire and hope that we may ever 'praise thee for our happy restoration.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—18.

When the dispensations of Providence *seem* contrary to the promises, and we venture to state our difficulties and discouragements before God; we should always recur to first principles, and take it for granted that he is doing right, though we are not able to discern it. Faith in the boundless and everlasting mercy and truth of God brings comfort into the heart, and fills the mouth with praise, even in the deepest scenes of adversity: and whilst we are assured that "mercy shall be built up for ever," and "faithfulness established in the heavens;" we should desire that all men, through successive generations, may be acquainted with them, and praise the Lord for them. His covenant with the seed of David his servant is immutably ratified; for the throne of David "is builded to all "generations," yea, for ever and ever: and all the inhabitants of Heaven, as well as the congregations of saints on earth, will continually praise the wonders of his power displayed in performing the engagements of his word.—We should be careful never to speak or act as if we thought any of the angels in heaven, or any of the sons of the mighty on earth, fit to be compared unto the Lord. He is not limited to such methods as we can conceive; or to such operations as creatures can perform. His thoughts and ways are infinitely above our comprehension; and our part is to adore the depths we cannot fathom, and to expect covenanted blessings when *we* can see no way in which they can be communicated. Our "God is greatly "to be *feared*, even in the assembly of his saints, and "to be had in reverence of all them that are about him." Nor should our filial confidence in his love abate our awful veneration of his Majesty; for then, our worship on earth would bear no resemblance to that of angels in heaven: (*Notes, Is.* vi.) Surely then our external posture and serious attention should indicate the reverence of our hearts, when we assemble to worship our glorious God. But, alas, how little of this appears in general in our congregations! and how much cause of humiliation have we all on this account?—It is a joyful consideration, that the power which created and upholds the earth, and which rules the impetuous waves of the sea, is engaged to perform the promises; and that the Proprietor of the universe is the Portion of his people. That high and strong right hand and mighty arm, which smote Egypt, will to the end scatter the enemies of his Church; and all who trust in his mercy shall rejoice in his name: for as justice and judgment are the stability of his throne, so mercy and truth direct all his dealings towards his believing servants. Happy then are they who know, believe, and obey the joyful sound of his Gospel; for their present safety and their eternal felicity are secured in the favour of Him whom they trust as a Saviour, love as a Father, and obey as a King.

V. 19—37.

The Lord hath spoken by his prophets and apostles, in divers times and various ways, with an especial purpose of making known to sinful men that He "hath laid help "upon one that is mighty, and exalted one chosen out "of the people;" who being infinite in power and love as the eternal Son of God, and having become one of us by assuming our nature, "is not ashamed to call us brethren." This is the Redeemer, whom JEHOVAH himself hath appointed for us, and who alone is adequate to the arduous work of our salvation. Having been anointed immeasurably with the Holy Spirit, and strengthened by the power of God, He in our nature withstood and repelled the combined assaults of earth and hell; and is now exalted by the right hand of the "Father to be a Prince and Saviour, "to give repentance and forgiveness of sins," and to beat down and destroy all that hate his disciples. In the name of JEHOVAH his horn is exalted, and mercy and truth come through and by him to the ruined sons of men; and his kingdom shall extend throughout the whole earth. He, in a peculiar sense, could cry unto the Lord, "Thou "art my Father, my God, and my strong Salvation:" being indeed his first-begotten, his only begotten Son, and made, even in our nature, far higher than the kings of the earth. With him the everlasting covenant is ratified for evermore, and through him alone is mercy exercised towards the guilty. "His dominion shall be for ever, "and his throne as the days of heaven." Whilst he in-

* A Prayer of Moses [a] the man of God.

LORD, [b] thou hast been our dwelling-place in † all generations.

2 [c] Before the mountains were brought forth, [d] or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even [e] from everlasting to everlasting, [f] thou *art* God.

* Or, *A Prayer*, being a Psalm *of Moses*.
a Ex. xxxiii. 14—19. Deut xxxiii. 1. 1 Kings xiii. 1. 1 Tim vi. 11.
b lxxi. 3. xci. 1. 9. Deut. xxxiii. 27. Is. viii. 14. Ez. xi 16. John vi. 56. 1 John iv. 16.——† Heb. *generation and generation*. lxxxix 1. *Marg*.
c Job xxxviii. 4—9 28, 29. Prov. viii. 25, 26.
d xxxiii 9. cxlvi. 6. Gen. i. 1.
e xciii. 2. cii 24—27. ciii 17. Is. xliv. 6. lvii. 15. Rev. i. 8.——f Is. Mic. v. 2. Hab. i. 12. 1 Tim. vi. 15, 16. Heb. i. 10—12. xiii. 8. xlv. 22.

vites sinners to incline their ear and come to him, that he may make with them this everlasting covenant; he treats all his willing subjects as his friends and children: and the oath with which that covenant is ratified to him, as the Seed of Abraham, and the Son of David, is recorded, in order "that we might have strong consolation who have "fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:" and the name of God would be dishonoured, if this security could possibly fail, or the thing be once altered which he hath spoken. So that the whole church of Christ, as his spiritual seed, is secured in its immunities and privileges by the covenant made and ratified with its glorious Head. Let us then seek an interest in these blessings; and an assurance that we belong to this happy company, by the witness of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, as the counterpart of "the faithful record in heaven," of our names written in the book of life; and so rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

V. 38—52.

Notwithstanding the security of the covenant of grace, it is also very plainly foretold that damnable heresies and grievous scandals and corruptions should take place among professed Christians; and when these predictions are compared with what we read and witness, they may serve to confirm our faith, though they grieve our hearts. Indeed even true Christians offend in many things. Hence it is that corrections become necessary, in order to the performance of the covenant to the honour of God. When this is the case, the Lord will visit their transgressions with the rod, and their "iniquity with scourges: nevertheless he will not "utterly take away his loving kindness from them, nor "suffer his truth to fail." The records of the Lord's dealings with the family of David, hold before us an emblem of his dealings with his church and with believers. Grievous may be the afflictions which they endure; great the disgrace and distress of soul which come upon them: but the gates of hell shall not prevail against the church, neither will God finally forsake or abhor the true believer. We should then rejoice in this security; but we should rejoice with trembling: many self-deceivers abuse the doctrine; and even they who are interested in the blessing, may, notwithstanding, by loose walking, bring themselves into such darkness and distress as can scarcely be conceived. We ought, therefore, to rely on it for our encouragement in the path of duty, and in bearing the cross, and not when yielding to sloth and self-indulgence. Neither should we give way to despondency, whilst we witness the success of idolatry, superstition, heresy, or infidelity against the religion of Christ. These early began to corrupt or to oppose the church: and their success seems often to make void the covenant and profane the Redeemer's crown, to break down the strong holds of his royal city, and to expose his religion to reproach. But though his cause may appear to suffer loss and his glory to be eclipsed, and his enemies to conquer and triumph, yet this will be only for a time. The Lord will not hide himself for ever, nor suffer his wrath to burn like fire, whatever his people fear, or his enemies expect. But when his purposes are effected, he will return, cause his servants to rejoice, and put his enemies to silence and shame. For the Saviour ever liveth to effect his grand designs, and a thousand years are in his sight but as one day; and though one instrument after another die, and effect very little; though we are all shortly to drop into the grave, and may perhaps leave the church under a thick cloud; and though all men seem made in vain: yet the Lord himself will surely arise and plead his own cause, and fulfil his largest promises in their fullest meaning. If, then, we can do little else during our few remaining days on earth, let us give ourselves unto prayer: let us plead with the Lord his former mercies to his people, and the promises of his word: let us humbly represent before him the reproach cast upon his servants by his enemies, through the prevalence of impiety in the visible church, and through the *apparent* delay of his making his truth universally triumphant. And though the blasphemies and slanders of the proud and mighty, who revile or ridicule those who expect the coming of the Lord's anointed King, and walk in his footsteps, must needs grieve our hearts: yet let us still hope for the commencement of a more glorious scene on earth, as well as for eternal felicity in heaven; and in the prospect of these approaching seasons of joy and praise, let us now mix our tears and prayers with hallelujahs, and still say from our hearts, "Blessed be the LORD for ever-"more, Amen, and Amen."

NOTES.

PSALM XC. *Title.* "Moses, the man of God," (the prophet Moses, and not one of the same name in after ages, as some imagine,) may very reasonably be supposed to have composed this most instructive and affecting psalm, when the generation of Israel, which God had by him brought out of Egypt, was sentenced to fall in the wilderness, or when he had witnessed in a great degree the execution of that sentence. (*Notes*, &c. *Num.* xiii. xiv:) and it is not improbable that it was used at the tabernacle, as well as published among the people, during that solemn season, when death marched his rounds among them in so remarkable a manner. It seems to have been preserved along with the books of Moses, and afterwards to have been inserted in the book of Psalms. To obtain the most interesting view of this picture, so to speak, we must consider Moses as the principal figure, and carefully advert to his peculiar circumstances at that season. The sentiments indeed of the psalm are never unsuitable to our situation in this world: but they would be peculiarly adapted to the case of a pious man, in a time of pestilence, when tens of thousands were swept away on every side of him.

3 [e] Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men.

4 For [b] a thousand years in thy sight *are but* as yesterday, when it * is past, and [i] *as* a watch in the night.

5 [k] Thou carriest them away as with a flood: [l] they are *as* a sleep: [m] in the morning *they are* like grass *which* † groweth up.

6 [n] In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth.

7 For [o] we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath [p] are we troubled.

8 [q] Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, [r] our secret *sins* [s] in the light of thy countenance.

9 For [t] all our days are ‡ passed away in thy wrath: we spend our years as ◊ a tale *that is told.*

10 ‖ The days of our years *are* threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength *they be* fourscore years, † yet *is* their strength labour and sorrow; for [x] it is soon cut off, and we fly away.

11 [y] Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, *so is* thy wrath.

12 [z] So teach *us* to number our days, [a] that we may * apply *our* hearts unto wisdom.

13 [b] Return, O LORD, [c] how long? and [d] let it repent thee concerning thy servants.

14 O [e] satisfy us early with thy mercy; [f] that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

15 [g] Make us glad according to the days *wherein* thou hast afflicted us, *and* [h] the years *wherein* we have seen evil.

16 [i] Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and [k] thy glory unto their children.

17 And [l] let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us: and [m] establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.

g civ. 29. cxlvi. 4. Gen iii. 19. vi. 6, 7. Num. xiv. 35 Job xii. 10. xxxiv. 14, 15.
h 2 Pet. iii. 8.
* Heb *hath passed them.*
i Matt. xiv. 25. xxiv. 43. Luke xii. 38.
k Job ix. 26 xxii. 16. xxvii. 20, 21. Is viii. 7, 8. Jer xlvi. 7, 8
l lxxiii 20 Is. xxix. 7. 8.
m cjii. 15, 16 Is. xl 6. Jam i. 10, 11. 1 Pet. i 24.
† Or, *is changed.*
n xcii. 7. Joo xiv 2 Matt. vi. 30.
o 9. 11. xxxix. 11. liix. 13. Num. xvii. 12, 13. Deut. ii 14—16. Heb. iii 10, 11. 17—19. iv. 1, 2.
p Ex. xiv. 24. Rom. ii. 8, 9.
q x. 11. l. 21. cxxxix. 1—4. Job xxxiv. 21. Jer. xvi. 17. xxiii. 24 Ez. viii. 12. Rev. xx. 12
r xix. 12 Prov. v. 21. Ec. xii. 14 Luke xii. 1, 2. Rom ii. 16. 1 Cor. iv. 5. Heb. iv. 12, 13. 1 John iii. 20.
s lxxx. 16.
t lxxviii. 33.
‡ Heb. *turned away.*
◊ Heb. *a meditation.*
x lxxviii. 39 Job xiv. 10. *Marg.* xxiv 24 Is. xxxviii. 12 Luke xii 20. Jam iv. 14.
y Lev. xxvi 18. 21. 24 28 Deut. xxviii. 59 xxix. 20, &c. Is. xxxiii. 14 Nah. i. 6. Luke xii. 5 2 Cor v. 11. Rev. vi. 17
z xxxix. 4 Deut. xxxii. 29. Ec. ix. 10. Luke xvi. 35—40. John ix. 4 Eph. v. 16, 17.
a Job xxviii. 28. Prov ii. 2—6. iii. 13—18. iv. 5 vii. 1—4. viii. 32—36 xvi. 16. xviii. 1, 2. xxii. 17. xxiii 12 23.
* Heb. *cause our hearts to come.*
b vi. 4. lxxx. 14. Jer. xii 15. Joel ii. 13, 14. Zech. i. 16.
c lxxxix 46.
d cvi 45 cxxxv. 14. Ex. xxxii. 14. Deut xxxii. 36 Hos. xi. 8. Am vii. 3. 6. Jon. iii. 9.
e xxxvi. 7, 8. lxiii. 3—5 lxv. 4. ciii. 3—5. Jer xxxi. 14. Zech ix. 17.
f xxiii 6. lxxv 6. lxxxvi. 4. cxlix. 2. Phil. iv. 4.
g xxx. 5 cxxvi. 5, 6. Is. xii. 1 xl 1. 2. lxi. 3. lxv. 18, 19. Jer. xxxi. 12, 13. Matt. v 4 John xvi. 20. Rev. vii. 14—17——h Deut. ii 14. 16.——i xliv. 1. Num. xiv. 15—24. Hab iii 2.——k Num. xiv. 22. 31. Deut. i. 39. Josh. iv. 22—24. xxiii. 14.——l xxvii. 4. i. 2. lxxx. 3 7 2 Cor. iii. 18. 1 John iii. 2.——m lxviii 23. cxviii. 24. Is. xxvi. 12. 1 Cor. iii. 7. 2 Thes. ii. 16, 17. iii. 1.

V. 1, 2. The Israelites were shut up in the desert, and not allowed to find habitations in the promised land: but the Psalmist recollected, that even Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were strangers and pilgrims in Canaan. Indeed God himself had in all ages been the *Home, Rest, Safety,* and *Comfort* of his people: and into that *Dwelling-place* they might enter by faith and prayer, even in the wilderness; seeing He was the same almighty, merciful, and faithful God from everlasting to everlasting.

V. 3—6. When man sinned, his Creator sentenced him "to return to the dust from whence he was taken." Adam, however, and several of his descendants, lived almost a thousand years: but in the sight of the eternal God this was but as *yesterday;* and it was soon past like a watch, or three hours of the night, which glides away while men sleep. Thus the Lord turned them to destruction, as well as their more short lived posterity; and the human race had all along been swept away by death as by an impetuous torrent: life appeared but a sleep; and all earthly prosperity only resembled the verdure and variegated hues of the meadow in the summer's morning; which before night is cut down by the scythe, and withered by the sun. The words translated, "Thou carriest them away as with a flood," may be rendered, "*Thou overflowedst them;*" and be considered as a reference to the desolations of the general deluge.

V. 7—10. The Israelites had provoked the Lord, by their unbelief and rebellion, to swear in his wrath that they should not enter Canaan: and this passage may refer to those events. Accordingly they were swept away by the wrath of God, in so extraordinary a manner, that they were kept in constant trouble of mind by the dread of his judgments. (*Marg. Ref.*) Not only were their open transgressions awfully punished; but their *secret sins,* or the *iniquities of their youth,* (as some render the word,) were called to remembrance by their righteous Judge. Thus their days and years were *turned away* from hope and comfort by the wrath of God, spent to little purpose, and soon came to an end, as a tale, a meditation, a waking dream. Perhaps the lives of men in general were at this æra reduced to about the present limits: at least it was thus with that generation of Israel; few of whom would exceed, and most would come short of, eighty years. But the verses are equally applicable to the general state of human nature.

V. 11. This verse is thus rendered by several learned men, "Who knoweth the power of thy anger? or of thy "wrath, according as thou art terrible?" That is, 'Who is there that fears the wrath of the Almighty in proportion to the degree in which it ought, in all reason, to be dreaded? or in proportion to his fear of mortal men, when possessed of power? Who is sufficiently afraid of offending God; or earnest in seeking to be reconciled to him?' 'According as men do more or less tremble at thy judgments; so dost thou more or less execute them.' (*Hall.*)

V. 12. The shortness, uncertainty, and sorrows of life, as the effects of the powerful wrath of God against the sins of men, when considered in connexion with the doctrine of an eternal state of future retribution, and that of salvation by the mercy and grace of God, through the promised Redeemer, if duly laid to heart, are suited to teach men true wisdom: and Moses prayed, that he and all his people, might be taught by the Lord himself thus to lay them to heart.

PSALM XCI.

The believer's security under the divine protection, amidst enemies and dangers, 1—10. Angels charged to take care of him, 11, 12. Promises to him who loves, knows, and trusts in God, 13—16.

V. 13—17. The Israelites, notwithstanding their transgressions, were externally the Lord's people, and he had many faithful servants among them. These no doubt thought the time very long, during which they continued under the severe rebukes of their God, without the accustomed tokens of his favour. They therefore prayed, that for their sakes he would at length change his conduct towards the nation: and if the sentence respecting Canaan was irreversible, that he would without delay satisfy their souls with the comforts of his mercy and grace; which would enable them to spend their few remaining days in holy joy, and counterbalance their long continued afflictions. They further besought the Lord that he would cause them again to witness his works of power and mercy for them, as an earnest of those more glorious displays which were to be afforded to their children, and that "the beauty of the "LORD their God might be upon them." This implies a request that he would appear to them in his tabernacle, *the beautiful sanctuary:* that he would continue his ordinances among them, which were their glory and beauty; and especially, that he would shine upon them with the beams of his holiness, (which is *his beauty,*) that, like the moon, irradiated and beautified by the reflected beams of the sun, they might be made to shine in the beauty of holiness as derived from him. Thus Moses and Aaron especially desired that the Lord would prosper and establish their work; that their pious and zealous endeavours might have their full effect by rendering the Israelites a holy and a happy people; which would best prepare them for the conquest of Canaan, and for the blessings which God had engaged to bestow on the nation. 'Except thou guide with thine 'Holy Spirit, our enterprises can have no good success.'

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The favour and protection of God are the only suitable rest and comfort of the soul in this evil world: and in Christ Jesus he is become the Refuge and Dwelling-place, to which we may repair whenever pursued by the accusations of conscience or the unkindness of men; when wearied with the cares and toils of life; or disquieted by sickness and the prospect of death. His truth, love, and power are eternal and immutable; and this habitation can never fail those who, from age to age, resort to it for rest and peace. Compared with him who from everlasting to everlasting is God alone, how do the most renowned of the human race shrink into insignificancy! The longest life which men have passed on earth, has been but as a watch of the night; and then the word of the Almighty remanded their bodies to their original dust. What images in nature can then sufficiently illustrate the brevity of our present span of life? the impetuous current of time hurries mortals, as in a sleep, into eternity, where most of them first awake, and lift up their eyes: and all the external splendour and gayety which excite the envy, the desires, or the admiration of the thoughtless beholder, are destroyed and withered as in a moment. So that the supposed pleasure of a worldly life passes as a "tale that is told," and generally, taken all together, it proves a doleful tale. Few in comparison reach the seventy years assigned as the date of man's present life; and if a small number linger out a longer space, their lives are but a continuation of labour and sorrow, and soon they are cut off and fly away. But wherefore hath the Lord, as it were, made all men thus in vain? To this inquiry the scriptural, and the only rational, answer is, that we are a company of condemned criminals, and are thus troubled and consumed by his anger; he has his eye upon our most secret sins, as well as our more open iniquities; and therefore we pass our days away in his deserved wrath. The sentence of temporal death is gone forth, and is irreversible, however the time and circumstances of it may vary. This indeed is very little compared with the wrath to come: yet, alas, how few seem to understand or regard the powerful wrath of that God who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell; though no apprehensions can possibly equal the terror of it! Instead then of wasting our precious fleeting days in pursuing the phantoms of the world, which elude our grasp, and will leave their possessors for ever poor, we should employ ourselves in seeking forgiveness of sins and an inheritance in heaven. Let us earnestly pray, that the Lord would so teach us to consider the shortness and uncertainty of life, and the proportion of it which is already past, that we may apply our hearts to this true wisdom. A proper attention to this "one thing needful" will prove us wise to eternity, whatever else be renounced or neglected: but inattention to it will stigmatize us as fools for ever, though we should gain the whole world. If this grand interest be safe, the shortness of life may rather be matter of mutual congratulation than condolence: and as to the evils that we feel or witness, persevering prayer will prevail either for a mitigation of them, or comfort under them. Whatever else be withheld, the mercy and favour of our God will satisfy our souls: and in communion with him we may rejoice and be glad all our days, even in this miserable world. 'These are the days wherein God afflicteth us, these 'the years in which we see evil: but he will make us 'glad according to them. "These light afflictions which "are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." 'Then shall our 'joy be increased, and receive an additional relish from 'the remembrance of our former sorrows; then shall we 'bless the days and years which exercised our faith, and 'perfected our patience: and then shall we bless God 'who chastised us for a season, that he might save us for 'ever.' (*Horne.*) In the mean while, we should lay ourselves out to do what good we can in this evil world to those around us, and especially to such as are likely to survive us; earnestly and constantly praying, that the work of redeeming love may be more and more made known, in its glory and efficacy, to our souls; that we may more

HE that [a] dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall * abide [b] under the shadow of the Almighty.

2 [c] I will say of the LORD, *He is* my Refuge and my Fortress; [d] my God, [e] in him will I trust.

3 Surely he shall deliver thee from [f] the snare of the fowler, [g] *and* from the noisome pestilence.

4 He shall [h] cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust; [i] his truth *shall be thy* shield and buckler.

5 [k] Thou shalt not be afraid for [l] the terror by night; *nor* [m] for the arrow *that* flieth by day;

6 *Nor* for [n] the pestilence *that* walketh in darkness; [o] *nor* for the destruction *that* wasteth at noon-day.

7 [p] A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; *but* it shall not come nigh thee.

8 [q] Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold, and see [r] the reward of the wicked.

9 Because [s] thou hast made the LORD *which is* my Refuge, *even* [t] the Most High, thy Habitation;

10 [u] There shall no evil befall thee, [x] neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.

11 For [y] he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee [z] in all thy ways.

12 [a] They shall bear thee up in *their* hands, [b] lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

a xxvii. 5. xxxi. 20. xxxii. 7. lxi. 3, 4. xc. 1. Is. viii. 14. Ez. xi. 16. 1 John iv. 15, 16.
* Heb *lodge*. xxv. 13. *Marg.*
b xvii. 8. xxxvi. 7. lvii. 1. Judg. ix. 15. Cant. ii. 3. Is. iv. 5, 6. Lam. iv. 20.
c 9. xviii. 2. xlvi. 1. lxxi. 3. cxlii. 5. Deut. xxxii. 30, 31. xxxiii. 27—29. Prov. xviii. 10.
d xliii. 4. xlviii. 14. lxvii. 6, 7. Gen. xvii. 7. Deu. xxvi. 17—19. Jer. xxxi. 1. Luke xx. 38. Heb. xi. 16.
e lxiii. 5—8. Is. xii. 2. xxvi. 3, 4.
f cxxiv. 7. cxli. 9. Prov. vii. 23. Ec. ix. 12. Hos. ix. 8. Am. iii. 5. 1 Tim. vi. 9. 2 Tim. ii. 26.
g 6. Num. xiv. 37, 38. xvi. 46—48. 2 Sam. xxiv. 15. Job v. 19—22.——h lxi. 4. Deu. xxxii. 11. Ruth ii. 12. Mat. xxiii. 27.——i lxxxix. 32, 33. cxxxviii. 2. Gen. xv. 1. Is. xliii. 1, 2. Mark xiii. 31. Tit. i. 2. Heb. vi. 17, 18.——k iii. 6. xxvii. 1—3. xlvi. 2. cxii. 7. Prov. xxviii. 1. Matt. viii. 26. Heb. xiii. 6.——l iii. 5. 2 Kings vii. 6. Job iv. 13—15. xxiv. 14—16. Prov. iii. 23—25. Is. xxi. 4. Luke xii. 20. 39.——m Job vi. 4. Lam. iii. 12, 13.——n cxxi. 6. Ex. xii. 29, 30. 2 Kings xix. 35.
o Num. xvi. 48. 2 Sam. xxiv. 15. Mat. xxiv. 6, 7. 1 Cor. x. 6—10.
p xxxii. 6. Gen. vii. 23. Ex. xii. 12, 13. Num. xiv. 37, 38. Josh. xiv. 10.
q xxxvii. 34. lviii. 10, 11. xcii. 11. Mal. i. 5.
r Is. iii. 11. Heb. ii. 2.
s cxlii. 4, 5. cxlvi. 5, 6.
t 1. lxxi. 3. xc. 1.
u cxxi. 7. Prov. xii. 21. Rom. viii. 28.
x Deut. vii. 15. Job v. 24.
y xxxiv. 7. 2 Kings vi. 16, 17. Matt. iv. 6. Luke iv. 10. Heb. i. 14.
z Prov. iii. 6. Is. xxx. 21. Jer. ii. 18.
a Is. xlvi. 3. lxiii. 9.
b xxxvii. 24. Job v. 23. Prov. iii. 23.

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fully experience the sanctification and consolation of the Holy Spirit; that the beauty of holiness, even the divine image, may be evidently visible in all our character and conduct; that the same blessings in still larger proportion may be extended to our children and more remote posterity; that the Lord would "establish the works of our "hands upon us;" and that he would illuminate his church with the light and beauty of his truth and purity, and establish the Redeemer's kingdom and work throughout the whole earth.

NOTES.

PSALM XCI. V. 1, 2. It is probable, that David wrote this psalm, though his name is not prefixed to it. "The secret place of the Most High," may be an allusion to the ark of the covenant, fixed in the most holy place as in a secret pavilion. By faith and prayer, believers put themselves under the protection of God, relying on his power, wisdom, truth, and love; and thus they dwell in an invisible fortress, and are secured by an almighty Friend, in a way kept secret from the unbelieving world around them. Whilst the Psalmist recommended this Refuge and Rest to others, he avows his purpose to avail himself of it, and to place his entire confidence in the Lord. The two verses, however, may be thus rendered, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, "shall lodge under the shadow of the Almighty; saying of the LORD, My Refuge, &c." In every dark season of affliction and danger, he shall have security and comfort, while with his heart he relies on the Almighty, and with his lips avows that his expectation is from him alone.

V. 3—8. Under a variety of expressions, in the most beautiful style of eastern poetry, the Psalmist represents the manifold dangers to which believers are exposed from the wickedness of men, and from pestilences and diseases in all their multiplied forms. Yet these are but a shadow of the perils by which their souls are threatened from the subtlety and power of Satan, the plausible delusions of false teachers, the terrors of persecutors, the allurements of flattery and prosperity, the infectious wickedness of the world, and the deceitfulness of their own hearts. 'But 'God's help is ever ready for us, whether Satan assail us 'secretly, or openly: that is, his faithful keeping of his 'promise.' The Septuagint renders the clause, "the "destruction that wasteth at noon-day," "*the noon-day* "*demon*." 'Avarice and ambition are abroad in the day; 'while concupiscence as a pestilence walketh in darkness. 'In adversity the soul is disturbed by terrors, in prosperity 'still more endangered by pleasures. But Jesus Christ hath 'overcome the world to prevent us from being overcome 'by it.' (*Horne.*) Yet, as thousands and ten thousands fall, during a fatal pestilence, though others witnessing these desolations are preserved: so immense multitudes are swept into destruction by delusions and temptation, while a few escape to mourn over them. 'The godly 'have some experience of God's judgments against the 'wicked even in this life; but fully shall they see it at 'that day when all things shall be revealed.'

V. 9, 10. These verses are thus rendered in the old version. "For thou *hast said*, the LORD is mine hope; "thou hast set the Most High for thy Refuge. There "shall be no evil, &c." Because this is thy avowed and real confidence, therefore thou art safe.

V. 11, 12. The Lord is pleased to employ the ministration of his holy angels, for the protection of his people from outward harm while *in the path of duty;* but if they desert their post and path, they are not warranted to depend on that protection: and (not angels, but) the Holy Spirit must inwardly guide them in those ways, or bring them back when they wander. The mutilated and sophistical quotation which Satan made of this text, in tempting our Saviour, may show that Christ was *principally*, but not *exclusively*, meant. (*Notes, Matt.* iv.)

13 Thou shalt [c] tread upon the lion
and * adder: the young lion and [e] the
dragon shalt thou trample under feet.
14 [f] Because he hath set his love upon
me, therefore will I deliver him: [g] I
will set him on high, [h] because he hath
known my name.

c Judg. xiv. 5, 6. 1 Sam. xvii. 37. Dan. vi. 22. d 2 Tim. iv. 17. e Matt. xvi. 18 Acts xxviii. 3—6. Rom. xvi 20. * Or, *Asp.* f Is. xxvii. 1. Rom. iii. 13. Rev. xii. 9. xx. 1, 2. g 1 Chr. xxix. 3. John xiv. 23. xvi. 27. Rom. viii. 28 Jam. i. 12. ii. 5—g lix. 1 *Marg.* lxxxix. 16, 17. Is. xxxiii. 16. Phil. ii. 9—11.——h ix. 10. John xvii. 3. Gal. iv. 9.

15 [i] He shall call upon me, and I will
answer him: [k] I *will be* with him in
trouble; [l] I will deliver him, [m] and ho-
nour him.
16 [n] With † long life will I satisfy
him, and [o] shew him my salvation.

i x. 17. xviii. 3. l. 15 Is. lviii. 9. Jer xxix. 12, 13 xxxii. 3. Rom. x. 12, 13. Heb. v. 7. k xxiii. 4. cxxxviii. 7. Is. xli. 10. xliii. 1, 2. Matt xxviii. 20. John xvi. 32. Acts xviii 9, 10. 2 Tim iv. 17.——l xxxvii. 40. 2 Cor. i. 9, 10.——m 1 Sam ii. 30. John v. 44. xii. 26. 43. 1 Pet. i 21. iii. 22. v. 4. Rev. iii 21.——n xxi. 4 Gen. xxv. 8. Job v. 26. Prov. iii. 16. Is. lxv. 20—22.——† Heb. *length of days.*——o xvi. 11. l. 23. Is xlv. 17. Luke ii. 30. iii. 6.

V. 13. By these figurative expressions, Satan and his progeny of wicked men are figuratively described, who persecute the people of God, or attempt to terrify, or seduce them from their duty, but over whom they shall at length triumph as their Captain hath triumphed. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 14—16. 'To assure the faithful of God's protection, 'He bringeth in God himself to confirm the same.' So that JEHOVAH himself is here introduced as the speaker; and the persons intended are characterized. They have known the name of the Lord, and set their love on him, expecting their happiness from him, and seeking help from him in prayer: these characters He will deliver, honour, exalt, and satisfy with long life, if not here, yet in heaven, where he will show them his complete salvation. Even the promises of Scripture imply that "in this world the "best of Christians must have tribulation;" by engaging that the Lord will afford them his gracious presence under their troubles and trials.

The following view of this beautiful psalm, with an interchange of speakers, which has been transmitted to me, seems worthy of consideration. 'Imagine the Psalmist to 'have been addressing himself to some person hopefully 'disposed towards religion, in sentiments and language, of 'which the first verse affords a specimen: this person being 'much affected and confirmed in his religious purposes by 'the discourse, comes to the resolution of the second verse, 'I *will say*, &c." Encouraged and excited by this success, 'the Psalmist resumes the conversation, and in yet more 'animated strains sets forth the security and blessedness of 'the man "whose hope the LORD is." "Surely" (if you 'do so,) "he will deliver, &c." The Almighty himself, 'at the fourteenth verse, assumes the part of the speaker, 'and confirms all that his servant had urged, and thus the 'psalm concludes.'

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The divine protection and consolation which believers enjoy, are deemed visionary by ungodly men: but they really do abide and repose under the shadow of the Almighty, which the scorching sun of tribulation cannot penetrate, and in a fortress which no power of the enemy can force. Let then sinners come to him upon his mercy-seat, through the Redeemer's name: and let those who have experienced his salvation, boldly avow their confidence in him, and encourage others also to trust in him. Every man must perceive, that in this world we are exposed to innumerable evils and perils, from which no prudence, courage, or strength of our own can secure us: and it must be allowed desirable to have an Almighty, Omnipresent, and Omniscient Protector, who is likewise infinite in goodness, mercy, and truth: One that can preserve our lives from famine, pestilence, and sudden death; from the desolations of war, the open assaults of robbers and murderers; from the dark designs of false accusers and perjured persons; and from innumerable evils, to which we are exposed by day and by night. But they who violate the commands and neglect the salvation of the Lord, cannot possibly have any *well grounded* confidence in his protection: and should he bear with their provocations, and continue their lives for many years, yet except they repent they must at length perish in their sins. He therefore who is aware of his real situation, discovers more formidable evils to which he is exposed. He wants a refuge from the deserved wrath of God, and from the miseries of the eternal world. He needs an effectual and permanent deliverance from Satan, who takes men captive at his will, as the fowler ensnares the unsuspecting bird; who appears as a roaring lion when he excites persecution against the church, or as a subtle serpent and a destructive dragon, when he opposes the faith with seducing lies, vain reasonings, fascinating flatteries, or proffered secular advantages; or when he transforms himself into an angel of light to deceive men with false religion. He wants also protection against the pestilence of a wicked world; that he may not be infected with fashionable or epidemical vices, which form "a de-"struction that wasteth at the noon-day;" or by any other more silent and unsuspected contagion of example, influence, or false principles, which constitute "a pesti-"lence that walketh in darkness:" nay, he is sensible, that the remainders of corrupt nature often render solitude as dangerous as the world itself can be. He also longs to be delivered from the *terror* of these evils, and to be assured that he shall not at last perish with the multitudes that are on every side thronging the road to destruction. This security and assurance the Christian seeks as his principal object: being persuaded, that if his eternal interests be safe, the Lord will manage all his inferior and temporal concerns wisely and well; and preserve his life on earth as long as is good for him, to whatever perils it may seem exposed. For his encouragement in this grand concern, he by faith daily looks unto Jesus: he contemplates the beloved Son of God, boldly and patiently marching forward on his perilous and rugged path; entirely preserved from the combined hosts of foes which beset his road, and made completely victorious over them; in no degree entangled by any of Satan's snares, wounded by any of his fiery darts, or terrified by his furious assaults; and not in the least infected by the pestilence of sin, the contagious love of the world, or the fear of man. He considers the Redeemer upheld by the arm of JEHOVAH, ministered unto by angels, trampling upon the head of Satan, overcoming the world, and triumphing over the king of terrors. He hears the Father say of him, "Because

PSALM XCII.

The Psalmist shows that it is good to be thankful, to praise God, and to celebrate his perfections and works, 1—5. He contrasts the judgments of God on the wicked, with the abiding felicity of the righteous, 6—15.

A Psalm *or* Song [a] for the Sabbath-Day.

IT is a [b] good *thing* to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing *praises* unto thy name, [c] O Most High;

2 To [d] shew forth thy loving-kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness * every night,

3 [e] Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery; upon † the harp with a ‡ solemn sound.

4 For thou, LORD, [f] hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands.

5 O LORD, [g] how great are thy works! *and* [h] thy thoughts are very [i] deep.

6 [k] A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth [l] a fool understand this.

7 When [m] the wicked spring as the grass, and when [n] all the workers of iniquity do flourish; [o] *it is* that they shall be destroyed for ever.

a Is. lviii. 13, 14 Heb. iv 9 *Marg.* Rev iv. 8—11. b xxxiii. 1. 1 23. lii. 9. liv. 6. lxxiii 28 cvii. 1. 8. 15 21, 22. cxxxv. 3. cxlvii. 1. Eph. v. 19. Heb xiii. 15 c 8. lxxxii. 6 Is. lvii. 15 Dan iv. 34—37 v. 18. Acts vii. 48. 49. d lxxi. 15 lxxxix 1, 2 cxlv 2. Is lxiii. 7. Lam. iii. 32, 33. John i. 17.
* Heb. *in the nights.* xlii. 8. lxxvii. 2. Job xxxv. 10. Acts xvi 25.

e xxxiii 2. lvii. lxviii. 25 lxxx 2, 3 cxlix cl 3—5. 1 Chr. xv. 16 xxv. 6. 2 Chr xxix. 25.
† Or, *the solemn sound with the harp.*
‡ Heb *Higgaion.* ix 16.
f lxiv. 10. civ. 31, 34. cvi. 47 &c. cxxvi 3 cxlv 6,7. Is lxi 2—11 lxv. 13, 14. lxvi. 10, 11. Jer. xxxi. 7. 11. 13 Zeph. iii. 14—16 Luke i. 47. John xvi 22. 2 Cor. ii. 14. Rev. xviii. 20. g xl 5 lxvi 3. civ. 24. cxi. 2. cxlv. 3, 4. Rev. xv. 3
h cxxxix 17. Is. xxviii. 29 lv. 8, 9. Jer. xxiii 20.

Rom. xi 33, 34.——i lxiv 6. Ec. vii. 24 1 Cor. ii 10.——k xxxii. 9. lxxiii. 22 xciv. 8. Prov xxx 2 Is. i. 3 Jer. x. 14. 1 Cor ii 14.——l xiv. 1. xlix. 10 lxxv. 4. Prov. i 22. xxiv. 7. Luke xii 20.——m xxxvii. 2 xc. 5, 6. ciii. 15, 16 Is. xxxvii. 27 xl 6, 7. Jam. i. 10, 11. 1 Pet. i. 24.——n lxxiii. 12 Job xii 6 xxi 7—12 Jer xii. 1 Mal. iii 15. o xxxvii. 35, 36. 38. lxxiii. 18—20. 1 Sam. xxv. 36—38 Prov. i. 32 Luke xvi. 19—25.

"he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver "him: I will set him on high, because he hath known "my name," &c. and whilst he reflects that the Redeemer's conflicts, sufferings, and exaltation were all intended for the benefit of his true disciples; he finds himself animated with a holy courage, to deny himself and take up his cross, and follow him. Relying on the truth and mercy of God, through the Saviour's great atonement, he hath come to put his trust under the shadow of his wings; and to shelter his soul under his word, as his shield and buckler: he now knows the name of the Lord, and has seen some beams of his glory: he hath set his affections on things above, and given his heart unto the Lord, and desires to love him more and more: he now lives by faith, and daily calls upon the Lord for all he wants. Dangers, temptations, fears, and troubles make him more to prize his Refuge and Rest. In many a sharp conflict he comes off victorious; many a danger he but just seems to escape: thousands go on in sin, or fall away from their *profession;* yet, by a sort of miracle, he finds himself preserved: no real evil comes upon him, nor is any plague allowed to come nigh his dwelling-place. Often he experiences extraordinary protection in Providence; and he has the comfort to know, that all the angels in heaven are ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation. His chief fear is, lest he should be drawn aside from the path of duty: but he prays to be led and upheld in it, and to be restored with rebukes and corrections if he wander. At length the conflict ends, and he is crowned conqueror, and has done for ever with trouble, sin, and temptation: he is set on high, and honoured in the presence of the angels of God; and "with his eyes "shall he behold, and see the reward of the wicked." O LORD, visit our souls with this salvation, and this length of days even for ever and ever. Amen.

NOTES.

PSALM XCII. *Title.* The writer of this psalm is not mentioned, and the Jews have many absurd traditions respecting it: but in all probability David composed it, about the time that the ark was conveyed to mount Zion, to be used in the worship at the sanctuary on the sabbath days. Indeed the sabbath was originally intended to give men leisure and opportunity for contemplating the works of God, and rendering him worship and praise.

V. 1, 2. 'It is no less delightful than it is profitable to 'sing hymns, in the praise of the divine perfections, which 'infinitely transcend all that can be said or thought of 'them.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The majesty and greatness of God; with his loving-kindness in promising a Saviour and salvation, and his faithfulness in performing his promises, are especially noticed.

V. 3. *Harp.* Or, *With a meditation or song, on the harp.* Perhaps the tune is meant. (*Marg. Note,* 1 *Chr.* xvi. 4—6.)

V. 4, 5. The wisdom, power, and goodness of God, displayed in the works of creation and providence, are worthy of all admiration and gratitude: and the Psalmist had experienced much of the tender care of the Lord towards him, and perceived many deep contrivances of his wisdom, in all the events of his past life: yet it is probable that he was led by the Holy Spirit to look forward to the great work of redemption by the promised Messiah, as the ground of his hope, the source of his triumph and joy, and the chief subject of his praise.—'All are too little, O Lord, to express the joy I have in 'the acts of thy providence, by whom as the world was 'made, so it is still governed. It ravishes my spirit, and 'makes me shout for joy, to think, how excellently thou 'orderest and disposest all things.' 'Whose administra-'tion, though I cannot fully comprehend; yet I admire—'the astonishing greatness of thy works, and reverence 'the unsearchable depths of thy counsels and designs.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)—'A prospect of creation, in the vernal 'season, fallen as it is, inspires the mind with a joy, which 'no words can express: but how doth the regenerate 'soul exult and triumph at beholding that "work of God's "hands," whereby he hath created all things anew in 'Christ Jesus! If we can be pleased with such a world 'as this, where sin and death have fixed their habitation, 'shall we not much rather admire those other heavens and 'that other earth wherein dwell righteousness and life?' (*Horne.*)

V. 6, 7. "The *natural* man receiveth not the things

8 But thou, LORD, [p] *art most* high for evermore.

9 [q] For, lo, thine enemies, O LORD, for, lo, thine enemies shall perish; all the workers of iniquity shall be [r] scattered.

10 But [s] my horn shalt thou exalt like *the horn of* [t] an unicorn: [u] I shall be anointed with fresh oil.

11 [x] Mine eye also shall see *my desire* on mine enemies, *and* mine ears shall hear *my desire* of the wicked that rise up against me.

p lxxxiii. 18. cii. 26, 27. Ex. xviii. 11. Ec. v. 8. Dan. iv. 34, 35. Acts xii. 1. 22—24.
q xxi. 8, 9. xxxvii. 20. lxviii. 1, 2. lxxiii. 27. Judg. v. 31. Luke xix. 27. 2 Thes. i. 7—9.
r i. 4. lix. 11. lxviii. 30. Lev. xxvi. 33. Num. x. 35. Deut. xxviii. 64. Is. xvii. 13. Ez. v. 12. Luke xxi. 24. lxxxix. 17. 24. cxii. 9. cxxxii. 17. cxlviii. 14. 1 Sam ii. 1. 10. Luke i. 69.
s Num xxiii. 22. xxiv 8.
u xxiii. 5 xlv. 7
x xxxvii. 34. liv. 7. lix. 10. xci. 8. cxii 8.

12 [y] The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree; he shall grow like [z] a cedar in Lebanon.

13 [a] Those that be planted in the house of the LORD, [b] shall flourish [c] in the courts of our God.

14 [d] They shall still bring forth fruit [e] in old age; they shall be fat and * flourishing;

15 [f] To shew that the LORD is upright: *he is* [g] my Rock, [h] and *there is* no unrighteousness in him.

y 7. lii 9. Is. lv. 13. lxv. 22. Hos. xiv. 5, 6
z civ 16 cxlviii. 9. Am. ii. 9.
a Is. lx. 21 Rom. vi. 5. xi. 17. Eph. iii. 17.
b Is. lxi. 3. 2 Pet. iii 18.
c c. 4. cxxxv. 2. 2 Chr iv 9.
p 1 3 Matt. iii. 10. John xv. 2—5. Gal. v. 22, 23 Phil. i. 11 Jude 12.
e lxxi. 18. 1 Chr. xxix. 1, &c. Job xvii. 9. Pro. iv. 18. Is. xlvi. 4. Jer. xvii. 8.
* Heb *green*. Ez. xlvii 12.
f John x. 27—29.
g xviii. 2. lxii. 6.

xv. 1—8. 1 Cor. i. 8, 9. 1 Thes. v. 23, 24. Tit. i. 2. 1 Pet. i. 4, 5.——Deut. xxxii. 4.——h cxlv. 17 Rom. ix. 14. 2 Thes. i. 6, 7.

" of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness to him: " neither can he know them, because they are spiritually " discerned." So that, while the mere sensualist, who, like the brutes, seeks his happiness in animal indulgence, takes no pleasure in contemplating the works of creation and providence, and is incapable of perceiving or admiring the glory of God displayed in them: all other unregenerate, or ungodly men, (the persons denominated *fools* in Scripture,) are incapable of discerning or delighting in the glorious and harmonious display of the divine perfections in the work of man's redemption and salvation. And not only the sensualist, but all worldly men in general, being destitute of faith and spiritual discernment, are blind to the tendency and event of ungodly prosperity and pleasure. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 10. *Fresh oil.* Perhaps David might refer, by this expression, to his being re-anointed king upon his accession to the throne. This, however, was only an emblem of the fresh accession of wisdom, strength, and grace, which believers derive continually from the renewed unction of the Holy Spirit.

V. 11. The words *my desire* are not in the original, or in several versions ancient and modern: and the passage might be read without them, "Mine eyes shall behold mine " enemies, and mine ears shall hear of the wicked that " rise up against me." The Psalmist indeed *foresaw* their dreadful doom, but it does not follow that he *desired* it.

V. 12. The palm tree spreads its branches very wide, and grows to a vast size: it affords a refreshing shade to travellers. It also bears dates, a most grateful fruit in those countries, and it is in every way a most beautiful tree, and an invaluable treasure to the inhabitants. The cedar grows immensely large, and flourishes for ages, and when cut down, its valuable timber is exceedingly durable. These trees, compared with the gaudy withering grass, mark and illustrate very forcibly indeed the difference, in character and condition, betwixt the prosperous wicked man and the true believer.

V. 13—15. All holiness and spiritual consolation are derived from the fulness of Christ, through the ordinances of his appointment. The grace which teaches sinners to love and frequent those ordinances, in order to obtain these spiritual blessings, plants them, as "trees of righteousness," in the courts of the Lord: (*Isaiah* lxi. 3.) Others, who attend, are but withering branches: but these take root, and derive nourishment from Christ; they grow and flourish, and bear fruit, and are often most eminent in grace and usefulness to others, even amidst the infirmities of old age. This is ordered on purpose to show that the Lord does indeed fulfil his covenant-engagements to all who truly make him the Foundation of their hope, and the Rock of their salvation, (as the Psalmist did;) and is an earnest that he will also perform to them his promise of giving them eternal life.—For there is no *unrighteousness* or *fraud* in him; and though his promises were all made of mere grace and mercy; yet, being made, it would not consist with the perfection of his righteousness, in any measure to fail in the performance of them.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

To praise the Lord Most High, and give thanks unto his name, is not only our bounden duty and reasonable service: but it is a most profitable, delightful, and honourable employment, by which we emulate the work of angels, and anticipate the joys of heaven. Yet, whilst we live upon his bounty, and daily experience his loving-kindness and faithfulness, how backward are we in rendering this reasonable and pleasant tribute? We should then stir up ourselves and all around us to join in his praises: and as his truth and mercies are renewed to us by day and by night, we should at least every morning and evening adore his condescension and goodness, and give him thanks for all his benefits; employing every means of rendering the service as solemn and affecting as we can. But on his own day, which we should remember to keep holy, how ought we to abound in praise, in secret, in our families, with our friends, and in the great congregation! For however glorious the works of God in creation and providence are in themselves, or however liberally we are supplied with temporal benefits: none of his operations could give us *sinners* cause of joy and triumph in him, if it were not for that great work, on this day especially commemorated by Christians; when He, who "died for our sins, was raised " again for our justification." And if distant views of this great Deliverer so animated the praises of ancient believers; how should we abound in these expressions of exulting gratitude, who enjoy the meridian light of this Sun of Righteousness, which kings, prophets, and righteous men so long desired to see! Well may we say on contemplating the mysteries of redemption, "O LORD, " how great are thy works, and thy thoughts are very

PSALM XCIII.

The majesty, stability, power, and holiness of JEHOVAH'S *kingdom, and his superiority over all opposition,* 1—5.

THE [a] LORD reigneth, [b] he is clothed with majesty: the LORD is clothed with strength, *wherewith* [c] he hath girded himself: [d] the world also is established, that it cannot be moved.

2 [e] Thy throne *is* established * of old: [f] thou *art* from everlasting.

3 [g] The floods have lifted up, O LORD, the floods have [h] lifted up their voice; [i] the floods lift up their waves.

4 The LORD on high *is* [k] mightier than the noise of many waters, *yea, than* the mighty waves of the sea.

a lix. 13. xcvi 10. xcvii. 1. xcix 1. ciii. 19. cxlv. 13. 1 Chr. xxix. 12. Is. lii. 7. Dan. iv. 34—34. Mat. vi. 13. Heb i. 8. Rev. xi. 15—17. xix. 6.
b civ. 1, 2. Job xl. 10. Is. lix. 17. lxiii. 1.
c xviii. 32. lxv. 6. Is. xi. 5.
d lxxv. 3. xcvi. 10. Is. xlv. 12. 18. xlix. 8. li. 16. Heb. i 2, 3.
e xlv. 6. cxlv. 13. Prov. viii. 22, 23. Dan. iv. 34. Mic. v. 2
* Heb *from then.*
f xc 2. cii. 24—27. Heb. i. 10—12. xiii. 8. Rev. i. 8. 11. 17, 18. ii 8.
g xviii. 4 lxix. 1, 2. 14—16. Is. xvii. 12, 13. Jer. xlvi. 7, 8 Jon. ii. 3. Rev. xii. 15 xvii. 15.
h xcvi. 11. xcviii. 3. Is. lv. 12.——i ii. 1—3. cvii. 25. 26. cxxiv. 3—5 Acts iv. 25—27.——k lxv. 7. lxxxix. 6 cxiv. 3—5 Job xxxviii. 11. Jer. v. 22. Mark iv. 37—39.

"deep!" For in them angels and arch-angels behold and adore the manifold wisdom and love of God. But how many, who are called Christians, in the arrogant folly of infidelity, or in the brutish stupidity of a licentious and worldly life, despise and disregard, and therefore know nothing of, the glorious displays which God hath made of himself to us! Nor indeed do men, under the clear light of the Gospel, generally understand, *that God grants prosperity to wicked men in awful displeasure; and that their momentary flourishing is in order to their being destroyed for ever.* Yet, as "the LORD is Most High for evermore," it certainly follows that "all his enemies shall perish," and that all the "workers of iniquity shall be scattered." Let us not then envy their prosperity, but pity their misery, and pray for their conversion: whilst we seek for ourselves the salvation and the grace of the gospel; that being daily anointed with the renewed unction of the Holy Spirit, we may at length be exalted to behold and share our Redeemer's glory, and to witness the ruin of all impenitent sinners, and of those especially who have been our enemies because of our relation to Christ. For the flourishing of the righteous is of a permanent nature: amidst tribulations and temptations they grow in strength of faith and depth of experience, obtain increasing influence, and become fruitful and useful. Such Christians are real blessings to many whilst they live, and even after they are departed; and they themselves shall be most blessed for evermore. Let us then seek to be planted by faith, and rooted by love, "in the courts of the LORD:" that we may flourish, not merely in the leaves and blossoms of knowledge, profession, and discourse, but in the substantial fruits of a holy useful life; and this more and more, as we advance towards the close of our pilgrimage. Let us learn to detest the sentiment of many who profess much zeal for the peculiar doctrines of the gospel, who would persuade us that believers generally grow less zealous as they grow older. It is true that rash, and indiscreet, and ostentatious earnestness will gradually be laid aside, to make way for more simple, humble, prudent zeal and diligence: but a real, evident, and permanent decrease in the substantial fruits of piety and charity, is enough to bring any man's former integrity into question, whatever his profession may have been. Nay, indeed the uprightness and faithfulness of the Lord himself are concerned: the branches of the true Vine which are fruitful, shall be purged, and made more fruitful; (*John* xv. 2.) But if we have made him the Rock of our salvation, He will make it appear, that there is no unrighteousness in him, by enabling us to go on with increasing delight and fruitfulness, even under the decays of nature; until he transplant us to his courts above, there to grow and flourish, and be fruitful for evermore.

NOTES.

PSALM XCIII. V. 1, 2. There is no title to this psalm in the Hebrew; but in the Septuagint it is entitled, 'For the day before the Sabbath, when the earth had been 'inhabited; An ode of David,' and the Jews have a tradition, that it was composed to be sung on the sixth day of the week, in commemoration of the earth as on that day being completed and replenished with inhabitants. —The great Creator of the world, the eternal JEHOVAH, is the universal and everlasting King and Governor over all his creatures. He is also clothed, or arrayed, not as other kings with costly robes, but with majesty and power incomprehensible, yea, infinite, which appertain to him as self-existent in such a manner that they are absolutely his own; "he hath girded himself with them," and not derived them from any other. And the same power which at the creation established the earth and the whole world, and gave a law that cannot be broken, hath also established the throne of the Creator on an immoveable basis, as necessarily resulting from his own eternity. The government of God, however, over his own people, seems especially intended: and the Jews themselves acknowledge that the stability of the Messiah's kingdom is predicted, and that he is peculiarly meant in this and several of the following psalms. And indeed Immanuel is clothed, and hath girded himself, with majesty and strength; and the power which established the world, establishes also the mediatorial kingdom of the Redeemer, "whose goings "forth have been of old, from everlasting." (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 3, 4. The impetuous torrents of rivers swelled by sudden land-floods, and bearing down all before them with irresistible fury and tremendous noise; and especially "the mighty waves of the sea," during a violent storm, which absolutely baffles description and distances imagination; are the constant emblems of the numerous and powerful enemies which have in every age, by varied means, set themselves furiously and clamorously to oppose the kingdom of God and his Christ: but he who at first set bounds to the proud ocean; who drove back the waters of the deluge to their ancient channel; who divided the Red Sea and Jordan for his people to pass through; who walked on the waves of the sea, and rebuked the winds and waves, saying, "Peace, be still, and there was a "great calm;" is higher and more powerful than all

5 [l] Thy testimonies are very sure: [m] holiness becometh thine house, O LORD, * for ever.

PSALM XCIV.

The Psalmist calls on God to take vengeance on the persecutors of his church, 1—4. *He complains of their cruelty and impiety, and sharply reproves their atheistical folly,* 5—11. *He shows the benefits of affliction, attended by divine teaching; and the security of God's people,* 12—15. *He calls for helpers against evil-doers, declares his experience of God's goodness, and foretels the destruction of persecutors,* 16—23.

O LORD * God, to whom vengeance belongeth: [a] O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, † shew thyself.

2 [b] Lift up thyself, [c] thou Judge of the earth: [d] render a reward to the proud.

3 LORD, [e] how long shall the wicked, how long shall [f] the wicked triumph?

4 *How long* [g] shall they utter *and* speak hard things? *and* all the workers of iniquity [h] boast themselves?

5 They [i] break in pieces thy people, O LORD, and [k] afflict thine heritage.

6 They [l] slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless.

l xix. 7, 8. cxix. 111. 129. 138. 144 Is. viii. 20. Matt. xxiv 35. Heb. vi. 17, 18 1 John v. 9—13
m v. 4—7. xcix. 5 9 Lev. x. 3. xix. 2 Is. lii. 11. Zech xiv. 20, 21 John iv. 24. 1 Cor. iii 16, 17. Rev. xxi. 27.
* Heb. *to length of days.*

* Heb. *God of revenges*
a Deu. xxxii. 35. 41, 42. Is xxxv. 4. lix. 17. Jer l. 28. Nah. i. 2 Rom xii. 19. 2 Thes. i. 8. Heb. x. 30.
† Heb *shine forth.*
b vii. 6 lxviii. 1. lxxiv. 22. Mic. v. 9.
c l. 6. Gen. xviii. 25 John v 22, 23 2 Cor. v. 10.
d xxxi 23. Job xl. 11, 12. Is. ii. 11, 12. 17 x. 12. xxxvii. 23. 29. 36—38. Jer. l. 31, 32. Dan. iv. 37 v. 22—24. 1 Pet v. 5. Rev. xviii 6—8.
e xiii 2. lxxiv. 9, 10. lxxix. 5. lxxx. 4 lxxxix. 46 Jer. xlvii 6. Rev. vi 10.———f Esth v. 11, 12 vi. 6—10 vii 6. 10. Job xx. 5. Acts xii. 22. 23———g xxxi. 18. lix. 7. 12. lxiv. 3, 4 lxxiii. 8, 9 cxl. 3 Pro. xxx. 14. Jer. xviii 19. Matt. xii 24. 34. Jude 14, 15.———h x 2—7 lii 1 Ex. xv. 9, 10. Job xxi. 14, 15 Is x 13—15 xxxvii. 24, 25. Dan. vii. 8 11. 25. viii. 11. xi. 36, 37. Rev. xiii. 5, 6.———i vii 2. xiv. 4. xliv. 22. lxxiv. 8. 19, 20. lxxix. 2, 3 7. cxxix. 2, 3. Is. iii 15. lii. 5. Jer. xxii 17. li. 20—23. 34. Mic. iii. 2. 3 Rev. xvii. 6.———k Ex. ii 23, 24 Jer. l. 11 Rev. xi 3.———l Is. x. 2. xiii. 15—18 Jer vii. 6. xxii. 3. Ez. xxii. 7. Mal. iii. 5.

"the floods of ungodly men," who rage against him and his people; as well as "mightier than the noise of many "waters," &c. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 5. Revealed truth, and the promises grounded on it, are the *testimonies of God,* which are very *sure,* and can never fail. These ensure the safety of the church and the salvation of each believer. In these testimonies and his faithfulness to them, God shows his own holiness; and it becomes, or is the ornament and beauty of, all that belong to his family, to resemble and imitate him in holiness. "The "foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The "Lord knoweth them that are his: and, Let every one that "nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." (*Marg. Ref.*) 'Sacred and inviolable is the word of our king; sa-'cred and inviolable should be the loyalty of his subjects.' (*Horne.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

JEHOVAH might have determined to show his justice, holiness, and awful power alone, in his dealings with the inhabitants of this revolted province of his universal kingdom. But he hath been pleased to make choice of fallen men, for the display of the riches of his mercy, and of the power of his renewing grace. In effecting this great design, the Father hath given all "power in heaven and "earth" to his Son, "the second Adam, the Lord from "heaven," who by his humiliation and sufferings hath made atonement for our sins and purchased our salvation. "He is able to save to the uttermost, all those who come "to God;" and can not only pardon, but deliver, uphold, and protect, all who trust in him. The combined legions of evil spirits and ungodly men do indeed furiously threaten and assault his kingdom on earth, as the tempestuous waves once did the bark in which Jesus sailed. But he needeth only to arise, and speak with authority, and they will tremble, and desist; as knowing that the Lord on high is mightier than they all. Whilst his sure testimony engages his protection to his church, his true disciples have nothing to fear. But we should all carefully inquire whether his kingdom have indeed been set up in our hearts? This will best be decided by examining, whether we so believe his testimonies and depend on him for salvation, as to be thereby led to love and follow after that holiness, which his precepts command and his example displays, which becometh all who profess the truth, and is bestowed on all his real servants, in a measure on earth, and completely in heaven for ever. (2 *Tim.* ii. 19.)

NOTES.

PSALM XCIV. V. 1—7. The writer of this psalm is not known; and though some parts of it answer very well to the conduct of Saul and his courtiers, especially in the slaughter, not only of the priests, but of their widows and fatherless children, and also that of the unoffending Gibeonites, (5, 6;) yet it might equally suit many other corrupt times of the Jewish church, and of the Christian also. Whatever persecutions, cruelties, and iniquities, the Psalmist and his pious friends experienced or witnessed; they did not consider themselves as allowed to execute vengeance: but they called on "the God of "revenges," (to whom it belongeth to punish criminals and defend his people,) to appear in glory and majesty, and to recompense the blasphemies and proud boastings of their haughty persecutors. They were grieved and distressed, and thought it long while they were compelled to hear and witness such triumphs and revilings of ungodly men, and to understand how they encouraged themselves in their detestable cruelties by atheistical principles. The last verses are future in the original, and in several versions, and may be thus paraphrased: 'Unless thou appear to exe-'cute vengeance, they will entirely crush thy people, and 'reduce thy heritage, the nation of Israel, to the deepest 'misery; for they are direct Atheists, or at least they do 'not believe that God at all beholds or regards the actions 'of men, or will call them to account for any part of their con-'duct.' 'Seeing the church was then so sore oppressed, it 'ought not to appear strange to us if we see it so now: and 'therefore we must call on God to take our cause in hand.'

7 Yet [m] they say, The LORD shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard *it*.

8 Understand, [n] ye brutish among the people; and [o] *ye* fools, when will ye be wise?

9 [p] He that planted the ear, [q] shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?

10 He that [r] chastiseth the heathen, [s] shall not he correct? [t] he that teacheth man knowledge, *shall not he know*?

11 [u] The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they *are* vanity.

12 [x] Blessed *is* the man whom thou chastenest, O LORD, and [y] teachest him out of thy law;

13 That thou [z] mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, [a] until the pit be digged for the wicked.

14 For [b] the LORD will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake [c] his inheritance:

15 But [d] judgment shall return unto righteousness: and [e] all the upright in heart * shall follow it.

16 [f] Who will rise up for me against the evil-doers? *or* [g] who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity?

17 [h] Unless the LORD *had been* my help, my soul had † almost [i] dwelt in silence.

18 When I said, [k] My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O LORD, held me up.

19 [l] In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul.

20 Shall [m] the throne of iniquity have

m x. 11—13. lix. 7. Job xxii 12, 13. Is xxix 15. Ez. viii 12 ix. 9 Zeph i. 12. Luke xviii. 2. 4.
n xlix 10. lxxiii. 22 xcii. 6. Pro. xii 1. Is. xxvii. 11. Jer. viii. 6—8 x 8.
o I. 22. Deut. xxxii. 29. Prov. i. 22 viii. 5. Tit iii. 3.
p Ex iv. 11. Pro. xx. 12.
q xi. 4 xvii. 3. xliv. 21. cxxxix. 1—12. Jer. xxiii. 23, 24.
r ix. 5. x. 16. xliv. 2. cxxxv. 8—12. cxlix. 7. Is. x. 12. xxxvii. 36 Jer. x 25
s Is. x. 5, 6 Am. iii. 2 Hab. i 12
t xxv. 8. 9 cxix. 66. Job xxxv. 11 Prov ii. 6 Is ii. 3. xxviii. 26. liv 13. John vi 45.
u xlix 10—13 Job xi 11, 12. Rom i. 21, 22 1 Cor. i. 19. 21 25. iii. 18—20.
x cxix 67 71. Job v. 17 Prov iii 11. 1 Cor. xi 32. Heb. xii. 6—11.———y Job xxxiii. 16—25. Mic vi. 9 Rev. iii. 19.
z Is xxvi ——a 20. 21. Hab. iii. 16 2 Cor. iv 17, 18. 2 Thes i. 7, 8. Heb. iv. 9 Rev. xiv. 13. ix 15. lv. 23. Jer. xviii 20. 22. 2 Pet ii. 9. iii. 3—7. Rev. vi. 10, 11. xi. 18.

b xxxvii. 28. 1 Sam. xii 23. Is. xlix. 14, 15. Jer xxxii. 39, 40. John x. 27—30 Rom. viii. 38, 39. xi. 1, 2 Heb. xiii. 5.
c 5. xxxiii. 12 Deut xxxii. 9. Jer. x. 16. Eph. i. 18.
d 2, 3. vii. 8, 9. ix. 16. lviii 11. cxxv 3 Deut. xxxii. 35, 36 Job xxxv. 14. Mic. vii. 9. Mal iii. 18. 2 Pet. iii. 8—10 Rev. xv. 3, 4.
e xxxvii. 5—7. 34 cxxv. 4. 5. Job xvii. 9. xxiii. 11, 12. Jam. v. 7—11. 1 John ii. 19
* Heb. shall be *after it*.
f Ex. xxxii. 26—29 Num. xxiv. 6—13. Judg v. 23 1 Kings xviii. 39, 40 2 Kings ix. 32 x 15 Is lix. 16. lxiii. 5 Jer v. 1 Ez xxxii. 12. Matt. xii 30. 3 John 8.
g Neh. v 7 Jer xxvi. 16—19. John vii. 50, 51.———h cxviii. 13. cxxv 1—3. cxlii. 4, 5 John xvi. 32. 2 Cor. i. 8—10. 2 Tim. iv. 16, 17.— —† Or. *quickly* ——i xiii. 3 xxxi. 17. cxv. 17.——k xvii 5 xxxvii 23, 24. xxxviii 16 cxix. 116, 117. cxxi. 3. 1 Sam. ii. 9 Job xii 5. Is xli 10 Luke xxii. 32. 1 Pet i. 5.———l xliii. 2—5. lxi. 2. lxxiii 12—16. lxxvii 2—10 Jer. xx. 7—11. Hab. iii 16—18 Rom. v. 2—5. 2 Cor. i. 4, 5. 1 Pet. i. 7, 8.
m lii. 1, 2. lxxxii 1, 2. 1 Sam. xxii 17—19 Ec. iii. 16. v. 8.

V. 9. 'Shall He not hear your blasphemies, who gave 'you the faculty of hearing? Shall he not see all you do, 'who gave you the power of seeing? Is it possible he 'should give to others, what he wants himself?' (*Bp. Patrick.*) 'The Psalmist uses the word *planted* to de-'scribe the situation of the ear; and the word *formed* to 'denote the structure of the eye. The mechanism of 'the ear is like a root planted in the earth, and concealed 'from view; whereas the ball of the eye is prominent 'on the face, and presented to general observation.' (*Hervey.*)

V. 10, 11. The word rendered *chastise*, generally implies force, constraint, punishment, or even binding in chains; whereas that translated *correct*, denotes milder and gentler discipline and instruction. 'If God punish whole 'nations for their sins, it is mere folly for any one man, 'or else a few, to think that God will spare them.' Indeed he first taught Adam in Paradise, and since the fall, has in various ways taught his posterity, all the useful knowledge they possess; even those who abuse their talents in rebellion against him: and is not he himself omniscient, as well as omnipotent? But he well knows the emptiness and presumption of the thoughts, reasonings, speculations, and imaginations of apostate men, even of the very wisest and most ingenious of them: and how worthless, pernicious, and false they are!

V. 12—14. 'Not he that prospers in wickedness is 'happy, but he whom thou chastenest, O LORD, when 'he doeth amiss; and thereby teachest to study and obey 'thy law with greater care and diligence; which will quiet 'his mind under all his troubles, and at last procure the 'removal of them; when absolute ruin, mean time, is 'preparing for the ungodly.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The sharpest correction by which God leads men to search, believe and obey his word, are inestimable benefits; persecutors and tyrants often are the instruments of this salutary correction to the chosen tribes of God; the persecuted and oppressed, not the persecutors and oppressors, are the happy persons; they will have rest, when the day of vengeance overwhelms the wicked; and though God may let his people endure sharp and tedious sufferings, he "will never leave, nor "ever forsake them. Therefore they may boldly say, the "Lord is my Helper, I will not fear what man can do unto "me."

V. 15. When iniquity triumphs, judgment *seems* to decline from righteousness: but when the Lord executeth vengeance on the wicked, and delivers his people, then "judg-"ment *returns* to righteousness." This the upright in heart confidently expect, and therefore they adhere to the cause of piety, and continue to wait upon God in the midst of all their discouragements.

V. 16—18. It is probable that the Psalmist had expected, that many would have joined him in withstanding the oppression to which he was exposed, and which was the common cause of the nation; and that he called on them for that purpose: (*Acts* vii. 25.) But when he found himself disappointed, he was ready to give up all for lost; and had not God been his Helper, he must soon have been laid in the silent grave. His experience, however, did not accord to his fears; for when he was falling, his merciful God upheld him. When our Lord entered on his last scene of sufferings, he called on his disciples to watch with him one hour; but he called in vain. They first slept, and then all forsook him and fled. Yet he was carried through, and advanced to the throne of glory: and David's case was but a feeble shadow of Christ's, either in his humiliation or exaltation. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 19. The thoughts, contrivances, anxieties, and perplexities of the Psalmist's mind, seem to be here represented by the intricacies of a thicket, or labyrinth, from which there seems to be no way of escape: but communion with God, and the consolations of his Spirit so filled his heart with joy and gladness, as to raise him above them all.

n Is. i. 11—20. Jer. vii. 4—11. John xviii. 28. 2 Cor. vi. 14—16. 1 John i 5, 6
o 1 Kings xii. 32. Esth. iii. 6—12. Is. x. 1. Dan. iii. 4—7. vi. 7—9. Mic. vi 16. John ix. 22. xi. 57. Rev. xiii 15—17.——p ii. 1—3. xxii. 16 lix 3 Matt xxvii. 1. Acts iv. 5—7 27. 28——q Ex. xxiii. 7. 1 Kings xxi 19. Prov. xvii. 15 Jer. xxvi. 15 Ez. xxii. 6. 12. 27 Matt xxiii. 32—36. Acts. vii. 52. 58—60. Jam. v. 6 Rev. xvii. 6.

n fellowship with thee, which o frameth
mischief by a law?
21 They p gather themselves together
against the soul of the righteous, and
q condemn the innocent blood.

22 r But the Lord is my Defence; and
my God *is* s the Rock of my refuge.
23 And t he shall bring upon them
their own iniquity, and shall u cut them
off in their own wickedness; *yea*, the
Lord our God shall cut them off

r vii 10 xxvi. 1. —3. lix 9 16. 17. lxii. 2 6.
s xviii. 1 Is xxxiii 16.
t vii.16 ix.16, 17 lv. 23. lxiv 8. Esth vii 10. Prov. i 31. v 22. Dan. vi 24.
u xii. 3. 1 Sam xxvi 10 11 Prov. xiv. 32. Ex. xviii. 24 Dan ix. 26

V. 20. The evident injustice, oppression, and fraud of persecuting rulers, who perhaps at the same time pretend zeal for the honour of God, form an encouragement to the persecuted; who are sure that the righteous Lord will have no *fellowship* with such workers of iniquity under the colour of law and justice, and will give no countenance to them: however for a time he may permit them to escape with impunity.

V. 21. 'Righteousness and innocence are most atro-
'cious crimes in the eyes of wickedness and guilt. For
'these crimes Cain slew his brother Abel; the Jews cru-
'cified Christ, the pagans tortured and murdered his dis-
'ciples, and bad men in all ages have persecuted the good.'
"Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you." (*Horne.*) The narrative in the New Testament, of the chief priests, scribes, elders, and people of Israel; with Pilate and his soldiers, and the Roman power, all collected against the innocent and righteous Saviour, fully answers to this description: and it is hardly possible to think, that the Holy Spirit did not intend those events, whatever occasioned the Psalmist thus to express himself.—The words *righteous* and *innocent* are singular: and the Jews themselves allow, that this psalm relates to the Messiah's kingdom.

V. 23. The nation of the Jews, (speaking by their rulers, teachers, and priests, and the congregation assembled at Jerusalem to keep the passover,) when demanding the crucifixion of Christ, vehemently exclaimed, "His blood "be on us and on our children:" and the destruction of Jerusalem with unexampled slaughter, and the state of the Jews ever since, form an example of the manner in which God brings on persecutors "their own iniquity, "and cuts them off in their own wickedness:" and indeed those events seem to have been expressly foretold.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

They who suppose that the exuberant goodness and mercy of God are inconsistent with the exercise of rigorous justice, and with the infliction of vengeance on the wicked; must certainly have formed very erroneous conceptions of his character: for he is indeed a God *of revenges:* (*Marg.*) vengeance belongs to him alone, except as he delegates others to be his executioners of it: and such as have seen his glory in the face of Jesus Christ, readily perceive the most perfect harmony betwixt his justice and mercy; while others are blinded by the god of this world, whatever wisdom they seem to possess, or have the reputation of. We should however remember, that vengeance does not belong to us; and therefore we must render to no man evil for evil, but leave our cause with the Judge of the earth. Under oppression and persecution we should beg of him to *shine forth*, and show himself, and to render a reward to the proud and ungodly: not so much, that we may be freed from suffering, as that we may not be grieved by beholding the triumphs, and hearing the slanders, blasphemies, and boastings, of the workers of iniquity. It is most horrible wickedness in any case to murder the widow, the stranger, and the fatherless: but when *these* are the Lord's heritage, his chosen people, who are broken in pieces and butchered for his sake, the impiety becomes still more atrocious; and the pious spectator must needs be filled with the deepest sorrow and indignation. Such wretches as commit these daring crimes cannot believe that there is a God, or that he sees and will call them to an account for their conduct: and indeed infidelity and atheism are the proper attendants on injustice and cruelty. But the Christian, whilst, in earnestly pleading for the deliverance of the church, he must request the ruin of all her enemies if they continue implacable, would still be better pleased with their conversion. He will therefore pray that this change may take place: and with boldness and meekness, as he hath opportunity, he will expostulate with them on the brutish folly of their principles and conduct. It would not be *credible*, if it were not *undeniable*, that millions of rational creatures should live, move, speak, hear, understand, remember, will, and effect their purposes; and yet discourse and behave as if they verily believed that the God from whom they derive all these capacities could neither see, nor hear, nor understand, and would never punish their rebellious abuse of them! But they will find that Jehovah is the fountain of knowledge, wisdom, and power, as well as of goodness and justice: and he will show them, that he was acquainted with the secret thoughts of their hearts; which are equally unreasonable and wicked, and are sure to terminate in vexation, if not in destruction. We may therefore conclude, without hesitation, that the most afflicted believer is happier than the most prosperous of the ungodly. Indeed afflictions are frequently the means of bringing sinners to repentance, and faith in the Saviour: and every man should think himself happy, who, being chastened of the Lord, is under the correction taught his truths and will, from the sacred word, and by the Holy Spirit. For he will find first rest to his soul under adversities, and at length rest from them: and the wicked will only harass him, till the pit be prepared into which they shall sink and rise no more for ever. Let not then the upright in heart fear lest the Lord should cast off his people: let them still cleave to him and follow after righteousness; and at length the just Judge will terminate the triumphs of his enemies and the sorrows of his servants. We should indeed, according to our station in the church or in society, endeavour to unite all around us in attempting to stem the torrent of impiety: but we need not wonder, if we find the remnant of believers timid and inactive, in proportion as the wicked are daring and enterprising. Yet we must bear our testimony to the truth, and use our endeavours to serve the cause of godliness,

PSALM XCV.

An exhortation to praise God for his greatness, as the creator of the world, 1—5: to worship him, as his creatures, and his peculiar people, 6, 7; and not to tempt him, as Israel did in the wilderness, 8—11.

a O COME, let us b sing unto the LORD: c let us make a joyful noise to d the Rock of our salvation.

2 e Let us * come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with f Psalms.

3 For g the LORD *is* a great God, and h a great i King above all gods.

4 k In † his hand *are* l the deep places of the earth: m the ‡ strength of the hills *is* his also.

5 § The sea *is* his, and he made it: and n his hands formed the dry land.

6 o O come, p let us worship and bow down: q let us kneel before the LORD r our Maker.

7 For s he *is* our God; and we *are* t the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. u To-day, x if ye will hear his voice,

a xxxiv. 3. lxvi. 8. cvii. 8 15. 21. cxvii. 1. cxviii. 1. cxxxvi. 1--3. cxlviii. 11—13. cl. 6.
b xlvii. 6, 7. lxvi. 1, 2. lxxxi. 1. xcvi. 1, 2 ci. 1. Ex. xv 1. 21. 1 Chr. xvi. 9 Eph. v. 19 Col. iii. 16. Rev. v. 9. xiv. 3. xv. 3.
c lxvi. 1 xcviii. 4—8 c. 1. Ezra iii. 11—13 Is. xii 4—6. Jer. xxxiii 11. Matt. xxi. 9. Rev. xix 6.
d lxxxix 26. Deut. xxxii 15. 2 Sam. xxii. 47. 1 Cor x. 4.
e v. 7. c. 4. Jer. xxxii 12, 13.
* Heb. *prevent his face.* xvii. 13. *Marg.*
f cv. 2 Jam. v. 13.
g lxxxvi. 8—10. xcvi 4 xcvii. 9. cxlv. 3. Jer. x 6, 7
h xlvii. 2. xlviii. 2. Jer. x. 10 xlvi. 18. xlviii. 15 Dan. iv. 37. Mal. i. 11. 14. Matt. v. 35.
i cxxxv 5. Ex. xviii. 11. Is xliv. 8. Jer. x. 10—16.
k xxiv. 1. Job xi. 10.
† Heb. *whose.*
l cxxxv. 6.
m lxv 6. xcvii. 5. Job ix. 5. Mic i. 4. Nah i. 5. Hab. iii. 6. 10.
‡ Or, *heights of.*
§ Heb. *Whose the sea is.* xxxiii. 7. Gen. i. 9, 10. Job xxxviii. 10, 11. Prov. viii. 29. Jer. v. 22.
n Prov. viii. 26——o 1. Hos vi 1 Mic. iv. 2. Rev. xxii. 17.——p lxxii. 9. Ex. xx. 5. Matt. iv. 9 Mark xiv 35 Acts x. 25, 26 Rev. xxii. 8 ——q 1 Kings viii. 54 2 Chr. vi. 13. Ezra ix. 5 Dan vi 10. Luke xxii. 41 Acts vii 60. xx. 36. xxi 5. Eph. iii. 14 ——r c 3. Job xxxv. 10. Ec. xii 1. Is. liv 5 John i. 3. 1 Pet iv. 19 ——s xlviii. 14. lxvii. 6. cxv. 3. Ex. xv. 2 xx. 2. Jer. xxxi. 33. Heb. xi. 16 ——t xxiii. 1. lxxix. 13. lxxx. 1. c. 3. Is. xl. 10, 11 Ez. xxxiv. 30, 31. John x. 3, 4 14—16. Acts xx. 28. 1 Pet ii 25 ——u Heb. iii. 3. 7. 15. iv. 7.——x Prov. viii. 5. Is. lv. 3 Matt. iii 2, 3 xvii. 5. Rev. iii 20.

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though it be alone and in sackcloth: and the Lord will help and protect us, till our testimony is finished, let who will attempt to silence us, by terror, or in a dungeon, or in the grave. But unless he also uphold us, our feet will slip: and if we have been preserved from falling into sin, or shrinking from our duty, on trying occasions, we should give him the glory, and encourage our brethren. When urgent difficulties press upon our minds, respecting our own case, or the cause of God, multitudes of thoughts, contrivances, and apprehensions will arise within us; the indulgence of which only increases vexation, solicitude, or distrust, and renders our views more gloomy and desponding. Then should we retire, and spread the case before the Lord, and pour out our hearts unto him: thus we shall find light arise in the midst of our darkness, and divine consolations will often, not only satisfy and calm, but even delight our souls. The believer needs not be anxious about the event, either to himself or to the church: though he should see those in authority who frame mischief in enacting persecuting laws, and multitudes gathering themselves together against the soul of the righteous to condemn the innocent blood. The righteous Lord may indeed for a while bear with, but he will never patronize "the throne of iniquity:" and whilst he defends his cause, and is the Rock and Refuge of every saint, he will bring upon their haughtiest enemies "their own iniquity, and cut "them off in their own wickedness: yea, the LORD our "God shall cut them off." May we then join and adhere to that party which is sure at length to prevail for evermore.

NOTES.

PSALM XCV. V. 1. This psalm has no title in the Hebrew: but the Septuagint calls it, 'A Psalm of David;' and the apostle sanctions their testimony, by his manner of quoting it, "Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith, &c. "Again he limiteth a certain day, saying in David," or by David. (*Notes, Heb.* iii. iv.) This passage also manifestly shows, that the apostles considered the Jewish Scriptures as the language of the Holy Spirit, whoever committed that language to writing. The Holy Ghost spake by David. The psalm appears to have been composed for the use of the Israelites, as they ascended in companies to the sanctuary, or as soon as they entered into the courts of the Lord; being an introduction to the sacred services there performed, and especially the Psalmody, which had recently been instituted. And it is still retained in the offices of our church for similar purposes. The Psalmist 'showeth that God's service standeth not in dead ceremo-'nies, but in the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.' (*Notes* l.)

V. 3. *Gods.* 'Even the angels, (who in respect of 'men are thought as gods,) are nothing in his sight: 'much less the idols which man's brain inventeth.'

V. 4. The recesses of the earth, which man cannot penetrate or investigate, are in the hand, and open to the inspection, of the Creator. The word rendered *strength*, and in the margin *heights*, is derived from a root signifying *to weary:* because men are wearied in ascending the heights of the mountains.

V. 5. 'The treasures which he had in the deep places 'of the earth beneath; the majestic pride and strength 'of the hills, which tower above and lift up their heads 'to heaven; the unnumbered waves of the great and wide 'sea, which roll in perpetual motion round the world; 'the rich and variegated produce of the dry land, crowned 'with verdure and beauty; together with every thing that 'liveth in the waters and on the earth, are all under the 'government of our Lord.' (*Horne.*)

V. 6. The former verses were intended to animate the people in joyful praise and thanksgiving: but this seems a call to humble prayer and supplication. 'Since God 'made our bodies, as well as our souls, it is meet and 'right that they should bear their part in his service, and 'that internal worship should be accompanied and signified 'by that which is external.' (*Horne.*) *Kneeling* is the posture of prayer most commonly mentioned both in the Old and New Testament. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 7. The Creator of the world became the God, or the covenanted Friend, of Israel, and the nation was under special obligations to devote itself to his worship and service, being taken peculiar care of by him, and favoured with manifold advantages above all other nations.

y Ex. xviii. 15. 1 Sam. vi. 6. Dan. v. 20. Acts xix. 9. Rom. ii. 5. Heb. iii. 13. xii. 25.
z Ex. xvii. 2. 7. Num. xiv. 11. 22. 27. xx. 13. Deut. i. 34, 35. vi. 16. Heb. iii. 8, 9. 15—19.

8 y Harden not your heart, as z in the
* provocation, *and* as *in* the day of temp-
tation in the wilderness:
9 When a your fathers tempted me,
proved me, and b saw my work.
10 c Forty years long was I d grieved
with *this* generation, and said, It *is* a
people that do e err in their heart, and
f they have not known my ways:
11 Unto whom g I sware in my wrath,
that † they should not enter into h my
rest.

e Is. lxiii. 17. Heb. iii. 10. 17.
f Pro. i. 7. 22—29. Jer. ix. 6. John iii. 19—21. Rom. i. 28.
g Num. xiv. 23. 28. 30. Deut. i. 34, 35. Heb. iii. 11. 18.
† Heb. *if they enter.*

Jude 5.——* Heb. *contention.*——a lxxxvii. 17, 18. 40. 41. 1 Cor. x. 9.——b Num. xiv. 22. Matt. xi. 20—22. John xv. 24.——c Num. xiv. 33, 34. xxxii. 13. Deut. i. 3. ii. 14—16. Heb. iii. 9.——d Gen. vi. 6. Eph. iv. 30.
h Gen. ii. 2, 3. Jer. vi. 16. Matt. xi. 28. 29. Heb. iv. 4—11. Rev. xiv. 13.

They were his people and the sheep of his pasture. (*Notes*, xxiii.) Yet this was only an outward relation and privilege to most of them; the whole company were a kind of type of the true Israel, and nations professing Christianity are in great measure in a similar situation. Now, in very large congregations, some may be supposed to be spiritual worshippers; and others to be destitute of saving and sanctifying faith, though attending on the means of grace. The former part of the psalm, therefore, is an address to the true worshippers, exciting them to alacrity and fervency in their spiritual sacrifices: but the latter part of it is a warning to the unbelievers, from the example of the Israelites, in the days of Moses; and the apostle hath taught us to apply it to the case of professed Christians, and to that of all who hear the Gospel. If they ever mean to hear, that is, to believe and obey, the voice of God, let them lose no time, but attend without delay; lest the sentence of exclusion should be past, and the door be for ever shut. 'He showeth wherein they are God's 'flock, that is, if they hear his voice.' (*Notes*, 1 *Cor.* x. 1—12. *Heb.* iii. iv. *Jude* 5.)

V. 8. The original words for *provocation* and temptation, are *Meribah* and *Massah*. (*Notes*, *Ex.* xvii. *Num.* xx. 1—13.)

V. 10, 11. The word translated *grieved*, is rendered in the Septuagint, *provoked*; and the apostle hath followed that reading, though our version retains the word *grieved*. Some versions render it, 'I held them in abhorrence.'—It is certainly a much more indignant word, so to speak, than that used by the apostle, when he says, "Grieve not "the Holy Spirit, &c:" for he is speaking of the wrong tempers and other failures of true Christians: but the Psalmist, or rather the Holy Spirit by him, refers to the obstinate, incorrigible unbelief and rebellion of that generation which fell in the wilderness, after all they had seen and heard of JEHOVAH's power, majesty, and goodness.' "They rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit; therefore he "was turned to be their enemy, and fought against them." (*Is.* lxiii. 10.) The root of all this rebellion lay in their hearts; they *erred*, or *wandered*, in their hearts; they were influenced by "an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from "the living God." They were apostates and idolaters: they disliked the holy service of God, and delighted in the sensualities of idolatry, and in worldly pursuits; they were carnally minded, and enmity to God; they "said "to God, depart from us, for we desire not the know-"ledge of thy ways." And therefore the Lord passed the irrevocable sentence of exclusion from Canaan, confirmed with an oath: and set them forth in his word as a warning to all ages and nations; lest by imitating their example, they should be for ever excluded from that heavenly rest, of which Canaan was a faint shadow. (*Notes*, *Num.* xiv.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord, being infinitely powerful, wise, just, merciful, and faithful; the Creator, Benefactor, Sovereign, and Proprietor of all worlds, ought to be universally adored, loved, and praised by all his rational creatures; and gratitude to him should be the joy of every heart. But none of our fallen race cordially render him this reasonable tribute, unless they have known him, as in Christ Jesus, "the Rock "of our salvation." This great God and King above all gods, in whose hand are the deep places of the earth, and the reservoirs of the mighty ocean, and whose is the strength of the hills which he hath formed, is the Friend, the Father, and Portion, of all believers. Their Creator is become their Shepherd, he sought them when lost, and brought them to his fold, and now feeds them, with tenderness and care, as the sheep of his hand. How should *they* then delight in celebrating the praises of their glorious and gracious Benefactor, and in thanking him for his unspeakable mercies! and how gladly should they embrace every opportunity of meeting in his courts, to join their grateful songs of praise with those of their fellow Christians! When thus we assemble together to worship our God, we should endeavour to express by our deportment, as well as to cultivate in our minds, believing confidence, joyful gratitude, and reverential awe: and, as conscious of our own meanness and unworthiness, and mindful of his infinite majesty and glory, we should "bow down, and kneel "before the LORD, our Maker." But we must not imagine, that all, who meet in our religious assemblies, are capable of such spiritual worship, or partakers of such inestimable privileges. In general it is to be feared, they are but a remnant, like the few believers found in Israel, when as a nation they were excluded Canaan through unbelief. Whilst therefore the true people of God should excite each other, and ministers should excite them, to rejoice in God and to render him praise; and they ought to consider his solemn worship as the chief business of their assembling together: the rest are to be addressed in the name, and by the authority of God, to hear and obey his voice, and accept of his salvation. The abundant encouragements of the Gospel should be set before them, as well as the awful terrors of the law; that they may perceive that the Lord is still ready to forgive and to save all who come to him. But it is a concern which admits of no delay: death may come before tomorrow, if the sinner will not hear the voice of God to-day: or he may be consigned to final impenitency, and be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Yet men in general procrastinate, and harden their hearts against present convictions; they do violence to their own consciences, and plunge into those pleasures and pursuits which banish reflection, and increase their natural aversion to the truths

PSALM XCVI.

Israel and all nations called on to celebrate the praises of God, to show forth his salvation, and to join in his worship, 1—10. *The whole creation excited to rejoice in the prospect of his coming, and of his righteous judgment,* 11—13.

O [a] SING unto the LORD a new song: [b] sing unto the LORD, all the earth.
2 Sing unto the LORD, [c] bless his name; [d] shew forth his salvation from day to day.
3 [e] Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.
4 For [f] the LORD *is* great, and greatly to be praised; he *is* [g] to be feared above all gods.
5 For [h] all the gods of the nations *are* idols: but [i] the LORD made the heavens.
6 [k] Honour and majesty *are* before him: [l] strength and beauty *are* in [m] his sanctuary.
7 [n] Give unto the LORD, [o] O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the LORD [p] glory and strength.
8 Give unto the LORD [q] the glory * *due unto* his name: [r] bring an offering, and [s] come into his courts.
9 O worship the LORD [t] in the † beauty of holiness: [u] fear before him, all the earth.

a xxxiii. 3. xcviii. 1. cxlix. 1. 1 Chr xvi. 23—33. Rev. v. 9. xiv. 3.
b lxvii 3—5. lxviii. 32. Rom. xv 11.
c lxxii. 17, 18. ciii 1, 2. 20—22 civ. 1. cxlv. 1. 10. 1 Chr. xxix 20 Eph. i. 3 Rev. v. 13.
d xl. 10. lxxi. 16. Is. xl 9. lii. 7. 8 Mark xvi. 15. Acts xiii. 26. Rom. x. 14—18.
e xxii. 27. lxxii. 18, 19. cxvii Is. xix 23-25. xlix. 6. Dan iv. 1—3. vi. 26, 27 Mic iv. 2 Zech. ix 10 Matt. xxviii 19. Luke xxiv. 47. Rev. xiv. 6, 7
f lxxxvi 10 lxxxix. 7 cxlv. 3. Ex xviii. 11 1. Sam. iv. 8. Neh. ix. 5.
g lxvi 3 5 lxxvi. 7 lxxxix. 7. xcv. 3. Jer. v. 22. x. 6. 7. Luke xii. 5. Rev. xv. 4
h cxv 3—8. cxxxv 15—18. Is xliv. 8. &c. xlvi 1, 2 Jer. x. 3—5. 14. 15. Acts xix 26. 1 Cor viii. 4.
i Gen. i 1. Is. xlii. 5. Jer x. 11
k viii 1. xix. 1. lxiii. 2, 3. xciii. 1. civ. 1 Heb. i. 3. 2 Pet i. 16, 17.
l xxvii. 4. xxix, 9. 1 2.
m 1 Chr. xvi. 27.
n xxix. 1, 2. lxviii 32—34. Luke ii. 14.
o xxii. 27. lxvi. 1, 2 lxvii 3, 4. Rom. xv. 9, 10. Rev. v. 9 xix. 6.
p 1 Chr. xxix. 11—13. Matt. vi. 13. 1 Pet v 11. Jude 24, 25 Rev v. 13. vii 12. xiv. 7. xix 1.
q cviii. 3—5 cxi. 9. cxlviii. 13. 14 Ex xxxiv. 5—9. Rev. xv. 4.
* Heb. *of his name*
r Is lx. 6, 7. Mal. i. 11. Rom xii. 1. xv. 16. Phil. i. 16. iv. 18. Heb. xiii. 15, 16. 1 Pet. ii 5 Rev. viii. 3, 4.
s c. 4
t xxix 2. cx 3. Ezra vii. 27
† Or, *glorious sanctuary.* Ez. vii. 20 Dan. xi 45. Luke xxi. 5, 6.
u xxiii. 8. lxxvi 7. 11.

and service of God. Thus is he grieved and provoked with their obstinacy; and his abused patience is wearied out by their contempt of his favour, their disregard to his displeasure, and their unbelieving neglect of his salvation. When this is the case, the Lord gives them up to their own hearts' lusts: and then they will never be able to enter heaven, any more than the condemned generation of Israel could enter Canaan. Let sinners then take warning by this awful example, and not approach the brink of that precipice, whence these ancient rebels were cast down into destruction. Let them fear giving way to temptation, by presuming upon the patience and mercy of God; let them be careful not to sin on under the means of grace, and against the conviction of their own consciences: let them be aware of the evil of their own hearts, which leads them to wander from God, and to remain *ignorant*, because *haters*, of his ways: and let them dread giving into prejudices, or infidel objections to the Gospel, because they are averse to its salutary restraints: or devising a scheme of religion more suited to their pride and lusts, and less disquieting to their consciences. These are a few of the methods by which Satan blinds and hardens numbers in our religious assemblies, to their everlasting destruction. Finally, let us all then "fear, lest a promise being left "us of entering into his rest, any of us should at last be "found to come short of it."

NOTES.

PSALM XCVI. V. 1. (*Notes*, 1 *Chr.* xvi. 23—34.) The Septuagint prefixes the following title to this psalm, 'When the house was built after the captivity, an Ode of 'David.' Hence it has been conjectured, that after the captivity, when the temple was finished, it was selected, (perhaps by Haggai, or Zechariah,) from the rest of the songs of praise, used by David at the removal of the ark; and that, some alterations having been made, it was appointed as a proper expression of the people's thankful joy on that occasion. It is, however, generally allowed to contain a prediction of the Messiah's coming and kingdom, "A new Song:" 'a song calculated to celebrate new 'mercies, prefigured by old ones wrought for Israel in 'former times: as a song fit for the voices of renewed and 'regenerate men to sing in the new Jerusalem, in those 'new heavens and that new earth, which constitute the 'new creation, or kingdom of Jesus Christ.' (*Horne.*)—'The prophet showeth, that all nations shall have occasion 'to praise the Lord for the revealing of his Gospel.'

V. 2. The clause rendered, "Show forth his salvation, "&c." literally means, "Proclaim the glad tidings of his "salvation from day to day." The public, unremitting, and zealous preaching of the Gospel, by the apostles and primitive evangelists to Jews and Gentiles, and by a succession of ministers ever since; with the praises and thanksgivings offered to God by them, and their numerous converts, are evidently predicted.

V. 3. The glory of God is principally displayed in the person and salvation of Christ, and in the wonders of redeeming love. This glory, as manifested in his wonderful works for Israel of old, had, by various means, been made known to the heathen, yet they adhered to their idols: (*Marg. Ref.*) but when the apostles declared his glory, as displayed by the Gospel, immense multitudes renounced idolatry, and at length the whole ancient system of idolatry was subverted, through a large part of the world.

V. 4. 'Seeing he will reveal himself to all nations 'contrary to their own expectation, they all ought to 'worship contrary to their imaginations, and only as he 'hath appointed.'

V. 5. *Idols. Vanities, things of nought.* The Septuagint renders it *dæmons* or *devils.* (1 *Cor.* viii. 4. x. 19, 20.) 'The idols, or whatever made not the heavens, 'are not God.'

V. 7—9. 'Ascribe unto the LORD, O ye people, 'from whatever family ye come,—that incomparable majesty, and supreme dominion,—which you give to your 'imaginary gods: and renounce them all; and acknowledging the LORD alone to be the omnipotent King of 'all the world, do him honour suitable to the excellency 'of his majesty; bring an oblation to him, in token of

10 [x] Say among the heathen *that* [y] the LORD reigneth, [z] the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved: [a] he shall judge the people righteously.

11 [b] Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; [c] let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof.

12 [d] Let the field be joyful, and all that *is* therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice,

13 Before the LORD: [e] for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: [f] he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.

x xviii 49. cxxvi. 2 Mal. i. 11. 14 Gal i. 16.
y ii. 8—12. 13. xciii xcvii. 1. xciv. 1. Dan ii. 44. Matt iii. 2. Rev. xi. 15 xix 6.
z Is. xlix. 8 Col. ii. 7. Heb i 3.
a 13. ix. 8. lxvii 4. xcviii. 9. Is. xi 3—5. Acts xvii 31. Rom. ii. 5, 6 iii. 5, 6. Rev. xix. 11.
b lxix. 34. cxlviii 1—4 Is. xliv 23. xlix. 13. Luke ii. 10 13, 14 xv. 10. Rev. xii. 12. xix. 1—7.
c xcviii. 7—9.
d lxvi. 12, 13. Is. xlii. 10, 11. lv. 12, 13
e xcviii. 9. Is. xxv. 8, 9 Mal. iii 1, 2. 1 Thes iv. 16—18. 2 Thes i. 10. 2 Tim. iv. 8. Tit. ii. 13. 2 Pet iii. 12—14. Rev. xi 18. xxii. 20.——f 10 Rev. xix. 11.

PSALM XCVII.

The nations called on to rejoice in the coming of the righteous kingdom of God, and in the subversion of idolatry, 1—7. *The church rejoices because of his judgments, and in his universal sovereignty,* 8, 9. *An exhortation to holiness, and joy in God,* 10—12.

THE [a] LORD reigneth; [b] let the earth rejoice; [c] let the * multitude of isles be glad *thereof.*

c xciii. 1. xcvi. 10, 11. xcix. 1. Ob. 21. Matt. iii. 3. vi. 10 13. Mark xi. 10. Col i. 13. Rev. xi. 17.
b xcviii. 4—6 Is xlix. 13 Luke ii. 10, 11.
c Gen. x. 5. Is. xxiv. 14—16. xlii. 4. 10—12. xlix. 1. li. 5. lx. 9. lxvi. 19 Zeph ii. 11.
* Heb. *many*, or *great isles.*

'your submission, and humbly worship him at his temple, where he hath fixed his glorious residence among 'us.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 10. 'He prophesieth that the Gentiles shall be partakers with the Jews of God's promise.' When the apostles went and preached the mediatorial kingdom of God, as set up and administered by the Son of his love, to all the nations, what did they but fulfil the command here given? And as far as their doctrine has been cordially received, the moral state of the world has been established on an immoveable basis. But we are still called to pray, "Thy kingdom come;" and to exhort one another, to "Say among the heathen, The LORD reigneth."

V. 11, 12. These verses have great animation as a call on the universe at large, to break forth into joyful praise, and celebrate the coming, redemption, and kingdom of the Saviour: but they are more literally rendered as a direct prediction. "Then the heavens shall rejoice, "and the earth shall be glad; the sea shall roar," &c. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 13. The second coming of Christ, as well as the first, seems here predicted; when "the creature," or creation, "shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into "the glorious liberty of the sons of God." (*Notes, Rom.* viii. 19—23.) The kingdom of the Redeemer is the kingdom of *righteousness* and *truth*: He rules the world in equity, justice, and truth; he fulfils the gracious promises to his believing people; and the triumph of righteousness and truth, over wickedness and falsehood, is the certain effect. And when he shall come to judge the world, the justice and truth of God will be revealed and glorified in the destruction of the wicked according to his threatenings: and the faithfulness of God, in fulfilling his largest and kindest promises to his redeemed and devoted servants. (*Notes, 2 Thes.* i.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When our Emmanuel had finished his work on earth, and was received to his glory in heaven, the church began to sing a new song unto him, and to bless his name: and his apostles and evangelists lost no time, but proclaimed the glad tidings of his salvation; so that "daily in the "temple, and from house to house they ceased not to "teach and to preach Jesus Christ;" and soon they began to declare his "glory among the heathen, and his wonders "among all people." His honour and majesty, his strength and excellency, were so displayed at that time, in his doctrine and by his miracles, that vast multitudes renounced their idols, to worship JEHOVAH in the beauty of holiness, as "God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself;" to "render unto him the honour due unto his name;" to bring their spiritual sacrifices, and to come into his courts. Still this salvation is spread abroad; it is said among the heathen, that JEHOVAH reigneth: and we are taught to hope and pray for that time, when He shall establish his kingdom in righteousness over all nations, and when the whole creation shall rejoice in him and show forth his praise. At length the incarnate God will come to judge the earth, to execute his just vengeance on his enemies, and to fulfil his promises to his people. What then are we? Would that day be welcome to our hearts? Are we prepared to join the joyful acclamations of all his servants on earth and in heaven? If this be not our case, let us now begin to prepare to meet our God, by seeking the pardon of our sins and the renewal of our souls to holiness. If we are ready, let us bless his name, bear up cheerfully under our difficulties, endeavour to promote the peace and prosperity of his kingdom; and in our proper place, and doing our proper work, let us be as faithful servants, who are habitually expecting and desiring the coming of their Lord.

NOTES.

PSALM XCVII. V. 1. The Septuagint entitles this 'A Psalm of David, after his land was restored to him:' I suppose, meaning that he composed it, when he was re-established in his government after Absalom's rebellion. But whatever gave occasion to it; no doubt the Spirit of God speaking by the Psalmist, foretold the kingdom of Christ, and his victories. This verse may *literally* be thus rendered, "JEHOVAH reigneth, the earth shall rejoice; "yea, the multitude of the isles," (or *great* isles,) "shall "be glad thereof." It is a direct prediction of the conversion of the Gentiles to Christ, and their joy in him: and the evidence from prophecy appears to be very much obscured, by rendering such prophecies as exhortations.—When the righteous are exhorted to rejoice in God, (12,)

2 [d] Clouds and darkness *are* round about him: [e] righteousness and judgment *are* the * habitation of his throne.

3 [f] A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about.

4 [g] His lightnings enlightened the world: [h] the earth saw and trembled.

5 [i] The hills melted like wax at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of [k] the Lord of the whole earth.

6 [l] The heavens declare his righteousness, and [m] all the people see his glory.

7 [n] Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols: [o] worship him, all *ye* gods.

8 [p] Zion heard, and was glad; and the daughters of Judah rejoiced, [q] because of thy judgments, O LORD.

9 For thou, LORD, *art* [r] high above all the earth: thou art exalted [s] far above all gods.

10 [t] Ye that love the LORD, [u] hate evil: [x] he preserveth the souls of his saints; [y] he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked.

d xviii. 11, 12. lxxvii. 19. Ex. xx. 21. xxiv. 16—18. Deut. iv. 11, 12. 1 Kings viii. 10—12. Nah. i. 3. Rom. xi. 33.
e xlv. 6, 7. lxxxix. 14. xcix. 4. Gen. xviii. 25. Heb. i. 8, 9.
* Or, *establishment*. Prov. xvi. 12.
f xvii. 8. xxi. 8, 9. 1 3. Deut. iv. 11. 36. v. 4. 23, 24. xxxii. 22. Dan. vii. 10. Nah. i. 5, 6. Hab. iii. 5. Mal. iv. 1. 2 Thes. i. 8. Heb. xii. 29. 2 Pet. iii. 10—12. Rev. xi. 5.
g lxxvii. 18. cxliv. 5, 6. Ex. xix. 16—18.
h civ. 32. cxiv. 7. Job. ix. 6. Jer. x. 10. Matt. xxvii. 50, 51. xxviii. 2, 3. Rev. xi. 19. xix. 11.
i Judg. v. 4, 5. Is. xxiv. 19, 20. lxiv. 1, 2. Mic. i. 3, 4. Nah. i. 5. Hab. iii. 6.
k xlvii. 2. lxxxiii. 18. Is. liv. 5. Mic. iv. 13. Zech. iv. 14. Mark xi. 3. 1 Cor. i. 2.
l xix. 1. xxxvi. 5, 6. l. 6. lxxxix. 2, 5. Is. i. 2. Rev. xix. 2.
m lxvii. 4. xcviii. 3. Num. xiv. 21. Is. vi. 3. xlv. 6. lx. 2, 3. Hab. ii. 14. Matt. vi. 9, 10.
n Ex. xx. 4. Lev. xxvi. 1. Is. xxxvii. 18, 19. xli. 29. xlii. 17. xliv. 9—11. Jer. x. 14. Rev. xiv. 8—10.
o Ex. xxv. 20. 2 Chr. iii. 13. Heb. i. 6. 1 Pet. i. 12. Rev. v. 11—14.
p xlviii. 11. Is. xli. 5. 8. li. 3. lii. 7—10. lxii. 11. Zeph. iii. 14—17. Zech. ix. 9. Matt. xxi. 4—9.
q lii. 6. lviii. 10. Rev. xviii. 20. xix. 1—7.
r lxxxiii. 18. Eph. i. 21. Phil. ii. 9—11.
s xcv. 3. xcvi. 4. cxv. 3—8. cxxxv. 5. Ex. xviii. 11. Jer. x. 8—10.
t xci. 14. Rom. viii. 28. 1 Cor. viii. 3. Jam. i. 12. ii. 5. 1 Pet. i. 8. 1 John iv. 19. v. 2, 3.
u xxxvi. 4. ci. 3. cxix. 104. 163. Prov. viii. 13. Am. v. 15. Rom. vii. 15. 24. xii. 9.
x xxxi. 23. xxxvii. 28, 39, 40. cxlv. 20. Prov. ii. 8. Is. xlv. 17. John x. 28—30. Rom. viii. 28—30. 1 Pet. i. 5.
y cxxv. 3. Jer. xv. 21. Dan. iii. 28. vi. 22, 27. 2 Thes. ii. 8—12. iii. 2. 1 John v. 18. Rev. xiii. 8.

the *imperative*, not the *future* tense, is used. 'He showeth 'that where God reigneth, there is all felicity and spiritual 'joy. The Gospel shall not only be preached in Judea, 'but in all isles and countries.' 'We Britons, as inha- 'biting one of those eastern isles, and enjoying so fair a 'portion of evangelical blessings, have reason to repeat this 'verse with a particular pleasure and energy. The He- 'brews called by the name of *isles* not only countries sur- 'rounded by the sea, but all the countries which the sea 'divided from them; so that the term became synonymous 'with *Gentiles*.' Thus it is said "The isles shall wait for "his law," which is expounded as follows, "In him shall "the Gentiles trust." (*Is.* xlii. 4. *Matt.* xii. 21.) (*Horne.*) Europe, however, and the isles between Asia and Europe, seem more generally meant by this expression.

V. 2. *Clouds and darkness* may either denote the terrors with which the Lord appals his enemies, when he goes forth to execute righteous vengeance upon them; or the obscurity which rests upon his dispensations and dealings with his people, till the accomplishment of his promises and prophecies throws light upon them. But however it may appear to his creatures, or even to his most eminent saints; however they may be ready to say, "All "these things are against me:" or "Hath God forgotten "to be gracious?" and however the wicked may blasphemously revile his justice as tyranny or cruelty: Yet are righteousness and judgment the basis, the *support* and *establishment* "of his throne." His mercy-seat is founded on judgment and righteousness; the justification of the believing sinner, through the merits and atonement of Christ, magnifies the law, and honours the justice as well as grace of God. Every providential dispensation, whatever present appearances may be, springs from the same glorious union of justice and mercy, in the manifold wisdom and *judgment*, truth and faithfulness of God. And "the day of wrath will be the revelation of the righteous "judgment of God, who will render to every one accord- "ing to his deeds."

V. 3—7. In the deep but righteous judgment of our King, Jerusalem and its inhabitants were miserably destroyed, as by a consuming fire, for their enmity to him and his kingdom. The subversion of the deep-rooted foundations of idolatry, throughout the vast Roman empire, during the first three centuries, and then by the conversion of Constantine the emperor to Christianity, may next be predicted, in metaphorical language taken from the displays of the divine power and presence at mount Sinai. The mountainous obstructions, which before seemed to render the general spread of Christianity insurmountable, thus melted before God, like wax before the fire: the devoted worshippers of idols, even the greatest of them, were alarmed as by tremendous lightnings and earthquakes. His righteousness, in the destruction of the persecuting tyrants of those times, was conspicuous as the heavens: all the people beheld the divine glory, in making his cause triumphant: and the pagans were confounded, and ashamed of their idols, in which they had so long gloried: not only did angels worship the exalted Redeemer; but rulers, who are the vicegerents of the great God, submitted to him, and became his subjects: and all the mighty ones of the earth bowed down before him who had prostrated the idol gods of the heathen, by his presence and power.—The Septuagint renders the word translated *gods*, by *angels*; and thus the apostle quotes the verse, when speaking of the dignity of Christ. Hence we learn that Christ himself as Emmanuel is peculiarly intended. He is the object of universal adoration: and all the angels of God, (instead of receiving worship from Christians, according to the abominable idolatry of the Roman Antichrist,) are fellow-worshippers with Christians, when adoring the great Redeemer.—Thus they were, under the law, represented by the Cherubim as bowing down over the ark, "desiring to look "into these things;" and in many respects as joining in Israel's worship: and thus they are introduced by John in the Revelation, as joining in the praises of the church, to "the Lamb that was slain," &c. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 8, 9. The church of God, and all her assemblies, hearing of these revolutions, would greatly rejoice to see God's judgment upon his enemies, and his exaltation above all the gods of the heathen. "There is joy in heaven "among the angels of God, over one sinner that repent- "eth;" much more when the Redeemer triumphed over the idols of the heathen, and the kingdom of the devil.—Thus all the tidings brought to the apostles, concerning the conversion of the Gentiles, caused them to rejoice and glorify God.

z xviii 28 cxii 4. Esth viii. 16. Job xxii. 28. Pro. iv 18. Is. lx. 1, 2 lxii 1. Mic.vii 9 John xii 46. Rev xxi. 23. xxii. 5
a cxxvi. 5, 6 Gal vi. 8. Jam. v. 7—11.
b xxxii.11. xxxiii. 1. Hab. iii.17.18. Zeph. iii. 14—17. Phil. iv 4
c xxx. 4 lx. 6. Hab. i. 12, 13. Heb xii. 10
* Or, *to the memorial.*

11 [z] Light is [a] sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.
12 [b] Rejoice in the LORD, ye righteous; and [c] give thanks * at the remembrance of his holiness.

PSALM XCVIII.

The Psalmist calls on the whole world to praise the Lord, for overcoming all opposition, in making known his salvation to Israel, and to the ends of the earth, and in the prospect of his coming to judgment, 1—9.

A Psalm.

a xxxiii. 3. xcvi. 1. cxlix 1. Is. xlii. 10. Rev. v. 9 xiv. 3.
b lxxvii. 14 ex. 5. Ex. xv. 11. Is xliii 18—20 Jer. xxxi. 22. Luke i. 49. ii. 10—14 Acts ii. 11. Rev. xv. 3, 4.
c ii. 5, 6. xlv. 3—5. cx. 2—6. Gen. iii. 15. Is. lii. 10. lix. 16. lxiii. 5 John xvi. 33 Acts xix. 20 Col ii. 15 Heb. ii. 14, 15. Rev. iii 21 vi. 2. xvii. 14 xix. 11—21.

O [a] Sing unto the LORD a new song; for [b] he hath done marvellous things: [c] his right hand, and his holy arm hath gotten him the victory.

V. 10. *Hate evil*, &c. 'Show your love to the LORD 'by hating and forsaking all sin.' There is a peculiar emphasis in this caution, with reference to the events supposed to have been predicted: as it is well known that secular prosperity soon corrupted the visible church in a most lamentable manner, and brought an inundation of evils which are by no means terminated at this day. Yet the souls of the faithful remnant have in every age been preserved, notwithstanding the snares of the world, inward depravity, the contagion of false doctrine, and the fury of persecution.

V. 11. 'Though God's deliverance appear not sud 'denly; yet it is sown and laid up in store for them.'—Light is the emblem of knowledge, holiness, and joy: yet it is here compared to seed, which lies long under the clods, but at length comes up and yields an increase. St. James exhorts Christians to wait and be patient, after the example of the husbandman: but he means *real* Christians, "the "upright in heart," who hate evil, and are true *saints;* for God will surely preserve them.

V. 12. *Give*, &c. Some versions render this clause, "Celebrate the memorial of his holiness." (*Note*, xxx. 4.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The wise and righteous government of God is well calculated to rejoice the hearts of all, except rebels who have exposed themselves to his powerful vengeance: but the kingdom of JEHOVAH, as administered by the eternal Son, who hath pardons to confer on the most guilty, is a source of joy even to the sinful inhabitants of the earth. The Gospel also, when preached to those that before sat in darkness, calls for the exercise of gratitude and gladness: and this our favoured isle hath peculiar cause to be thankful: yet, alas, how few prize these privileges, or rejoice properly on account of them! Under every dispensation, the counsels and dealings of the infinite God are too mysterious for man's comprehension: but in the event we shall see, and now we should believe, that when "clouds and "darkness are round about him, righteousness and judg "ment are the basis of his throne." It is, however, evident from history, that from time to time, his wrath, like a consuming fire, hath gone "before him to burn up his "enemies round about." When he comes in his power to set up his kingdom, all opposition must melt away like wax before the fire; and dismay and ruin must be the effects of obstinate rebellion against him: while the inhabitants of heaven will "adore his righteousness, and all "the people shall see his glory." Confusion will be the portion of all those who worship and glory in graven images; and surely this idolatry is no less criminal *within*, than it is *without*, the pale of the visible church! The destruction of the imperial authority of pagan Rome, which had for ages been employed to support idolatry, was but a prelude of the destruction of that antichristian power which soon succeeded it, but hath far exceeded it in impieties and iniquities: and the Lord Jesus will ere long come, and confound all idolaters throughout the earth, and put an end to idolatry of every kind. All the angels of God worship him; we cannot therefore err in joining their adoration, and in "honouring the Son, even as we honour "the Father:" and the monarchs of the earth will never consult their own interest and honour, till they prostrate themselves before him, and use their authority in obedience to his commandments. As these events take place, the church of God, in every land, doth greatly rejoice: nay, we cannot but be glad on account of those his judgments upon persecuting tyrants, which promote the spread of his Gospel. But if we really love the Lord, and desire that his "name should be hallowed, his kingdom be set "up, and his will done on earth as in heaven;" we shall in proportion hate and dread the evil of sin, and carefully watch against the commission and the occasions of it. This is the best expression of our love, and our most effectual method of forwarding those desirable events.—The remnant of upright believers shall be preserved in the worst of times; and the light of joy and consolation is sown for them in a good soil, and will surely spring up and ripen to a glorious harvest. Let us then rejoice in the Lord, though in the world we have tribulation: let us thankfully recollect that his purity, justice, truth, and goodness, are pledged to support and deliver all who trust in him: and as he infinitely hates sin, yet freely loves the person of the sinner who believes in Christ; he will certainly make a final separation between the man he loves and the sin he hates, and sanctify his people wholly, in body, soul, and spirit.

NOTES.

PSALM XCVIII. V. 1. This is called "*A Psalm;*" the Septuagint adds 'of David.' It very much resembles the ninety-sixth; but especially celebrates, prophetically, the salvation of the Redeemer, by his almighty power accomplishing his holy decrees, notwithstanding the oppo-

2 The LORD hath [d] made known his salvation; [e] his righteousness hath he * openly shewed in the sight of the heathen.

3 He hath [f] remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: [g] all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

4 [h] Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth; make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise.

5 Sing unto the LORD [i] with a harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm.

6 [k] With trumpets and sound of cornet, make a joyful noise before the LORD, [l] the King.

7 [m] Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; [n] the world, and they that dwell therein.

8 Let [o] the floods clap *their* hands: [p] let the hills be joyful together

9 Before the LORD; [q] for he cometh to judge the earth: [r] with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.

Is xlv. 21—23 xlix 6 Matt. xxviii 18. Mark xvi 15 Luke ii. 30—32. iii. 6. Rom. x.18. Tit. ii. 13

e xxii. 31 xxiv. 5 Is. xlv. 24, 25 xlvi. 13. lxii 2. Jer. xxiii. 6 John xvi 8—10 Rom. iii 21—26. ix 30 x. 3, 4. 2 Cor v. 21 Phil iii.9 2 Pet. i. 1

* Or. *revealed.* Rom i 17

f cvi. 45. Lev xxvi. 42 Deut. iv. 31. Mic vii. 20. Luke i. 54, 55. 72. Rom. xv 8, 9

g 2. xxii 27 lxvii. 7. Is xlv 22. lii. 10 Acts xiii. 47. xxviii 28. Rev v. 9.——h xlvii. 1—5. lxvi. 1 4. lxvii 4 xcv. 1. c. 1. Is xii. 6 xlii. 11. xliv. 23. Jer xxxiii. 11. Zeph. iii 14. Matt. xxi 9 Rev xix. 1. 6.——i xxxiii. 2. xcii. 3, 4. 1 Chr. xv. 16. xxv. 1—6 2 Chr. xxix. 25 Rev v 8 xiv. 2, 3.

k xlvii. 5. lxxxi. 2—4. Num x. 1—10. 1 Chr. xv. 28. 2 Chr. v. 12, 13. xxix. 27

l xlvii. 6, 7 Mat. xxv. 34. Rev. xix. 16

m xcvi. 11, &c.

n xcvii 1. Is. xlix 13 lxi. 11.

o xlvii 1. 2 King. xi. 12 Is. lv. 12.

p lxv. 12. 13.

q xcvi 13.

r lxvii. 4 lxxii. 2. Is. v. 16 Acts xvii 31. xxiv. 25. Rom. ii. 5, 6.

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sition of earth and hell. The words rendered "gotten "himself the victory," are literally, "hath saved for him "self;" but in doing this he obtained the most glorious victories: and others at least equally glorious will at length be acquired; of which the deliverances and victories of Israel, from their departure from Egypt to the termination of the Mosaic dispensation, were but faint shadows. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 2. The salvation and righteousness of God are often united in Scripture, as showing the way of a sinner's acceptance, "by the righteousness of our God and Saviour, "Jesus Christ:" and these were made known, in the most public manner, to the heathen, by the preaching of the apostles. But perhaps the awful yet righteous vengeance executed on the Jewish nation for rejecting the Gospel, while salvation was thus sent to the Gentiles and welcomed by them, was intended. "Behold, therefore, the goodness "and severity of God; on them that fell severity, but on "thee goodness!"

V. 3. 'In sending the Messiah, God showed himself 'mindful of his promises, which *mercy* prompted him to 'make, and *truth* required him to perform.' (*Horne.*)

V. 7—9. (*Notes*, xcvi.) The *floods* and *hills*, or more literally, *rivers and mountains*, are here substituted for the *fields and the woods*. The different orders of rational creatures in the universe seem to be poetically described under these metaphors, as rejoicing and exulting with every expression of triumph and delight in the reign of the great Messiah. Angels celebrated his birth with glad songs of triumphant praise, and fervent congratulations of man's felicity. No doubt they triumphed with joyful praise at his ascension. They rejoice over every sinner that repents; they are his ministering spirits and the heirs of salvation; and they will execute his sovereign decisions at the day of judgment; admiring the equity and rectitude, as well as the truth and mercy, of his whole administration. (*Notes*, 1 *Chr.* xvi. 32—34. *Is.* lv. 12, 13.) The passage, as before, is future, and rather a *prediction*, than an *exhortation*.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The great Redeemer, "by his right hand and his holy "arm," obtained for himself here on earth most glorious victories: by his life, death, and resurrection, he overcame the world, sin, Satan, and death; and by his triumphant ascension he threw open the gates of heaven to all believers. These are the marvellous works of JEHOVAH JESUS, which demand from us new and perpetual songs of praise. But we are more especially to inquire, whether his holy arm have gotten him the victory in our hearts, over the power of Satan, unbelief, and sin? If this be our happy case, we shall soon exchange all profane, light, and sensual strains for new songs of joy and thanksgiving; and our lives will harmonize with our lips in celebrating Emmanuel's praise. To bring sinners to experience this needful change, he hath made known his salvation by the preaching of his gospel. "The ministration of condemnation" shows the justice of that sentence which is denounced against transgressors; and "the ministration of righteous-"ness" declares the way in which sinners may be justified before him. Thus "his righteousness hath he showed "*openly*," and not by types and shadows, in the sight of the heathen: and his ministers are ordered to use great plainness of speech, in warning, instructing, and inviting men to partake of these blessings. When the Redeemer came, JEHOVAH remembered the engagements, which his mercy dictated and his truth performed to the house of Israel: and, blessed be his name, this remote corner "of the "earth hath seen the salvation of our God!" Let then his people in all lands rejoice in their Saviour and King: and let them celebrate his praises, in every way and by every means, which can express how greatly they rejoice and glory in him; how they welcome him to the throne in their hearts, delight in his pleasant service, and find rest to their souls by reliance upon him. As all nature proclaims the Creator's glory, may all nations speedily resound with the Redeemer's name, whilst the blessings of his kingdom fill the earth with gladness. Yet sin in its dreadful effects will not be utterly abolished, until the Lord shall come to judge the world in righteousness. Then this visible creation will be dissolved; and his people will enter those "new heavens, and that new earth, "wherein dwelleth righteousness." "Seeing then we "look for such things, let us give diligence, that we "may be found of him in peace, without spot, and "blameless."

PSALM XCIX.

Exhortations to adore the power, equity, and holiness of the Lord's kingdom in Zion, 1—5. Encouragement to worship him, from the examples of Moses, Aaron, and Samuel, 6—9.

THE [a] LORD reigneth; [b] let the people tremble: [c] he sitteth *between* the cherubims; [d] let the earth * be moved.

2 The LORD *is* [e] great in Zion; and he *is* [f] high above all people.

3 Let them praise [g] thy great and terrible name; [h] *for* it *is* holy.

4 The King's [i] strength also loveth judgment; [k] thou dost establish equity, thou [l] executest judgment and righteousness in Jacob.

5 [m] Exalt ye the LORD our God, and worship at [n] his footstool; *for* † he *is* holy.

6 [o] Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name; [p] they called upon the LORD, and he answered them.

7 He spake unto them [q] in the cloudy pillar: [r] they kept his testimonies, and the ordinance *that* he gave them.

8 Thou answeredst them, O LORD our God: [s] thou wast a God that forgavest them, [t] though thou tookest vengeance of [u] their inventions.

9 [x] Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at [y] his holy hill; for [z] the LORD our God *is* holy.

a ii. 6. xciii. 1. xcvi 10 xcvii. 1. Luke xix. 12—14 Rev. xi 17.
b ii. 11, 12 xxi 8, 9. xcvii. 4. Luke xix 27 Phil ii 12.
c xviii 10 lxxx. 1. Ex. xxv. 22. Ez. x. 1, &c.
d lxxxii. 5 *Marg.* Jer iv 24. xlix. 21. 1. 46 Rev. vi 14. xx 11.
* Heb *stagger.* Is. xix. 14. xxiv. 19, 20
e xlviii 1—3. 1. 2. lxxvi 1, 2. Is. xii. 6. xiv. 32 Heb. xii. 22—24. Rev. xiv 1, &c. lxvi 7. xcvii. 9. Dan. iv 34, 35. Jam iv. 6, 7.
f lxvi. 3 lxxvi. 12 Deut. vii. 21. Neh. i 5. iv 14. ix. 32 Jer. xx. 11.
h cxi. 9. cxlv. 17. Josh. xxiv. 19. 1 Sam ii 2. Is. vi. 3 John xvii. 11. Rev iv. 8. xv. 3, 4.
i xiv. 6, 7. lxxii. 1, 2 Deut xxxii 3, 4. 2 Sam. xxiii. 3, 4. Job xxxvi. 5—7. xxxvii. 23. Is. xi. 3—5. Jer xxiii. 5. Rev. xix. 11. 16—k Is. ix. 7. xlii. 4. lxi. 11.
l Deut. x. 18. Jude 15.
m 9 xxi 13. xxxiv. 3 cviii 5 Ex xv 2 Is xii. 4. xxv. 1 Hos. xi. 7.
n cxxxii 7. 1 Chr. xxviii. 2 Is. lxvi 1.
† Or, *it is holy.* 3. Lev. xix 2.
o Ex. xxiv 6—8. xxix. 11, &c xl. 23—29. Num. xvi. 47, 48.
p Ex xiv. 15. xv 25. xxxii. 11—14. xxxiii. 12—15. Num xiv. 13—20. xvi 21, 22. 1 Sam xii. 9—12 18. 24. Jer xv. 1
q Ex xix. 9. xxxiii. 9. Num xii. 5.
r Ex. xl 16. Num. xvi. 15. Deut. iv. 5 xxxiii. 9. 1 Sam xii. 3—5. Prov xxviii 9. Heb iii. 2 1 John iii. 21, 22
s Num. xiv 20. Deut. ix. 19. Jer. xlvi. 28. Zeph. iii 7
t Ex. xxxii. 34, 35. Num xi 33, 34.
xiv. 20—34. xx. 12. Deut. iii. 26. ix. 20.——u Ec. vii. 20. Rom. i. 21——x 5.——y ii. 6. xlviii. 1, 2. lxxxvii. 1—3——z 3. 5. 1 Sam. ii. 2. Is. v. 16. vi. 3. lvii. 15. Hab. i. 12, 13. Luke i. 49. 1 Pet. i. 15, 16. Rev. iii. 7. iv. 8.

NOTES.

PSALM XCIX. V. 1—3. The Septuagint aasigns this psalm also to David; whether on sufficient grounds or not is uncertain. The word rendered *tremble*, signifies also to *rage* or *fret;* and being *future*, the opposition of the Jews and Gentiles to the establishment of Messiah's kingdom, and their furious persecutions of the church in the primitive times, seem to be predicted; as well as the consternation of the opposers, while they witnessed the success of the Gospel, and saw their resources, one after another, failing them, and every thing foreboding their disgrace and ruin. For it was evident that the Lord was great in Zion: and was determined to effect a revolution in the moral and religious state of the world; and to show himself "high above "all people," (*Marg. Ref.*) So that nothing remained but unreserved and cordial submission; and a willing exchange of idolatry and superstition for the spiritual worship of the awful and holy name of Israel's God.

V. 4. 'None can resist him: yet he is not a King that 'uses his power to wrong and oppress his subjects; but to 'do them right, and to give them relief, in which he delights. He hath hitherto governed the seed of Israel 'with exact justice and singular mercy.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) 'Impenitent rebels must feel the weight of his arm, and 'none can accuse the justice of their punishment: but in 'all other cases, he is mighty only to save.' (*Horne.*)

V. 5. (9.) This is a call to the *trembling* or *raging* persecutors to submit to God, and bow to the Messiah's sceptre, (*Notes*, ii.) The temple, or the ark, was the footstool before which they were to prostrate themselves in humble adoration. These were typical of the person and mediation of Emmanuel.

V. 6. God was often so provoked at Israel, as to threaten to destroy the nation: but Moses and Aaron, at one time, and Samuel at another; and in like manner the priests, and prophets, and zealous believers, in different ages, interceded; and so the nation was spared; but these were only types of that great Mediator, "who is able to save "to the uttermost all them that come to God through him; "seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."—The wrath of God, therefore, against the opposers of the Gospel, need not drive any to despair; for he that heard Moses, Aaron, and Samuel, through the typical sacrifices, and spared Israel, would spare all that submitted and sought mercy through the sacrifice and intercession of Christ. The same consideration was also well calculated to encourage the prayers and supplications of the persecuted and afflicted church.

V. 7. *In*, &c. or *from* "the cloudy pillar." Thus, the Lord, in a most condescending manner, made known his will to Moses and Aaron, and by them to Israel. To Samuel also he revealed himself with great clearness, though in another way: and they answered his kindness, by an habitual course of zealous obedience; so that they were both blessed, and blessings to Israel.

V. 8. *Tookest*, &c. In answer to the prayers of Moses, Aaron, and Samuel, the Lord repeatedly spared the nation of Israel: yet he took vengeance on the ring-leaders of rebellion among them: and he caused the people to suffer for, and even by means of, "their own inventions:" (*Exod.* xxxii. xxxiii. *Num.* xiv.) When Aaron burned incense between the living and the dead, the plague was stayed; yet many of the people had previously died of it; (*Num.* xvi.) And when Samuel prayed for the people, they were spared; but their King, whom they had sinfully desired, proved a severe scourge unto them. (1 *Sam.* xii.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

JEHOVAH reigning on a mercy-seat, may be viewed with joy by all his faithful subjects: but his great salvation will aggravate the guilt of obstinate rebels; and as hitherto the greatest number, even of those that have heard the Gospel, have continued impenitent and unbelieving, the inhabit-

PSALM C.

A solemn call to the joyful worship of God as our Creator and Shepherd, and to adore his everlasting goodness, mercy, and truth, 1—5.

[a] A Psalm of * praise.

1 MAKE a joyful noise unto the [b] LORD, [c] all † ye lands.
2 [d] Serve the LORD with gladness: [e] come before his presence with singing.

3 [f] Know ye that the LORD he *is* God: [g] *it is* he *that* hath made us, and ‡ not we ourselves; [h] *we are* his people, and the sheep of his pasture.
4 [i] Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, *and* into his courts with praise: [k] be thankful unto him, *and* bless his name.
5 For [l] the LORD *is* good; [m] his mercy *is* everlasting: [n] and his truth *endureth* to § all generations.

a cxlv. *title.* * Or, *thanksgiving.* b xxxxi. 11. xlvii. 1, 5. lxvi. 1. 4. xcv. 1, 2. xcviii. 4. Is. xxiv 14—16. xliii. 10—12. Zeph. iii. 14. Luke xix 37 c lxvii.4.lxviii.32. cxvii. Deut. xxxii. 43. Zech. xiv. 9. Rom.xv. 10 † Heb *the earth.* d lxiii. 4, 5. lxxi. 23. cvii 21, 22. Deut xii.12. xvi. 11 14 xxviii 47. e 1 Kings viii. 66. Acts ii. 46, 47. Phil. iv 4. e xlii. 4 xcv. 2. 2 Chr. xx. 27, 28. xxxi. 2.

f xlvi 10. xcv 3. 6, 7 Deut. iv. 35 39 vii 9. 1 Sam. xvii. 46, 47 1 Kings xviii. 36—39. 2 Kings xix 19. Jer x. 10. John xvii 3. Acts xvii.23, 24. g 2 Cor iv. 6. Gal. iv 8, 9. 1 John v. 20 g xcv 6. cxix. 73. cxxxix 13, &c. cxlix. 2. Job x. 8—13 Ec.xii. 1. Eph.ii.10. 1 Pet. iv. 19. ‡ Or, *his we are.* xii. 4. 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. h lxxiv. 1, 2. lxxviii 52 lxxix. 13. xcv. 7. Is. xl. 9—11. lxiii. 11. Ez. xxxiv. 30, 31 John x. 14—16 26—28. Acts xx. 28, 29. 1 Pet ii. 9 25 v 2—4. —i lxvi. 13 cxvi. 17—19 —k xcvi 2. ciii. 1, 2. 20—22. cxlv. 1, 2. 1 Chr. xxix. 13 20. Col iii 16, 17 Heb xiii. 15—l lii 1 lxxxvi. 5 cv. 1. cvi. 1. cvii. 1. 8. 15. 22 cxix 68 Jer. xxxiii. 11.—m xxxvi 5 ciii. cxviii. 1—4. cxxvi. 1, &c Luke i. 50.—n lxxxv. 10 lxxxix. 1, 2 cxix. 90, 91. cxlvi. 6 Ex. xxxiv 6, 7. Deut vii 9. Jer. xxxiii 20. 21 Mic. vii 20. Rom. xv 8, 9. Tit. i. 2. Heb. vi. 13—18. § Heb. *generation and generation.* lxxxix. 1 *Marg.*

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ants of the earth have abundant cause to tremble at the report of the Redeemer's absolute authority and almighty power. But he still waiteth to be gracious: let then all who hear take warning and seek his mercy.—Our God is "great in Zion, and high above all people:" and the chief of sinners may yet rejoice, and praise his great and terrible name, though he is holy, yea, because he is holy. His power is exercised in perfect wisdom and justice; and though he executes just punishment on his enemies: yet he most delighteth in showing mercy to the humbled transgressor. As he loveth judgment and righteousness in his own administration; so he establisheth equity amongst his subjects, and requireth them to be holy, because he is holy. His worshippers must bow before him in humility and reverence, and seek conformity to him; whilst they exalt him by their adorations, and give him the glory of their salvation. There have always however been many professed worshippers of God, who have neither believed his truths, nor obeyed his will: and there is so much faulty in all of us, that our persons and services might justly be rejected by him. But our Prophet and High-Priest, of far greater dignity than Moses, Aaron, or Samuel, who received and declared to us the will of the Father, and who himself perfectly observed his testimonies and ordinances, and who "bare our sins in his own body on the tree," continually pleads for us before the throne, and prevails for our pardon and acceptance. Encouraged by these glad tidings, we may come before him and call upon his name, and expect an answer of peace; nay, our supplications for others, may be an extensive blessing to them; "for the "effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth "much." But would we thus be heard, we must uprightly walk in all the ordinances and commandments of the Lord. And as no prayers will prevent the ruin of impenitent sinners: so believers will surely be corrected by their own inventions, when they commit iniquity, though the Saviour's intercession prevent their final condemnation. Let us then entertain high and honourable thoughts of the LORD our God; and not only exalt him with our lips, but give him the throne in our hearts: and whilst we worship him upon his mercy-seat; let us never forget that he is holy, and abhors hypocrisy, as much as profaneness and infidelity.

NOTES.

PSALM C. *Title.* 'There is no other Psalm hath a 'like title with this, which is called "A Psalm of praise;" 'or rather of thanksgiving, or acknowledgment of divine 'blessings. The Hebrews imagine that it was peculiarly 'appointed to be sung when the sacrifices of thanksgiving 'were offered.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 1. The Psalmist 'invites all the world to join with 'the Israelites, in the service of Him who was kind and 'gracious to them beyond expression. Accordingly we 'Christians very properly use it, in acknowledgment of 'God's wonderful love to us in Christ: by whom we offer 'up continually spiritual sacrifices, for redeeming us by the 'sacrifice he made of himself; for making the world anew, 'and creating us again unto good works, according to his 'faithful promises, which we may depend on for ever.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

Joyful noise. The sound of the trumpets, at the beginning of the Jubilee, seems alluded to. (*Notes, Lev.* xxv.)

V. 2. These continually reiterated calls to joy and gladness in serving God, should not pass unnoticed: for they show that exalted piety is the most abundant source of true rejoicing; and that sorrow and dejection do not spring from piety, even in religious persons; but arise from the want of more religion, and from occasional circumstances.

V. 3. Some versions render this verse as follows: "Acknowledge that JEHOVAH is God: It is he, (and not "we ourselves,) that made us his people and the sheep of "his pasture:" and this is indeed the more literal translation. 'His we are; and by his power and goodness, not 'our own, we are become so great and mighty a nation; 'whom of his own good will alone he hath made his peculiar people, of whom he takes a tender care.'—'To deny 'that we created ourselves is altogether needless: but that 'it is not to be ascribed to our industry or wit, that we 'are raised to a happy condition, is a proper expression 'of humility,' (*Bp. Patrick.*)—'He chiefly means touching the spiritual regeneration, whereby we are his sheep 'and people.' (*Deut.* vii. 6—8. viii. 17. 1 *Chr.* xxix. 14—16. 2 *Cor.* iv. 6. *Jam.* i. 18.)—The marginal reading "*His we are,*" requires an alteration in the original text.

PSALM CI.

David declares how he will rule his household and his kingdom, for the suppression of sin, and the encouragement of piety, 1—8.

A Psalm of David.

B. C. 1058.
a lxxxix. 1 xcvii. 8. cii. 6—8. cxxxvi. 10—22. Rom. ix. 15—18. 22, 23. xi. 22. Rev. xv. 3, 4. xix. 1—3.
b lxxi. 22, 23.
c lxxv. 1, 2. cxix. 106. 115. 1 Sam. xviii. 14, 15. xxii. 14. 2 Sam. viii. 15. 2 Chr. xxx. 12. xxxi. 21, 22. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6.
d 6. xl. 17. cxliii. 7, 8.

a I WILL sing of mercy and judgment: b unto thee, O LORD, will I sing.
2 c I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. b O when wilt thou come unto me? e I will walk within my house with f a perfect heart.
3 I will g set no * wicked thing before mine eyes: h I hate the work of i them that turn aside: k *it* shall not cleave to me.
4 l A froward heart shall depart from me: I will not m know a wicked *person.*
5 Whoso n privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: him that hath o an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer.

e Gen. xviii. 19. Deut. vi. 7. Josh. xxiv. 15. 1 Tim. iii. 4, 5.
f 1 Kings ix. 4. xi. 4. 2 Chr. xv. 17. Is. xxxviii. 3.
g xviii. 20—23. xxvi. 4, 5. xxxix. 1. cxix. 37. 113. Ex. xx. 17. 2 Sam. xi. 2, 3. 1 Kings xxi. 2, &c. Job xxxi. 1. Pro. vi. 25. xxiii. 31—35. Ec. vi. 9. Jer. xxii. 17. Hos. vii. 6, 7. Mic. ii. 2. Matt. v. 28. Jam. i. 13—15.
* Heb. *thing of Belial.* 1 Kings xxi. 13.——h xcvii. 10. Rom. xii. 9.——i xiv. 3. xxxvi. 3. xl. 4. lxxviii. 41. 57. cxxv. 5. Ex. xxxii. 8. 1 Sam. xv. 11. Is. xxx. 11. Zeph. i. 5, 6. Gal. iv. 9. Heb. x. 29. 2 Pet. ii. 21. 1 John ii. 21.——k Deut. xiii. 17.——l Pro. ii. 12—15. iii. 32. viii. 13. xi. 20.——m vi. 3. cxix. 115. Pro. ix. 6. xxii. 24. Mat. vii. 23. 2 Cor. vi. 14—16. 2 Tim. ii. 19.——n xv. 3. 1. 20. Ex. xx. 16. xxiii. 1. Lev. xix. 16. Prov. x. 18. xx. 19. xxv. 23. Ez. xxii. 9. 1 Cor. v. 11. 1 Tim. iii. 11. Tit. ii. 3.——o x. 2—4. xviii. 27. cxxxviii. 6. 1 Sam. ii. 3. Job xl. 11, 12. Prov. vi. 16—19. xxx. 13. Is. ii. 11. Dan. iv. 37. Ob. 3, 4. Luke xviii. 14. 1 Pet. v. 5, 6.

V. 5. "JEHOVAH is good:" 'he is the source of all 'beauty and perfection in the creature; how altogether 'lovely must he needs be in himself.' "His mercy is "everlasting," 'extending through time into eternity:' "and his truth," 'or his fidelity in performing his pro-'mises,' "endureth to all generations," 'from Adam to 'his last-born son.' (*Horne.*) The word *good* seems also to mean, the bounty and kindness of God to all his creatures. "GOD is LOVE."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The service of God would be the delight of all rational creatures, did they all know and love his glorious excellencies, and were they sensible of their obligations to him. As far as we on earth take pleasure in worshipping him, and can serve him with gladness of heart and songs of fervent praise, we emulate the employment and anticipate the joys of heaven. Let us then study to know the glorious and eternal JEHOVAH, as our Creator, and the God in whom we live, and move, and are; by whose arm we are upheld, and on whose bounty we are fed: and then we shall understand how reasonable it is that we should be thankful and obedient to him. But if we can also say,

> 'And when like wandering sheep we stray'd,
> 'He brought us to his fold again;'

We shall have abundant cause "to enter into his courts "with praise, to be thankful to him, and to bless his "name." His goodness to us hath been great beyond expression: and the effects of his mercy will be everlasting to our souls, and his faithfulness is the perpetual security for the performance of his largest promises. And as JEHOVAH's truth and mercy endure for ever: sinners of every land should be invited to come and rejoice in his salvation. In the fulness of time the Gentiles were admitted into the Christian church, in performance of Old Testament prophecies, but contrary to the narrow expectations of the Jews; and assuredly the inhabitants of all lands will ere long come, and make a joyful noise before God our Saviour. So that this song of praise should be considered as a prophecy, and even used as a prayer, for the coming of that time, when all people shall know that the LORD he is God, and shall become his worshippers and "the sheep of his pasture."

NOTES.

PSALM CI. *Title.* 'The title tells us who made 'this psalm: and the matter of it is so plain, that any body 'may see that it is a pious resolution of David to govern 'first himself, and then his court, and then his kingdom, 'with so much care, that the good might expect all favour 'from him; but no wicked men of any sort, have the least 'countenance.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 1. The mercy of God shown towards David, and his righteous judgments upon his persecutors, were not only the subjects of his grateful praise, but the pattern he proposed to imitate in his administration. 'David con-'sidereth what manner of king he would be, when God 'should place him on the throne, promising openly that he 'would be merciful and just.'

V. 2. 'Though as yet thou deferrest to place me in 'the kingly dignity; yet I will give myself to wisdom and 'uprightness, being a private man.' Some, however, think that the psalm was composed while David ruled over Judah, but not over Israel. David purposed to unite wisdom and piety, with justice and mercy, in his behaviour before his family and court, as well as in his public administration. He meant to walk uprightly in the ordinances and commandments of God, as an example to his people. But knowing that his ability to perform his vow would depend upon the Lord's presence with him, he prayed with earnest desires, and as impatient of delay, that the Lord would speedily come and dwell with him, and bless him.

V. 3. 'I will not propose to myself, or think of carry-'ing into execution, any iniquitous scheme of politics, 'however advantageous or tempting it may appear. I 'will reject it at once, "I hate the work of those who "turn aside," 'who deviate from the divine law to serve 'their own interests.'—'No such corrupt principle shall 'adhere to my soul, or find a place in my affections. How 'noble a resolution for a king to make! but how difficult 'an one for a king to keep!' (*Horne.*) 'He showeth 'that magistrates do not their duty, except they be ene-'mies to all vice.'

V. 4. 'I will turn him instantly out of my service, 'who shall dare to suggest to me any crooked counsels. I 'will have no familiarity with him, much less make him 'my favourite, who makes no conscience how he com-'passes his ends.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

6 [p] Mine eye *shall be* upon the faithful of the land, [q] that they may dwell with me: he that walketh * in a perfect way, he shall serve me.

7 [r] He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not † tarry in my sight.

8 I will [s] early destroy all the wicked of the land; that I may [t] cut off all wicked doers from the city of the LORD.

p xv 4 xxxiv. 15. cxix. 63 Prov. cxviii. 28. xxix. 2. Matt xxiv 45 Luke xii 42—44 Rom. xiii 1—4
q John xii. 26 xiv. 3 xvii 24 Rev. iii. 20, 21 xxi 3.
* Or *perfect in the way* cxix 1—3 *Marg* Phil. iii. 12—15.
r 2 Sam. iv 10—12 2 Kings v. 25, 27 Prov. xxix. 12. Acts i. 16—20 25 v. 1—10
† Heb *be established*
s lxxv 10. Prov. xvi 12. xx. 8. 26. Jer. xxi. 12. Mic. iii. 1—4 9
t xlviii. 2. 8 Hos. ix. 3 Mic ii 8—10 Rev. xxi. 27. xxii. 14, 15.

PSALM CII.

The Psalmist pours out doleful complaints, 1—11. *He takes comfort from the eternity of God,* 12. *He predicts the triumph of the church, though then desolated, according to the promises of God, at the appointed time, and in answer to the prayers of his people,* 13—17 *He records the mercies of the Lord for the benefit of posterity,* 18—22. *Conscious of his own weakness, he rests his hope on the unchangeableness of God,* 23—28.

A prayer * of the afflicted, when he is [a] overwhelmed, and [b] poureth out his complaint before the LORD.

* Or, *for*
a xli 5. lxi. 2. lxix 1, 2. cxlii. 3. cxliii. 4 Lam. iii 18 20 Mark xiv 33, 34 Luke xxii 44 Heb. v. 7.
b xlii 4. lxii. 8. lxxvii. 3. cxlii. 2. 1 Sam. i. 15, 16.

V. 5. 'In promising to punish these vices, which are 'most pernicious in them that are about kings, he declar-'eth that he will punish all.'

V. 6. One great improvement of power, either in church or state, consists in carefully and wisely selecting fit persons for all the different services required, in order to the prosperity and good order of both: though, alas! this is very rarely indeed attended to, and men with David's spirit are every where much wanted.

V. 8. *Early*, or, *in the mornings*, that is, *every morning*. (*Jer.* xxi. 12.) Promptitude, activity, and perseverance are alike necessary to suppress vice in the state, and to keep the visible church, and even its most sacred offices, pure from the pollution of ambitious and covetous hypocrites. The latter is called, "the city of the LORD:" but it has too often been made a city of merchandise, and even "a den of thieves."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When we celebrate the praises of the divine perfections, we should, in many cases, consider them as patterns for our imitation: but we never can so clearly understand in what respect this example is imitable by us, as when we view it exhibited in the person of the incarnate Son of God. His compassionate and condescending love to sinners harmonizes with the most perfect abhorrence of sin: and his conduct as our exalted King is conformable to his holy life on earth. He does not connive at any wickedness or bear it in his presence; he abhors the works of those who turn aside from his righteous ways; and can no more allow his disciples to cleave to sin, than he can cleave to it himself. They who continue of a perverse disposition must depart from him; and at the day of judgment he will reject all the workers of iniquity, as those whom he *never knew*. He will as certainly punish the subtle undermining slanderer, as the murderer: pride and covetousness will no more escape, than adultery or drunkenness; and hypocrites, and liars of every kind, will be doomed to the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone. In short, he will destroy all impenitent sinners; and those with peculiar detestation, who form a part of his visible church, and are a scandal to it. Such are often removed from the earth, to prevent further mischief; but at length a final and eternal separation shall be made, and no wicked person shall ever enter the city of the Lord in the world to come. But he will search out, watch over, and favour the faithful, who repent and renounce their sins, trusting in his mercy, and by his grace learn to walk before him in truth and righteousness: these are his servants on earth, and they shall dwell with him for ever in heaven. This is his determination and invariable conduct; nor will he treat any as his people, who are not redeemed from all iniquity, and progressively purified unto him, a peculiar people zealous of good works. This example should be copied by rulers and magistrates especially: justice, truth, goodness and piety, should be visible in their whole conduct: and then their patronage and influence should unite with the impartial and vigorous exercise of their authority, in discountenancing all vice and impiety, in protecting the righteous, and in promoting the cause of God. By a resolute and steady adherence to such a plan, wicked doers might be reclaimed or restrained; and we might appear like a part of the city of God, by the prevalence of equity and piety. Ministers, heads of families, and all others, in the superior relations or stations of life, have also an important duty in this matter. Their example and influence, and the exercise of their authority; their refusal to be acquainted with notorious sinners, or to show favour to them, or even to employ them; their decided disapprobation of slanderers, flatterers, and all dissemblers: and the encouragement of the faithful, humble, and upright, would have an extensive good effect; if they would adopt David's resolutions, or rather imitate Christ's example. It is true this would require much wisdom and courage; and of ourselves we are not sufficient for such services: but the Lord would come to us, and even abide with us, if we earnestly and cordially entreated him; and then his grace would be sufficient for us, his favour would render any station comfortable, and his blessing would crown our endeavours with success. But let us recollect, that if we refuse to obey his command and copy his example, whilst we call him our Lord and Master, he will treat us as hypocrites and liars, exclude us from his family, and drive us with indignation from his presence, as workers of iniquity whom he never acknowledged or approved.

HEAR my prayer, O LORD, and [d] let my cry come unto thee.

2 [e] Hide not thy face from me in the day *when* I am in trouble; [f] incline thine ear unto me: [g] in the day *when* I call, answer me speedily.

3 For [h] my days are consumed * like smoke, and [i] my bones are burned as an hearth.

4 [k] My heart is smitten, and [l] withered like grass; [m] so that I forget to eat my bread.

5 By reason of [n] the voice of my groaning my bones cleave to my † skin

6 I am [o] like [p] a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert.

7 I [q] watch, and am as a sparrow [r] alone upon the house-top.

8 [s] Mine enemies reproach me all the day; *and* they that are [t] mad against me are [u] sworn against me.

9 For [x] I have eaten ashes like bread, and [y] mingled my drink with weeping,

10 [z] Because of thine indignation and thy wrath: for [a] thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down.

11 [b] My days *are* like a shadow that declineth; and [c] I am withered like grass.

12 But [d] thou, O LORD, shalt endure for ever; and [e] thy remembrance unto all generations.

13 [f] Thou shalt arise, *and* have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, [g] the set time is come.

14 For [h] thy servants take pleasure in her stones; and favour the dust thereof.

15 So [i] the heathen shall fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth thy glory.

16 [k] When the LORD shall build up Zion, [l] he shall appear in his glory.

17 [m] He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and [n] not despise their prayer.

18 [o] This shall be written for the generation to come; and [p] the people which shall be created shall praise the LORD.

19 For [q] he hath looked down from [r] the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the LORD behold the earth;

20 [s] To hear the groaning of the prisoner; [t] to loose ‡ those that are appointed to death;

21 [u] To declare the name of the LORD in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem;

c v. 2. lv. 1–5 lvii. 1–3 cxxx. 1, 2. cxli. 1, 2 cxliii 7 d xviii. 6 Ex ii. 23 Judg x. 16 1 Sam ix. 16. 2 Chr. xxx 27 Lam iii 8. 44 e xiii. 1 xxvii 9 lxix 17. lxxviii. 14. civ 29. cxliii. 7. Job xxxiv. 29. Is. viii 17. f lxxi 2 lxxxviii. 2, &c. g xxii. 19 xl. 13. lxx. 1. 5 Job vii. 21. Is lxv 24. Acts xii 5. &c. h xxxvii 20. cxix. 83 Jam iv. 14 * Or, (as some read,) *into smoke.* i xxii. 14, 15. xxxi. 10 xxxviii 3. Job xxx. 30 Lam i. 13 iii 4. k vi. 2, 3 xlii 6. lv 4, 5. lxix. 20 lxxvii 3 cxliii 3, 4 Job vi. 4. x. 1 Lam iii. 19 20. Matt. xxvi. 37, 38. l 11 xxxvii. 2 Is. xl. 7. m 9. 1 Sam. i. 7, 8 Ezra x. 6. Acts ix. 9. n vi. 6. 8. xxxii 3, 4 xxxviii 8—10 Job xix. 20. Prov xvii. 22 Lam iv 8. † Or, *flesh.* o Job xxx. 29, 30. Is xxxviii. 14. Mic. i 8. p Is. xxxiv. 11—15 Zeph ii. 14. *Marg* Rev xviii. 2 q xxii 2 lxxvii. 4. cxxx. 6. Deu xxviii 66, 67. Job vii. 13—16 Mark xiv. 33—37. r xxxviii. 11 Lam. iii. 28—30 ——s xxxi 11—13 lv. 3 lxix. 9, 10. 20. lxxxix 51 Rom. xv. 3 ——t ii. 1. Luke vi. 11 Acts vii 54. xxvi 11.——u Acts xxiii 12. &c ——x xlix. 21. Is. xliv 20 Lam. iii 15, 16 Mic. i 10. vii 17.——y xlii. 3. lxxx. 5. Job iii. 24 Lam. iii. 48. 49 z xxxviii 3 18 xxxix 11. xc. 7—9. Lam i. 18 iii 39—42 v 16 Dan ix. 8—14. Rom. iii. 19.——a xxx. 6, 7 lxxiii. 18—20 cxlvii 6. 1 Sam. ii. 7, 8 2 Chr. xxv 8 2 Cor iv. 9.——b 3. xxxix 5, 6 cix 23. cxliv. 4. Job xiv 2. Ec. vi. 12. Jam. iv. 14. c 4. Is xl 6—8. Jam. i. 10. 1 Pet. i. 24.

d 24—27. lx. 7. xc. 1, 2. Deut. xxxiii 27. Is. xliv. 6 lx. 15. Lam v. 19. Heb. xiii. 8. Rev i 17, 18 e cxxxv 13 Ex iii. 15 f vii 6. xliv. 26. li. 18. lxix 35, 36. Is. xiv. 32 lx. 10—14 Jer. xxxi. 10—12. 23 Zech ii 10—12 g Ezra i. 1. Is. xl. 2. Dan ix 2 &c xii. 9 12, 13. Acts i. 7. Gal iv 4 2 Pet. iii. 8 12 Rev. xi. 15—18 h lxxix 7—10. cxxxvii 5, 6. Ezra i 5 iii 1—3 vii 27 Neh. i. 3. ii. 3 17. iv. 2 6. 10. Dan. ix. 16 i lxvii. 2—4. lxviii. 31, 32. lxxii. 11 lxxxvi. 9. cxxxviii. 4. 1 Kings viii. 43. Is lv 5 lx. 3, &c. Zech viii. 20—23. Rev xi. 15. xxi 24. k li. 18. lxix. 35. cxlvii. 2 Is. ii. 2, 3. xliv. 26. lxvi. 18 Jer. xxxi. 4. xxxiii. 7 l xcvii. 6 Is lx. 7. lxi. 3. Mic. ii. 9. Zech ii. 6—13. m ix. 18 lxxii. 12. Deut. iv. 29. xxxii 36. Neh. i 6. 11 ii. 8. Jer. xxix. 11—14. Dan. ix. 3—20. n xxii 24. li. 17. o lxxi. 18. lxxviii. 4—6. Ex xvii. 14. Deut. xxxi 19, &c. Job xix. 23, 24. Dan. ix. 2. John xx. 31. Rom xv. 4. 1 Cor x 11 2 Tim. iii 16, 17. 2 Pet i. 15 ——p xxii 30, 31. xlv. 16, 17. Is xliii. 7, 21 lxv. 17—19 2 Cor v. 17, 18. Eph ii 10 1 Pet ii. 9, 10.——q xiv 2. xxxiii. 13, 14. Deu xxvi 15. 1 Kings viii 39, 43 2 Chr. xvi. 9 ——r Job xxii 12. Heb. viii. 1, 2. ix. 23, 24 ——s lxxix. 11 Ex. ii 23—25 iii 7. 2 Kings xiii 4. 22, 23 Job xxiv. 12 Is xiv 17. lxi. 1—3. Jer. li 34, 35. Zech ix. 9—12.——t 2 Chr. xxxiii 11—13 Jer. lii. 32 34. Acts vii. 6—11 ——‡ Heb. *the children of death.* Eph. ii 2, 3.——u ix. 13, 14. xxii. 22. li. 14, 15. lxxix. 13. Is. li. 11. Eph. ii. 4—7. iii. 21. 1 Pet. ii. 9.

NOTES.

PSALM CII. *Title.* This psalm seems to have been written towards the conclusion of the Babylonish captivity: (or, as some think just after the return of the remnant under Zerubbabel,) for the use of the pious Jews who were overwhelmed with affliction, on account of the desolations of their holy city and temple: yet they poured out their complaint with some hope of redress, as God had promised to restore them again to their own land. But the termination of the reign of Antichrist seems also to be predicted.

V. 1, 2. 'Albeit we be in ever so great misery; yet 'there is ever room left for prayer.'

V. 3—11. 'These excessive kinds of speech show 'how much the affliction of the church ought to wound 'the hearts of the ungodly.' Perhaps the Psalmist was grievously afflicted in his own person, as well as on account of the public calamities; but he seems to personate Jerusalem and the church, during the desolations of the captivity. He complains that his health vanished like the smoke which is scattered by the wind, his strength decayed as wood is consumed by the fire, and his spirits dried up as the grass is withered by the scorching sun. He had lost his appetite, was reduced to a skeleton, courted solitude, was deprived of sleep, and spent his time in mourning and complaints. The unjust reproaches and formidable combinations of his enraged enemies united with the just indignation of God to fill him with disquietude. It seemed as if the Lord had only raised him to prosperity, in order to cast him down: and he was constrained to feed upon sorrow, as his bread, and as it were to mingle his drink with tears. In short, he was like a man about to expire of some wasting sickness. All this well applies to the state of the church during the Babylonish captivity; and corresponds to the language of Jeremiah in the book of Lamentations.

V. 12. It is very beautiful and instructive to view the Psalmist consoling himself under all his afflictions and the prospect of speedy dissolution, while his people and the church were in deep distress, by the thoughts that God would still be glorious, would still favour the church, and restore her from her desolations. His sufferings and death therefore might be regarded as comparatively of little consequence. *Thy remembrance* may mean either the church's *remembrance* of JEHOVAH's wonderful works for Israel, and engagements to her; or rather his *remembrance* of his holy covenant, and of her desolate and afflicted state, from which he had promised to deliver her.

22 [x] When the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the LORD.

23 [y] He * weakened my strength in the way; [z] he shortened my days.

24 [a] I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: [b] thy years *are* throughout all generations.

25 [c] Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens *are* the work of thy hands.

x lxxii. 8—11 Gen xlix. 10. Is xlix. 22, 23 lx. 3, &c. Hos. i. 9—11 Zech viii. 20—23. Matt. xxiv. 14. Rom xv 19
y lxxxix. 38—47 2 Thes ii. 3—12 1 Tim. iv 1—3 2 Tim iii. 1, &c. Rev xi 2, &c. xii. 13, &c
* Heb *afflicted*
z Job xxi 21.
a xxxix 13 Is xxxviii 10. &c.
b 12 ix 7. xc 1. 2. Hab. i. 12. Rev. i. 4. 8.
c Gen i. 1. ii. 1 Ex xx. 11. Job xxxviii. 4—7 Prov. viii. 23, &c. Jer. xxxii 17 Heb i. 10—12 iii. 3, 4.

26 [d] They shall perish, but thou shalt † endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed:

27 But [e] thou *art* the same, and thy [f] years shall have no end.

28 [g] The children of thy servants shall continue, and [h] their seed shall be established before thee.

d Is. xxxiv. 4 li. 6. lxv. 17 lxvi. 22. Luke xxi 33. Rom. viii 20. 2 Pet iii 7—12. Rev. xx 11 xxi. 1.
† Heb *stand.* 12. Ex iii 14
e Mal. iii 6. John viii. 58 Heb xiii. 8. Jam. i. 17 Rev. i. 8 17, 18.
f xc 4 Job xxxvi 26.
g xxii 30. 31 xlv. 16, 17. lxix. 35, 36. Is liii. 10. lix 20, 21. lxv 22 lxvi. 22.
h xc. 16, 17.

V. 13—22. God had by his prophet Jeremiah fixed a time for liberating the captive Jews, and for rebuilding the city and the temple: that time was come; and this excited the prayers of believers, who favoured the very dust and stones of Zion, for the sake of the temple which had stood upon it. In their destitute and forlorn condition, they not only "groaned, being burdened" with the oppression and persecution of those who detained them prisoners; but they were instant in prayers, which doubtless they accompanied with humiliation for their sins. These prayers the Lord would not despise; but in answer to them, as one who looked down from his holy heaven, he would surely appear for their release; and when he had conducted them to Jerusalem, they would there declare his name and his praise. Under his protection and by his assistance, the temple would be rebuilt upon mount Zion: then he would appear so glorious in his power, truth, and love, that the heathen would fear his wrath, and all kings round about would stand in awe for his glory; many people would gather together out of the adjacent kingdoms to serve the Lord; and these events would be recorded for the edification of future ages, and of other nations, which should at length be brought into the church by the new-creating power of God. But this prophecy will have a more full accomplishment when the Jews shall be converted to Christianity, and gathered from their dispersions; when the tedious captivity of the church under the New Testament Babylon shall finally be terminated; and when the fulness of the Gentiles, with all their kings and kingdoms, shall be brought into the church. The old version of the fifteenth and two following verses, is quite literal, and very expressive. "Then the heathen shall fear the LORD, "and all the kings of the earth thy glory: when the LORD "shall build up Zion, and shall appear in his glory; *And* "shall turn unto the prayer of the desolate, and not de-"spise their prayer."

V. 23, 24. Perhaps the Psalmist, personally, from his time of life and state of health, had expected to see the re-establishment of Jerusalem, the prosperity of his people, and multitudes thronging to the temple to sacrifice, and worship God. But he was unexpectedly seized with a debilitating disease, and concluded that he was about to be taken away in the midst of his days; as Job, Hezekiah, and others had done; and he prayed, as Moses also did, that he might live to witness the prosperity of his people, which he by faith clearly foresaw. Some, however, apply this to the church of Israel. She was, as it were, on her way to meet her expected King; but at the captivity her strength was weakened, and her days seemed to be shortened: but she prayed to be spared, that she might receive the promised blessing.

V. 25—28. (*Notes, Heb.* i. 10—12.) The eternity and immutability of God the Creator of the world and the Saviour of the church, encouraged the pious Jews under their distresses. The visible creation indeed waxes old, and is wearing out, and will at length be changed as an old garment for a new one. But the Creator is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. (*Heb.* xiii. 8.) And because he lives and reigns, his church must be preserved; a succession of believers, as the children of Abraham, shall serve him whilst the world endures; and all the redeemed shall live with him in heaven for ever. We cannot but know from the Scriptures above referred to, what views the inspired writers of the Old Testament had of the expected Messiah, whom they spake of as the eternal and unchangeable Creator, as well as the Redeemer and King of Israel. The apostle, writing to the Hebrews, no doubt quoted this psalm in the sense in which it was generally understood. 'It cannot be too hard for thee to raise Zion 'out of her ruins, who hast many ages ago created this 'goodly fabric by thy eternal Word.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The more overwhelming our afflictions are, the greater cause have we to pour out our complaint before God: and he hath invited and commanded us to "call upon him in "the time of trouble," and hath assured us, that he will not hide his face from us or leave us comfortless. In this world we must expect tribulation, and we know not how deep and durable our sorrows may be: but should they be so various and grievous, as to warrant the use of the strong language before us, they would not be equal to our deservings, and it would still be "of the LORD's mercies that "we were not consumed:" still there would be hope for us in the God of our salvation; and it would behoove us to humble ourselves before him, and patiently to wait and pray for his forgiving love. Then should we lose our relish for every earthly comfort, and be kept by pain and anguish from taking any rest; should we be treated with general contempt and hatred, and struggle with sore temptations and anguish of spirit, and have death continually before our eyes: we should still have inward supports, and hope would brighten our otherwise gloomy prospect. The believer, who has attained to a good measure of ripeness in judgment and experience, will feel himself deeply in-

PSALM CIII.

David earnestly praises God for his plenteous mercy and goodness to him and to Israel; his fatherly compassion to the frailty of those that fear and obey him; and his constant regard to their posterity, 1—18. *He calls on men and angels and all creatures to join him in blessing the Lord the universal Sovereign,* 19—22.

A Psalm of David.

a BLESS the LORD, O my soul: and b all that is within me, *bless* his c holy name.

2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and d forget not all his benefits;

3 Who e forgiveth all thine iniquities; who f healeth all thy diseases;

4 Who g redeemeth thy life from destruction; who h crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies;

5 Who i satisfieth thy mouth with good *things: so that* k thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

6 The LORD l executeth righteous-

a 22. civ. 1. cxlvi. 1, 2. Luke i. 46, 47.
b xlvii. 7. lvii. 7—11. lxiii. 5. lxxxvi 12, 13. cxi. 1. cxxxviii. 1. Mark xii. 30—33. John iv 24.
c xcix 3 Is. vi.3. Rev. iv. 8.
d cv. 5. cvi 7, 21. cxvi. 12 Deut. viii. 2—4—10—14. xxxii 6 18. 2 Chr xxxi. 25. Is. lxiii. 1 7. Jer. ii. 31, 32. Luke xvii 15—18. Eph. ii. 11—13.
e xxxii. 1—5. li. 1—3. cxxx. 8. 2 Sam. xii. 13. Is. xliii. 25. Matt ix. 2—6. Luke vii. 47, 48.
f xxx. 2. xxxviii. 1—7. xli. 3, 4. 8. cvii. 17—22. cxlvii. 3. Ex. xv. 26. Num. xii 13 xxi 7—9. Is. xxxiii. 24.
liii. 5. Jer. xvii 14. Jam. v. 15——g xxxiv. 22. lvi. 13 lxxi. 23. Gen xlviii. 16. Job xxxiii. 19—30. Rev. vii. 10.——h v. 12. *Marg.* viii. 5 xxi. 5. lxv 11. Jam. i. 12. 1 Pet. v. 4. i. xxiii. 5. lxv. 4. civ 28. cvii 9. cxlv. 15, 16 1 Tim vi. 17.——k Is. xl. 31. Hos ii. 15. 2 Cor. iv. 16.——l ix. 9. x. 14—18. xii. 5. lxxii. 4. 12. cix. 31. cxlvi. 7. Deut. xxiv. 14, 15. Job xxvii. 13, &c Prov. xiv. 31. xxii 22, 23 xxiii. 10, 11. Is. xiv. 4, &c 17—19. lviii. 6, 7. Jer. vii. 6, &c. Ez. xxii. 7. 12—14. Mic. ii. 1—3. iii. 3—4. Jam. ii. 6. v. 1—6.

terested in the concerns of the church. Her desolations, divisions, and corruptions, pain his heart in his most prosperous days, and double the poignancy of his personal afflictions. The triumphs of infidels and profligates, and the sorrows of true believers, cause him to partake of the bread and water of affliction, and to humble himself before God in lamentations and prayers. On the other hand, he rejoices in the promises of God, relating to the security and prosperity of his church: and the revival of the power and purity of religion revives his heart, even under grievous pains, and at the approach of death. This might afford us never-failing comfort, if we duly attended to the word of God. The success of the Gospel has indeed hitherto been small, compared with the millions of the human species. The low estate of vital godliness within the visible church hath often made her appear like one dying of a consumption: but "the LORD will certainly arise, and have mercy "on Zion." Though, like Jerusalem of old, the Christian church seem laid in ruins, by the assaults of open enemies, and the treachery of pretended friends, and through the prevalence of idolatry, superstition, infidelity, and impiety: yet the servants of God take pleasure even in her ruins, and their prayers incessantly ascend to heaven in her behalf. They are indeed often poor and destitute in the world, and despised by proud ungodly men; and sometimes they are laid to groan in prisons, as men appointed to death: but the Lord regards, and will honour them; he will look down from heaven to hear and deliver them; he will build up Zion, that his glory may appear: and indeed the set time to favour her is near at hand, and many revolutions within the former kingdom of Antichrist seem evident presages of its approaching ruin. Shortly the Lord will deliver and purify his church, and Jews and Gentiles shall unite in worshipping God our Saviour, and in declaring his name and glory in our Zion: and all the kingdoms of the earth shall become his worshippers and servants. And were not these things written for the use of the generations to come, that nations then unborn might praise the Lord, when they should beheld the performance of these ancient prophecies? It is true the Christian church was so soon debilitated and corrupted, her days of prosperity were so shortened, and her enfeebled estate hath been so prolonged, that many despair of happier days. Yet such are evidently predicted: and He who laid the foundation of the earth, is the unchangeable and eternal Support of his church: and as he hath foretold the dissolution of the frame of nature, he hath also assured us that his cause shall triumph on earth before that grand consummation. Let us then rejoice in God our Saviour, and give ourselves unto prayer; assured that the children of his servants shall continue to the end of time, and their seed shall be established for ever in heaven.

NOTES.

PSALM CIII. *Title.* David is supposed to have written this most beautiful psalm, when he was newly recovered from a dangerous sickness to vigorous health.

V. 1. 'He wakeneth his dulness to praise God, showing that both understanding and affections, mind and heart, are too little to set forth his praise.'

V. 2. David's fear of losing the sense and remembrance of the benefits which God had bestowed on him, shows both what the fallen nature of man is most prone to, and what divine grace most teaches the regenerate to watch and pray against; namely, ingratitude to God.

V. 3, 4. The sickness with which the Psalmist was visited had been the correction of his sin: but having obtained forgiveness, the malady was also removed. Thus his life was redeemed from the grave, and his soul from the pit of destruction; and all his comforts were restored and increased. Sinful passions are the diseases of the soul: but if sin be pardoned, these also will be healed.

V. 5. *Eagle's.* It is generally agreed, that the eagle is very long-lived, and seems at an advanced age to possess the vigour of youth. Perhaps the Psalmist had nothing more in view than this: He had been reduced to great weakness, with loss of appetite, and other infirmities, which he supposed to indicate his approaching death, or the labour and sorrow of old age. But he unexpectedly recovered health, appetite, and strength; and seemed, like the eagle, to be restored to the vigour of youth, at an advanced time of life. Many traditions about the eagle seem not sufficiently proved: nor is it certain, that in moulting her feathers, she materially differs from other birds. 'I can never sufficiently praise thee, who dost 'restore my strength, and make my youth and freshness 'return like the eagle's. O that I may with fresh delight 'and joy be still praising thee, and be lifted up to heaven, '(as they are when they have renewed their plumes,) in 'more vigorous love, and affectionate desires and endeavours, to employ all my renewed strength in thy faithful service.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

ness and judgment for all that are oppressed.

7 He [m] made known his ways unto Moses, [n] his acts unto the children of Israel.

8 The LORD *is* [o] merciful and gracious, [p] slow to anger, and * plenteous in mercy.

9 He will [q] not always chide: neither will he keep *his anger* for ever.

10 He hath not [r] dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

11 [s] For † as the heaven is high above the earth, *so* great is [t] his mercy toward them that fear him.

12 As far [u] as the east is from the west, [x] *so* far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

13 Like [y] a father pitieth *his* children, *so* the LORD pitieth [z] them that fear him.

14 For [a] he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that [b] we *are* dust.

15 *As for* man, [c] his days *are* as grass: as [d] a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.

16 For [e] the wind passeth over it, and ‡ it is gone; [f] and the place thereof shall know it no more.

17 But [g] the mercy of the LORD *is* from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and [h] his righteousness [i] unto children's children;

18 To [k] such as keep his covenant, and to those that [l] remember his commandments to do them;

m lxxvii. 20. cv. 26, &c. Ex. xix. 6. 20. xx. 21. xxiv. 2—4. Num. xii. 7. Deut. xxxiv. 10. Neh. ix. 14. Is. lxiii. 11, 12. John v. 45—47. Acts vii. 35, &c.
n lxxviii. 5. cxlvii. 19.
o lxxxvi. 5. 15. cxxx. 7. cxlv. 8.
p Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. Num. xiv. 18. Deut. v. 10. Neh. ix. 17. Is. lv. 7. Jer. xxxii. 18. Rom. v. 20, 21. Eph. i. 7, 8.
* Heb. *great of mercy.*
q xxx. 5. Is. lvii. 16. Jer. iii. 5. Mic. vii. 18, 19.
r cxxx. 3. Ezra ix. 13. Neh. ix. 31. Job xi. 6. Lam. iii. 22. Dan. ix. 18, 19. Hab. iii. 2.
s xxxvi. 5. lvii. 10. lxxxix. 2. Is. lv. 9. Eph. ii. 4—7. iii. 18, 19.
† Heb. *according to the height of heaven.* Job xxii. 12. Prov. xxv. 3.——t 17. Luke i. 50.
u l. 1. cxiii. 3. Is. xiv. 6.——x Is. xliii. 25. Jer. xxxi. 34. l. 20. Mic. vii. 18. Heb. x. 2—4.
1 John i. 7.

y Num. xii. 12. Deut. viii. 5. Prov. iii. 12. Is. lxiii. 15, 16. Jer. xxxi. 9. 20. Matt. vi. 9. 32. Luke xi. 11, 12. xv. 21, 22. John xx. 17. Heb. xii. 5—11.
z 11. 17. cxlvii. 11. Mal. iii. 17, 18. iv. 2. Acts xiii. 26.
a lxxviii. 38, 39. lxxix. 47.
b Gen. iii. 19. Job vii. 5—7. 21. x. 9. xiii. 25. xiv. 2, 3. Ec. xii. 7.
c xc. 5, 6. Is. xl. 6, 7. li. 12. Jam. i. 10, 11. 1 Pet. i. 24.
d Is. xxviii. 1. 4. Nah. i. 4.
e Job xxvii. 20, 21. Is. xl. 7.
‡ Heb. *it is not.* Gen. v. 24. xlii. 36. Job xiv. 10.
f Job vii. 6—10. viii. 18, 19. xx. 9.
g lxxxix. 1, 2. c. 5. cxviii. 1. cxxxvi. 1, &c. Jer. xxxi. 3. Rom. viii. 28—30. Eph. i. 4—8. ii. 4—7. 2 Thes. ii. 13, 14. 2 Tim. i. 9.——h xxii. 31. xc. 16. Is. xlvi. 13. li. 6. Dan. ix. 24. Mic. vi. 5. Rom. i. 18. iii. 21—26. 2 Pet. i. 1.——i Deut. x. 15. Is. xli. 8. Jer. xxxiii. 24—26. Acts xiii. 32—34. Rom. xv. 8.——k xxv. 10. cxxxii. 12. Gen. xvii. 9, 10. Ex. xix. 5. xxiv. 3. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 31. Heb. viii. 6—9.——l cxix. 9. 11. Deut. iv. 23. vi. 6—9. Prov. iii. 1. Matt. xxviii. 20. Luke i. 6. Acts xxiii. 16. 1 Thes. iv. 1, 2.

V. 6—8. Lively gratitude for recent personal benefits led the Psalmist to remember, with adoring praise, the glorious perfections of his gracious Benefactor, as manifested in his dealings with his creatures. The omnipotent Sovereign of the world uses his power in executing righteousness, relieving the oppressed, and crushing the oppressor. This he especially did, when he delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage; and by Moses made himself known to the people, and brought them acquainted with his works, his truth and laws: and especially he showed his glory to Moses, and proclaimed his name, as "merci-" ful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy." (*Note, Ex.* xxxiv. 5—7.)

V. 9. 'He showeth first his severe judgment; but so 'soon as the sinner is humbled, he receiveth him to 'mercy.' Such expressions must always be understood of true believers, or of those who by affliction are brought to repentance and works meet for repentance: for God will keep his anger *for ever*, in the full meaning of the words, against all that continue to the end of life impenitent and unbelieving.

V. 10. 'Blessed be his name, there is mercy even in 'our punishments: our sufferings are never so great as 'our sins.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 11—13. The immeasurable height of the arch of heaven is an emblem continually before us of the infinite mercy of God to his people. The space betwixt the rising and setting sun reminds us of the immense distance to which their guilt is removed from them; and the compassion of a tender father feebly represents the kindness and tenderness of God to them. A wise and good father will not be severe to mark every failure in his child; he will encourage his feeble attempts to obey him; he will feel every stroke which he inflicts, when chastising him for his good; and he will always gladly remove his sufferings when he is able. The character to which these blessing exclusively belong, should be carefully noted. (*Note, Gen.* xxii. 10—12.)

V. 14. The word rendered *our frame*, generally means, the *device* or *imagination* which we frame in our hearts, (*Gen.* vi. 5. viii. 21:) and the clause seems to mean, that God knoweth our fallen nature, both in respect of its depravity and frailty; and should he deal with us in strict justice, we must all be crushed and destroyed. He therefore exercises fatherly compassion to those that fear him; notwithstanding the evil which he witnesses in their hearts and lives: and he is long-suffering to the wicked, giving them space for repentance, and often warning them, before he inflicts deserved punishment.

Dust, (*Note, Gen.* xviii. 27, 28.) The sentence, "Dust thou art and to dust shalt thou return," was pronounced against man as fallen. "By one man sin en-" tered into the world, and death by sin; and so death " passed upon all men, because all have sinned."

V. 15—18. (*Note, 1 Pet.* i. 23—25.) This affecting illustration of human frailty, and the transient nature of all earthly glory and prosperity, frequently recurs in Scripture: but it is here contrasted, most beautifully, with the everlasting mercy and truth of God. 'Let not man pre-' sume, who withereth like the green herb: but then let 'not man despair, whose nature, with all its infirmities, 'the Son of God hath taken upon him. The flower 'which faded in Adam, blooms anew in Christ, never to 'fade again.' (*Horne.*) The language used by the Psalmist is very emphatical. "The mercy of JEHOVAH, is " *from eternity* and *to eternity*." (*Notes, Eph.* i. 4—7. iii. 11. 2 Tim. i. 9:) And this mercy, which is from everlasting in its source, and to everlasting in its efficacy, is ensured to all them that fear GOD, in every generation; who must therefore be the same with true Christians: " And this righteousness" "to children's children."— 'His just and faithful keeping of his promise;' that is,

19 The LORD hath [m] prepared his throne in the heavens; and [n] his kingdom ruleth over all.

20 [o] Bless the LORD, ye his angels, * that excel in strength, that [p] do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.

21 Bless ye the LORD, [q] all *ye* his hosts; *ye* [r] ministers of his, that do his pleasure.

22 Bless the LORD, [s] all his works, in all places of his dominion: [t] bless the LORD, O my soul.

m ii 4. ix. 7. xi. 4. cxv. 3. Is. lxvi. 1. Heb. viii 1.
n lxvii. 2. Dan. iv. 34, 35 Eph. i 21, 22. Phil. ii. 9, 10. 1 Pet. iii. 22.
o cxlviii. 2. Luke ii. 13, 14. Rev. xix. 5, 6.
* Heb. *mighty in strength.*
2 Kings xix. 35. Is vi. 2. Matt. xxvi. 53.———p Matt vi. 10. Luke i. 19.
q xxxiii. 6. Gen. xxxii. 2. 1 Kings xxii. 19. 2 Chr. xviii. 18. Luke ii. 13.
r lxviii. 17. civ. 4. Neh. ix. 6. Dan vii. 10. Matt. xiii. 41. xxiv. 30, 31. 2 Thes i 7, 8. Heb. i 6, 7. 14.
Rev. xxii. 8, 9.———s cxlv. 10. cxlviii 3—12 cl. 6 Is. xlii. 10—12. xliii. 20. xliv. 23. xlix. 13. Rev. v. 12—14. ———t l. civ. 1. 35. cxlvi. 1.

the promise made to Abraham, and in him to all believers, of special benefits to their posterity. But then the persons spoken of, to prevent mistakes, are further characterized; "To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them." They come to him, according to the covenant of mercy ratified "with "Abraham in Christ, which the law given four hundred "and thirty years afterwards could not disannul;" they adhere to it as their only ground of hope: and daily endeavour to "walk in all his commandments and ordinances blameless." They cannot indeed *perform* his commandments, (20:) but they remember them, with a real desire and purpose of unreserved obedience. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 19. The mediatorial kingdom of God, as administered by Emmanuel; ("who is Head over all," for the benefit of his church,) seems especially intended.

V. 20—22. 'In that we, who naturally are slow to 'praise God, exhort the angels who willingly do it, we 'stir up ourselves to consider our duty, and awake out of 'our sluggishness.' The language used, concerning the obedience of "the angels, who excel in strength," should be compared with that which describes the obedience of frail sinful man. (18.) The business, privilege, and felicity of angels consist in perfectly doing their Maker's will. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'Let all with one consent bless his holy 'name: and thou, my soul, be sure thou never forget to 'make one. O fail not to bear thy part in this joyful choir, 'that daily sing his praise.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Our God is a Spirit, and must be worshipped in spirit and truth. We must therefore "call upon our souls, and "all that is within us, to bless his holy name:" we must also entreat him to assist us, that we may lift up our souls unto him; otherwise the most excellent words and the most melodious singing will be entirely unacceptable. But, alas! how prone are we all to forget his benefits! Without constant recollection we shall continually omit to render thanks to God, for the unceasing favours of his providence and grace: and indeed we never keep pace with our great Benefactor in these returns, or in making a proper use of his goodness. His readiness to forgive makes way for all his other benefits to the sinful race of men: and without an interest in his pardoning mercy, no natural endowments or providential gifts will prove real blessings. But the true believer may praise the Lord, for having forgiven, and for daily forgiving, all his iniquities, having set forth his own Son to be the sacrifice for them. He is also daily healing the diseases of his soul, which are far more malignant than those of the body: and as he preserveth our temporal lives; so he redeemeth the souls of his people from merited destruction, "and crowneth them with "loving kindness and tender mercies." The plentiful provision made for our outward wants, and even for our enjoyment, demands a tribute of grateful praise: but the feast with which our God satisfieth the souls of his people, is a still more important obligation. The renewal of health after wasting sickness is very pleasant, and should be acknowledged with hearty thanksgiving: yet the renewal of our souls to holiness, and the renewal of our spiritual strength from day to day, are blessings of a nobler and more enduring nature. But we cannot recount half our mercies, nor by any means form a due estimate of them, till they be completed in eternal glory. We should therefore, to enliven our gratitude, trace these streams back to the fountain, and consider the Lord's constant goodness to his people, as well as his peculiar kindness to us. He is the righteous Judge of the world, and the Patron of all that are oppressed: he rescued Israel from Egyptian bondage, and executed judgment on their haughty oppressors: but he redeems his people from a far more deplorable slavery. "He made known his ways unto Moses, and "his acts to the children of Israel:" but he has displayed more clearly his glorious perfections by his son Jesus Christ; and hath afforded us advantages far superior to any they enjoyed. We are shown in the most effectual manner, that "the LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to "anger, and plenteous in mercy:" and happy are we, if we have come at his invitation to share the blessings of his Gospel. In this case, we may indeed experience rebukes and corrections; but He will not always chide, neither will "He keep his anger for ever:" and every humbled penitent knows, that "He hath not dealt with him after "his sins, nor rewarded him according to his iniquities." If indeed this be our character, we need not yield to discouragement at the consideration of our most atrocious and multiplied transgressions; seeing the mercies of God are still larger than they all: and when we trust in those mercies, he will put away our sins far from us, and bury them in the depths of the sea. Indeed we are yet weak and frail; our days are few, our temporal comforts are withering as the grass, and we shall soon be gone: but our heavenly Father knoweth our frame, and remembereth that we are dust; and he pitieth us under all our sorrows and trials. He will indeed thwart our wayward inclinations, and will not indulge us to our hurt; but he will support and comfort us under every cross, and he cannot want power to relieve his afflicted children. His mercy is from everlasting in its origin, and to everlasting in its blessed effects, and should be contrasted with all the fading glories of this world: and they who belong to the Lord, have the fairest prospect of felicity for their children; and may entertain a cheerful hope, that he will make known

PSALM CIV.

The Psalmist celebrates the glory of the divine perfections, as displayed in creation and providence, 1—32. He determines perpetually to meditate with delight on God and his works, and predicts the destruction of the wicked, 33—35.

a 35. ciii. 1, 2 22.
b vii. 1—3. Dan. ix 4. Hab. i 12.
c cxlv. 3. Jer. xxiii. 24. xxxii. 17—19.
d xciii. 1. Is liv. 17. Dan. vii. 9.
e xxix. xcvi. 6.

BLESS the LORD, O my soul. [b] O LORD my God, [c] thou art very great; [d] thou art clothed with [e] honour and majesty.

2 Who coverest *thyself* [f] with light as *with* a garment: who [g] stretchest out the heavens like a curtain:

3 Who [h] layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: who [i] maketh the clouds his chariot; [k] who walketh upon the wings of the wind;

4 Who [l] maketh his angels spirits; [m] his ministers a flaming fire:

5 * *Who* laid [n] the foundations of the earth, [o] *that* it should not be removed for ever.

f Matt. xvii. 2. 1 Tim. vi. 16. 1 John i. 5.
g Is. xl. 22. xlv 12 Zech xii. 1 Heb i. 11, 12.
h xviii. 11. Am. ix. 6.
i Is xix. 1. Mat. xxvi. 64. Rev i. 7.
k xviii. 10. cxxxix. 9. 2 Sam. xxii. 11 Nah i. 3
l Acts xxiii 8. Heb. i 7 14.
m 2 Kings ii. 11 vi. 17. Ez. i 13. 14
* Heb. *He hath founded the earth on her basis.*
n xxiv. 2 xxxiii. 9. cxxxvi 6 Job xxvi. 7. xxxviii. 4—7.——o xciii. xcvi. 10. Ec i 4. 2 Pet. iii. 10, 11. Rev. vi 14 xx. 11.

his righteousness and salvation even to their remote posterity. But they are distinguished by their characters, as well as by their privileges: for they join themselves to the Lord according to his gracious covenant, and whilst they trust in his mercy they "remember his commandments "to do them." Our glorious God and King hath prepared a mercy-seat for his throne in heaven, on which he ruleth over all. Let us then rejoice, that innumerable hosts of angels, who excel in strength, are continually celebrating his praises. Their employment and happiness consist in doing his commandments, in hearkening to the voice of his word, in being his servants, and doing his pleasure. Such would have been our constant delight, if we had not been *fallen* creatures: such it is in a measure become, if we are born of God; and such it will be for ever in heaven to all who arrive there; nor can we be perfectly happy, till we can take unwearied pleasure in perfect obedience to the will of our God. Let us then copy the example of these bright spirits; and cordially join our feeble hallelujahs to their exalted praises of God our Saviour: let us glorify him with all his works in all places of his dominion; and rejoice in hope, that the earth, as well as the heavens, will at length be filled with those who praise the Lord, and "do his commandments, hearkening unto the "voice of his word."

NOTES.

PSALM CIV. V. 1. The Septuagint ascribes this psalm to David; and as it opens with the same words, which both begin and close the preceding psalm, some expositors conjecture that it was written at the same time. 'The Psalmist celebrates the mighty power and goodness 'of God, in the fabric of the world; as the hundred and 'third doth benefits to himself and the children of 'men.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) 'The prophet showeth that we 'need not to enter into the heavens to seek God, for all 'the order of nature, with the propriety and placing of 'the elements, are most lively mirrors to see his majesty 'in.' He manifests himself in each of his works; and though he himself is invisible; yet his garments of glory and beauty are every where most clearly seen. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 2. The formation of light was the beginning of the work of this visible creation, by which God discovered his glory in the beauty and excellency of his other works. Knowledge, wisdom, purity, and felicity, are denoted by the emblem of light; and with these the Lord is most gloriously arrayed. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'Thou art kept from 'all mortal eyes by that inaccessible light, wherein thou 'dwellest above.' The writers of the New Testament expressly ascribe the work of creation to the divine Saviour: and when, at his transfiguration, "his face did shine "as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light;" he gave his disciples a glimpse of "that glory which he "had with the Father, before the world was." (*Marg. Ref.*) 'The spacious heavens are the royal pavilion, 'which thy sovereign power has extended, like a canopy, 'for thy Majesty, in this great palace of the world.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 3. JEHOVAH is here represented as building the upper stories of his magnificent palace in those waters above the firmament, whence the clouds are formed; upon which he comes riding as in a chariot, when by his thunder and lightning he appals or destroys the inhabitants of the earth: and he "walketh upon the wings of the "wind," when storms and tempests execute his commands.

V. 4. The old translation of this verse is strictly literal, "Which maketh the spirits his messengers, and a flaming "fire his ministers." The word rendered *spirits* may, however, be translated *winds*. 'As the prophet there showeth that all visible powers are ready to serve God: so the apostle beholds in this glass, how the very angels also are obedient to his commandments.' 'He sends his angels, (and what king is there that hath such noble ministers?) sometimes in vehement winds, and sometimes in lightning and thunder, whereby they execute his royal pleasure.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) 'Who maketh those glorious spirits of heaven his messengers; and causeth them to appear in the forms of fire; and maketh both the winds and the fire to execute those offices of revenge or preservation, which he committeth to them.' (*Bp. Hall.*) The apostle's infallible exposition, however, seems to include the whole ministration of angels, and to confine the verse to that subject; whence we learn that the holy angels are swift as the wind in obeying the commands of the Lord; and as a flame of fire with love and zeal.

V. 5. The great Creator so formed the earth, and ordered every thing respecting it; as to provide effectually, that it should preserve its relative situation in the universe, and its regular course without deviation, until the appointed time for its final dissolution.

6 Thou [p] coveredst it with the deep as *with* a garment: the waters stood above the mountains.

7 [q] At thy rebuke [r] they fled: at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away.

8 * They [s] go up by the mountains: they go down by the valleys; unto the place which thou hast founded for them.

9 Thou [t] hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth.

10 † He [u] sendeth the springs into the valleys, *which* ‡ run among the hills.

11 They [x] give drink to every beast of the field: [y] the wild asses § quench their thirst.

12 By them shall [z] the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, *which* ‖ sing among the branches.

13 He [a] watereth the hills from [b] his chambers: [c] the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works.

14 He [d] causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and [e] herb for the service of man: that [f] he may bring forth food out of the earth;

15 And [g] wine *that* maketh glad the heart of man, *and* * oil to [h] make *his* face to shine, and [i] bread *which* strengtheneth man's heart.

16 The [k] trees of the LORD are full *of sap;* the cedars of Lebanon which he hath planted;

p Gen. i. 2—10. vii. 19, 20. 2 Pet. iii. 5, 6.
q Gen. viii. 1 Prov. viii. 28, 29.
r cxiv. 3—7. Mark iv. 39.
s Or, *The mountains ascend, the valleys descend.*
t Gen. viii. 5.
u xxxiii. 7. Gen ix. 11—15 Job xxvi. 10. xxxviii. 10, 11 Is liv. 9. Jer. v. 22.
† Heb. *Who sendeth.* cvii. 35.
x Deut. viii. 7. Is. xxxv. 7. xli. 18.
‡ Heb. *walk.*
x cxiv. 16.
y Job xxxix. 5—8
§ Heb. *break.*
z 16, 17. l. 11. xxxiv 3. cxlviii. 10. Mat. vi 26.
‖ Heb. *give a voice.* cxlvii. 9.
a cxlvii. 8. Deu. xi. 11. Job xxxviii. 25—28. 37. Jer. x. 13. xiv. 22. Mat. v. 45 Acts xiv. 17.
b 3 Am ix. 6.
c lxv. 9—13.
d cxiv. 15, 16. cxlvii. 8, 9. Gen i. 11, 12. 29, 30. ii. 5 1 Kings xviii. 5. Jer. xiv. 5, 6. Joel ii. 22.
e Gen. ii. 9. 16. iii. 18. ix. 3.
f cxxxvi. 25. Gen. iv. 12 Job xxviii. 5. 1 Cor. iii 7.
g xxiii. 5. Judg. ix. 13. Prov. xxxi. 6, 7. Ec. x. 19. Jer. xxxi. 12. Zech. ix. 15—17. Mark xiv. 23. Eph. v. 18.
* Heb *to make his face shine with oil,* or *more than oil.* xcii. 10. Deu ‖xxviii. 40. Judg. ix. 9. Ec ix. 7, 8 Cant. i. 2—4. Heb. 9. i. 1 John ii. 20. 27.——h Ec. viii. 1.——i cv. 16. Lev. xxvi, 26 Deut. viii. 3. Is. iii. 1. Ez. iv. 16. v. 16. xiv. 13.——k xxix. 5. xcii. 12. Num. xxiv. 6. Ez. xvii. 23.

V. 6—9. In the beginning the waters covered the whole chaotic mass; so that no mountains appeared above them: but at the voice of the Creator, which was as thunder, they hasted away. "And the mountains ascend, "and the valleys descend to the place which thou hast "established for them.—Thou hast set them" (the waters,) "a bound which they shall not pass; they shall not "return to cover the earth."—This is the old version: it accords with the Septuagint, and is mose clear than the present translation. 'Immediately the dry land was seen, 'part of which, by thy wonderful contrivance, O LORD, 'rose up in lofty hills; the rest sunk down in lowly valleys; where thou hast cut channels for the waters to run 'into the main ocean, the place thou hast appointed for 'them: and there, though they restlessly toss and swell, 'yet they cannot get over the shores, wherein thou hast 'enclosed them, nor shall they ever recover their former 'liberty, to overflow the earth again.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)—'Upon thy command the waters sunk down into one place, 'so as the hills, (thereupon appearing,) seemed to ascend, 'and the valleys to go down to their settled hollowness: 'thither, by thy divine appointment, did the waters gather 'themselves, and there abide.' (*Bp. Hall.*)—Some suppose that the retiring of the waters after the deluge was meant; and the clauses "the waters stood above the "mountains," and, "that they turn not again to cover "the earth," seem to favour the interpretation. Yet the Psalmist is speaking of creation: and a single exception, (the *miracle* of the deluge, if alluded to,) does not abrogate the general rule which is often spoken of. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 10, 11. 'The waters of the sea are not only prevented from destroying the earth, but, by a wonderful 'machinery, are rendered the means of preserving every 'living thing which moveth thereon. Partly ascending 'from the great deep, through the *strata* of the earth, 'partly exhaled in vapour from the surface of the ocean 'into the air, and from thence falling in rain, especially 'on the tops and by the sides of mountains, they break 'forth in fresh springs, having left their salts behind them; 'they trickle through the valleys, between the hills, receiving fresh supplies as they go; and after watering by their 'innumerable windings immense tracts of country, they 'return to the place from which they came. Thus every 'animal hath an opportunity of quenching that thirst 'which must otherwise put a period to its existence. '(*Note, Gen.* i. 9.) "The wild asses," are especially mentioned; because they live in remote and sandy deserts; 'yet they are, by the God of nature, taught the way to the 'waters; insomuch that the parched traveller findeth them 'to be the best guides in the world; and needeth only to 'follow the herds of them descending to the streams.' (*Horne.*)

V. 12. By the springs of waters, in the valleys, the birds delight to build their nests; and concealed in the branches of the trees, to pour out their cheerful notes.—'The music of birds was the first song of thanksgiving 'which was offered from the earth, before man was 'formed. All their sounds are different, but all harmonious; and all together compose a choir which we cannot imitate.' (*Wesley.*)

V. 13. 'As for the hills, which constantly enrich the 'lower grounds, He waters them from the regions above; 'whence dews distil, and showers of rain come pouring 'down.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) Thus the whole earth is satisfied and enriched, by "the fruit" or effects of the Lord's most wonderful contrivance.

V. 14, 15. 'He describeth God's provident care over 'man, who doth not only provide necessary things for 'him, as herbs and other meat; but also things to rejoice 'and comfort him, as wine, and oil, or ointments.'—Under the word *herb*, all kinds of corn, pulse, and vegetable food are comprised; and likewise the produce of the vineyards and olive-yards.—(*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 16. The largest trees, and most flourishing, as the cedars of Lebanon, grow without man's care. They are, both on this account, and also by reason of their vast size, "the trees of the LORD," which "he hath planted;" yet by no means comparable to "the trees of righteousness, "the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified."

17 Where [l] the birds make their nests: [m] *as for* the stork, the fir-trees *are* her house.

18 The high hills *are* a refuge for [n] the wild goats, *and* the rocks for [o] the conies.

19 ¶ He appointeth [p] the moon for seasons: the sun knoweth his going down.

20 Thou [q] makest darkness, and it is night: wherein all the beasts * of the forest do creep *forth*.

21 [r] The young lions roar after their prey, and [s] seek their meat from God.

22 [t] The sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens.

23 [u] Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening.

24 O LORD, [x] how manifold are thy works! [y] in wisdom hast thou made them all: [z] the earth is full of thy riches.

25 *So is* [a] this great and wide sea, wherein *are* things creeping innumerable, both small and great [b] beasts.

26 [c] There go the ships: *there is* that [d] leviathan, *whom* thou hast † made [e] to play therein.

27 These [f] wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give *them* their meat in due season.

28 *That* thou givest them they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good.

29 Thou [g] hidest thy face, they are troubled; [h] thou takest away their breath, they die, and [i] return to their dust.

30 Thou [k] sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created: and thou [l] renewest the face of the earth.

12. Jer. xxii.23. Ez. xxxi. 6 Dan. iv. 21 Ob. 4. Matt. xiii 32.
m Lev.xi 19. Jer. viii. 7
n 1 Sam xxiv. 2. Job xxxix. 1.
o Deut. xiv. 7. Prov. xxx. 26
p viii 4 cxxxvi. 7—9. Gen. i 14—18 Deut. iv. 19. Job xxxi 26—28 xxxviii.12. Jer. xxxi. 35.
q lxxiv. 16. cxxxix. 10—12. Gen. i 4, 5. viii. 22 Is. xlv. 7. Am. iv. 13
* Heb. *thereof do trample in the forest.*
r xxxiv. 10. Job xxxviii 39. Is. xxxi. 4. Ez xix. 2, &c. Am. iii. 4.
s cxlvii. 9. Job xxxviii 41. Joel i 18. 20. ii. 22.
t Job xxiv. 13—17 Nah. iii. 17. John iii. 20.
u Gen. iii 19. Judg xix. 16. Ec. v. 12. Eph. iv. 28. 2 Thes. iii. 8—12.
x viii 3. xl. 5. cvii. 31. Neh. ix. 6. Job v. 9. xxvi. 14.

y cxxxvi. 5. Gen. i 31 Prov iii. 19. 20 viii. 22. &c. Jer. x. 12. Rom. xi. 33. Eph. i 8. iii. 10.
z xxiv. 1. 1. 10—12. lxv 11. Gen. i 11, 12. 24, 25. 1 Tim. vi 17.
a xcv. 4, 5. Gen. i 20—22. 28. Deu xxxiii. 14—16. 19.
b Gen. iii. 1. Acts xxviii. 5.
c cvii 23. Gen. xlix. 13
d lxxiv. 14 Job iii. 8. *Marg.* xli. 1. & Is. xxvii. 1.
† Heb *formed.*
e Job xii. 5. 29.
f xxxvi. 6. cxxxvi. 25. cxlv. 15, 16. cxlvii 9. Job xxxviii 41. Luke xii. 24—28.
g xxx 7 Job xiii. 24. xxxiv. 29. Rom. viii. 20—22.
h cxlvi. 4. Job xxxiv. 14, 15. Ec. xii. 7. Acts xvii. 25.
i xc. 3 Gen. iii. 19.
k xxxii 6. *Marg.* Job xxvi 13. xxxiii. 4. Is. xxxii. 15. Ez xxxvii. 9. Eph. ii. 1. 4, 5. Tit. iii. 5.——l Is. lxv. 17. lxvi 22. Rev. xxi. 5.

V. 17, 18. The kind and condescending attention of the omnipotent Creator, to the meanest of his creatures, as thus introduced along with his special regard to man, is very beautiful and affecting to a serious mind. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 19. The Psalmist next celebrates the wisdom of God, in the motions and revolution of the heavenly bodies. The moon divides time by months, and its changes divide the months also: the seasons of the year were anciently computed by moons, and the Jewish festivals were fixed in the same manner. 'The sun, or solar light,—'seemeth to know the exact time of its coming on, and 'going off, and fulfilleth the course prescribed to it with-'out the least deviation.' (*Horne.*)

V. 20—23. The bountiful and wise Creator hath so ordered it, that the beasts of prey naturally shun the light, and seldom leave their dens till it is dark, and man be retired to his rest: so that there is no great danger from them, even in the regions where they most abound, except in the night-time. Then they range abroad, and, in their way, seek their meat from God, till the sun ariseth, and man returns to his work, and then they retire to their dens. Wicked men, who choose darkness, as best suited to the commission of their crimes with secresy and impunity, and who hate the light of God's word because their deeds are evil, resemble the savage beasts, in this and many other respects. As do they also who spend the night in revels and dissipation, and retire to rest when they ought to set about some useful employment: for thus they seem to renounce their kindred to the human species, and to be ambitious of a relation to the wild beasts of the forest. In nations, who sit in darkness for want of revelation, Satan seems to have permission to range and devour at pleasure: but when the Sun of Righteousness ariseth, this roaring lion has his power diminished, and men are stirred up to "labour for the meat, which endureth unto "everlasting life."

V. 24. 'Transported with the survey—the Psalmist breaks forth into an exclamation, (and what heart has 'not already anticipated him?) on the variety and magni-'ficence, the harmony and proportion of the works of 'God, in this visible—perishable world. What then 'are the miracles of grace and glory! What are those in-'visible and eternal things, which God hath prepared for 'them that love him!' (*Horne.*)

V. 25, 26. The word rendered *wide*, signifies literally, *spacious of both hands*, being *dual*. 'This great and spa-'cious sea also, which seems to embrace the earth in its 'arms, is no less full of thy wonderful works.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) 'There is not in all nature a more august and 'striking object than the ocean. Its inhabitants are as 'numerous as those upon the land; nor is the wisdom 'and power of the Creator less displayed, perhaps, in 'their formation and preservation; from the smallest fish 'that swims, to the enormous tyrant of the deep, the 'leviathan himself. By means of navigation, Providence 'has opened a communication between the most distant 'parts of the globe; the largest solid bodies are wafted, 'with incredible swiftness, upon one fluid by the impulse 'of another, and seas join the countries which they appear 'to divide.' (*Horne.*) 'There the ships sail as swiftly 'as the fishes swim; fetching us the riches both of sea 'and land; and there that great leviathan, finds room 'enough to tumble up and down, and sport himself in 'his absolute dominion over all that the sea contains.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) Many authors, and among the rest Bishop Patrick, in commenting on Job, suppose the leviathan to mean the crocodile: but the text before us, so fully decides the leviathan to be an inhabitant of the sea, that this respectable author paraphrases it in direct opposition to his exposition of the Scripture before referred to! The word rendered *things creeping*, is used concerning the fishes, in the history of the creation: and as none of them, properly speaking, have legs and feet, and many of them, in great measure lie and crawl at the bottom of the water; there is a propriety in considering them as a peculiar species of reptiles.

31 [m] The glory of the LORD shall
* endure for ever: [n] the LORD shall re-
joice in his works.
32 He [o] looketh on the earth, and it
trembleth: [p] he toucheth the hills, and
they smoke.
33 [q] I will sing unto the LORD as long
as I live: I will sing praise to my God,
while I have my being.
34 My [r] meditation of him shall be
sweet: [s] I will be glad in the LORD.
35 Let [t] the sinners be consumed out
of the earth, and let the wicked be no
more. [u] Bless thou the LORD, O my
soul. Praise ye the LORD.

m cii. 16. Rom. xi. 36. Gal. i. 5. Eph. iii. 21. 2 Tim. iv. 18. Heb. xiii. 21. 1 Pet. v. 11. 2 Pet. iii. 18. Rev. v. 12, 13.
* Heb. *be for ever.*
n Gen. i. 31. Ex. xxxi. 17. Is lxii. 5. lxv. 18, 19. Jer. xxxii. 41.
o Zeph. iii 17. Luke xv. 5, 6 22—24.——o lxxvii. 16. xcvii. 4, 5. cxiv. 7. Is lxiv. 2. Jer iv. 23—26. v. 22 Am viii. 8. Nah. i. 5, 6. Heb. iii. 5, 6. Rev. xx. 11——p l. 3. cxliv. 5. Is. lxiv. 1, 2. Rev. xix. 3.——q lxiii. 4 cxlv. 1, 2. cxlvi. 2.
r i. 2. lxiii. 5, 6. lxxvii. 12. cxix. 15, 16. 111. 127, 128. 167. cxxxix. 17, 18. Prov. xxiv. 14.
s xxxii 11. Hab. iii. 18. Luke i. 47. Phil. iv. 4.
t xxxvii. 33. lix. 13. lxviii. 1, 2. lxxiii. 27. ci. 8. Judg. v. 31. Prov. ii 22. Rev. xix. 1, 2.
u l. ciii. 1, 2. 22.

V. 27—30. The vast creation, forming one great family, maintained upon the riches and bounty of JEHOVAH, as the great householder, is a very striking idea: whilst at his will one generation of creatures perish, a new generation succeeds; and successive crops of vegetable productions renew and cover the face of the earth. The twenty-eighth verse may be literally rendered, "Thou wilt give them; they "will gather: Thou wilt open thine hand; they shall be "satisfied with good." The Holy Spirit seems to be spoken of in Scripture, as the immediate agent in giving and preserving life, both natural, spiritual, and eternal.

V. 31. The old version here is, "Glory be to the "LORD for ever; let the LORD rejoice in his works." Our present translation is more literal: but the variation shows, that no certain rule has been adopted, in rendering such passages; and that the context in general must determine in which sense we should understand them. (*Note, Gen.* i. 31.)

V. 32. 'At his presence the earth trembleth, and the 'mountains, (as our fathers saw at mount Sinai,) are full of 'fire and smoke.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) It is probable, however, that earthquakes and volcanos, as terrific displays of the Creator's power, (in whatever way men account for them,) were also intended: and perhaps the last general conflagration.

V. 33. *While I have my being.* Or, "Till I be no more," that is, on earth.

V. 35. *Let,* &c. Or, "The sinners shall be con-"sumed, &c." Thus the Psalmist concludes as he began: "Bless thou the LORD, O my soul;" only calling on all that read and sing the psalm, and on all creatures, to join with him in praising the eternal and glorious God of heaven and earth.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Every object, which we behold or reflect on, may remind us to bless and praise the Lord, who is very great, and arrayed with majesty, glory, and excellency, infinitely surpassing our comprehension. "His eternal power and "God-head" are clearly seen by the things which he hath made: his glory, like the sun, becomes visible by its own splendour; and they are without excuse, who do not love, and thank, and worship him. The heavens stretched forth as his curtain, the light as his magnificent garment; the clouds as his chambers, or his chariot; the winds and flames as his servants and messengers; and the holy angels, executing his commands with inconceivable zeal, alacrity, and promptitude, are so many demonstrations of his power and authority; and show that all his creatures serve him, apostate spirits, and apostate man alone excepted. The less we can comprehend of the *manner* in which the Creator retains the earth in its course, and the seasons in their order, the more we should admire and adore his power, wisdom, and goodness: and whilst we consider the numerous and invaluable advantages which we derive from the ocean, and from the wonderful manner in which the earth is watered from the great reservoir; we should remember to bless the Lord for his faithfulness to Noah and his posterity. We may likewise observe the wisdom, love, and power of God in the instinctive propensities of all animals; by which they are not only led to the means of their own preservation, and the continuance of each species, but are rendered subservient to our comfort and benefit. When we reflect on the provision, which the bounteous Creator hath made for the wants of all his creatures, we should also notice the *natural* worship, so to speak, which they render unto him; whilst the feathered songsters warble his praise, and even the lions, roaring in the woods, seek their meat from God. Yet man, forgetful and ungrateful man, is favoured with the largest measure of his kindness: to him he giveth all things richly to enjoy; not only bringing food out of the earth, but wine and oil for his exhilaration and pleasure. He hath put the animal tribes under his dominion; even those which render him no service, stand in awe of him, and are taught to retire to their dens, when the rising sun calls him to his work; and in general they only venture forth, when night hath drawn her sable curtain to favour his repose. Well then may we break forth in admiration, and say, "O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast "thou made them all; the earth is full of thy riches!" For the seas and the dry land, the air, and even the bowels of the earth, are abundantly replenished with useful treasures for the service of man. Yet let us remember that we are pensioners, and, in some sense, fellow-commoners with the inferior creatures; which all wait upon the Lord, who "giveth them their meat in due season; which gather "what he giveth," and are examples to us of contentment and moderation. Let us also recollect that death, which sweeps away the innumerable multitudes of living creatures that people the earth, and makes room for successive generations, first entered by man's sin; and likewise that we are not sent into the world, as leviathan into the great deep, to play therein; either by living merely for amusement or by preying upon our inferiors. We have much to do; we are sentenced to eat our bread in the sweat of our brow; and he who does nothing useful to society, lives upon the labour of others. We ought, therefore, to work out our salvation, to improve our talents, and to serve our generation, from the morning to the evening of our lives:

PSALM CV.

An exhortation to praise God, to make known his works, to glory in him, and to seek his favour, 1—7. A brief history of God's goodness to his people from the call of Abraham, to the settlement of Israel in Canaan, 8—45.

O [a] GIVE thanks unto the LORD; [b] call upon his name: [c] make known his deeds among the people.

2 [d] Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: [e] talk ye of all his wondrous works.

3 [f] Glory ye in his holy name; [g] let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD.

4 [h] Seek the LORD and [i] his strength: [k] seek his face evermore.

5 [l] Remember his marvellous works that he hath done; his wonders, and [m] the judgments of his mouth;

6 O [n] ye seed of Abraham his servant, ye children of Jacob [o] his chosen.

7 He *is* [p] the LORD our God: [q] his judgments *are* in all the earth.

8 [r] He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word *which* he commanded to [s] a thousand generations:

9 Which [t] *covenant* he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac;

10 And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, *and* to Israel *for* [u] an everlasting covenant:

11 Saying, [x] Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the * lot of your inheritance:

12 When they were *but* [y] a few men in number; yea, very few, [z] and strangers in it.

13 When they went from one nation to another, from *one* kingdom to another people;

14 [a] He suffered no man to do them wrong; yea, he reproved kings for their sakes;

15 *Saying*, [b] Touch not [c] mine anointed, and do [d] my prophets no harm.

16 Moreover [e] he called for a famine upon the land: [f] he brake the whole staff of bread.

a cxxxvi. 1—3. 1 Chr. xvi. 7—22. xxv 3. xxix. 13. 20.
b Is. xii. 4. Joel ii. 32. Acts ix. 14. Rom. x. 13. 1 Cor. i 2.
c lxxxix 1. xcvi. 3 cxiv. 4—6. 11, 12. Num. xxiii. 23. Is. li. 10. Dan. iii 29. iv. 1—3. vi. 26, 27.
d xlvii. 5, 6 xcvi. 1, 2. xcviii 1 5. Judg v. 3. Is. xii. 5, 6. xlii. 10—12. Eph. v. 19. Rev. xv 3, 4.
e lxxvii 12. lxxviii 4—6. cxix. 27. Ex. xiii. 8 9. 14. Deu. vi. 6—9. Luke xxiv. 14, &c.
f xxxiv. 2. Is. xlv. 25 Jer. ix. 23, 24. 1 Cor. i. 29. 31. Gal. vi. 14.
g ix. 10. Prov. viii. 17. Is. xlv. 19. lv. 6, 7. Lam. iii. 25. Luke xi. 9, 10.
h Am. v. 4—6. Zeph. ii. 2, 3
i lxxviii. 61. cxxxii. 8 2 Chr. vi. 41.
k xxvii. 8.
l lxxvii. 11. ciii. 2. Deut. vii. 18, 19. viii. 2. xxxii. 7. Is. xliii. 18, 19. Luke xxii. 19. 1 Cor. xi. 24—26.
m cxix. 13. Rev. xvi. 7. xix. 2.
n Ex. iii. 6. Is. xli. 8. 14. xliv. 1, 2. Rom. ix. 4, &c.——o Deut. vii. 6—8. John xv. 16. 1 Pet. ii 9.
p xcv. 7. c. 3. Gen. xvii. 7. Ex xx. 2. Deu. xxvi. 17, 18. xxix. 10—15. Josh. xxiv. 15—24.
q xlviii. 10, 11. Is. xxvi. 9. Rev xv. 4.
r 42. cxi. 5, 9. 1 Chr. xvi. 15 Neh. i 5. Dan. ix. 4. Luke i 72—74
s Deut. vii. 9.
t Gen. xvii. 2. xxii. 16. xxvi. 3. xxviii. 13. xxxv. 11. Neh ix. 8. Acts vii. 8. Heb. vi. 17.
u Gen. xvii. 7, 8. 2 Sam. xxiii 5. Heb. xiii. 20.
x Gen. xii. 7. xiii. 15. xv. 18 xxvi. 4. xxviii. 13
* Heb. *cord.* lxxviii. 55.
y Gen. xxxiv. 30. Deut. vii. 7. xxvi. 5. Is. li. 2. Ez. xxxiii. 24, &c.
z Gen. xvii. 8. xxiii 4. Acts vii. 5. Heb. xi. 9, 13.
a Gen. xii. 14—17. xx. 1—7. xxvi. 14, &c. xxxi. 24—29. xxxv. 5. Ex. vii 16, 17.
b Gen xxvi. 11 Zech. ii. 8.
c 1 Kings xix. 16. 1 John ii. 27.
d Gen. xx. 7. xxvii. 39, 40. xlviii. 19, 20. xlix. 8, &c.
e Gen. xli 25—32. 54. xlii. 5, 6. 2 Kings viii. 1. Am. iii 6. vii. 1—4. Hag. i. 10, 11. ii. 17. Matt viii. 8, 9. Rev. vi. 8.——f civ. 15 Gen. xlvii. 18, 19. Lev. xxvi. 26. Is. iii. 1. Ez. iv. 16. Acts vii. 11.

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and then the faithful servant will enter into rest, and the slothful will be called to a severe account. For man alone lives beyond death: when the Lord taketh away his breath, his soul enters on another state of existence; and his body shall at length be raised either to eternal glory or misery.—May the Lord then send forth his Spirit, and new create our souls to holiness; and renew the face of the earth by the conversion of sinners. His power is as terrible to the workers of iniquity, as beneficial to his people: and in every way "his glory shall endure for ever: the LORD "shall rejoice in his works." If he look with a frown upon the earth, it will tremble; if he touch the hills in anger, they will smoke and kindle into a flame; and at length "the day of the Lord will come—in which the "elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, "and all the works that are therein, shall be burnt up:" doubtless then sinners, however numerous or powerful, shall be consumed and perish. But they who trust in his mercy and love his name, shall sing his praises as long as they have their being. And if meditation on the glories of creation be so sweet to the soul; what superior glories must appear to the enlightened mind, when contemplating the great work of redemption! There all the divine perfections with combined splendour beam upon the soul, exciting astonishment, love, gratitude, and joy! there spiritual riches are discerned, far more unsearchable than those temporal treasures which supply the wants of the whole visible creation! and there alone can a sinner perceive ground of confidence, and joy in God! Whilst then we thankfully receive, and moderately use and fear to abuse the bounty of Providence; whilst we learn to trust in him who feeds the young lions, assured that he will not desert his children; let us fix our attention and choice on "that "good part, which shall never be taken from us:" and not only let us show our gratitude by fervent songs of praise; but by devoting ourselves to the service of our God, and imitating his liberality and mercy, as we have opportunity and ability.

NOTES.

PSALM CV. V. 1. (*Notes*, 1 *Chr.* xvi. 8—22.) 'The 'first part of this psalm at least was made by David:—'and it is most probable that he afterwards enlarged it; '(for who else would adventure to do it?) that it might be 'a more complete commemoration of all the mercies of 'God toward their nation.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 2. 'Music and conversation are two things, by 'which the mind of man receiveth much good, or a great 'deal of harm. They who do in reality love the Saviour, 'will always find themselves inclined to sing of him, and 'to talk of him.' (*Horne.*)

V. 8. (2 *Chr.* xvi. 15.) In the passage referred to, the Psalmist exhorts the people to be mindful of the covenant, which the Lord had made with their fathers: but here he teaches them to praise God for having always *remembered* it.

V. 15. *Prophets.* 'Meaning the old fathers to whom 'God showed himself plainly, and who were setters forth 'of his word.'

17 [g] He sent a man before them, *even* [h] Joseph, *who* was sold for a servant:

18 [i] Whose feet they hurt with fetters: * he was laid in iron;

19 Until the time that [k] his word came: the word of the LORD tried him.

20 The [l] king sent and loosed him, *even* the ruler of the people, and let him go free.

21 He [m] made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his † substance:

22 To bind his princes at his pleasure; and [n] teach his senators wisdom.

23 [o] Israel also came into Egypt; and [p] Jacob sojourned in [q] the land of Ham.

24 And [r] he increased his people greatly; and [s] made them stronger than their enemies.

25 [t] He turned their heart [u] to hate his people, to deal subtilely with his servants.

26 He [x] sent Moses his servant, *and* [y] Aaron whom he had chosen.

27 [z] They shewed ‡ his signs among them, and [a] wonders in the land of Ham.

28 He [b] sent darkness, and made it dark; and [c] they rebelled not against his word.

29 He [d] turned their waters into blood, and slew their fish.

30 Their land [e] brought forth frogs in abundance, in the chambers of their kings.

31 He spake, and [f] there came divers sorts of flies, [g] *and* lice in all their coasts.

32 He gave § them [h] hail for rain, *and* flaming fire in their land.

33 He [i] smote their vines also and their fig-trees; and brake the trees of their coasts.

34 He spake, and [k] the locusts came, and caterpillars, and that without number.

35 And did eat up all the herbs in their land, and devoured the fruit of their ground.

g Gen xlv.5.7, 8. l 26.
h Gen xxxvii.27, 28 36. xxxix. 1, xlv. 4. Acts vii. 9.
i Gen. xxxix. 20. xl. 15. Acts xvi. 24.
* Heb. *his soul came into iron.* cvii. 10.
k xliv. 4 Gen.xli. 11—13. 16. 25. Prov. xxi. 1. Dan ii 30. Acts vii. 10.
l Gen. xli. 14.
m Gen xli. 40—44. 55. xlv. 8.26
† Heb *possession*
n Gen. xli. 33 38, 39. Is. xix. 11, 12.
o Gen xlv. 9—11. xlvi. 2—7. Josh. xxiv. 4 Acts vii. 11—15.
p Gen. xlvii. 6—9. 28.
q 27. lxxviii. 51. cvi. 22.Gen. x.6.
r Gen xiii 16 xlvi. 3 Ex. i. 7. Deut. xxvi 5. Acts vii. 17, 18. Heb xi. 12.
s Ex. i. 9. xii. 37
t Gen. xv. 13 Ex. ix.16. x. 1. Deu ii. 30 Rom. ix. 17—19.
u Ex. i 10—14.16. ii.23 Acts vii.19.
x lxxvii 20. Ex. iii. 10. iv 12—14. vi. 11. 26,27 Josh. xxiv. 5 Mic. vi. 4 Acts vii 34, 35.——y Ex. vii. 1. 12 xxviii. 1, 2. 12. 29—38. xxx. 5, &c. Lev. viii. 7, &c. Num. xvi 5—11. 40. 47, 48. xvii. 5. 1 Sam. xii. 6

z lxxviii. 43—51. cxxxv. 8, 9 Ex. vii.—xi. Deu iv. 34. Neh ix. 10, 11. Is. lxiii. 11, 12 Jer. xxxii. 20, 21.
‡ Heb *words of his signs.*
a cvi 22.
b Ex x. 21—23. Joel ii. 2—31. Luke xxiii. 44, 45. 2 Pet ii. 4. 17.
c xcix 7. Ez. ii. 4—8.
d lxxviii. 44. Ex. vii 20, 21. Ez. xxix 4, 5 Is 1. 2 Rev xvi 3.
e lxxviii. 45 Ex. viii. 3—14. Rev. xvi. 13. 14
f lxxviii 45. Ex. viii 21—24. Is. vii. 18
g Ex viii 16—18.
§ Heb. *their rain hail.*
h lxxviii. 47, 48. Ex ix. 18, &c. Rev. viii. 7. xi. 19. xvi 21.
i Rev. ix. 4.
k lxxviii. 46. Ex. x 12. 15. Joel i. 4—7. ii. 25. Rev. ix. 3, &c.

V. 16. Famine is here figuratively spoken of as the servant of God, which at his call promptly attends to fulfil his righteous will. Bread is called *the staff*, or the support of life; and the experience of seasons in which corn is very scarce and dear, though short of absolute famine, gives a very affecting and distressing exposition of the phrase.

V. 17. The word translated *a man*, is in some versions rendered *an eminent man:* Joseph was an eminent character, though envied by his brethren, and sold for a slave: he was a great deliverer, and one of the most illustrious types of the Saviour, in the whole Old Testament. "When God "purposed to call for a famine in the land," he had sent an extraordinary man into Egypt, to make provision for Jacob's family; and Joseph's brethren "meant it for evil, "but God meant it for good."

V. 18. It seems by this, that Joseph was very severely used, when first imprisoned by Potiphar. (*Notes*, &c. *Gen.* xxxvii. xxxix.)

V. 19. 'Until his appointed time came; and the 'counsel of the LORD had tried him.' (*Old Ver.*) The word which Joseph spoke, as from God, when he interpreted the dreams of the chief baker and chief butler, was reported to Pharaoh; and when Joseph had interpreted Pharaoh's extraordinary dream too, he was not only released, but likewise advanced to the highest dignity. But till this time arrived, Joseph continued in prison, according to the *word*, or the counsel and decree of God; that he might be tried as gold is tried in the furnace. (lxvi. 10—12. 1 *Pet.* i. 6, 7.)

V. 22. "That he should bind his princes to his "will." (*Old Ver.*) The clause seems rather to denote the efficacious means used by Pharaoh, to secure the obedience of his princes to Joseph, than any severe measures used by Joseph to punish the disobedient, or any arbitrary use of his high authority. The Septuagint thus renders the verse: 'That he should instruct his 'princes even as himself; and make his elders wise.' (*Notes, Gen.* xl. xli.)

V. 23—25. (*Notes, Gen.* xlv. xlvi. xlvii. l.) At first the Egyptians were *friends* to Jacob's family, for Joseph's sake: but after the death of Joseph and his patron, and the succession of another king who knew not Joseph, the Egyptians became *enemies* to Israel. Their rapid increase from a single family to a powerful people, excited envy, jealousy, dread, and hatred; which prompted both the king and his subjects to devise politic and detestable measures of diminishing their numbers and strength, and of retaining them in bondage. (*Notes, Ex.* 1.) And as the events which had taken place, by the providential appointment of God, gave *occasion* to this change in the disposition of the Egyptians; as he foresaw and had predicted, that this would be the case; and as he determined to leave them to themselves and the natural tendency of their depraved hearts, in such circumstances; it is said, "He turned their "hearts," &c. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 28. *They*, &c. Moses and Aaron boldly executed their commission, in every particular. "They feared not "the wrath of the king; but endured as seeing Him that "is invisible." They were sent, like Ezekiel, to deliver the message of God to haughty rebels; and were careful not to imitate their rebellion. Some, however, explain the clause of the Egyptians, reading it as an interrogation. "Did they not rebel against his word?" Did they not persist in rebelling, amidst all the plagues inflicted on them? (*Notes, Ex.* ii—xv.)

36 [l] He smote also all the first-born in their land, [m] the chief of all their strength.

37 He [n] brought them forth also with silver and gold; and *there was* not one feeble *person* among their tribes.

38 Egypt was [o] glad when they departed: [p] for the fear of them fell upon them.

39 He [q] spread a cloud for a covering; and fire to give light in the night.

40 *The people* [r] asked, and he brought quails, [s] and satisfied them with [t] the bread of heaven.

41 He [u] opened the rock, and the waters gushed out; they ran in the dry places *like* a river.

42 For [x] he remembered his holy promise, [y] *and* Abraham his servant.

43 And [z] he brought forth his people [a] with joy, *and* his chosen with * gladness:

44 And [b] gave them the lands of the heathen: and [c] they inherited the labour of the people;

45 [d] That they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws. † Praise ye the LORD.

l lxxviii. 51. cxxxv. 8. cxxxvi. 10. Ex. iv. 23. xi. 4, 5. xii. 12. 29, 30. Heb. xi 28.
m Gen xlix. 3.
n Gen. xv. 14. Ex iii. 22. xii. 35, 36. Acts xiii. 17.
o Ex. x. 7. xii. 33.
p Gen. xxxv. 5. Josh ii. 9.
q lxxviii. 14. Ex. xiii. 21, 22. xiv. 24. Num. ix. 15—22. Neh. ix. 12. 19. Is. iv. 5. 1 Cor. x. 1, 2.
r lxxvii 18. 26—28. Ex. xvi. 12, 13. Num xi. 4—6. 31—33.
s Ex. xvi 14—35. Num xi 7—9. Deut viii. 3. Josh. v. 12. Neh. ix. 20.
t lxxviii. 23—25. John vi. 31—33. 48—51.——u lxxviii. 15, 16. 20. cxiv. 8. Ex xvii. 6. Num. xx. 11 Neh. ix. 18. Is. xlviii. 21. 1 Cor. x. 4.

x 8—11. Gen. xii. 7. xiii. 14—17. xv. 14. Ex. ii. 24. Luke i. 54, 55. 72
y Ex xxxii. 13. Deut. ix 5. 27. Mic vii 20.
z lxxviii 52, 53. cvi. 8—12. Ex. xv 13. Deut. iv 37, 38. Is. lxiii. 11—14. Acts vii. 36. xiii. 17.
a Is. xxxv. 10. li. 10, 11. lv. 12. Jer. xxxi 11—14.
* Heb. *singing.* cvi 12. Ex. xv. 1, &c.
b xliv. 2, 3. lxxviii. 55 lxxx. 8 cxxxv 10—12. cxxxvi. 21, 22 Josh. xi. 23. xxiii 4. xxiv. 8. 13. Neh ix. 22
c Deut vi 10, 11. Josh v. 11.——d Deut. iv. 40. v 33 vi 1, 2. 21—25. Ez. xxxvi. 24—28. Eph. ii. 8—10. Tit. ii. 14——† Heb. *Hallelujah* cvi. 1. cl. 1. *Marg* Rev. xix. 3.

V. 37. 'Among such a number of men, women, children, and cattle, nothing was weak and feeble, nothing unable to perform the journey. The order was that "not a hoof should be left behind;" and He, who commanded, gave strength to obey.' (*Horne.*)

V. 42. The Psalmist here records the goodness of God to Israel, without noticing Israel's ingratitude and rebellion, which form in a great measure the subject of the ensuing psalms. Yet he intimates in this verse, that the Lord conferred all these benefits on them, entirely from regard to their ancestor Abraham his friend; "and to the word of "his holiness," which he had spoken to Abraham. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 45. Many of the laws given to Israel were of such a nature that they could not be obeyed in the wilderness, or at a distance from the sanctuary: so that there was a *special* reason why they must inhabit Canaan, in order to observe the statutes, and obey the laws, of God: but in general all their religious advantages, and all the favours bestowed on them, were expressly vouchsafed, in order to separate them from other nations, and to render them the obedient worshippers of the true God.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Our meditations on the works of the Creator, and on the providential goodness of God, should lead us to consider his special love to his chosen people; that we may have more enlarged views of his glory, and be more enlivened in admiring love and gratitude. Whilst ungodly men, by their vain songs and corrupt conversation, inflame one another's passions; Christians should edify each other, by singing the praises of God, and by talking of all his wondrous works: and the New Testament furnishes us with more sublime and interesting subjects, than even the history of Israel's deliverance from Egypt, and settlement in the promised land. Let believers then glory in his holy name; let sinners seek his face; and let us all remember the Redeemer's "marvellous works, his wonders, and the "judgments of his mouth." The Lord hath indeed remembered his covenant with Abraham, in raising up his promised "Seed, in whom all the families of the earth "shall be blessed;" and we Gentiles are in Him become a chosen generation to show forth his praise: (1 *Pet.* ii. 9, 10.) Indeed true Christians are hitherto but few in number, and strangers and pilgrims upon earth; yet a far better inheritance than that of Canaan is ensured to them, by the oath and covenant of God: and if we have the unction of the Holy Spirit, no kings or people can do us harm; but our God will reprove the greatest of those who so much as attempt to injure us. We greatly mistake, if we do not rank afflictions among our mercies: as they tend to prove the reality of our faith and love, to humble our pride, to wean us from the world, to quicken our prayers, to enlarge our experience of the Lord's faithfulness to his promises, to encourage our dependence, to bow our hearts into submission, and to soften them into compassion to our brethren. When the Lord calls, famines obey his word; and by withholding bread he breaks the staff of life, to punish the iniquities of guilty nations, and to exercise the faith and patience of his people. But he will assuredly provide for those that trust in him: and he often previously makes arrangements, in order to supply those wants of which his servants had no foresight. Thus, in his foreknowledge of our lost estate, long before we had an existence, he appointed his beloved Son, whom Joseph typified, to be our Redeemer. In the fulness of time he appeared on earth in the form of a servant; and though perfectly *holy*, he was accused of grievous crimes, treated with the utmost insult, crucified, and laid in the grave; and by these sufferings he paid the ransom of our souls. At the appointed time the bands of death were loosed, and by his resurrection he was fully justified from all that had been charged upon him: he was then exalted by the right hand of the Father, to the mediatorial throne; all the treasures of grace and salvation are entirely at his disposal; and perishing sinners come to him, and are relieved from his inexhaustible stores. But with this example in view, we can expect nothing else, than humiliation and hardship, before honour and usefulness on earth, and complete felicity in heaven. We should then prepare for the cross, and for the hatred of the world: we should submit to the will of our God, and wait his time, and commit our all to his disposal: and in the depth of our distress the case of Joseph also may teach us to hope for speedy and important changes in our circumstances, even in this present world. Nor is

PSALM CVI.

The Psalmist praises God, admires the happiness of his people, and prays to partake of it, 1—5. He recapitulates Israel's provocations, from their bondage in Egypt, to the time when they were settled in Canaan, and imitated the idolatries of the Canaanites, 6—46. He concludes with prayer and praise, 47, 48.

* Heb. Hallelujah. cv. 45.
a c. 4. 5. cvii 1. cxviii. 1. cxxxvi. 1. 1 Chr. xvi. 34. Ezra iii. 11. Jer. xxxiii. 11. 1 Thes. v. 18.
b ciii. 17. cxix. 68. Matt. xix. 17. Rom. v. 20, 21.

*PRAISE ye the LORD, [a] O give thanks unto the LORD; [b] for *he is* good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

2 [c] Who can utter the mighty acts of the LORD? *who* can shew forth [d] all his praise?

3 [e] Blessed *are* they that [f] keep judgment, *and* he that [g] doeth righteousness [h] at all times.

4 [i] Remember me, O LORD, with the favour *that thou bearest unto* thy people: O [k] visit me with thy salvation;

5 That [l] I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may [m] rejoice in the gladness of thy nation, that [n] I may glory with thine inheritance.

c xl. 5. cxxxix. 17. cxiv 3—15. Job v. 9. xxv. 2. 14. Rom. xi. 33. Eph. i. 19. iii. 18—21.
d Neh. ix. 5.
e i. 1—3. ciii. 20, 21. cxix 1—3. Mark iii. 35. Luke vii. 47—49. xi. 28. John xiii. 17. xv. 14. Jam. i. 25. Rev. vii. 15.
f cxix. 106. Is. lvi. 1. 2. Jer. xxii. 15. 16. Luke xi. 42. John xiv. 21—23.
g xv. 2. cxix. 44. Is. lxiv. 5. Ez. xviii. 21, 22. Luke i 74, 75. Acts xxiv. 16. Rom. ii. 7. Gal. vi. 9. Rev. xxii. 14.—h cxix. 20. 112. Deut. v. 29. xi. 1.——i xxv. 7. cxix. 132. Neh. v. 19. xiii. 14. 22. 31. Luke xxiii. 42.——k Luke i. 68, 69. Acts xv. 14.——l cv. 6. 43. Deut. vii. 6. John xv. 16. Acts ix. 15. Eph. i. 4. 2 Thes. ii. 13. Jam. ii. 5. 1 Pet. ii. 9. Rev. xvii. 14.——m xiv. 7. xlviii. 11. Is. xii. 6. xxxv. 10. lxvi. 10. Joel ii. 23. Zeph. iii. 14. Zech. iii. 9. Phil. iii. 3.——n Is. xlv. 25. Eph. i. 18.

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it improper to observe, that Jesus hath power to bind kings and princes at his will; and that he alone can teach senators true wisdom. As the believer commonly is most prosperous in his soul, when under the cross; so the church hath often flourished most in holiness and increased in number, under oppression and persecution. But the image and favour of God are sure to excite the enmity of wicked men; whose hearts will thus be turned to hate his servants, and to join force with subtlety to destroy them: and that which ungodly counsellors think *a wise political measure*, often proves, on examination, to be *a most detestable project* of the *devil against the church of Christ.* Yet instruments shall be raised up for her good suited to her emergencies: and multiplied plagues may be expected by obstinate persecutors, who persist in their rebellion under the gentler strokes of God's correcting rod. The whole creation is ready to rise up in arms against his enemies; and when he gives the word, every thing will concur to render them contemptible and miserable. He will fulfil his largest promises to his people, and make them a terror to those who hate them: and all the benefits conferred on Israel, as a nation, were only shadows of the spiritual blessings with which he hath blessed us in Jesus Christ. Having redeemed us with his blood, enriched us from his treasures, restored our souls to health and holiness, and set us at liberty from Satan's bondage; he guides and guards us all the way, he satisfies our souls with the Bread of heaven, and with the Water of life from the Rock of salvation, and will bring us safe to our incorruptible inheritance. But let it never for a moment be forgotten, that the Lord, by all he doeth for us, intends to teach, incline, and enable us, to "observe his statutes, and keep his laws;" and to show forth his praise, first here on earth, and then in heaven for ever; and that he "redeems his servants from all iniquity, and "purifies them unto himself, a peculiar people, zealous of "good works."

NOTES.

PSALM CVI. V. 1. *Praise ye the* LORD. *Hallelujah.* 'There is little doubt,—but this is the title of the 'Psalm,—whereby the author excites them to acknowledge 'God's bounty to their ungrateful forefathers.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) Many commentators affix a very late date to this psalm; supposing it to have been written during the Babylonish captivity, or even so long after as the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes. But the concluding verses, on which they ground that opinion, are found for substance in the psalm which was used when David removed the ark to mount Zion; as is likewise this first verse. (*Notes, 1 Chr.* xvi. 32—36.) Indeed this seems to be an appendix to the preceding psalm; for as *that* celebrated the mercies of God to Israel; so *this* confesses and deplores the rebellions of Israel against God. 'The prophet exhorteth the 'people to praise God for his past benefits, that thereby 'their minds may be strengthened against all present troubles and despair.'

V. 2. 'When you glorify the LORD, exalt him as 'much as you can: for even yet he will far exceed: and 'when you exalt him, put forth your whole strength, 'and be not weary; for you can never go far enough.' (*Ecclesiasticus.*)

V. 3. The Israelites had been put in possession of Canaan, by the immediate power of JEHOVAH, "that they "might keep his statutes, and observe his laws:" and they would have been very happy, if they had thus "kept "judgment, and done righteousness at all times;" that is, if they had persevered in attendance on the ordinances, and in obedience to the commandments, of God. But though Israel, as a nation, had lost much of their prosperity by sin; yet every individual, who thus ordered his conduct, was and would be happy. No mere man indeed obeys God perfectly: yet every true believer makes this his constant aim, nor shall we ever be perfectly happy till we are perfectly obedient; that is, till fully delivered from sin and all its consequences.

V. 4, 5. The Psalmist well understood the difference between the nation of Israel, and the true Israelites found among them. He was one of that nation, and shared all its external privileges: but his desire and prayer was, that he might be remembered with the favour shown to the true people of God, and visited with their salvation; and that he might see, and share the blessings, and the joy, and the triumphs, of those who are indeed a chosen generation, an holy nation, and the Lord's highly valued inheritance. (*Notes, Rom.* ix. 6—9. 1 *Pet.* ii. 9, 10.)—Many expositors understand these verses merely of the

6 ¶ We have [o] sinned with our fathers, we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly.

7 [p] Our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt; [q] they remembered not [r] the multitude of thy mercies; but [s] provoked *him* at the sea, *even* at the Red sea.

8 Nevertheless [t] he saved them for his name's sake, [u] that he might make his mighty power to be known.

9 He [x] rebuked the Red sea also, and it was dried up: [y] so he led them through the depths as through the wilderness.

10 And [z] he saved them from the hand of him that hated *them*, and [a] redeemed them from the hand of the enemy.

11 And [b] the waters covered their enemies; there was not one of them left.

12 Then [c] believed they his words; they sang his praise.

13 [d] They * soon forgat his works; [e] they waited not for his counsel:

14 [f] But † lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, [g] and tempted God in the desert.

15 And [h] he gave them their request: but sent leanness into their soul.

16 ¶ They [i] envied Moses also in the camp, *and* Aaron [k] the saint of the LORD.

17 [l] The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan, and covered the company of Abiram.

18 And [m] a fire was kindled in their company; the flame burned up the wicked.

19 ¶ They [n] made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image.

20 Thus [o] they changed their glory [p] into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass.

21 They [q] forgat [r] God their Saviour, [s] which had done great things in Egypt;

22 [t] Wondrous works in the land of Ham, *and* [u] terrible things by the Red sea.

23 Therefore [x] he said that he would destroy them, had not Moses [y] his chosen [z] stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy *them*.

o lxxviii 8 Lev. xxvi. 40. Num. xxxii. 14. Ezra ix. 6, 7 Neh. ix. 16. 33, 34. Dan. ix. 5, &c Matt. xxiii. 32. Acts vii 51, 52.
p Deut. xxix. 4. xxxii. 28, 29. Prov. i. 22. Is. xliv. 18. Mark iv. 12. viii. 17—21. 2 Thes ii. 10—12.
q lxxviii.42.cv 5. Deut. xv. 15. Eph. ii. 11.
r 45. v. 7. li. 1. Is. lxiii. 7. Lam. iii. 32.
s Ex. xiv. 11, 12.
t cxliii. 11. Num. xiv. 13—16. Deut. xxxii 26, 27. Josh. vii 9. Jer. xiv. 7. 21. Ez. xx. 9. 14. 22. 44. Dan. ix. 17—19.
u cxi. 6. Ex. ix. 16. xv. 6. Rom. ix. 17.
x lxvi. 6. lxxviii. 13. 52, 53. cxiv. 3—7. cxxxvi. 13—16. Ex. xiv. 21, 22. 27—29. Neh ix.11.Is.xi. 14—16. Nah i. 4. Matt viii 26.
y lxxvii.19,20. Is. lxiii. 11—14.
z Ex. xiv 30. xv. 9, 10. Deut. xi. 4. Neh. ix. 11.
a cvii. 2. cxxxvi. 24. Ex. xv. 13. Job vi. 22, 23. Mic. vi. 4.
b lxxviii. 53 Ex. xiv. 13. 27, 28. xv. 5. 10. 19.
c Ex. xiv. 31.xv. 1, &c. Luke viii. 13. John viii. 30, 31
d lxxviii. 11. Ex. xv. 24. xvi. 2 xvii. 2. Num. xi. 4 33, 34. Deut. ix. 22. 1 Cor x. 6.
e Prov. i. 25. 30. Is. xlviii. 17, 18.
f lxxviii. 18. 30
g lxxviii. 18—20, 40, 41. xcv. 8, 9. Ex.xvii.2 Num. xiv 22. 1 Cor.x. 9 Heb.iii.8—10.
h lxxviii. 29—31. Num. xi. 31—34. Is. x. 16. xxiv. 16.
i Num. xvi.3, &c.
k Ex xxviii. 36. Lev. xxi. 6—8. 10—12. Num. xvi. 7.
l Num. xvi. 29—33. xxvi. 10. Deut. xi. 6.
m Num. xvi. 35—40. Heb. xii. 29.
n Ex xxxii.4—8. 35. Deut. ix. 12—16 21. Neh. ix. 18 1 Cor. x. 7.
o lxxxix. 17 Jer. ii. 11. Rom. i. 22, 23.
p Ex. xx 4, 5. Is. xl. 13—25.
q 13. lxxviii. 11, 12. 42—51 Deut. xxxii.17,18. Jer. ii. 32.
r Is. xii. 2 xlv. 21. lxiii. 8. Hos. i. 7 Luke i. 47. Tit. i. 3. ii. 10. iii. 4—6.
s lxxiv. 13, 14. cxxxv. 9. Deut. iv. 34 vi. 22. vii. 18, 19 Neh. ix. 10, 11.
t lxxviii 51. cv. 23. 27—36.
u Ex xiv. 25—28. xv. 10.
x Ex.xxxii.10,11. 32. Deut ix. 13, 14. 19. 25. x. 10. Ez. xx. 13, 14.
y cv. 6. 26. Num. xvi. 5. Matt.xii. 18. John xv. 16. 19.
z Ex. xxxii. 14. Jer. v. 1. Ez. xiii. 5. xxii. 30. Jam. v. 16.

* Heb. *made haste they forgot.*——† Heb. *lusted a lust.*

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temporal felicity promised to Israel when obedient: but that was only a shadow of the spiritual and eternal blessings ensured to the elect of God; and scarcely any passage of the New Testament breathes out a more fervent longing after those spiritual blessings. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 6. 'We are no better than our forefathers; but 'have offended after their example, by which we ought 'to have been amended. We are guilty of many iniqui-'ties against one another, and much impiety against thee.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 7. The Israelites in general did not so understand the miracles wrought for them in Egypt, as to expect deliverance from the love and power of God; nor were they suitably impressed or affected by what they had heard and seen, when pursued by the Egyptians to the banks of the Red sea: so that they soon provoked the Lord by their unbelief and distrustful murmurs. (*Notes, Ex.* xiv.)

V. 8. 'He gave them a new deliverance, that the world 'might not imagine he wanted power to complete what he 'had begun to do for them.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 12. The faith of the Israelites was exactly the same, as is represented by the *seed sown upon stony ground*, and widely different from that which springs up in a broken penitent heart. They were surprised, gratified, and delighted, by their unexpected escape and the destruction of their enemies: and they experienced a mighty flow of natural joy and gratitude, such as may be observed in children when they are humoured. But there was no humiliation for sin: no abiding apprehensions of the glorious perfections of JEHOVAH; no steady reliance on his power, wisdom, truth, and love; no submission to his will, or preparation for self-denying obedience: and therefore in time of temptation they fell away, having no root in themselves; and when their wishes were thwarted, they murmured, rebelled, forgat the works of God, would not wait for his counsel; but lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God by their unbelief. (*Notes, &c. Ex.* xv. xvi. xix.)

V. 15. Instead of being benefited by the abundance of the quails sent them; the Israelites surfeited through excess, and multitudes died by disease. (*Notes, Num.* xi.)—"They knew not what they asked," or "what manner of "spirit they were of:" and their sensual request was granted as a punishment.

V. 16—18. (*Notes, Num.* xii. xvi.)

V. 19—23. (*Notes, Ex.* xxxii. xxxiv.) 'All idolaters 'renounce God to be their glory, when instead of him 'they worship any creature.' 'It is to be hoped, that we 'shall never see a time, when the miracle of our redemp-'tion shall be forgotten;—and when the people shall 'solicit their teachers to fabricate a new philosophical 'deity for them to worship, instead of the God of their 'ancestors.' (*Horne.*) The place, even Horeb, where the Israelites made and worshipped the calf; and all the preceding miracles of mercy to them, and judgment on their enemies, which they had witnessed, constituted so many highly aggravating circumstances of their base and ungrateful conduct: and by parity of reason, is not the idolatry of professed Christians, especially of such as have access to

24 ¶ Yea, [a] they despised * the [b] pleasant land, [c] they believed not his word:

25 But [d] murmured in their tents, *and* [e] hearkened not unto the voice of the LORD.

26 [f] Therefore he [g] lifted up his hand against them, to overthrow them in the wilderness:

27 To † overthrow their seed also among the nations, and [h] to scatter them in the lands.

28 ¶ They [i] joined themselves also unto Baal-peor, and ate the sacrifices [k] of the dead.

29 Thus they provoked *him* to anger [l] with their inventions: and [m] the plague brake in upon them.

30 Then [n] stood up Phinehas, and executed judgment: and *so* the plague was stayed.

31 And [o] that was counted unto him for righteousness unto all generations for evermore.

32 They [p] angered *him* also at the waters of strife, [q] so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes:

33 Because [r] they provoked his spirit, so that [s] he spake unadvisedly with his lips.

34 ¶ They [t] did not destroy the nations, [u] concerning whom the LORD commanded them:

35 But [x] were mingled among the heathen, [y] and learned their works.

36 And [z] they served their idols; [a] which were a snare unto them.

37 Yea, [b] they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto [c] devils,

38 And [d] shed innocent blood, *even* the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and [e] the land was polluted with blood.

a Gen. xxv. 34. Num. xiii. 32. xiv. 31 Matt. xxii.5. Heb. xii. 16.
* Heb. *a land of desire.*
b Deut. viii.7—9. xi 11, 12. Jer. iii. 19. Ez. xx.6.
c Num. xiv. 11. Deu i. 32. Heb. iii. 12. 18, 19. iv. 2. 6. 11. Jude 5.
d Num xiv 1—4. 27—29. Deut. i. 26, 27.
e xcv. 7—9. Num. xiv. 22. Heb. iii. 7, 8. 15.
f xcv. 11. Num. xiv 28 — 35. Deut. i. 34, 35. Heb iii. 11.
g Gen. xiv.22, 23. Deut xxxii. 40—42. Ez. xx. 15. Rev. x. 5, 6.
† Heb. *make them fall.*
h xliv. 11. Lev. xxvi 33 Deut. iv. 26, 27. xxviii. 37. 64, 65. xxxii. 26, 27. Ez. xx. 23.
i Num xxv. 1—3. 5. xxxi 16. Deu. iv. 3. xxxii. 17. Josh. xxii. 17. Hos ix.10. Rev. ii. 14.
k cxv. 4—8. Jer. x. 8—10. 1 Cor. x. 19, 20.
l 39. xcix. 8. Deu. xxxii. 16—21. Ec. vii. 29 Rom i. 21—24.——m Num. xxv. 9. 1 Cor. x. 8.——n Num. xxv. 6—8. 14, 15. Deut. xiii 9—11. 15—17. Josh vii. 12. 1 Kings xviii. 40, 41. Jon. i. 12—15.——o Num. xxv. 11—13. Deut xxiv. 13. Mark xiv. 3—9.
p lxxviii.40. lxxxi. 7. Num. xx. 2—6. 13
q Num. xx. 12 23, 24 xxvii 13, 14. Deut. i 37 iii. 26 iv. 21.
r Num. xx. 10, 11. xxxix. 1. clxii. 3. Gen. xxx. 1. xxxv. 16—18.
s Job ii. 10. xxxviii 3. xl. 4, 5. xlii 7, 8. Jam. iii. 2
t Josh. xv. 63. xvi. 10. xvii. 12—16. xxiii. 12, 13. Judg. i. 19. 27 — 35. Matt. xvii. 19—21.
u Num. xxxiii. 52. 55, 56. Deu. vii. 2. 16. 23, 24. xx. 16, 17. 1 Sam. xv. 3. 22, 23.
x Josh. xv. 63. Judg. i. 27—36. ii. 2, 3.
y Is. ii. 6. 1 Cor. v. 6. xv. 33.
z lxxviii. 58. Ex. xxxiv. 15, 16. Judg. ii. 12. iii. 5—7. x. 6. 2 Kings xvii. 8—11. 16, 17. 2 Chr. xxxiii 2. 9. Ez. xvi. 15, &c. xx. 28—32
a Ex. xxiii. 33. Deut. vii 16. Josh. xxiii. 13. Judg ii. 3.
b Deu. xii. 30, 31. xviii. 10. 2 Kings xvi 3 xvii. 17. xxi. 6. Is. lvii. 5 Jer. vii. 31. xxxii. 35. Ez. xvi 20, 21. xx. 26. xxiii 37. 47.——c Lev. xvii. 7. Deut. xxxii. 17. 2 Chr. xi. 15. 1 Cor. x. 20. Rev ix. 20.——d Deut. xxi 9. 2 Kings xxi. 16. xxiv. 4. Jer. ii. 34.——e Num. xxxv. 33. Is. i. 15. xxvi. 21. Ez. vii. 23. xxii. 3.

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the oracles of God, proportionably more heinous and inexcusable, than that of poor benighted pagans? The idolatry of papists, than that of the Chinese?—Moses stood before God, in behalf of Israel, by fervent prayer: but when he stood before Israel, protesting against their wickedness, and executing judgment on the idolaters; he was equally employed for the good of the nation, and his exertions were equally efficacious in preventing their destruction.

V. 24—27. (*Notes, Num.* xiii. xiv.) 'He solemnly 'sware, that not one of that wicked generation should 'ever come' into Canaan: 'but all perish in the wilder-'ness.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)—The prophetical threatenings in the twenty-sixth of Leviticus, the twenty-eighth of Deuteronomy, and other parts of the books of Moses, which are fulfilling at this day, seem also to be referred to. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 28—31. (*Notes, Num.* xxv.) "The sacrifices of "the dead," were such as the idolaters offered to lifeless images, or in honour of their deceased warriors and rulers. —The word rendered "*executed judgment,*" means also prayed, and is so translated in the common Prayer-book: but the conduct of Phinehas, as recorded by Moses, shows that the translation here used is proper. He *interposed*, not merely by prayer, but as a magistrate, by punishing two most daring and audacious criminals. The Septuagint renders it, "He made atonement." 'This act declared his 'lively faith, and for his faith's sake was accepted.'

V. 32, 33. (*Notes, Num.* xx.) "The wrath of man" 'found admission, and that "worketh not the righteous-"ness of God." Thou, blessed Jesus, art the only per-'fect pattern of patience and love! O grant to all, but, 'above all, to the pastors of thy flock, a spirit not easy 'to be provoked, and lips not hasty to speak unadvisedly.' (*Horne.*) 'If so notable a prophet of God escape not 'punishment, though others provoked him to sin; how 'much more shall they be subject to God's judgment, 'who cause God's children to sin.

V. 34. God commissioned Israel to execute his righteous sentence of extermination on the Canaanites, who had filled up the measure of their crimes: and while many in every age declaim against them for the supposed cruelty of their conduct in this respect; they are every where in Scripture charged with guilt, for sparing those whom God had doomed to death; and their crime was awfully punished by its consequences.

V. 37, 38. (*Note, Deut.* xxxii. 17.) No instance is recorded in which the Israelites were guilty of this most horrid crime, till long after the days of David; and this circumstance seems to favour the opinion, that the psalm was composed by some other person, during the captivity. The Israelites, however, in the days of the judges, might imitate the idolaters among whom they lived, in this, as well as in their other abominations; though it is not expressly recorded. And no allusion is made in any part of the psalm to the rebellions and idolatries of the kings of Judah or of Israel, to the golden calves worshipped by the latter, or to the profanations of the temple by the former: yet these are prominent subjects, in the enumeration given by other inspired writers of the crimes which provoked God to cast off Israel, and to punish Judah by the Babylonish captivity; and would scarcely have been passed over in entire silence, if the psalm had been written after those events. Indeed, it would be wonderful, in that case, that nothing should be said either about the temple or Jerusalem, or any of the kings of Judah, good or bad.

39 Thus were they [f] defiled with their own works, and [g] went a whoring with [h] their own inventions.

40 Therefore was [i] the wrath of the LORD kindled against his people, [k] insomuch that he abhorred [l] his own inheritance.

41 And [m] he gave them into the hand of the heathen; and [n] they that hated them ruled over them.

42 Their enemies also oppressed them, and they were brought into subjection under their hand.

43 [o] Many times did he deliver them; but they provoked *him* [p] with their counsel; and were * brought low for their iniquity.

f Is. xxiv 5, 6. liv. 3 Ez. xx 18. 30, 31. 43.
g Ex. xxxiv. 16. Lev. xvii. 7 xx. 5, 6 Num xv 39. Jer. iii. 1. 2. Ez xvi. 15, &c. xxiii. 3, &c. Hos. ix. 1. Rev. xvii. 1—6.
h 29.
i lxxviii. 59—62 Judg. ii. 14. 20. iii. 8.
k Lev. xx. 23. Deu. xxxii. 19. Zech xi. 8.
l lxxiv. 1. 2 Deu. ix. 29.
m Deu. xxxii. 30. Judg. ii. 14. iii. 8. 12. iv. 1, 2. vi. 1—6 x. 7, &c. Neh. ix. 27, &c
n Deu xxviii 25. 29 33. 48.
o Judg ii 16—18. 1 Sam. xii 9—11. Neh. ix. 27, 28.
p 29. i. 1. lxxxi. 12.
* Or, *impoverished.* or, *weakened.* Judg. v. 8. vi. 5, 6. 1 Sam. xiii. 19—22.

44 Nevertheless [q] he regarded their affliction, when he heard their cry:

45 [r] And he remembered for them his covenant, and [s] repented according to [t] the multitude of his mercies.

46 [u] He made them also to be pitied of all those that carried them captives.

47 [x] Save us, O LORD our God, and [y] gather us from among the heathen, [z] to give thanks unto thy holy name, *and* to triumph in thy praise.

48 [a] Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting: and let all the people say, Amen. † Praise ye the LORD.

a xli. 13 lxxii 18, 19. lxxix. 52. 1 Chr. xxix. 11. 1 Cor. xiv. 16. ——— † Heb. *Hallelujah.* 1. cv. 45. *Marg.*

q Judg. ii. 18. vi. 6—10. x. 10—16. 1 Sam. vii. 8—12. 2 Kings xiv. 26, 27.
r cv. 8. Lev. xxvi. 40—42. 2 Kings xiii. 23. Luke i. 71, 72.
s xc. 13. cxxxv. 14. Ex xxxii. 14 Deu. xxxii. 36. Judg. ii. 18. 2 Sam. xxiv. 16 Hos. xi. 8. Am. vii. 3 6.
t li. 1. lxix. 16. Is. lxiii. 7. Lam. iii 32.
u 1 Kings viii. 50. Ezra ix. 9. Jer. xv. 11. xlii. 12.
x xiv. 7 cxxvi. 1—4. 1 Chr. xvi. 35, 36
y Jer. xxxii. 37—41. Ez. xxxvi. 24—28. xxxvii. 21—28. xxxix. 25—29.
z cvii. 1—3. 2 Cor. ii. 14. Rev. vii. 10—12.

V. 39. (*Notes, Lev.* xx. 2—6.)

V. 40—45. The history contained in the book of Judges, and in the former part of the first book of Samuel; and especially those parts of it which are referred to in the margin, form a sufficient comment on these verses.

V. 46. Had the several nations, into whose hands God successively sold Israel for their sins, determined on extirpating them, as they had in part served the Canaanites, there was in many instances nothing sufficient to hinder them: but the Lord inclined the hearts of the conquerors to compassionate their slaves and captives, and thus the effects of their vehement resentment were prevented. The Israelites, being *pitied*, were only impoverished and enslaved, and not destroyed.

V. 47, 48. (*Note*, 1 *Chr.* xvi. 35, 36.) If David did not write this psalm, but it was composed by some prophet during the captivity: he took this passage from David's psalm, and applied it to the state of the Jews in his own time. Indeed the words are very applicable to the present condition of the Jews; and will doubtless be used by them, when the veil shall be taken from their hearts, and they shall turn to the Lord. 'Let the great LORD of all the world, who 'has been so gracious to Israel as to choose them for his 'own peculiar people, be most heartily blessed and praised. 'Let all generations bless him, as long as the world shall 'last, and to eternity: and let all his people concur in 'these desires, and wish it may be so. Let them all praise 'the LORD, and desire that he may be praised.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—27.

None of our sins or sufferings should prevent our ascribing glory and praise to the Lord, and thanking him for his undeserved and everlasting goodness and mercy: indeed the more unworthy we are, the more admirable is his kindness, in continuing to us any of our comforts and hopes. "But "who can utter the mighty acts of the LORD, or show "forth *all his praise!*" This as much exceeds our ability, as it does to fulfil the whole of his righteous law without any defect or failure: yet they who depend on the Redeemer's righteousness, will copy the example of his persevering obedience, and endeavour, both by word and deed, to show forth his praises as they are able. These are indeed a happy people; for sin is the only cause of all the misery in the universe: how absurd then is it for men to amuse themselves with the notion of a religion, which they fancy will save and bless them, without rendering them obedient to the will of God!—Though multitudes abuse their outward privileges, and many professed Christians run into extravagant sentiments and inconsistent practices: yet God hath a people in every age, who enjoy his favour and experience the power and comfort of his salvation; whom he hath chosen to himself, and to whom he will do good; who are holy and happy under his government and protection: and for whom gladness and victory, and eternal glory are reserved. Let us pray earnestly and constantly to be thus remembered and distinguished, and to participate their privileges and felicity. We shall not be excluded from this favour, though "we have sinned with our fathers and "done very wickedly," if indeed we are truly humbled for our iniquities. But when man is left to himself, no miracles, mercies, warnings, or judgments will deeply or durably influence his heart to trust and serve the Lord. We have then no right to charge our misery upon our fathers' sins, seeing we have copied and perhaps exceeded them: rather we should be humbled to reflect how we arise, one generation after another, "an increase of sinful "men, to provoke the LORD to anger:" so that, if he did not save us for his own name's sake, and to the praise of his glorious power and grace, we should all perish without remedy. In reviewing our past lives, we shall often find that the *timing* of our rebellions has exceedingly aggravated the guilt of them. We have perhaps distrusted the Lord, after having just before experienced his merciful interpositions in our favour. When remarkable deliverances have excited a transient joy and gratitude, we have speedily forgotten all, and relapsed into our murmurs and disobedience. Under distress of conscience, we have per-

PSALM CVII.

Exhortations to praise God for redemption from captivity, and guidance in perilous journies to a safe habitation, 1—9. *For deliverance from prison,* 10—16. *For recovery from sickness,* 17—22. *For preservation when in imminent danger of shipwreck,* 23—31. *And for the care of his providence over the affairs of men,* 32—43.

O [a] GIVE thanks unto the LORD, for *he is* [b] good: [c] for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

2 Let [d] the redeemed of the LORD say *so,* whom he hath redeemed [e] from the hand of the enemy;

3 And [f] gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and * from the south.

a cvi. 1. cxviii. 1 cxxxvi. 1, &c 1 Chr. xvi 34. 41. 2 Chr v 13. vii. 3. 6. xx 21 b cxix. 68. Matt xix. 17. c iii. 17. Luke i. 50. d xxxi 5 cxxx 8 Ex. xv. 17 Deut xv. 15. Is. xxxv 9. xliii. 1. xliv. 22. 23. Luke i 61. xxiv. 28. Gal. iii. 13 Tit. ii. 14. 1 Pet. i 18, 19. e cvi. 10. Deut. vii. 8. Jer. xv 21. xxxi. 11. Mic iv. 10. Luke i 74.——f cvi. 47. Is. xi. 11—16. xliii. 5, 6 xlix. 12. Jer. xxix. 14. xxxi. 8. 10 Ez. xxxvi 24. xxxix. 27, 28. Rev. v. 9.——* Heb. *from the sea.*

haps been ready to say to the Lord, 'Save our souls, and 'deal with us in all other things as thou pleasest:' yet it may be ere long we have grown impatient of poverty and hardship, have lusted after some worldly indulgence, and tempted instead of trusting his Providence: and thus have we provoked him to send leanness into our souls, or to inflict severe corrections upon us to bring us to a sense of our folly. We cannot but know that we have often given way to envy, ambition, and self-preference: and instead of sitting down quietly in the lowest place of his church, (which is far too good for such vile sinners;) and rejoicing in the gifts and usefulness of his saints and ministers; we have been secretly repining, or openly reviling or censuring them. So that even the believer will see abundant cause to say, "It is of the Lord's mercies that I was not consumed," after the example of Korah and his company. Often have we, forgetful of the terrors of mount Sinai, and of the scene exhibited on mount Calvary, and of our marvellous deliverance from the hand of our enemy, been setting up idols in our hearts, and cleaving to some forbidden object: so that if a greater than "Moses had not stood in the "breach to turn away the anger of the LORD," we should have provoked him to destroy us. And though we have not entirely disbelieved the word of God, or despised the heavenly inheritance: yet the feebleness of our desires, and the weakness of our faith, and our great eagerness about worldly things, have frequently argued a very perverse, ungrateful, and carnal frame of spirit. In short, we have put the patience of the Lord himself to trial, and no other could have borne with us; we have brought upon ourselves many rebukes and corrections; we have continual reason to join humiliation with our gratitude: and though the Lord has many a time delivered us, and renewed our comforts, yet we have again provoked him, and have been brought low for our iniquity. Still, however, mercy hath prevailed; He hath heard our prayers, remembered his covenant, and spared us for his name's sake.

V. 28—48.

If the real Christian's review of his past conduct affords so much ground for humiliation, the case of professed Christians is still worse. A great part of the visible church has forgotten God our Saviour, and turned aside to the worship of molten images, and saints, and angels; changing, like Israel, their glory into the similitude of their fellow-creatures. Vast multitudes seem desirous of discarding the God and Saviour of the Bible, and substituting in his place, a *philosophical deity,* not indeed the work of their own hands, but the creature of their own imaginations, and no more a just resemblance of JEHOVAH, than the golden calf was. Even among those who do not adopt such sentiments, we find conformity to the world, in its vainest and most criminal practices; the indulgence, instead of the mortification, of every carnal lust; nay, an imitation of the lewdness, excesses, extortions, oppressions, and cruelties of the heathen, even to the polluting of the lands where they live, with the blood of vast multitudes sacrificed to their avarice. And numbers train up their children in vanity and vice, and in contempt of every thing sacred; as if they meant that they should be devoted to Satan, and were determined to murder their precious souls. Whilst nations professing Christianity are openly and generally guilty of such enormities; no wonder that the wrath of the Lord is kindled against them; and if, after repeated deliverances, he brings them very low for their iniquities, except a general and deep repentance and works meet for repentance, intervene, there can be no prospect but of increasing calamities and confusion. It would be well if those who fill up the important stations of legislators and magistrates, were inspired with the intrepid zeal of Phinehas, to execute judgment upon daring criminals: this would be accounted to them for righteousness by the Judge of the world, however it were blamed by the criminals, or their abettors. And every one of us should imitate Moses, by standing in the breach to turn away the wrath of God from a guilty land; both by our earnest and persevering prayers, and by our zealous endeavours to promote reformation and the revival of true religion in our several circles. But it behooves us, in our zeal against sin, to watch over our own passions and expressions; lest we speak unadvisedly with our lips, and it should go ill with us also for their sakes. Our general duty is, however, the most pleasant, and the safest; and when many are left in any church or nation, who attend to these things, there remains a hope that God will turn away his wrath, and not destroy them. Let us then beseech him to separate his church, and to distinguish his professed people from the heathen, by his sanctifying grace; and to unite them in love, that they may give thanks unto his holy name, and triumph in his praise. Let us beseech him to bring again into his church the poor dispersed Jews: let us bless his name for our peculiar mercies, and desire that our God may be universally and everlastingly praised; and that all the people of the earth may say, Amen. Hallelujah.

4 They [g] wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way: they found no city to dwell in.

5 [h] Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them.

6 Then [i] they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, *and* [k] he delivered them out of their distresses.

7 And [l] he led them forth by the right way, [m] that they might go to a city of habitation.

8 [n] Oh that *men* would [o] praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* [p] his wonderful works to the children of men!

9 For [q] he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.

10 ¶ Such [r] as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, *being* [s] bound in affliction and iron;

11 Because [t] they rebelled against the words of God, and [u] contemned the counsel of the Most High:

12 Therefore [x] he brought down their heart with labour; they fell down, [y] and *there was* none to help.

13 Then [z] they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, *and* he saved them out of their distresses.

14 He [a] brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and [d] brake their bands in sunder.

15 Oh [c] that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men!

16 For [d] he hath broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder.

g 10. Gen. xxi. 14, &c. Num. xiv. 33. Deut. viii 15. Job xii. 24. Ez. xxxiv. 6. 12. Heb. xi. 38 Rev. xii. 6. h Judg xv 18, 19. 1 Sam. xx. 11, 12. Is xliv. 12. Jer. xiv. 18. Lam. ii. 19. Mark viii 2, 3. i 13. 19. 28. 1. 15. xci 15. Is. xli. 17, 18 Jer. xxix 12—14. Hos. v. 15. Heb iv. 15, 16. k 2 Cor. i. 8—10. xii 8—10. 2 Tim. iii 11. l lxxvii. 20. lxxviii. 52. cxxxvi. 16. Ezra viii 21—23. Is. xxx. 21. xxxv. 8—10. xlviii 17. xlix 8 — 11. lxiii. 13, 14. Jer. vi 16. xxxi. 9. 2 Pet ii 15. 21. m 4. 36 Neh. xi 3 Jer xxxi 24 30 — 40 xxxiii 10—13. Heb. xi. 9, 10 16 xii. 22. Rev xxi 2 —4 10. &c.

n 15 21 31 lxxxi 13—16. Deut. v. 29 xxxii. 29. Is. xlviii. 18 ——o xxxiv. 3 xcii. 1, 2 cxlvii. 1. Is. lxiii. 7 ——p xl 5. lxxviii. 4 cxi. 4 Dan. iv. 2, 3. vi. 27——q xxxiv. 10. cxxxii. 15. cxlvi 7 Is. iv 1—3. Jer. xxxi 14 25. Matt. v. 6 Luke i. 53. Rev. vii. 16, 17.——r Job iii. 5. Is. ix 2. Matt. iv. 16. xxii. 13. Luke i. 79.

s cv. 18. Ex. ii 23 24. 2 Chr xxxiii. 11. Job xxxvi. 8. Lam. iii 6, 7. Rom vi. 20, 21. t lxviii 6. 18. cvi. 43. Is. lxiii. 10, 11. Lam iii 39 —42. v. 15—17. u lxxiii. 24 2 Chr. xxv. 15, 16. xxxiii. 10 Prov. i. 25. 30, 31. Is v. 19. Jer. xliv. 16. Luke vii. 30. xvi. 14. Rom i. 28. x Ex. ii. v. 18, 19 Judg. x. 16 —18. xvi. 21. 30. Neh. ix. 37 Is. li 19, 20. 23. lii. 5. Lam. v. 5, 6. Luke xv. 14—17. y xviii 40. 41. cxliii. 4 2 Kings vi. 26. 27. 33. Is lxiii. 5. z 6. 19. 28. xviii. 6. cxvi. 3 — 6. Ex. iii. 7, 8. Judg. iv. 3. &c. vi. 6—10. x. 10, &c. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 12, 13. 18, 19. Jer. xxxi. 18—20. a 10. Job iii. 5. x. 21, 22 xv. 22. 30. xix 8. xxxiii. 30. xlii. 10—12. Is. xlii 16. xlix. 9. lx. 1—3. Eph. v. 8. 1 Pet. ii. 9.——b cii. 20 cv. 19, 20 cxvi. 16. cxlvi 7. Job xxxvi. 8. Is. lxi. 1. Jer. lii. 31—34. Zech ix. 11, 12. Acts v. 19. 25 xii. 7—10. xvi 26.——c 8. 21. 31. cxvi. 17—19.——d Judg. xvi. 3. Is xlv. 1, 2. Mic. ii. 13.

NOTES.

PSALM CVII. V. 1—7. It is most probable that this psalm was composed by David, if he indeed were the author of the two preceding psalms: as those relate to the Lord's dealings with Israel: and this calls our attention to his providential care of mankind in general. But, whilst we primarily notice the *literal* sense, we shall also perceive that the instances which are selected are pictures or similitudes of the blessings pertaining to salvation. There seems in these verses some reference to the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt, their wanderings in the desert, and their settlement in Canaan; yet they do not exactly, or exclusively, apply to these events. The Israelites were not gathered out of the lands, from the east, west, north, and south: but they were redeemed from the power of Pharaoh; and wandered in the wilderness, and hungered, and thirsted, and were led far round, yet in a right way; (*Notes, Deut.* viii;) and at length were settled in a land where cities were ready prepared for them, and where they were abundantly satisfied with every earthly blessing. The case of travellers in those countries seems also referred to. A number of people, collected from all quarters, march together through the sandy deserts: where they are liable to be assaulted by free-booters, and are in danger of losing their way, or of perishing by hunger and thirst. But when they are in trouble, and call upon the Lord, he delivers them from their enemies and dangers, and guides them in his providence to the cities which they mean to inhabit. The words likewise exactly describe the case of those whom the Lord hath redeemed from the bondage of Satan, and collected from all parts of the earth; who pass through the world as a perilous and dreary wilderness; who are often ready to faint through troubles, fears, and temptations; who learn to call upon the Lord in every danger and difficulty, and are guarded, fed, and refreshed, till they at length arrive at that city which the Lord hath prepared for their habitation; where their longing souls will be for ever satisfied with his goodness. Perhaps the recovery of the Jews from their dispersions was also predicted; as the conclusion of the foregoing psalm seems peculiarly applicable to their present condition. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 8, 9. "They shall acknowledge" (or "let them "acknowledge,) to JEHOVAH, his mercy, and his wonders to the children of Adam, &c." The kindness and compassion of God to the sons of fallen Adam, in abundantly supplying their temporal wants, demands the return of admiring praise and thanksgiving: but his mercy, in providing for the spiritual wants of perishing sinners, and thus satisfying the longing soul, and filling the hungry soul with goodness, is most astonishing: and to eternity every one of the redeemed, with all his powers, will celebrate this goodness of the Lord, and his wonderful works to the sons of Adam. Though our translation is not strictly literal: yet the meaning of it is implied, and it has a peculiar animation, as repeated after every instance of the divine goodness and mercy.

V. 10—16. The Psalmist next selected the case of *prisoners delivered from their confinement.* We are led to conceive of persons shut up in a dark and unwholesome dungeon, barricadoed on every side by gates of brass and bars of iron, and loaded with galling fetters, condemned to die, and hourly expecting to be led to execution. This they are supposed to have merited by their crimes, having both violated the laws of man, and rebelled against the word of God. In this deplorable condition, bowed down with pain and anguish of spirit, they are represented as praying to the Lord; and by his power over the hearts and affairs of men marvellously set at liberty. Multitudes through successive generations have doubtless experienced such an unmerited and unexpected escape: and the deliverance of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon, must

17 ¶ [e] Fools, [f] because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted.

18 Their soul [g] abhorreth all manner of meat; and [h] they draw near unto the gates of death.

19 Then [i] they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, *and* he saveth them out of their distresses.

20 He [k] sent his word and [l] healed them, and [m] delivered *them* from their destructions.

21 Oh [n] that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men!

22 And let them [o] sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and [p] declare his works with * rejoicing.

23 ¶ They that [q] go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters;

24 These see the works of the LORD, and [r] his wonders in the deep.

25 For [s] he commandeth, and † raiseth the stormy wind, which [t] lifteth up the waves thereof.

26 They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths; [u] their soul is melted because of trouble.

27 They reel to and fro, and [x] stagger like a drunken man, [y] and ‡ are at their wit's end.

28 Then [z] they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses.

29 He [a] maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.

30 Then are they glad because they be quiet; so [b] he bringeth them unto their desired haven.

e xiv. 1. xcii. 6. Prov. i. 22. vii. 7 22.
f xxxviii. 1—8. Num xi. 33, 34. xii. 10—13. xxi. 5—9. Is. lvii. 17, 18. Jer. ii. 19.
g Job xxxiii 19—22.
h ix. 13. lxxxvii. 3. Is. xxxviii. 10.
i 6. 13. 28. xxx. 8—12. xxxiv. 4—6 lxxviii. 34, 35. cxvi. 4—8. Jer xxxiii 3.
k cxlvii. 15. 19. 2 Kings xx. 4, 5.
l Matt. viii. 8.
m xxx. 2, 3. ciii. 3, 4. cxlvii. 3. Num. xxi. 8, 9. Job xxxiii. 23—26.
n xlix. 15 lvi 13. Job xxxiii. 28—30.
o 8. 15. 31. 2 Chr. xxxii. 25. Luke xvii. 18.
p l. 14. cxvi. 12. 17. Lev. vii. 12. Heb. xiii. 15. 1 Pet. ii. 5. 9.
q ix. 11. lxxiii. 28. cv. 1, 2 cxviii. 17 Is xii 4.
* Heb. *singing*.
r xcv. 5. civ 24—27. Job xxxviii. 8—11
s cxxxv. 7. cxlviii. 8. Jon. i. 4, &c.
† Heb *maketh to stand*
t xciii. 3, 4 Matt. viii. 24 John vi. 18.
u xxii. 14. cxix 28. 2 Sam. xvii. 10. Is xiii. 7. Nah. ii. 10.
x Job xii. 25 Is. xix. 14. xxix. 9, 10.
y Acts xxvii 1—5. 20.
‡ Heb *all their wisdom is swallowed up*. Job xxxvii. 20. Is. xix. 3. *Marg*.
z 6, 13. 19. Jon. i. 5, 6. 14. Matt. viii. 25. Acts xxvii. 23—25.
a lxv. 7. lxxxix. 9. Jon. i. 15. Matt. viii. 26. Mark iv 30—41. Luke viii 23—25.
b John vi. 21.
q xlvii. 7. Ez. xxvii. 25. Acts xxvii. 9, &c. Rev. xviii. 17.

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occur to the mind of the attentive reader, with many particular instances recorded in Scripture. (*Notes*, 2 *Chr.* xxxiii. 13—16. *Marg. Ref.*)—But it is also a shadow of the sinner's deliverance from a far worse confinement. By rebellion against God men are brought under the condemnation of his holy law; and Satan, by means of their lusts, hath obtained dominion over them, and holds them fast in the most miserable bondage. This the awakened sinner discovers, and becomes sensible of his guilt, misery, and danger; and having struggled hard, but in vain, for deliverance, he finds there is no help for him but in the mercy and grace of God. For this he seeks by earnest prayer; and thus receives liberty and peace. Let us revert to the poor prisoner before described; if a free pardon be sent him, his chains are soon knocked off; the gates and bars of iron and brass fly open; the jailer hath no longer power to detain him; the gloom, horror, and despair of the dungeon are exchanged for the cheerful light of the sun and the wholesome air; the company of malefactors, the presence of the keeper, the rattling of chains, the expectation of the executioner with the implements of death, and the squalid attire of a prison, are changed for his own house, the society and congratulations of his friends and relatives, and all the comforts of liberty. All this is in a measure the case with the true Christian in this world: but at the resurrection, when the gates of the grave shall be thrown open, and sin and death shall be finally done with, his deliverance and his gratitude will together be perfected.

V. 17—20. The next selected case is that of *recovery from sickness*, when it hath been the effect of licentiousness, or iniquity: for though all diseases spring from sin, yet some are more immediately the effect of men's personal transgressions. The righteous providence of God hath connected several loathsome and dreadful diseases with different kinds of excessive or forbidden gratifications; yet men rush forward without regard to consequences: thus "Fools, because of their transgressions, are afflicted." Loss of strength and of appetite are attended with excessive pain, and death presents itself before their affrighted minds: then the most profane will sometimes cry unto the Lord; and though their prayer is often the mere instinctive voice of distress, and only means "torment me not;" yet he frequently hears them, and unexpectedly restores their health and strength. Probably Christ by his powerful word healed some of this description when he was on earth: (*John* v. 14:) and all his miracles were emblematic of his healing the worse diseases of our souls. We are, as fallen creatures, prone to pride, ambition, envy, malice, covetousness, and sensual lusts: but most men exceedingly increase these fatal distempers by habits of indulgence. The convinced sinner knows that these maladies must terminate in misery, unless cured; and he finds by experience, that he can increase, but cannot remedy them: he even feels his carnal inclination recoil at those things which should be the nourishment of his soul, and he often apprehends that his destruction is inevitable. But he cries unto the Lord in this emergency, and by His word and Spirit his soul is gradually restored to health and holiness.

V. 23—30. The case of *mariners* is next selected. They transact their business upon the unstable and tempestuous ocean, and there witness scenes, and experience deliverances, of which others can scarcely form a conception. When, at His command whom the winds and waves obey, a storm ariseth; their situation becomes most tremendous, and it seems every moment as if the vessel must be swallowed up by the raging billows. In this perilous situation the most courageous are often dismayed: they are tossed about by the violent motion of the vessel, as if they staggered through drunkenness; and being baffled in all their efforts, "all their wisdom is swallowed up," and the most skilful and experienced are at a loss what further to do, to escape impending death. But when they call upon the Lord in their distress, they are often rescued, as from the very jaws of destruction, by the ceasing of the storm, or some unexpected way of escape; and their

31 [c] Oh that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* [d] his wonderful works to the children of men!

32 Let them [e] exalt him also [f] in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders.

33 ¶ He [g] turneth rivers into a wilderness, and [h] the water-springs into dry ground:

34 [i] A fruitful land into * barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein.

35 He [k] turneth the wilderness into a standing water, and dry ground into water-springs.

36 And [l] there he maketh the hungry to dwell, that they may prepare [m] a city for habitation;

37 And [n] sow the fields, and plant vineyards, [o] which may yield fruits of increase.

38 [p] He blesseth them also, so that they are multiplied greatly; and [q] suffereth not their cattle to decrease.

39 Again, [r] they are minished and brought low, through [s] oppression, affliction, and sorrow.

40 He [t] poureth [u] contempt upon princes, and [x] causeth them to wander in the †wilderness, *where there is* no way.

41 Yet [y] setteth he the poor on high ‡ from affliction, and [z] maketh *him* families like a flock.

42 The [a] righteous shall see *it*, and rejoice: and all [b] iniquity shall stop her mouth.

43 Whoso [c] *is* wise, and will observe these *things*, even [d] they shall understand the loving-kindness of the LORD.

c 8. 15 21. ciii. 2. cv. Hos. ii. 8. Jonah i. 16 ii. 9 Mic. vi. 4, 5. Rom. i. 20, 21. 2 Tim. ii. 2. Heb. xiii. 15
d lxxi. 17 lxxii. 18, 19. lxxvii 11. 14. cv. 2. Rev. xv 3
e xviii. 46. xlvi. 10. xcix. 5 9. Ex. xv. 2. Is. xii 4 xxv. 1.
f xxii 22 25. xl. 9, 10. cxl. 1. cxix. 46. Acts iv. 8--12
g 1 Kings xvii. 1 Is. xiii. 19—21. xix. 5 — 10. xxxiv 9, 10. xlii 15. xliv 27. l. 2. Ez xxx. 12 Joel i. 20. Nah i. 4 Zeph. ii. 9 13.
h 1 Kings xviii 5 Jer. xiv. 3 Am. iv. 7, 8.
i Gen xiii 10 13 xix. 25. Deut xxix. 25 —28 Is xxxii. 13—15.
* Heb *saltness*. Gen. xiv. 3. Ez. xlvii 11.
k cxiv. 8. Num. xxi. 16 — 18. 2 Kings iii 16—20. Is. xxxv. 6, 7 xli. 17—19. xliv. 3—5. Ez. xlvii. 6—12——l cxlvi. 7. Luke i. 53.——m 7. Acts xvii. 26.——n Is. xxxvii. 30. Jer. xxix. 5. xxxi. 5. Ez. xxviii. 26. Am ix. 13—16.
o lxv 9—13. Gen. xxvi. 12. Joel i. 10—12. Hag. i. 5, 6. 10, 11 ii. 16 — 19. Zech. viii. 12. Acts xiv. 17. 1 Cor. iii 7. 2 Cor ix. 10.
p cxxviii. 1—6. Gen. i. 28. ix. 1. xii. 2. xvii. 16 20. Ex. i. 7. Deut. xxviii. 4. 11. xxx. 9. Jer. xxx. 19. Ez. xxxvii. 26.
q cxliv. 13, 14. Gen. xxx. 43. xxxi 9. Ex. ix. 3—7. xii. 38. Deut. vii. 14. Prov. x. 22.
r xxx. 6, 7. Gen. xlv. 11. Ruth i. 20, 21. 1 Sam. ii. 5—7. 2 Kings iv. 8. viii. 3. Job i 10, &c.
s Ex. i 13, 14. ii. 23, 24. Judg. vi. 3—6. 2 Kings x. 32. xiii 7. 22. xiv. 26. 2 Chr. xv. 5, 6 Jer. li. 33, 34.
t Job xii. 21 Is. xxiii. 8. 9.
u lxxviii. 66 Ex. viii. 3. 17 24. Josh. x. 24—26. Judg. i. 6, 7. iv 21. 1 Sam. v. 9. vi. 4. 1 Kings xxi 19. 2 Kings ix. 35—37 Dan. iv. 33. v. 5, 6. 18, &c Acts xii. 23.——x 4. Job xii 24. Jer. xlii. 15—18.——r Or, *void place*.——y cxiii 7, 8. Ruth iv. 14—17. 1 Sam. ii 8 Esth viii 15—17. Job v. 11. viii 7 xi. 15—19. xlii. 10--12. Jer. lii. 31—34 Jam v. 11.——‡ Or, *after* ——z cxxviii. 6. Gen. xxxiii. 5—7. xlviii 11. 1 Sam. ii. 21. Job xxi. 11 xlii. 16 Pro xvii 6. Is xlix. 20—22.——a lii. 6 lxiii. 11. Job xxii 19 Is. lxvi. 10, 11. 14 - —b lxiii 11 cxii 10 Ex. xi. 7. Job v. 16 Prov x. 11 Rom. iii. 19.——c xxviii. 5. lxiv 9. Is. v. 12. Jer. ix. 12. Dan. x 12. Hos. xiv. 9.——d 1. 23. Jer ix. 24. Eph. iii. 18, 19.

terror is succeeded by proportionable gladness, when they arrive safe at their destined harbour. This too may be a picture of those terrors and that distress of conscience, which many experience when they first apply their minds to religion: and of those deep scenes of trouble and temptation, which some, far more than others, pass through, in their subsequent course; in which, like Job, they seem to be set up as marks, at which Satan is permitted to shoot all his fiery darts; and by every suggestion to fill them with hard thoughts of God, and desperate conclusions concerning themselves. These are, like the mariner, exposed to tempests unknown to others; and are sometimes almost at their wits' end: yet in answer to their cries, the Lord turns their storms into a calm, and causes their trials to terminate in gladness and praise.

V. 31, 32. 'O that they who are thus unexpectedly 'preserved, would never forget to make their thankful 'acknowledgments to the LORD for his singular kindness; 'but every where proclaim what wonders he hath done for 'them! Let them magnify his power and goodness in 'the great assemblies of the people, especially in his 'temple. Let them praise him in the supreme court 'of the kingdom; that judges and governors may be ex-'cited to make Him their trust and confidence.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 33—43. The righteous Lord effects changes as he pleases, in the face of nature and the affairs of nations; drying up rivers, and turning well watered fertile countries into barren deserts, for the wickedness of their inhabitants. Thus Canaan itself is now remarkable for its sterility. On the contrary, other regions, which were barren and uncultivated, in the course of his providence become most fruitful and flourishing; where colonies of destitute person build cities, cultivate the lands, and are blessed and increased exceedingly. The casting of the Jews out of the church, and the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles, answer to this picture. The well-watered and fruitful soil is become dry and barren: while the wilderness is filled with pools of water and wells of salvation. (*Marg. Ref.*) The Gospel flourished for a time exceedingly amongst the Gentiles; but it has been brought low and minished, in different places, through oppression and persecution, and internal corruptions or divisions: yet contempt hath repeatedly been poured upon persecuting princes; and even upon such as, pretending friendship, have attempted to lord it over God's heritage; so that they have been bewildered and infatuated in their counsels, like men who have lost their way; whilst the poor and persecuted church of God has been revived from the dust, and again increased and prospered. This will be more eminently the case in future times, when the righteous will see it and rejoice, and iniquity will be silenced. In the mean while, the wise will notice these varied dispensations of Providence, and will learn to walk in those ways, in which the loving-kindness of the Lord may be understood and experienced. 'A truly 'wise person will treasure up in his heart the contents of 'this most instructive and delightful psalm. By so doing, 'he will fully understand—the weakness and wretchedness 'of man, and the loving-kindness of God; who, not for 'our merits, but for his mercy's sake, dispelleth our 'ignorance, breaketh off our sins, healeth our infirmities, 'preserveth us in temptations, placeth us in the church, 'enricheth us with his grace, sheltereth us from persecu-'tion, blesseth us in time, and will crown us in eternity.' (*Horne.*).

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—22.

Wherever we turn our thoughts, we perceive the effects

PSALM CVIII.

David earnestly praises God, 1—5. *He fervently prays for help, and expects great success according to the promises of God to him,* 6—13.

of the Lord's goodness and mercy, which should excite our grateful praises: but the redeemed alone will unfeignedly thank him even for providential benefits. The Bible instructs us, and faith will enable us, to perceive the hand of God in those events which unbelief ascribes to chance, to second causes, or subordinate agents. Whatever means or instruments are employed, the Lord is the great Agent. We should therefore mark his operations in the ordinary occurrences of life, and render him thanks for every instance of his kindness to us and to our connexions.—When we have been preserved or delivered from hostile invasions, and the assaults of robbers and assassins; when we are brought safe home from tedious or perilous journeys; when provided for with things needful for our bodies, or placed in convenient habitations, or enjoying domestic comforts; how good and right is it that we should "praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works" to us, the sinful children of fallen Adam! But, alas! we are most apt to forget the hand of God, when every thing corresponds to our wishes: and therefore he brings us into trouble and danger, that we may feel our dependence, and call upon him for deliverance; and that, when our desires are granted, we may either render him our tribute of praise, or be left inexcusable in our neglect. —Sin is always to be considered as the source of all our troubles; which we might justly be left to struggle with, or to sink under, without help from that God, against whom we have rebelled, and whose counsel we have rejected. But there are many afflictions, that are genuine consequences of men's crimes. Such are especially, in most instances, the horrors of a prison, and the prospect of an ignominious death! Yet, alas, how many are in this dreadful situation, brought down with anguish of heart, and having none to help them! And when such persons unexpectedly obtain liberty and all its comforts, how should they praise the Lord for his goodness to them! Yet, alas! it is but seldom that their sorrows and terrors are productive of genuine humiliation before God, and fervent prayer unto him: and therefore they commonly return to their former courses, and only perish at last more inexcusable and unpitied. Thus also infatuated multitudes entail upon themselves months and years of disease and pain, by moments of licentious indulgence: and if, in answer to their cries of distress, the Lord bring them back from the gates of death, surely they should praise him for his goodness, and sacrifice to him the sacrifices of thanksgiving, with fervency equal to their great unworthiness of such favour, and proportioned to the consequences of dying in such a manner. Yet whilst thousands are cured in our hospitals and by various charities, as well as in other ways, of diseases contracted by licentiousness and excess: it is to be feared that, a very small number excepted, they generally manifest their ingratitude by returning to their former excess; and the event generally illustrates the benevolence as well as wisdom and piety of fervently exclaiming, "Oh, that they would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men."

V. 23—43.

The perils to which seamen are exposed, are not commonly the effect of their own transgressions: but as they do their business in great waters, they see so much of the wonderful works of God, that their too general irreligion forms one of the most lamentable demonstrations of the depravity of the human heart. If we were strangers to these truths and facts, we should expect that they who had once beheld the storm arise in obedience to the Creator's will, and had experienced the horrors of the tremendous scene, which baffles all description, with that dismay and astonishment, which must be inseparable from the idea of being every moment liable to be swallowed up by the raging billows, without being able to do any thing to prevent it; who in their extreme distress had cried unto the Lord for help, and had in some marvellous manner been unexpectedly preserved, and restored in peace to their desired haven; that they would certainly unite fervent gratitude with their overflowing gladness; and not only employ their tongues, but spend the remnant of their days, to the glory of their great Preserver, "Exalting him in the congregation of the people, and praising him in the assembly of the elders." This ought uniformly to be the case: but how evident is the general and awful reverse! Indeed the surprising changes, which are continually taking place in the affairs of nations, families, and individuals; whilst some are cast down from the summit of prosperity, and others advanced from the depth of adversity, evince our absolute dependence upon God in every thing, and show that neglect of him, or rebellion against him, are as unreasonable as they are wicked. The fertility and populousness of nations depend on his sovereign will, and he effects what changes he pleases, for the display of his justice, or his mercy. In his providence, a few poor hungry outcasts have often migrated into a waste howling wilderness, and have there been enabled to build cities, and to cultivate the before barren desert; and so have become prosperous, and multiplied exceedingly; yet, after a time perhaps affluence has introduced luxury and impiety; for their punishment they have been minished and brought low by oppression and public calamities. He, who set them up when afflicted and poor, pours contempt upon them when they are become powerful princes, and perhaps reduces them to their former abject state. The righteous, beholding these judgments of God, will rejoice in his just and gracious sovereignty: and thus, from time to time, iniquity receives a check, and infidelity stands confuted: and he that is truly wise will observe these things, and will be encouraged in trusting in, and waiting for, the loving-kindness of the Lord. But the same persons will see still more of the wisdom, power, and love of God, in his dealings with his church of redeemed sinners, whom he hath gathered from the east, the west, the north, and the south, to be unto him a peculiar people. Having redeemed them from the power of the enemy, he guides them through this desolate wilderness to his holy habitation.

[a] A Song *or* Psalm of David.

O God, [b] my heart is fixed; [c] I will sing and give praise, even with [d] my glory.

2 [e] Awake, psaltery and harp; [f] I *myself* will awake early.

3 I will [g] praise thee, O LORD, among the people: and I will sing praises unto thee among the nations.

4 For [h] thy mercy *is* great above the heavens: and thy truth *reacheth* unto the * clouds.

5 [i] Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: and [k] thy glory above all the earth;

6 That [l] thy beloved may be delivered: [m] save *with* thy right hand, [n] and answer me.

7 God hath [o] spoken in his holiness; [p] I will rejoice, I will divide [q] Shechem, and mete out [r] the valley of Succoth.

8 [s] Gilead *is* mine; Manasseh *is* mine; [t] Ephraim also *is* the strength of mine head; [u] Judah *is* my lawgiver;

9 [x] Moab *is* my wash-pot; over Edom will [y] I cast out my shoe; [z] over Philistia will I triumph.

10 Who will bring me into the strong city? [a] who will lead me into Edom?

11 *Wilt* not *thou*, O God, [b] *who* hast cast us off? and wilt not thou, O God, [c] go forth with our hosts?

12 [d] Give us help from trouble: [e] for vain *is* the help of man.

a lxviii. *title*. b lvii 7—11. c xxx.12. xxxiv 1. civ.33.cxxxviii. 1.cxlv.1,2.cxlvi. 1, 2 Ex. xv. 1. d xvi. 9 lxxi. 8. 15. 23, 24. cxlv. 21. e xxxiii. 2 lxix. 30. lxxxi. 2. xcii 1—4. Judg. v. 12. f lvii. 8. ciii. 22. g xxii. 22. 27. h xcvi. 10. cxvii. i xcii. 5. cxxxviii. 4, 5. Zeph. iii. 14 20. k xxxvi.5 lxxxv. 10, 11. lxxxix. 2. 5. ciii. 11. Is. lv. 9. Mic. vii. 18—20. Eph. ii. 4—7. * Or, *skies*. l viii. 1. xxi. 13. lvii. 5.11.cxlviii. 13. 1 Chr. xxix. 10—13. k lxxii. 19. Is. vi. 3. Matt. vi. 9, 10. 13. l lx. 5—12. Deut. xxxiii.12. 2 Sam. xii. 25. Matt. iii. 17. xvii. 5. Rom. i. 7. Eph. i. 6. Col. iii. 12.

m xxxv. 1—3.liv. 1. xcviii. 1, 2. cxliv. 5—7 Ex. xv 6 Is li.9—11. n 1 Kings xviii. 24. 26. 29.36, 37. 2 Chr xxxii. 20 —22. Is. lxv. 24. Jer. xxxiii. 3. o lxxxix. 35, 36. Am. iv. 2. p xvi.9—11.2 Sam. vii.20, &c. 1 Pet. i 3—8. 2 Pet. i. 3, 4. 1 John ii. 25. q Josh. xvii. 7. xx. 7. xxiv. 1. r Gen xxxiii. 17. Judg. viii. 5, 6. s Josh xiii.8—11. 2 Sam.ii.8, 9.v.5. t Deu. xxxiii. 17. 1 Sam. xxviii 2. u cxxii. 5 Gen. xlix. 10. x lx.8—10 2 Sam. viii. 1, 2 John xiii. 8. 14. y Ruth iv. 7, 8. z 2 Sam. xxi.15—22 Is.xiv 29—32. a xx 6—8 lx. *title*. Is. lxiii. 1 —6 Jer. xlix. 7 —16. Ob. 3, 4. b xliv. 9. 1 Sam. xxxi &c. c Num x. 9. Deut. xx. 3, 4. 1 Sam. xvii. 26. 16. 2 Chr. xiii. 12. xiv. 11. xx. 15 —1 xx. 1, &c —— e cxlvi. 3—5. Job ix. 13. Is xxx. 3—5. xxxi 3. Jer. xvii. 5—8. Lam. iv. 17.

Having caused them to hunger and thirst after righteousness, when they were ready to faint and perish, he supplied their wants from his abundant stores; he taught them to seek help from him, and will never leave them, till he hath fully satisfied their longing souls with his goodness. From bondage, terror, and the borders of despair, he brings them forth to liberty, to confidence, and comfort. He heals their diseases, restores their strength and vigour, and even removes those troubles which they have brought upon themselves by their own folly. He preserves them through the storms of temptation and persecution: he speaks peace, and commands a calm to their souls, when they are ready to give up all for lost. Whilst they are steering to the haven where they would be, they will be praising the Lord for his goodness, celebrating his wonderful works for them, sacrificing the sacrifices of thanksgiving, declaring his works with gladness, and exalting him in the congregation of his people. At length their souls will arrive at their expected rest; and at the appointed season the brazen gates and iron bars of death will be burst by the power of their redeeming God: but who can describe their joy and gratitude, when "mortality shall thus "be swallowed up of life!" Let us also remember to praise our God, for turning the wilderness, that we Gentiles inhabited, into a fruitful land, and opening for us the wells of salvation. Let us pray that the Jewish nation, which has been so long a barren desert, may again be watered with his grace, and bring forth the fruits of faith and holiness. Let all the Lord's ministers and people cultivate their fields and vineyards, their own souls, and those of their families and congregations; that, being blessed exceedingly, the church may yield more abundantly "the "fruits of increase." Let us pray for the revival of religion in those places where the church is minished and brought low through oppression, or corrupted with superstition and error: and that God would convert, or pour contempt upon, all those princes or people who oppose the spread of his pure Gospel, that they may lose their labour, and be baffled in all their devices; and that he would replenish the poor in spirit and afflicted, and increase every one of his people into families, like large flocks of sheep. Then shall the righteous behold and rejoice, and iniquity shall be disgraced and repressed; and the wise observer will more and more understand and admire the loving-kindness of the Lord.

NOTES.

PSALM CVIII. V. 1. (*Notes*, lvii. 7—11.) This psalm consists of the latter part of the fifty-seventh psalm, and the latter part of the sixtieth, with no material alteration. The fifty-seventh was composed when David fled from Saul in the cave: and begins with grievous complaints, which are here omitted. The sixtieth was written after David had for some time reigned over all Israel, and when he was engaged in war with the Syrians and others. It also begins with complaints of the calamities to which Israel had been exposed; and these too are left out. So that this as a psalm is more in the strain of confidence, gratitude, and joyful hope, than either of those from which it is taken; and so, more suited to a season of thanksgiving for past mercies, and prayer for further deliverance: and it is probable it was compiled for that purpose. *Even with my glory.* 'My tongue, because it chiefly setteth forth the 'glory of God.'

V. 4. 'My thankfulness should be as boundless as 'thy mercy, which infinitely transcends all my expressions, 'and hath nothing equal to it, but thy faithfulness and 'truth.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 5. 'Let all the world see thy judgments, in that thou 'art God over all, and so confess that thou art glorious.'

V. 6. (*Notes*, lx. 5—12.) 'By thy mighty power accompany my arms, that I may be an instrument of 'delivering thy beloved people from their oppressors." (*Bp. Patrick.*) The word *beloved* is plural.

V. 7. 'As he hath spoken to Samuel concerning me, 'so he will show himself constant and holy in his pro-'mise; so that these nations following shall be subject to 'me.' Nathan also had just before delivered a very encouraging message from God to David. (2 *Sam.* vii.)

13 [f] Through God we shall do valiantly: for he *it is that* shall [g] tread down our enemies.

f xviii. 29—34. cxviii. 6—13. cxliv 1 1 Cor. xv. 10. Eph. vi. 10—18.
g xviii 42. lx. 12. Judg. xv. 8 Is. xxv. 10. lxiii. 3. Rom. xvi. 20.

PSALM CIX.

David, as the type of Christ, complains of the slanders, deceit, and malice of his enemies, 1—5. He predicts the doom of Judas, by devoting one of them, in particular, to destruction, 6—20. He complains of his sufferings, prays for relief, and determines to praise the Lord, 21—31.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

HOLD [a] not thy peace, [b] O God of my praise;

2 For [c] the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of * the deceitful †are opened against me: they have spoken against me [d] with a lying tongue.

3 They [e] compassed me about also with words of hatred; and [f] fought against me without a cause.

4 [g] For my love they are my adversaries: [h] but I *give myself unto* prayer.

a xxviii. 1. xxxv. 22, 23. lxxxiii. 1. Is. xlii. 14.
b cxviii. 28. Ex. xv. 2. Deut. x. 21. Jer. xvii. 14.
c xxxi. 13. 18. lxiv. 3, 4. cxl. 3. 2 Sam. xv 3—8. xvii. 1, &c. Pro. xv. 28. Matt. xxvi. 59—62.
* Heb. *of deceit.*
† Heb. *have opened* themselves.
d cxx. 3. Pro. vi. 17. xii. 19. Jer. ix 3. 5.
e xvii. 11. xxii. 12. lxxxviii. 17. 2 Sam. xvi. 7, 8. Hos. xi. 12.
f xxxv. 7. 20. lix. 3, 4. lxix. 4. 1 Sam. xix. 4, 5. xxvi. 18. 2 Sam. xv. 12. John xv. 24, 25.
g xxxv 7. 12. xxxviii. 20. 2 Sam. xiii. 39. John x. 32. 2 Cor. xii. 15.
h lv. 16, 17. lxix. 12, 13. 2 Sam. xv. 31, 32. Dan. vi. 10. Luke vi. 11, 12. xxiii. 34.

5 And [i] they have rewarded me evil for good, [k] and hatred for my love.

6 ¶ [l] Set thou a wicked man over him; [m] and let ‡ Satan stand at his right hand.

7 When he shall be judged, let him § be condemned: [n] and let his prayer become sin.

8 [o] Let his days be few; *and* [p] let another take his ‖ office.

9 Let [q] his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow.

10 Let [r] his children be continually vagabonds, and beg: let them seek *their bread* also out of their desolate places.

11 Let [s] the extortioner catch all that he hath; and [t] let the stranger spoil his labour.

12 Let there be [u] none to extend mercy unto him: neither let there be any [x] to favour his fatherless children.

13 Let [y] his posterity be cut off; *and* in the generation following let [z] their name be blotted out.

14 Let [a] the iniquity of his fathers be remembered with the LORD; and [b] let

i xxxv. 12. Gen. xliv. 4. Prov. xvii. 13.
k lv. 12—15. 2 Sam. xv. 12. 31. Mark xiv. 44, 45 Luke vi. 16 xxii. 47, 48. John xiii. 18.
l Mat. xxvii. 4.
m Zech. iii. 1. John xiii. 2 27.
‡ Or, *an adversary.* Mat. v. 25.
§ Heb. *go out guilty,* or *wicked.* Rom. iii. 19. Gal. iii. 10.
n 2 Sam. xv. 7, 8. Pro. xv. 8. xxi. 27. xxviii. 9. Is. i. 15. lxvi. 3. Matt. xxiii. 14.
o lv. 23. Matt. xxvii. 5.
p Acts i. 16—20.
‖ Or, *charge.*
q Ex. xxii. 24. Jer. xviii. 21. Lam. v. 3.
r xxxvii. 25. Gen. iv. 12—14. 2 Sam. iii. 29. 2 Kings v. 27. Job xxiv. 8—12. xxx. 3—9. Is. xvi. 2.
s Job v. 5. xviii. 9. xx. 18—20.
t Deu xxviii. 29. 33, 34. 50. 51. Judg. vi. 3—6.
u Is. xxvii. 11. Luke vi. 38. Jam. ii. 13.
x cxxxvii. 8, 9. Is xiii. 18. Mat. xxvii. 25. Luke xi. 50.
y xxxvii. 28. 1 Sam. ii. 31—33. iii. 13. 2 Kings x. 10, 11. Job xviii. 19. Is. xiv. 20—22. Jer. xxii 30.
z Deut ix. 14.

xxv. 19. xxix. 20. Pro. x. 7.——a Ex. xx. 5 Lev. xxvi. 39. 2 Sam. iii. 29. xxi 1. 8, 9. Matt. xxiii 31—36.——b 2 Kings viii 27. ix. 27. x. 13, 14. xi. 1.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We may with great utility select passages from different psalms, to assist our devotions, encourage our expectations, or enliven our gratitude, in our private concerns, or in those of the church and nation. When the heart is established in faith and love, the tongue being employed in grateful praises will be indeed our *glory:* and every endowment will become honourable and profitable to the possessor, in proportion as it is employed in the service and to the glory of God. They who can sincerely use the Psalmist's language of adoring praise, may pray with assured faith and hope for all the blessings of salvation; which are secured to them by the faithful promise and covenant of God, and will be effected by his powerful arm, and communicated from his everlasting love and mercy. Let them then expect from him help in every trouble, and victory in every conflict; till Satan and every enemy be bruised under their feet. O Lord, visit all our souls with this salvation, even with this favour which thou bearest to thy chosen people!

NOTES.

PSALM CIX. V. 1. Most expositors suppose that David composed this psalm, when persecuted by Saul, who was rendered more implacable by the base and malicious calumnies of Doeg and others: but some expressions favour the opinion that it was written when David fled from Absalom, and that Ahithophel, rather than Doeg, is the person principally referred to. "The God of my "praise;" 'whom I am accustomed to praise, and whom 'I take delight in praising.'

V. 2—4. David was most basely deceived by Absalom, whose insinuations tended to depreciate his character: and the cursings and revilings of Shimei, who charged him to his face with being the murderer of Saul and his family, were, no doubt, the echo of calumnies circulated against him among some of his subjects; whilst other slanders, as malicious and groundless, would be better calculated for different descriptions of men. Thus the minds of the people were alienated from their aged king; and they readily joined Absalom in levying war against him, *without a cause,* or *gratuitously,* when he had done nothing to deserve it, but entirely the contrary. His indulgent affection for Absalom was excessive: He had preferred and honoured Ahithophel, as his counsellor and friend: and he had spent his life in promoting the benefit of his people; and in pouring out his prayers for them: yet he was thus ungratefully used by all parties. David was very useful to Saul, and to Israel in general; and to some of those in particular, that joined in persecuting him: but he had never shown that affection for Saul, or that friendship to Doeg, which he had for Absalom and Ahithophel. In all these respects, however, he was only a type of Christ, the history of whose life and death is the best comment on the passage.

not the sin of his mother be [e] blotted out.

15 Let them be [d] before the LORD continually, that he may [e] cut off the memory of them from the earth

16 Because that [f] he remembered not to shew mercy, but [g] persecuted the poor and needy man, that he might even [h] slay the broken in heart.

17 As [i] he loved cursing, so let it come unto him: as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him.

18 As [k] he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment; [l] so let it come * into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones.

19 Let it be unto him [m] as the garment *which* covereth him, and for a girdle wherewith he is girded continually.

20 *Let* [n] this *be* the reward of mine adversaries from the LORD, and of [o] them that speak evil against my soul.

21 But [p] do thou for me, O GOD the Lord, for thy name's sake: because [q] thy mercy *is* good, deliver thou me.

22 For [r] I *am* poor and needy, and [s] my heart is wounded within me.

c Neh. iv. 5. Jer xviii. 23. d li. 9. xc. 8. Deut. xxxii 34. Jer ii. 22 Hos vii 2. Am viii. 7. e 13. xxxiv 16 Job xxiii. 17. Is. lxv 15. f 2 Sam. xvii. 1, 2. Matt. v 7. xviii 33—35 Jam ii 13. g x. 2. 14 Gen. xlii. 21. Job xix. 2, 3 21, 22 Matt xxvii 35—46 h xxxiv. 18 lxix. 20—29 2 Sam xvi 11 12 Mark xiv 33—36. i lii. 4, 5 lix 12, 13. Ez xxxv 6. Matt vii. 2. 2 Thes. ii 10 11 Rev. xvi 6. —k lxxiii 6. Job xxix 14. Col. iii. 8. 12 1 Pet v 5 —l Num. v. 22. 27 Job xx. 12—16. 20—23. Matt. xxvi. 24. xxvii. 3—5 Acts i. 18. 25.

* Heb. *within him.* m 18 29. xxxv. 26. cxxxii 18. n ii 5. 6 12. xxii. 8- 12. xl. 14 15. cx 1. 5. 6. 2 Sam xvi 23. xviii 32. 1 Kings ii. 44. Luke xix. 27 xxii 15 16. 1 Thes ii. 15, 16. o Mat xi 19 xii. 24. xxvi 66, 67. Mark ix 39. 1 Cor xii. 13. p xxxi 3 lxix. 29. lxxix 9, 10. cxliii 11, 12. John xvii 1. Phil. ii. 8—11. q xxxvi. 7—9. lxiii 3. lxxxvi. 5 15 r xxii 6 xl. 17. lxxxvi. 1 cii. 17—20. Matt viii. 20. 2 Cor. viii 9 —s 16 lxxxviii. 15, 16. cii. 4. 2 Kings iv. 27. Job vi. 4. Is. liii. 3. Luke xxii. 44 John xii 27.

V. 6—20. Whether David, when he wrote these verses, thought of Doeg, or Ahithophel, who (being a traitor,) more resembled Judas, as he also did in murdering himself, they are most certainly a prophetic denunciation of the doom which awaited the enemies of Christ, and Judas in particular: for the apostle has quoted one clause from the passage, with this remarkable introduction; "This Scripture must "needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost, by the "mouth of David, spake concerning Judas," &c. (8.) (*Acts* i. 16—20.) And the historian gives the exact words from the Septuagint, which translates the whole as an imprecation. Indeed the first verb is the only one which necessarily requires this construction, being literally rendered, "Set thou," &c. whereas all the other verbs may well be rendered in the future, as prophecies. Yet the first verb, being imperative, with the quotation in the Acts from the Septuagint, seems to imply, that sentence was prophetically denounced against the criminal or criminals, and not merely the event foretold. If David intended not only to predict, but to imprecate, the vengeance of God on apostate Ahithophel and his impenitent foes, as the first word seems to imply: it should be remembered, that "the Spirit of God spake by him;" taking occasion from his circumstances to predict in this alarming manner the miseries which would come on the enemies of the Messiah. But, unless we were under the same influence, the example is not suited for our imitation: and we ought by no means to adopt the words with reference to our own enemies; yet there can be no impropriety in reading or singing the psalm, as the sentence of our Judge on his implacable opposers and blasphemers, for a solemn warning to all who hear it; any more than in reading the latter part of the twenty-fifth chapter of St. Matthew, or the curses contained in the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth chapters of Deuteronomy. We may apply the whole passage to Judas, who ungratefully and basely sold Jesus to his enemies. He was left to become the servant to a most wicked and cruel master, when he hired himself to Caiaphas as the head of the Sanhedrim, who treated his remorse of conscience with such contempt as helped to hurry him into desperation: his tempter "Satan stood at "his right hand" as his *accuser*, and urged him to suicide: he hath ever since been considered as a guilty wretch by almost every body: he was expressly condemned by the Lord Jesus himself: his prayers were mere form and hypocrisy, and not the language of true repentance and faith, so that they aggravated his guilt: his days were few, and another was chosen to succeed to his apostleship. Probably he left a widow and fatherless children, on whom infamy and distress were entailed, in the righteous providence of God, till the family was extinct; and thus the sins of his progenitors were visited upon him and his descendants, in a remarkable manner. By betraying Christ, he refused his blessing, and avowed that he would not follow him in doing good; and preferred a curse and mischief, and as it were clothed himself with malevolence and treachery: the blessing of God would therefore be removed far from him; and his curse would cover and cleave to him as a garment, confine him as a girdle, enter into his bowels as water, and insinuate into his bones as oil; that is, it would be his only and his everlasting portion. The verses may also be applied to the Jewish nation; who having rejected and crucified Christ, were given up to be tyrannized over by one usurper after another, and to be infatuated by Satan in an unheard of manner. Under the divine condemnation for their obstinate unbelief, their hypocritical religion only added to their guilt, by rendering them more proud, bigoted, and furious in persecution of the Christians. Their civil and ecclesiastical state expired within forty years from the death of Christ, and their peculiar privileges were transferred to the Gentile converts. At the destruction of Jerusalem immense multitudes were slain; their widows and orphans were left to penury and misery; and their posterity have ever since been dispersed as vagabonds, and preyed upon by extortion and oppression, in almost every land: their name hath been, as it were, expunged from the records of the church: all the iniquities of the nation, from its origin, were visited on that and the succeeding generations; and the horrible imprecation, which the enraged persecutors of Christ uttered against themselves and their children, has been as awfully fulfilled. (*Notes, Deut.* xxviii. xxix.) The whole may also be applied to all the enemies of Christ and his church, in every age and nation. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 21. O GOD *the Lord.* Or, JEHOVAH *my Lord.*—*According to thy name.* 'As thou art named, merciful, 'and gracious, and long-suffering; so show thyself in 'effect.'

t cii. 11. cxliv. 4. 1 Chr. xxix 15. Job xiv. 2 Ec. vi. 12 viii 13 Jam iv 14
u cii 10 Ex. x. 13. 19.
x xxii. 15. xxxv. 13. 14 lxix 10. Matt. iv. 4. 2 Cor. xi. 27.
y xxxii. 3, 4. xxxviii 5–8. cii 4, 5. Job xix 20.
z xxxi. 11–13. xxxv. 15, 16. lxix. 9–12. 19, 20. Rom. xv. 3. Heb. xii. 2. xiii. 13.
a xxii. 6, 7. Job xvi 4. Is. xxxvii. 22. Matt. xxvii. 39, 40
b xl. 12, 13 cxix. 86. Heb. v. 7.

23 I am [t] gone like the shadow when it declineth: [u] I am tossed up and down as the locust.

24 My [x] knees are weak through fasting; and [y] my flesh faileth of fatness.

25 I became also [z] a reproach unto them: [a] *when* they looked upon me they shaked their heads.

26 [b] Help me, O LORD my God: O [c] save me according to thy mercy:

27 That [d] they may know that this *is* thy hand; *that* thou, LORD, hast done it.

c lvii. 1. lxix. 13. 16.——d lxiv. 8, 9. cxxvi. 2. Ex. viii. 19. Num. xvi 28–30 1 Sam xvii. 46, 47. 1 Kings xviii. 36, 37. Acts ii. 32–36. iv 16.

28 [e] Let them curse, but bless thou: when they arise, let them be ashamed; but [f] let thy servant rejoice.

29 Let mine adversaries [g] be clothed with shame; and let them cover themselves with their own confusion as with a mantle.

30 I will [h] greatly praise the LORD with my mouth; yea, [i] I will praise him among the multitude.

31 For [k] he shall stand at the right hand of [l] the poor, [m] to save *him* from [*] those that condemn his soul.

e 17. Num xxii. 12. xxiii. 20 23. 2 Sam. xvi. 10, 11–13
f Is. lxv 13–18. John xvi. 22. Heb. xii 2
g 17–19 vi. 10. xxxv. 26 cxxxii. 18. cxl. 9. Jer. xx. 11 Dan. xii. 2. Mic vii 16.
h vii. 17 ix 1. xxii. 22–25. lxxi. 22, 23 cviii. 1–3.
i xxii. 22–26. cvii. 32. cxi 1. cxvi. 12–18 cxxxviii. 1 4. Heb. ii. 12.
k xvi. 8. lxxiii. 23. cx. 5. cxxi. 5.
l 16 lxviii. 5. lxxii. 4 12, 13. cxl 12.
m x. 14. Ex xxii. 22–24. Prov. xxii. 22, 23. Ec. v. 8. Is. liv. 17. Acts iv. 10–12 v. 30, 31.——* Heb. *the judges of his soul.*

V. 22—24. (16.) David, when driven from his palace and city, and out of Judah; and when compelled to depend on a few loyal subjects for sustenance, was at least as *poor* as during his persecutions by Saul: and his heart was far more deeply "wounded within him," both in contrition and self-abasement, and by anguish of spirit. Being advanced in years, he considered himself, as "a shadow that declineth," towards the sun-set; and not having a settled home, but wandering from place to place, according to the tidings brought him of the conspirators, he resembled the locust, which is driven by the wind to east or west, without being able to keep any settled course. And besides fasting, in humbling himself before God, and through sorrow of heart, he wanted often suitable provision; and thus he grew feeble and emaciated. But the poverty and sorrow of the Saviour, "who had not "where to lay his head;" and all the events of his life, especially from his fasting in the wilderness, to the close of his sufferings on the cross, are most emphatically described.

V. 25. "I was also a reproach to them! They looked "on me! they shook their heads." (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 27. When God restored David to the throne in peace and honour, his hand was manifest in the surprising change, and his enemies were appalled and silenced: and when Christ was raised from the grave, and exalted to the right hand of the majesty in the heavens, the power of God was displayed to the conviction of millions in that and future ages, that the whole was his work.

V. 28—30. "They will curse, but thou wilt bless. "They shall be ashamed: but thy servant shall rejoice. "Mine adversaries shall be clothed with shame. They shall "cover themselves with their own confusion as with a man-"tle. I will greatly, &c." The whole is future in the original. And the language of assured hope, or of clear foreknowledge, in the depth of distress, is more suited to the case, both of the type and antitype, as well as more animated, than that of supplication.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Our incarnate Redeemer willingly became poor, and submitted to pain and suffering, for our sakes, to atone for our sins and effect our salvation: and when we consider, that the gifts, which his hands bestow, were purchased by "his heart being wounded within him," by his "being "wasted as a shadow, and driven about as a locust in the "wind; and by his knees being weak with fastings:" we should place the higher value on them, and express the more gratitude to him. Those wicked men who spread slanders and uttered blasphemies against him; who compassed him about with words of hatred, and fought against him without a cause; who were his adversaries because of his love to sinners, and rewarded him evil for good; did indeed fulfil the predictions of the Scriptures and the divine decrees: but as they were actuated by the most diabolical enmity to God and holiness, so they exposed themselves to the most awful vengeance. If then we in any measure bear the image and seek the honour of Christ, we must expect to be hated by persons of the same character, and must stand prepared to bear their malice, slanders, treachery, injustice, and ingratitude, with firmness, patience, and meekness, "considering him who endured "the contradiction of sinners against himself," and "giving "ourselves unto prayer." And if we duly estimate our obligations to the Redeemer, we shall not be reluctant to suffer for his sake and according to his will; whether he be pleased to prove us by poverty, sickness, persecution, or self-denying labours. In all our trials we should call upon the Lord, as "the God of our praise," in whom we glory, and whom we delight to worship: we should beg of him to deliver us for his own name's sake, and according to his abundant mercy; and that his hand may appear and be glorified. We need not regard the malicious imprecations of ungodly men: though they curse, he will bless those who trust in him, and they will rejoice when their enemies will be covered with confusion: for God will plead the cause of those that honour him by their animated praises; he will rebuke Satan, and every accuser, and "save them from those who would condemn their souls." But we must persevere in blessing those who curse us, and in endeavouring to overcome evil with good. Yet in the case of Judas, and the unbelieving Jews, the enemies of Christ and his people may read their own doom, if they continue impenitent. No language can express the miseries that are coming upon them, where there will be no remedy, no help, no mercy: for what are all the temporal afflictions, which can befal us or our descendants, compared with the everlasting wrath of God? Indeed enmity against Christ is likely to entail infamy and misery upon a man's family

PSALM CX.

A prophecy of the Messiah's kingdom, subjects, priesthood, triumphs, and sufferings, 1—7.

A Psalm of David.

a viii. 1. Matt. xxii. 42 — 46. Mark xii. 35—37. Luke xx. 41—44.
b Mark xvi. 19. Acts ii. 34—36. Eph. i 20—22 Heb. xii. 2. 1 Pet. iii. 22.
c ii. 6—9. 1 Cor. xv. 25. Heb. i. 3. 13. x. 12, 13.

THE [a] LORD said unto my Lord, [b] Sit thou at my right hand, [c] until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

2 The LORD shall send [d] the rod of thy strength [e] out of Zion: [f] rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.

3 [g] Thy people *shall be* willing in [h] the day of thy power, [i] in the beauties of holiness, * from the womb of the morning: [k] thou hast the dew of thy youth.

d Ex. vii.19. viii. 5. Mic vii. 14. Matt. xxviii. 18.—20. Acts ii. 34—37. Rom. i. 16. 1 Cor. i. 23, 24. 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. 1 Thes. ii. 13. 1 Pet i. 12.
e Is. ii. 3. Ez. xlvii. 1, &c. Mic iv. 5.
f ii. 8, 9. xxii. 28, 29. xlv. 5, 6.
g xxii. 27 Judg. v 2 Acts ii. 41. Rom. xi. 2—6. 2 Cor. viii. 1—3 12 16 Phil ii. 13. Heb. xiii. 21 —h Acts i. 8. ii. 33. iv. 12—14. xix. 20. 2 Cor. xiii. 4.—i xcvi. 9. Ez. xliii 12. Eph i. 4. 1 Thes. iv. 7. Tit. ii. 14.—* Or, *more than the womb of the morning thou shalt have*, &c—k Acts iv. 4. xxi. 20. Rev. vii. 9.

through successive generations: and they who show no mercy to the poor, especially to his needy and broken-hearted people, but treat them with insult and cruelty, must expect no mercy from God. Nay, when men reject the salvation of Christ, their very prayers are numbered among their sins. Satan will be permitted to tempt, to tyrannize over, to accuse, and to torment them, and their condemnation and ruin will be inevitable and sudden. In rejecting Christ, they refuse the blessing, and it will be far from them; the curse of the broken law is eventually their choice, and their portion: all the blasphemous expressions which they employ against the truths and professors of the Gospel, and all the imprecations which they liberally bestow on those who offend or differ from them, will rebound upon themselves, and enhance their condemnation and misery. This will be the reward of all the adversaries of Christ, and of all who revile and hate his people. Let sinners then take warning, and flee for refuge to the great Redeemer: let those who have employed their tongues in cursing and profaneness, fear and tremble, lest their multiplied imprecations should come upon them: let all opposers of the Gospel be persuaded to cease from their ruinous attempts: and let all the Lord's poor and afflicted people rejoice in him, and praise his holy name.

NOTES.

PSALM CX. V. 1. 'David speaks of some person 'much greater than himself, whom he calls his Lord; so 'that it can be no other but the LORD CHRIST, of whom 'he here prophecies: not, as he is wont to do elsewhere 'with respect to himself, in the first place, as his type and 'figure, but in plain words, which can belong to none but 'Christ alone: for no other king can be said to sit at 'God's right hand; nor was there any priest after the 'order of Melchizedek, that could be a type of him.—'The Jews have taken a deal of pains to wrest this 'psalm to another sense: yet they are so divided in their 'opinions about it, (speaking inconsistent things, like 'drunken men, as St. Chrysostom's words are, or rather, 'says he, like men in the dark, running against one 'another;) that from thence alone we may be satisfied 'they are in the wrong, and have their eyes blinded.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)—'We are here informed of JEHOVAH's 'eternal and unchangeable decree concerning the kingdom 'of the Messiah, its extension, power, and duration. 'That Messiah should, after his sufferings, be thus ex-'alted, was determined in the divine counsel and cove-'nant, before the world began.'—'O my Son Messiah—'take now the throne prepared for thee from the founda-'tion of the world.—Behold all power is given to thee! 'Enter upon thy mediatorial kingdom, and reign till every 'opposer shall have submitted unto thee, and sin and death 'have felt thy all-conquering arm.' (*Horne.*) This interpretation is established by multiplied quotations from the Psalms, in the New Testament, with the most express application of it to the kingdom of Christ. (*Marg. Ref.*)—David, speaking by the Holy Spirit, calls the promised Messiah, *his Lord*, though he was to descend from him, according to the flesh: not only because he should hereafter be far superior to him and all the kings of the earth; but because he *then* existed in glory, as the eternal Son of God.

V. 2. In the former verse the royal prophet reported the words of JEHOVAH to the Messiah: but here he addresses the Messiah as present. 'The eternal LORD, who 'hath thus decreed to honour thee, O most mighty Prince, 'will make Zion first of all to feel how powerful thy 'sceptre is; and thence extend thy empire over all the 'earth; where, I foretel thou wilt prevail over all infide-'lity, idolatry, superstition, and impiety, which will set 'themselves against thy authority.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) 'Go 'on, victorious Prince, plant the standard of the cross 'among the thickest ranks of the adversary; and in opposi-'tion to both Jew and Gentile, tumultuously raging against 'thee, erect and establish thy church throughout the 'world.' (*Horne.*) The Gospel, "preached with the "Holy Ghost sent down from heaven," is *the rod*, or *sceptre* of the Redeemer's strength or authority. This was sent forth from Zion by the apostles and evangelists, who were the instruments of setting up his kingdom; by which he hath ever since reigned over an innumerable multitude of subjects, in the midst of his most furious and inveterate enemies; namely, evil spirits and wicked men, who in vain attempt to subvert his throne, or deprive him of his subjects.

V. 3. "The people" of Christ are those given 'him 'by his Father, and gathered to him by the preachers of 'his word. "The day of his power," is the season of 'their conversion, when the corruptions of nature can no 'longer hold out against the prevailing influences of grace; 'when the heart, and will, and affections turn from the 'world to God, and they make, as the first disciples did, 'a free and voluntary offering of themselves, and all they 'have, to the Redeemer. Then, they appear "in the beau-"ties of holiness," adorned with humility, faith, hope, 'and love, and all the graces of the Spirit.' (*Horne.*)—"More than the dew from the womb of the morning—is "the dew of thy progeny." Thus some translate the last

4 The LORD [l] hath sworn, and [m] will not repent, [n] Thou *art* a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

5 The LORD [o] at thy right hand shall [p] strike through kings [q] in the day of his wrath.

6 He shall [r] judge among the heathen: [s] he shall fill *the places* with the dead bodies; [t] he shall wound the heads over * many countries.

7 He [u] shall drink of the brook in the way: [x] therefore shall he [y] lift up the head.

l lxxxix. 34—36. Heb. vi. 13—18. vii. 28 m Num xxiii. 19. n Gen xiv. 18—20. Zech. vi. 13. Heb vi. 20. vii. 1—3. 11. 17. 21. Rev. i. 6. o 1. xvi. 8. Mark xvi 19. Acts ii. 34—36. vii. 55, 56.——p ii. 2—6. 9—12. xlv 4, 5. lxviii. 14 30. cxlix. 7—9. Zech. ix. 9, 10. 13—15 Rev. xvii. 12—14. xix. 11—21. xx. 8, 9.——q xxi. 8, 9. Ez. xxxviii. 18, 19. Rom ii. 5. Rev. vii. 15—17. xi. 18

r 1 Sam ii. 10. Is ii 4. xi 3. xlii. 1. 4. li. 5. Joel iii. 12—16. Mic. iv. 3. John v. 22. 27. Rev. xix. 11. s Is. xxxiv. 2—8. lxiii. 2—4. lxvi. 16. 17 Ez. xxxviii 21, 22. xxxix. 4. 11—20. Rev. xiv. 20. t lxviii. 21. Gen. iii. 15. Hab. iii. 13——* Or, *great.*——u cii. 9. Job xxi. 20. Is. liii. 3 Jer. xxiii 15. Matt. xx 22. xxvi. 42. John xviii. 11.——x Is liii. 11, 12. Luke xxiv. 26. Phil. ii. 7—11. Heb. ii. 9, 10 1 Pet. i 11.——y iii. 3. xxvii. 6. Jer. lii. 31.

clause: but perhaps the word rendered *thy youth*, refers to the first publication of the Gospel, the early days of the glorified Redeemer's kingdom; when converts, numerous as the drops of dew, which, by a bold metaphor, are said to be produced from the womb of the morning, "gladly "received the word," willingly yielded themselves to the Lord Jesus. The word rendered *willing*, is literally *voluntary offerings:* it seems to imply the most unreserved cheerfulness in presenting the oblation; like that which David expresses (1 *Chr.* xxix. 17:) and the scene exhibited on the day of Pentecost, and just afterwards, when the haughty and selfish crucifiers of Christ, in that day of his power, not only were made willing by divine grace to accept his salvation, but devoted their all, as a free-will offering to his service. (*Notes, Acts* ii. iv.)

V. 4. 'The oath of God was the great seal of heaven, 'to intimate the importance of the deed to which it was 'set, and "to show the heirs of promise the immuta-"bility of his counsel." 'Oblation, intercession, and 'benediction, are the three branches of the sacerdotal office, 'which our great High Priest exerciseth for us.' (*Horne.*) —(*Notes, Gen.* xiv. 18. *Heb.* vii.) The Redeemer's kingdom is inseparably connected with the performance of his priestly office; to which he was appointed by an irrevocable engagement of the Father, and in which he abides from age to age. In virtue of his atonement and intercession, he employs all his power and authority for the benefit of his redeemed people. But it should be carefully noted, that the two offices, of king and priest, were incompatible, according to the Mosaic law, at least after the appointment of David and his family to the kingdom: and the Jews must have known, if they had not been blinded by prejudice, that a new order and constitution must take place at the coming of the Messiah, who was to be "a Priest upon his throne," a Priest, not after Aaron's order, which, as David's son, he could not be; but after the order of Melchizedek. It is observable that this is the only place in which Melchizedek is mentioned in the whole Scripture, except in the narrative by Moses, and by the apostle, in proving to the Hebrews that Jesus was the Messiah. The New Testament dispensation made no alteration, except in those things in which the Old Testament taught all that understood it and attended to it, to expect an alteration. (*Notes, Gen.* xiv. 18—20. *Zech.* vi. 12, 13. *Heb.* vii.) 'As Melchizedek, the figure of Christ, was 'both king and priest, so the effect cannot be accomplish-'ed in any king, save only Christ.'

V. 5, 6. By "the Lord, or My Lord, at thy right "hand,"—the same person must undoubtedly be under-'stood, who is mentioned in the first verse under the same 'title, as sitting at the right hand of JEHOVAH. And the 'Psalmist, who had hitherto addressed himself to Messiah, 'or the Son, must be supposed now to make a sudden 'apostrophe to the Father. This, my Lord Messiah, 'who sitteth at thy right hand, O JEHOVAH, "shall "smite through kings in the day of his wrath." The 'kings of the earth will endeavour to destroy his religion, 'and put an end to his kingdom: the Neros, the Domi-'tians, the Dioclesians, the Maxentiuses, the Julians, shall 'stand up, and set themselves in array against him: but "the Lamb shall overcome them, he shall judge and "punish them," 'and strew the ground with their car-'casses.' (*Horne.*) This will receive a more tremendous completion, when he shall destroy all anti-christian powers, and set up his kingdom throughout the earth; as it must evidently appear to him, who attentively compares the various prophetical scriptures referred to in the margin.

V. 7. 'He shall first humble himself to the meanest 'condition; not living in the state of a king here in this 'world, but of a way-faring man, who is content with 'such provision as he meets with. For which cause, 'after enduring many hardships, even death itself, he 'shall be highly exalted, &c.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) In his 'way to glory, he was to drink deep of the waters of 'affliction.' (*Horne.*) "Drinking of the brook," may, however, mean the refreshments with which the Saviour was supported in passing through his sufferings, and beginning his conquests by triumphing over Satan on the cross, and over death by his resurrection: for either the waters of comfort, or the waters of affliction, may be meant; yet the scriptures referred to in the margin seem to favour the exposition first given.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Our ascended Saviour is King of kings and Lord of lords: the decree hath been accomplished; the Mediator reigns in human nature over all worlds, and shall reign till death, the last enemy, is destroyed by him. His powerful Gospel hath reached our land, and we have heard it: and his kingdom is set up amidst opposing foes. But what are we? Has his Gospel been "the power of God unto "our salvation?" Has his kingdom been set up in our hearts? Are we become his loyal subjects? Once we knew not our need of his salvation, and were not willing that he should reign over us: have we then experienced a *day of his power?* Have we been rendered willing to renounce every sin, to turn our backs upon an ensnaring world, to rely only on his merits and mercy, and to have him for our Prophet, Priest, and King? And do we desire to be adorned with the beauties of holiness? Vast multitudes through successive generations have experienced this change; to them the Saviour's sacrifice, intercession, and benediction belong; he is their merciful and faithful

PSALM CXI.

The Psalmist praises God for his glorious and gracious works, 1—9. And shows that the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, 10.

*PRAISE ye the LORD. [a] I will praise the LORD with *my* whole heart, [b] in the assembly of the upright, and *in* the congregation.

2 The [c] works of the LORD *are* great, [d] sought out of all them [e] that have pleasure therein.

3 His work *is* [f] honourable and glorious: and [g] his righteousness endureth for ever.

4 He [h] hath made his wonderful works to be remembered: the LORD *is* [i] gracious and [k] full of compassion.

5 He [l] hath given † meat unto them that fear him: [m] he will ever be mindful of his covenant.

6 He hath [n] shewed his people the power of his works, [o] that he may give them the heritage of the heathen.

7 The [p] works of his hands *are* verity and judgment: [q] all his commandments *are* sure.

8 [r] They ‡ stand fast for ever and ever, *and* [s] *are* done in truth and uprightness.

* Heb. *Hallelujah.*
a ix. 1. ciii. 1. cxxxxiii. 1.
b xxii. 25. xxxv. 18 xl 9, 10. lxxxix. 7. cvii. 32 cviii. 3. cix. 30 cxlix. 1 Chr. xxix. 10—20 2 Chr. vi. 34. xx. 23—28.
c xcii. 5. civ. 24. cxxxix. 14. Job v. 9. ix. 10. xxvi. 12—14. xxxviii.—xli. Is xl 12. Jer. xxxii. 17—19. Dan. iv. 3. Eph i. 19, 20. ii. 7—10. Rev. xv. 3.
d lxxvii. 11, 12, civ. 24 34. cvii. 43 cxlii. 5. Job xxxvii. 7. Ec. iii. 11. 1 Pet. i 10—12.
e xcii. 4. Prov. xvii. 16. xviii. 1, 2. xxiv. 14. Rom. i. 28 viii. 6.
f xix. 1. cxlv. 5. 10—12 17. Ex. xv. 6, 7. 11. Eph. i. 6—8. iii. 10. Rev. v. 12—14.——g cill. 17. cxix. 142. 144. Is. li. 5, 6. 8. Dan. ix 24.
h lxxviii. 4—8. Ex. xii. 26, 27. xiii. 14, 15. Deut. iv. 9. xxxi. 19, &c. Josh iv. 6, 7 21—24 1 Cor. xi. 24—26.
i lxxxvi. 5. 15. ciii. 8 Ex xxxiv. 6, 7. Is lxiii. 7. Mic. vii. 18, 19. Rom. v. 20, 21. Eph. i 6—8. 1 Tim. i. 14.
k lxxviii. 38. cxii. 4 cxlv. 8.
l xxxiv. 9, 10. xxxvii. 3. Is. xxxiii. 16. Matt. vi. 26—33. Luke xii. 30.
† Heb. *prey.*
m lxxxix. 34. cv. 8. cvi 45. Neh i. 5. Dan. ix. 4. Luke i. 72.
n lxxviii. 12, &c. cv. 27, &c Deut. iv. 32—38 Josh iii. 14—17. vi 20. x. 13, 14.——o ii. 8. xliv. 2. lxxviii. 55. lxxx. 8 cv. 44.——p lxxxv. 10. lxxxix. 14 xcviii. 3. Deut xxxii. 4. 2 Tim. ii. 13. Rev. xv. 3, 4.——q xix. 7. cv. 8. cxix 86, 151. 160.——r Matt v. 18. Rom. iii. 31.——‡ Heb are *established.*
s xix. 9. cxix. 127, 128. Rom. vii. 12.

High-Priest, and their King of righteousness and peace; their powerful Protector and Friend; and because he ever liveth, they shall live also with him for evermore. Yet, as he passed through sufferings in his way to glory, so must his people: and having drunk of the bitter waters of death, they too shall lift up their heads, be delivered from Satan, sin, and every foe, and be for ever happy in his presence. But the Saviour's power will be very dreadful to all who oppose, neglect, or pervert his gospel. Many persecuting tyrants have already felt the weight of his vengeance; many more will yet be made sensible of the madness of provoking his indignation; and his coming to establish his kingdom, and to judge the world, will be attended with the terror and ruin of every enemy. Let us then bow to the sceptre of his grace, and yield ourselves to be his subjects, with all we are and have, as a free will offering, to be employed for his glory, that we may love his appearing, as the accomplishment of all our desires and expectations.

NOTES.

PSALM CXI. V. 1. This psalm consists of as many short metres as there are letters in the Hebrew alphabet, and in their regular order; so that *Hallelujah* could not be a part of the first verse, as that word begins with the fifth letter of the alphabet. It should, therefore, in general be considered as a title to the psalms which begin with it; pointing out the scope to the reader, and calling on him to prepare his heart for praising God. The word rendered *assembly*, signifies *a secret council* or *company*. "Secretly "among the faithful, and in the congregation." (*Liturgy.*) 'I will make my thankful acknowledgments to the LORD 'with all my heart and soul; and that, not only in the 'private society of those good men whom I am more in-'timately acquainted withal, but in the public congrega-'tion of all his people.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 2, 3. The works of God, in Creation and Providence, are grand displays of his power and majesty; and all who take pleasure in meditation on the divine perfections will, as they have opportunity, bestow pains to understand his works: but especially the work of Redemption is "beauty and glory;" being the display of his everlasting righteousness, in harmony with his mercy, and truth, and wisdom in pardoning, justifying, and saving sinners.

V. 4. "He hath appointed a memorial for his won-"derful works." It is probable that the passover was especially meant; though all the appointed feasts of Israel were memorials of the wonderful works of God for that nation. Our Redeemer appointed a memorial of his wonderful grace and compassion in dying for our salvation, when he instituted the Lord's supper, saying, 'Do this 'in remembrance of me.'

V. 5. *Meat, Prey,* or *a Portion.*—'God hath given 'to his people all that was necessary; and will still do so 'even for his covenant's sake; and in this sense the He-'brew word is taken. (*Prov.* xxx. 8. xxxi. 15.) He gave 'them food, even manna, which recalled God's other won-'ders to remembrance: whence it was ordered to be pre-'served in the ark. It was a figure of the eucharist, which 'truly is an eternal monument of divine love.' (*Bossuet in Horne.*) With the leave, however, of this learned Popish Prelate, I must observe, that as the manna was only a figure, so the eucharist is no more: manna prefigured, and the eucharist commemorates, Christ, "the Bread of Life, who "came down from heaven," and died on the cross, that he might give life unto the world. (*Notes, John* vi. 27—58.)

V. 6—8. The power of the works by which the Lord put Israel in possession of Canaan, was displayed in judgments on his enemies, and in fulfilling his faithful promises to his people, according to those *appointments* or *decrees* which he had made sure and established for ever, and which in due time he most punctually accomplished. 'All his orders of this kind are in pursuance of his most 'righteous decrees.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The word rendered *commandments*, seems in this connexion to mean, the purposes and revelations which God had made concerning Israel, which were performed when he put them in possession of Canaan: but these were only shadows of his purposes and promises to the true Israel, the church of the redeemed.

9 He [t] sent redemption unto his people: [u] he hath commanded his covenant for ever: [x] holy and reverend *is* his name.

10 The [y] fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom: [z] a * good understanding have all they that † do *his commandments*: [a] his praise endureth for ever.

[t] cxxx. 7, 8. Ex. xv. 13. Deut. xv. 15. Is. xliv. 6. lxiii. 9. Luke i. 68. Eph. i. 7. 14. Tit. ii. 14. Heb. ix. 12. 1 Pet. i. 18—20. Rev. v. 9. [u] 5. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. 1 Chr. xvi. 15. Is. lv. 3. Jer. xxxiii. 20, 21. Gal. iii. 15—17. Heb. xiii. 20. [x] lxxxix. 7. xcix. 3. 5. 9. Ex. xv. 11. Deut. xxviii. 58. Is. vi. 3. Mal. i. 11. ii. 2. Luke i. 49. Rev. iv. 8. ——— [y] Job xxviii. 28. Prov. i. 7. ix. 10. Ec. xii. 13. ——— [z] Deut. iv. 6. 2 Tim. iii. 15—17. ——— [a] Or, *good success*. i. 3. Josh. i. 7, 8. Prov. iii. 4. ——— † Heb. *do them*. John xiii. 17. Rev. xxii. 14. ——— [x] Matt. xxv. 21. John v. 44. xii. 43. Rom. ii. 7. 29. 1 Cor. iv. 5. 2 Cor. iv. 17. 1 Pet. i. 7.

V. 9, 10. The Israelites were slaves in Egypt, but God sent redemption to them. "He gave Egypt for their "ransom," and rescued them by his almighty arm: according to the covenant, which he had established with Abraham, and which could not be disannulled. Thus he displayed his holy name, and showed that, as his enemies had abundant cause to tremble at his power, so his people ought to "serve him with reverence and godly fear." And indeed this fear of the LORD is the beginning or principal part of true wisdom, and makes way for the attainment of all the rest. (*Notes, Gen.* xxii. 12. *Job* xxviii. 28.) 'Religion is the perfection of wisdom, practice the best instructor, and thanksgiving the sweetest recreation.' (*Horne.*) "A good understanding is to them who practise these "things." "His praise endureth for ever." They who do these things will praise God for ever: or they will be honoured for ever. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Our exhortations should always be seconded by our example, if we would render them effectual. In worshipping God we should be careful to approve our hearts sincere before him, and to have our affections lively: at the same time, we should be avowed in our grateful praises, and present them in the select companies of upright believers, and in the great congregations which assemble for public worship: for this has a powerful tendency to make known his glory, and to animate and edify his people. At the first glance we perceive a majesty and greatness in all the works of God; and there is nothing mean or trivial to be any where discovered in them. If we have any taste for sublimity, grandeur, and beauty, we shall take peculiar pleasure in investigating the works of creation and providence; and in admiring the discoveries which are made of the divine wisdom, power, and goodness in every one of them, the minute as well as the immense. But without a relish for the spiritual excellency of true holiness, we shall not find satisfaction in looking into the greatest and most wonderful of all the works of God: nor shall we deduce a profitable conclusion from any of our investigations, or learn from them to love, trust, and serve the Lord with joy and gratitude; and then how incapable must we be of the employment and happiness of heaven! Indeed the administration of his universal kingdom is honourable; "the ministration of "condemnation is glorious: but the ministration of righ-"teousness, exceeds in glory." This is the fullest display of all his harmonious attributes which JEHOVAH hath ever made: his everlasting righteousness here shines forth, connected with the exercise of boundless mercy; and being "gracious, and full of compassion," he hath *here* "made "his wonderful works to be had in remembrance." As the Israelites subsisted on the manna, so the great Redeemer has given his flesh for the life of the world; and whilst he sustains our souls in so wonderful a manner, he will not starve our bodies, or our families. If the Lord, "being "mindful of his covenant with Abraham," "showed his "people the power of his works, that he might give them "the heritage of the heathen;" he will show his true people, who are interested in the covenant of grace, greater things, that he may put them in possession of their heavenly inheritance. The works of his hand are all wrought in performance of his promises, or in executing his threatenings; and are done in verity and judgment. As his holy law is established on an immutable basis; so all his commandments issued forth for the salvation of his people are sure, and stand fast for ever, being done in truth and uprightness. Having sent his people a redemption of a nobler nature than that of Israel out of Egypt; he hath ratified his covenant with them for ever, by his irrevocable word. His name is holy and terrible; and as sinners tremble before him, so saints should stand in awe of his infinite Majesty. The fear of him is the beginning of wisdom. No man is wise who doth not fear the Lord, and no man acts wisely except as he is influenced by that fear: this will always lead us to repentance, to faith in Christ, and to watchful and conscientious obedience. Such persons are of a good understanding, however poor, unlearned, or despised they may be in the world: and as God will be praised and glorified in and by them for ever; so will they be honoured of him, and commended for their wisdom by their fellow-servants for ever and ever.

PSALM CXII.

The believer's character, privileges, and final felicity, 1—9. *The anguish and despair of the wicked,* 10.

* PRAISE ye the LORD. [a] Blessed *is* the man *that* feareth the LORD, *that* [b] delighteth greatly in his commandments.

* Heb. *Hallelujah*. cxi. 1. cxlvii. 1. cxlviii. 11—14. cl. 6. [a] cxi. 10. cxv. 11—13. cxxviii. 1. cxlv. 19. Is. l. 10. Luke i. 50. [b] i. 1, 2. xl. 8. cxix. 16. 35. 47. 48. 70—72. 97. 143. Rom. vii. 22. viii. 7.

NOTES.

PSALM CXII. V. 1. This psalm is composed in the same manner as the foregoing: and, it should be remarked, that the Septuagint places the word Hallelujah as the title to this and similar psalms. 'It seems intended 'as a short commentary upon the last verse of the pre-'ceding psalm.' The wise man is happy: "the fear of "the LORD is the beginning of wisdom." Where the true fear of God possesses the heart, the happy man will love God's commandments, greatly delight in obeying them, and only grieve that he "cannot do the things that "he would."

2 [c] His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed.

3 [d] Wealth and riches *shall be* in his house: [e] and his righteousness endureth for ever.

4 Unto the upright [f] there ariseth light in the darkness: [g] *he is* gracious, and full of compassion, [h] and righteous.

5 A [i] good man [k] sheweth favour, and lendeth: [l] he will guide his affairs with * discretion.

6 [m] Surely he shall not be moved for ever: [n] the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance

c xxv. 13. xxxvii. 26. cii 28. Gen. xvii. 7. xxii 17, 18. Prov xx. 7. Jer. xxxii. 39 Acts ii. 39.
d Prov. iii. 16. xv. 6 Is xxxiii. 6. Matt. vi. 33 2 Cor vi. 10. Phil iv. 18, 19. 1 Tim. vi. 8
e 9. cxi. 3. 10. Is. xxxii. 17 ii. 8. Matt. xxiv. 22—24.
f xxxvii. 6 xcvii. 11. Job xi. 17. Is. l. 10. Mic. vii 8, 9. Mal iv. 2. John xii. 46.
g cvi. 1. Luke vi. 36. 2 Cor. viii. 8, 9. Eph. iv. 32. v. 1, 2. 9. Col. iii. 12, 13
h Tit. ii. 11, 12. 1 John ii. 29. iii. 7 10.
i Prov. ii. 20. xii. 2 Luke xxiii 50. Acts xi 24. Rom. v. 7.——k xxxvii. 25, 26. Deut. xv. 7—10. Job xxxi. 16—20. Luke vi. 35——l Prov. xvii. 15 xviii. 9. xxii. 26, 27. xxiv. 27. 30—34 xxvii. 23—27 John vi 12 Rom. xii. 11. Col. iv 5——* Heb. *Judgment.* Phil. i. 9——m xv 5. lxii. 2. 6. cxxv 1. 2 Pet. i. 5—11.——n Neh xiii. 22. 31. Prov. x. 7. Matt. xxv. 34—40. Heb vi 10.

7 He [o] shall not be afraid of evil tidings: [p] his heart is fixed, [q] trusting in the LORD.

8 [r] His heart *is* established, he shall not be afraid, [s] until he see *his desire* upon his enemies.

9 [t] He hath [u] dispersed; he hath given to the poor; [x] his righteousness endureth for ever; [y] his horn shall be exalted with honour.

10 The [z] wicked shall see *it*, and be grieved; [a] he shall gnash with his teeth, [b] and melt away: [c] the desire of the wicked shall perish.

o xxvii. 1—3. xxxiv 4. lvi 3, 4. Prov. i. 33. Luke xxi. 9. 19.
p lvii. 7. cxviii 6. Is xxvi. 3, 4. Dan iii. 16—18. Acts xx. 24. xxi. 13
q lxiv 10. cxviii. 8, 9 John xiv. 1. Acts 6. xxvii. 25.
r xxvi 14. xxxi. 24. Heb. xiii. 9.
s lix 10. xci 8. xcii. 11. cxviii. 7.
t 2 Cor. ix. 9.
u Deut. xv. 11. Prov xi. 24, 25. xix. 17 Ec. xi. 1, 2. 6. Is. xxxii. 8. lviii 7. 10. Mark xiv 7. Luke xi 41. xii. 33. xviii. 22. John xiii. 29. Acts iv. 35. xx. 35. Rom. xii 13 2 Cor. viii. 9. ix. 10—15. 1 Tim. vi. 18. Heb. xiii. 16. Jam. ii. 15, 16. 1 John iii. 16—18.——x 3. Deut. xxiv. 13. Matt vi. 4. Luke xiv 12—14. xvi. 9. Heb vi. 10.——y lxxv. 10. xcii. 10. 1 Sam. ii. 1 30.——z Esth. vi 11, 12 Is. lxv. 13. Luke xiii. 28. xvi. 23——a xxxvii. 12. Matt. xxii 13. Rev. xvi. 10, 11.
b lviii. 7, 8.——c Prov. x. 28. xi. 7. Luke xvi. 24—26.

V. 2, 3. It is probable that Lot thought of enriching his family, when he chose the fertile plains of wicked Sodom: "but Abraham" feared the LORD "and delighted "greatly in his commandments;" and his descendants were "mighty on earth:" and thus it will generally be in every age with the posterity of those who imitate the father of the faithful.

V. 4. The upright believer is a follower, or imitator, of his God, especially in kindness and compassion and equity. He may and will have distress or affliction; but light, or comfort, will arise in the midst of it.

V. 5. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'He gives to one and lends to 'another, as occasion serves: and yet orders all his affairs 'so judiciously, that he doth not impair, but rather main-'tains, the good estate of his family.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) This sentiment, which our translation establishes, is very beautiful and scriptural: yet the original words do not obviously convey it; but rather, that the upright man conducts all his concerns with *equity*. He is first *just*, then liberal. Each of the interpretations conveys its appropriate instruction. 'He who employeth his talents for the 'good of mankind, will be able to render a good account 'to his Lord who intrusteth them with him.' (*Horne.*)

V. 6. The man of whom the Psalmist spake, possessed the "things which accompany salvation," and would therefore most surely be "kept by the power of God through "faith," to the eternal enjoyment of it. (*Note, Heb.* vi. 9, 10.) 'When his work is done, his body will go to its 'repose in the dust; but the memorial of his name and 'good deeds will be still fresh as the morning breeze, and 'fragrant as the flower.' (*Horne.*) It is, however, in heaven alone, that all persons of this character will be remembered, and that for ever.

V. 7. Dismaying fear of outward calamities, or even of death and judgment, arises either from entire unbelief, or from weakness of faith and want of assured hope: and these are commonly the effect of a comparatively negligent and unfruitful conduct: but the character here described is strong in faith and hope, and very diligent and fruitful; and thus exempt from those terrors which distress others.

V. 10. The word rendered *grieved* is literally *enraged*: and it may be easily conceived, how persecutors especially will be filled with rage and madness, when they witness the final triumph, and exalted honour, and complete felicity, of the very persons whom they most implacably hate.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The blessed Redeemer so delighted in the commandments of the Lord, that it was his meat to obey them perfectly, in the midst of temptation and sufferings. His true disciples whom he owns as brethren, share his unsearchable riches, and his everlasting righteousness; and being blessed in him, according to the degree of their faith and grace, they bear his image, and tread in his steps. They are taught to fear the Lord, as well as to love and praise him; and they delight greatly in the law of God; though not able perfectly to obey it. Blessings are laid up for them and their posterity; and as much of this world's possessions as can be profitable to them. In their darkest hours the light of hope and peace springs up within them, and seasonable relief turns their mourning into joy. From their Lord's example they learn to be gracious and full of compassion, as well as just in all their dealings: they show favour, and give or lend to the poor and needy, as occasion requires and ability is afforded; and they are instructed to employ frugality and discretion in their affairs, as means of being enabled to liberality. But as they should not dissipate their substance in needless expense, nor bury their talent in a napkin; so they ought not to give it away at random; but to disperse their bounty, (as the husbandman does his seed,) in that measure and manner which is likely to produce the most good to mankind. But, alas! it must be owned that only some, nay, but few of those, who contend zealously for the doctrines of the Gospel, exhibit such a character as is here drawn; especially in imitating the Saviour's compassionate, self-denying, liberal love: and it is worthy of inquiry, whether the fears, and doubts and complaints, of which we hear more than of the voice of joy and praise, and the language of unshaken confidence in God amidst dangers and alarms, do not arise from this source. The Lord deals with them as they do with the poor;

PSALM CXIII.

The servants of the Lord exhorted to praise his glorious majesty, condescension, and kindness, 1—9.

*PRAISE ye the LORD. [a] Praise, O ye servants of the LORD, praise the name of the LORD.

2 [b] Blessed be the name of the LORD from this time forth, and for evermore.

3 From [c] the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same, the LORD's name *is* to be praised.

4 The LORD *is* [d] high above all nations, *and* [e] his glory above the heavens.

5 Who *is* [f] like unto the LORD our God, who † dwelleth on high;

6 Who [g] humbleth *himself* to behold *the things that are* in heaven, and [h] in the earth!

7 He [i] raiseth up the poor [k] out of the dust, *and* lifteth [l] the needy out of the dunghill;

8 That [m] he may set *him* with princes, *even* with the princes of his people.

9 He [n] maketh the barren woman to ‡ keep house, *and to be* a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the LORD.

[c] Heb. *Hallelujah.* cxii. 1 [a] xxxiii. 1, 2. ciii. 20, 21. cxxxiv. 1. cxxxv. 1—3. 20. cxlv 10. Eph v. 19, 20. Rev xix 5. [b] xli 13 cvi 48. 1 Chr xvi. 36. xxix 10 13. Dan ii. 20 Eph. iii. 21 Rev. v. 13. [c] lxxii. 11. 17—19 lxxxvi 9 Is. xxiv. 16 xlii. 10—12 xlix. 12. lix. 19 Hab. ii. 14 Mal. i. 11. Rom. xv 9, 10. Rev. xi. 15. [d] xcvii. 9 xcix 2 Is. xl. 15. 17. 22. [e] viii. 1. lvii. 10. 1 Kings viii. 27. Is lxvi. 1. [f] lxxxix 6 8. Ex. xv. 11. Deut. xxxiii. 26. Is xl. 18. 25. xlvi 5. Jer. x. 6. † Heb. *exalteth himself to dwell.* [g] xi. 4. Job iv. 18. xv. 15 Is. vi. 2. [n] cxxxviii 6. Is. lvii. 15 lxvi, 2. [i] lxxv 6, 7 cvii. 41. Job v 11. 15, 16. Ez. xvii. 24. xxi. 26, 27. Luke i. 52, 53. Jam ii 5. [k] xxii. 15. Is. xxvi. 19. Dan. xii. 2, 3. Acts ii. 31—33. Eph. i. 20 21. 1 Pet. iii. 21, 22. [l] 1 Sam. ii. 7, 8. xxiv. 14. 2 Sam. vii. 9, 10. Job ii. 8. xxxvi 6, 7.——[m] lxviii 13. Gen. xli. 41. Phil. ii. 8—11. Rev. v 9, 10.——[n] lxviii 6. Gen. xxi. 5—7. xxv. 21. xxx. 22, 23. 1 Sam. ii. 5. Is. liv. 1. Luke i. 13—15. Gal. iv. 27. ‡ Heb. *dwell in an house.*

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he metes to them in their own measure; and no wonder they have but little comfort, who do so little to make their brethren comfortable; and but little confidence, who are so deficient in the scriptural evidences of conversion. (*Notes, Is.* lviii.) But they who show their faith by their works, in the way and degree here described, most certainly have a "righteousness which endureth for ever," and they shall never be separated from the love of God their Saviour. Envy and detraction may for a time hide their true characters; but "they shall be had in everlasting remembrance." They need not and ought not to be afraid of evil tidings: and by steadfastly trusting in the Lord, they rise above terror when they hear of wars, pestilences, earthquakes, or famines; and even at the approach of death, and in the day of judgment, they shall have confidence. Then they will behold their enemies confounded and condemned: the fruits and evidences of their faith and love will be produced before men and angels, and their horn shall be exalted with eternal honour. But their felicity will increase the torment of the wicked, who shall gnash with their teeth and consume away; whilst all their desires and expectations close in eternal disappointment and despair. Lord, form us by thy grace to the character, that we may possess the felicity, of thy redeemed people!

NOTES.

PSALM CXIII. V. 1. We are informed by the Jewish writers, that this and the five following psalms were sung at their feasts, especially after the Passover. 'By 'this often repetition, he stirreth up our cold dulness to 'praise God.'

V. 3. 'If God's glory shine through all the world, and 'therefore of all ought to be praised; what great condem- 'nation were it to his people, among whom it chiefly shi- 'neth, if they should not earnestly extol his name.'

V. 7, 8. The advancement of Joseph, David, and others, from a low condition to the highest authority, seems alluded to. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 9. This verse may thus be rendered, perhaps more literally, "He maketh her who was barren in the family, "to sit as a joyful mother of sons." The instances of Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, the mother of Samson, Hannah, the woman of Shunem, and Elizabeth, who were long barren, but were at length made joyful mothers, by the special blessing of God, are supposed to have been emblems of the calling of the Gentiles: when that vast proportion of the earth, which had so long been barren, produced multitudes of true converts, the sons and daughters of the church, and of the Lord Almighty who hath espoused her unto himself. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The redeemed servants of the Lord may well sing his praises, when employed in his pleasant service, and enjoying the comfort of his presence and favour. His name shall be blessed from age to age, to the end of time and to eternity: and he will be praised from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same. His unequalled and infinite majesty becomes the more glorious by his unspeakable condescension. He is not only high above all nations, but his glory is above the very heavens in which he dwelleth. He humbleth himself in noticing the concerns, and in accepting the exalted adorations, of angels and archangels! How vast then must be his condescension, in attending to the interests, and in regarding the worship of us mean polluted sinners on earth! How inconceivable his love in assuming our nature, and tabernacling among us, that he might ransom our guilty souls! In his providence, the Lord sometimes raises men from the most abject to the most honourable stations in society; and it is well when they acquit themselves properly in their new dignities. But this is his constant method in his kingdom of grace. He takes us beggars, debtors, nay, rebels and traitors, from the dust, the dunghill, or the dungeon, to be his favourites, his children, to be kings and priests unto him; and thus he numbers us with the princes of his chosen people. He giveth us all our comforts; which are generally the more welcome when they have been long delayed, and were no longer expected. Nor should the hint be overlooked, that joyful mothers should cheerfully bear the *confinement* of tending on their beloved children. But whilst we bless the Lord for favouring the Gentile world with the joy of his salvation; let us pray, that those lands, which are yet

PSALM CXIV.

The powerful presence of God with Israel, (when he brought them out of Egypt, and led them through the wilderness into Canaan,) admired and adored, 1—8.

a Ex. xii. 42. xiii. 3. xx. 2. Deut. xv. 1. xxvi. 8. Is. xi. 16.
b lxxxi. 5. Gen. xlii. 23.
c Ex. vi. 7. xix. 5, 6. xxv. 8. xxix. 45, 46. Lev. xxi. 45. Deut. xxiii. 14. Ez. xxxvii. 26—28. 2 Cor. vi. 16, 17. Rev. xxi. 3.
d lxxvii. 16. civ. 7. cvi. 9. Ex. xiv. 21. xv. 8. Is. lxiii. 12. Hab. iii. 8, 15.
e lxxiv. 15. Josh. iii. 13—16. Hab. iii. 9.
f xxix. 6. xviii. 16. Ex. xix. 18. xx. 18. Judg. v. 4, 5. Jer. iv. 23, 24. Mic. i. 3, 4. Nah. i. 5. Hab. iii. 6. 2 Pet. iii. 7—11. Rev. xx. 11.
g Jer. xlvii. 6, 7. Hab. iii. 8.

WHEN [a] Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from [b] a people of strange language;

2 [c] Judah was his sanctuary, *and* Israel his dominion.

3 The [d] sea saw *it*, and fled: [e] Jordan was driven back.

4 The [f] mountains skipped like rams, *and* the little hills like lambs.

5 [g] What *ailed* thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan, *that* thou wast driven back?

6 Ye mountains, *that* ye skipped like rams; *and* ye little hills, like lambs?

h lxxvii. 18. xcvii. 4, 5. civ. 32. Job ix. 6. xxvi. 11. Is. lxiv. 1—3. Jer. x. 10.
i lxxxviii. 15, 16. cv. 41. Ex. xvii. 6. Num. xx. 11. Deut. viii. 15. Neh. ix. 15. 1 Cor. x. 4.

7 [h] Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the God of Jacob;

8 Which [i] turned the rock *into* a standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters.

PSALM CXV.

The Psalmist calls on God to vindicate his own honour against the reproaches of idolaters, 1—3. *He exposes the vanity of idols and the folly of idolaters,* 4—8. *He exhorts Israel to trust the Lord, who will not fail to bless his church,* 9—18.

a lxxiv. 22. lxxix. 9, 10. Josh. vii. 9. Is. xlviii. 11. Ez. xx. 14. xxxvi. 32. Dan. ix. 19. Eph. i. 6. Rev. iv. 10, 11.
b lxi. 7. lxxxix. 1, 2. Mic. vii. 20. John i. 17. Rom. xv. 8, 9.
c xlii. 3, 10. lxxix. 10. Ex. xxxii. 12. Num. xiv. 15, 16. Deut. xxxii. 26, 27. 2 Kings xix. 10—19. Joel ii. 17.

NOT [a] unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, [b] for thy mercy, *and* for thy truth's sake.

2 [c] Wherefore should the heathen say, Where *is* now their God?

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barren, may, by the genial influence of his Gospel, become fruitful, and produce numerous converts, who may join with us in praising the Lord for ever.

NOTES.

PSALM CXIV. V. 1, 2. When God brought Israel out of Egypt, he manifested his presence among them, as his sanctuary in which he had chosen to reside; and he exercised dominion over them in the most open and explicit manner, giving laws, inflicting punishments on the refractory, and protecting his loyal subjects against all their enemies. The Psalmist wrote as one full of his subject; and therefore he did not name that glorious God whose wonderful works he celebrated; supposing that all would certainly know his meaning and enter into his feelings.

V. 3—6. Few passages can any where be found, and probably none except in the oracles of God, which unite so much sublimity and simplicity, as these verses do. They are inexpressibly beautiful, and in the highest style of poetry: and need attention more than explanation.—The fifth verse is literally—'What was it to thee, O sea, 'that thou fleddest?' &c.—'The waters are poetically re-'presented as sensible of their Creator's presence.' (*Horne.*) The deliverance of Israel, and the visible effects of Omnipotence attending it, may be considered as a figure of the establishment of Christianity, and the fall of opposing powers before it; for which no adequate cause can be assigned, except "that it was of God, and men could not "overturn it."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When the Lord comes for the salvation of his chosen people, he redeems them from the power of sin and Satan, and separates them from an ungodly world, and its maxims, customs, and language: he forms them to be his temple, and he becomes their King. From that time he has engaged to make them his peculiar care; he meets them in his ordinances; and causes the whole course of nature, and all the dispensations of his providence, to concur in doing them good. Having, as it were divided the Red Sea, to bring them out of bondage, at their conversion; he will surely divide Jordan, to open them a safe passage to their heavenly inheritance. All things, even death itself, are theirs; and all nature shall sooner change its settled course, than one of his promises shall fail. As the Son of God, the Rock of ages, gave himself to death, to open a fountain to wash away their sins, and to supply them with the waters of life and consolation: whilst they are washing in that fountain and drinking of those waters, they cannot possibly think any thing too great to expect from his unfathomable love. But if the inanimate creation is represented as trembling at the presence of the Creator, how should sinners fear before their just and holy Governor and Judge! His voice from mount Sinai may well alarm those who have broken that holy law, and yet remain under the curse of it: and they who neglect the great salvation of the Gospel, are liable to another and more terrible condemnation: but none will be so dreadfully punished as they will who injure the Lord's chosen people, and try to obstruct them in their pilgrimage. What will be their consternation, when the Judge shall appear, and all creation shall melt at his presence! Let us now prepare to meet our God, that we may not be terrified or ashamed, but have confidence before him at his coming.

NOTES.

PSALM CXV. V. 1, 2. 'The faithful, oppressed by idolatrous tyrants, desire God to help them. Because he promised to deliver them, not for their sakes, but his

3 But [d] our God *is* in the heavens: [e] he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.

4 Their [f] idols *are* silver and gold, the work of men's hands.

5 They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not:

6 They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not:

7 They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat.

8 They that [g] make them are like unto them; *so is* every one that trusteth in them.

9 O [h] Israel, [i] trust thou in the LORD: he *is* [k] their Help and their Shield.

10 O [l] house of Aaron, trust in the LORD: he *is* their Help and their Shield.

11 [m] Ye that fear the LORD, trust in the LORD: he *is* their Help and their Shield.

12 The LORD [n] hath been mindful of us: he will bless *us*; [o] he will bless the house of Israel; he will bless the house of Aaron.

13 He will [p] bless them that fear the LORD, [q] *both* small * and great.

14 The [r] LORD shall increase you more and more, [s] you and your children.

15 Ye *are* [t] blessed of the LORD, which [u] made heaven and earth.

16 The [x] heaven, *even* the heavens, *are* the LORD's: [y] but the earth hath he given to the children of men.

17 The [z] dead praise not the LORD, neither any that [a] go down into silence.

18 But [b] we will bless the LORD from this time forth and for evermore. Praise the LORD.

d ii. 4. lxviii. 4. cxxiii. 1. Matt. vi. 9.
e cxxxv. 6. Is. xlvi. 10. Dan. iv. 35. Rom. ix. 19. Eph. i. 11.
f xcvii. 7. cxxxv. 15—17. Deut. iv. 28. Is. xl 19, 20. xlii. 17. xlvi. 1, 2. 6, 7. Jer. x. 3, &c. Hos. viii. 6. Hab. ii. 19, 20. Acts xix. 26. 36. 1 Cor. x. 19, 20.
g cxxxv. 18. Is. xliv. 9—20. Jer iii. 8. Jon. ii 8. Hab. ii. 18, 19.
h cxviii. 2—4. cxxxv. 19, 20. Ex. xix. 5.
i lxii. 8. cxxv. 1. cxxx. 5. cxlvi 5, 6. Jer. xvii. 7. 13. Eph i 12
k xxxiii 20, 21. Deut. xxxiii. 29.
l Ex. xxviii. 1. Num xvi. 5. 40. xviii. 7.
m xxxiii. 18. cxviii. 4. cxlvii. 11. Prov. xiv. 26. xxx. 5. Acts x. 35. Rev. xix. 5.
n xxv. 7. cxxxvi. 23. Gen viii. 1. Ex. ii. 24. 25. Is, xlix. 14—16. Acts x. 4.
o lxvii. 7. Gen. xii. 2, 3. xxii. 17. 18. Acts iii. 26. Gal iii. 14. 29. Eph. i. 3.
p cxii. 1. cxxviii. 1. 4, 5. Mal. iii. 16, 17. iv. 2. Luke i. 50 Acts xiii. 26. Col. iii. 11.
q Acts xxvi. 22. Rev xi. 18. xix. 5. xx. 12.
* Heb. *with*.
r Gen. xiii. 16. 2 Sam. xxiv. 3. Is. ii. 2, 3. xxvii. 6. xlix. 20, &c. lvi. 8. lx. 4, &c. Jer. xxx 19. xxxiii. 22. Hos. i. 10. Zech. viii. 20—23 x. 8. Rev. vii. 4. 9.
s Gen xvii. 7. Jer. xxxii. 38. 39. Acts ii. 39. iii. 25.
t Gen xiv. 19. xxxii. 26—29. 1 Pet. iii. 9.
u xcvi. 5. cxlvi. 5, 6. Gen i. 1.
x lxxxix. 11. cxliv. 5 cxlviii. 4. Is. lxvi. 1 Lam. iii. 66. John xiv. 2.——y Gen. i 28—30. ix. 1—3. Deut. xxxii. 8. Jer. xxvii. 5, 6.——z vi 5 xxx. 9. lxxxviii 10—12 Is xxxviii. 18, 19 ——a xxxi 17. 1 Sam. ii 9.——b cxiii. 2. cxviii. 17—19. cxlv. 2. 21. Dan. ii. 20. Rev. v. 13.

'own; they ground their prayers upon this promise.'—The verses are evidently a prayer for deliverance; though often quoted as a thanksgiving for benefits received, and they may properly be thus applied. God was entreated to help his people; not because they deserved it, or that they might be honoured, but that his name might be glorified, and the blasphemies of his enemies silenced, by the performance of his faithful and merciful engagements to his worshippers. Perhaps the psalm was written during Sennacherib's invasion of Judah.

V. 3—7. 'A beautiful contrast is here formed between 'the God of Israel and the heathen idols. He made 'every thing: they are themselves made by men: He 'doeth whatsoever he pleaseth; they can do nothing. He 'seeth the distresses, heareth the prayers, accepteth the 'offerings, cometh to the assistance, and effecteth the sal-'vation of his servants: they are blind, deaf, dumb, sense-'less, motionless, and impotent.' (*Horne.*)

V. 8. The makers and worshippers of idols renounce their reason and understanding, and willingly become as stupid as the objects of their worship: "Having eyes they "see not, having ears they hear not," &c. (*Isaiah* xliv. 9—20.)

V. 9—13. The Israelites in general, and the priests in particular, (who were required to teach the people by example, as well as precept,) were exhorted to trust in the Lord; reminded how he had in all ages shown himself the Helper of such as thus relied on him; and assured that he would bless them. The proselytes, also from other nations, seem intended by those "who fear the LORD."

V. 14. The increase of the church, by the conversion of the Gentiles, as well as the prosperity of Israel, is here predicted.—(*Marg. Ref.*) There is a peculiar animation in the concluding part of the psalm, when considered, not as praise for benefits obtained, but as the language of faith and hope in urgent difficulties.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

As we are unworthy of all our blessings, so none of the glory of them belongs to us, but the whole must be rendered to the Lord, who hath glorified all his perfections, and especially his mercy and truth, in the salvation of his people; in pardoning, sanctifying, upholding, and comforting them from day to day; and in supplying all their wants, both temporal and spiritual. In like manner, when our conscious unworthiness is ready to extinguish our hopes, we have a never-failing plea, in the same important truths: and we may entreat the Lord to save and bless us, for the glory of his mercy and truth, in Jesus Christ, when all our other arguments are silenced. For it can never consist with his honour, that his avowed enemies should finally triumph over those who profess his truth and call upon his name; and thus be emboldened in impiety and infidelity. Our God is upon his glorious throne, and "doeth as he pleaseth "in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of "the earth:" and the temporary success of his enemies, and troubles of his people, will assuredly end in the greater good of the latter and the deeper confusion of the former. Whilst we reflect upon the stupidity of idolaters with indignation and contempt, let us humbly recollect that we are the same by nature, and remember to give God the glory of making us to differ. They who reject the Gospel, to rely for salvation on themselves, and they who idolize worldly advantages, which cannot profit them in the hour of death, or in the day of judgment, are as fatally deceived as even the worshippers of idols. But we are called Christians, and some of us sustain the office of ministers; (being the spiritual Israel, and the house of Aaron;) let us then remember to act consistently with our character and profession; let us not "lean to our own understanding," depend on our own righteousness and strength, trust in our own hearts, or rely on uncertain riches and the friendship

PSALM CXVI.

The Psalmist avows his gratitude to God, who had answered his prayers, and brought him out of deep distress; and resolves to worship and serve him all his days, 1—9. He records his temptation to unbelief, and his victory over it, 10, 11. He determines to perform his vows, and render thanks to God after the most public manner at the sanctuary, 12—19.

a xviii. 1. cxix. 132. Mark xii. 33. John xxi. 17. 1 John iv. 19. v. 2, 3.
b xviii. 6. xxxi. 22, 23. xxxiv. 3. 4. xl. 1, 2. lxvi. 19, 20. lxix. 33, 34. Gen. xxxv. 3. 1 Sam. i. 26, 27. John xvi. 24.

1 [a] I LOVE the LORD, [b] because he hath heard my voice *and* my supplication.

2 Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, [c] therefore will I call upon *him* * as long as I live.

3 The [d] sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell † gat hold upon me: [e] I found trouble and sorrow.

4 Then [f] called I upon the name of the LORD: [g] O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.

5 [h] Gracious *is* the LORD, [i] and righteous; yea, our God *is* merciful.

6 The LORD preserveth [k] the simple: [l] I was brought low, and he helped me.

7 Return unto [m] thy rest, O my soul; for the LORD hath [n] dealt bountifully with thee.

c lv. 16, 17. lxxxvi. 6, 7. lxxxviii. 1, 2. cxlv. 18, 19. Job xxvii. 10. Luke xviii. 1. Phil. iv. 6. Col. iv. 2.
* Heb. *in my days.*
d xviii. 4—6. lxxxviii. 6, 7. Jon. ii. 2, 3. Mark xiv. 33—36. Luke xxii. 44. Heb. v. 7.
† Heb. *found me.*
e xxxii. 3, 4. xxxviii. 6. Is. liii. 3, 4.
f xxii. 1—3. xxx. 7, 8. l. 15. cxviii. 5. cxxx. 1, 2. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 12, 13. Is. xxxvii. 15—20. xxxviii. 1—3. Jon. ii. 2.
g vi. 4. xxii. 20. xxv. 17. xl. 12, 13. cxlii. 4—6. cxliii. 6—9. Luke xviii. 13.
xxiii. 42, 43.——h lxxxvi. 5. 15. ciii. 8. cxii. 4. cxv. 1. cxlv. 8. Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. Neh. ix. 17. 31. Dan. ix. 9. Rom. v. 20, 21. Eph. i. 6—8. ii. 4. 1 Tim. i. 14. Tit. iii. 7.
i cxix. 137. cxlv. 4—7. Ezra ix. 15. Neh. ix. 33. Is. xlv. 21. Dan. ix. 7. 14. Rom. iii. 25, 26. 1 John i. 9.——k xix. 7. xxv. 21. Is. xxxv. 8. Matt. xi. 25. Rom. xvi. 19. 2 Cor. i. 12. xi. 3. Col. iii. 22.——l lxxix. 9. cvi. 43. cxlii. 6.——m xcv. 11. Jer. vi. 16. xxx. 10. Matt. xi. 28, 29. Heb. iv. 8—10.——n xiii. 5. cxix. 17. Hos. ii. 7.

of the world: but let us trust in the Lord alone, for acceptance, assistance, sustenance, protection, comfort, usefulness, and everlasting happiness. "He hath ever been "mindful of his servants, and will bless them; even every "one of them who fear him, both small and great." He will increase the number of his true ministers and people, and prosper them and their children; for they are indeed "the blessed of the Lord who made heaven and "earth." The heaven, which belongs to him, he reserves as the peculiar inheritance of his children; the earth he hath given indiscriminately to the children of men: and wretched will they be who have no better portion; for indeed they are but stewards, who will shortly be called to give an account of their stewardship. But grace is *our own*, and will never be taken from us. As to the rest, a little will bear the expenses of our pilgrimage: let us then be content, and thankful for our allowance, and moderate in the use of it. Let us communicate of our little to those that have less: and, if any have much intrusted to them, let them *prove* their interest in the true riches, by faithfully improving the mammon of unrighteousness. As death will terminate our opportunities of praising God on earth, let us now redeem the time, that we may glorify him with our lips and in our lives. Then we shall shortly join the company before the throne, and assist them in blessing our God; and our bodies will be raised from the silent grave, to join in this delightful work to all eternity: whilst successive generations shall be occupied on earth, in celebrating the praises of our God, till time shall be no more.

NOTES.

PSALM CXVI. V. 1. Various are the opinions of learned men concerning the author of this psalm, and the time when it was composed. But perhaps David wrote it; not when persecuted by Saul, (for the sanctuary was not then at Jerusalem) but either when delivered from Absalom's rebellion, or after some other sharp trial, between the removal of the ark to Zion, and that event.—The original of this verse is, "I love; because the LORD "hath, &c." The object of the Psalmist's love and gratitude is not mentioned at first, but may be collected from what follows. The abrupt opening was expressive of a full heart. Some render the clause, *I am satisfied*, or *I am well pleased:* but it seems rather more in the manner of Peter's earnest declaration, "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou "knowest that I love thee."

V. 2. 'In so readily granting my desires, he encourages and engages me—to the last breath of my life to expect deliverance from him.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 3. It is likely that the inward anguish of the Psalmist's mind was equal to his outward sufferings. He seemed to feel at once the agonies of death, and that sense of wrath and remorse of conscience which have in them something of the pains of hell. (*Marg. Ref.*) It is by no means natural to interpret both the expressions of the fear or pain of death, or of death, and the grave in which no pains are felt; when so obvious an interpretation offers itself, and so suited to the feelings of every one who in great pain of body and remorse of conscience, has been alarmed with the dread of immediate death.

V. 4. The expressive brevity of the prayer here mentioned is well worth noticing.

V. 5. "A just God and a Saviour;" righteous in showing mercy to the guilty, as well as faithful to his promises.

V. 6. The simple are they who feel themselves liable to be imposed on by designing foes: are destitute of wisdom and power to deliver themselves; but renounce all other dependence, to rely wholly on God, and in simplicity and godly sincerity wait on him to save them.

V. 7. To know, trust, love, and delight in God, is the *rest* of rational creatures. This is forsaken through sin; and hence arises the restlessness of mankind: but the believer has returned to God through the Saviour, and found, in some measure, "a rest to his soul, which is the earnest "and foretaste of heavenly felicity." Yet this is imperfect, and often interrupted, especially by sin: and when chastenings bring the wanderer from God to a due sense of his sin and folly, conscious guilt at first often increases the agitation of his mind: till recollection of the Lord's

8 For [o] thou hast delivered my soul from death, [p] mine eyes from tears, [q] *and* my feet from falling.

9 I will [r] walk before the LORD [s] in the land of the living.

10 [t] I believed, [u] therefore have I spoken: [x] I was greatly afflicted:

11 I said [y] in my haste, [z] All men *are* liars.

12 [a] What shall I render unto the LORD *for* all his benefits toward me?

13 I will [b] take the cup of salvation, and [c] call upon the name of the LORD.

14 I will [d] pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people.

15 [e] Precious in the sight of the LORD *is* the death of his saints.

16 O LORD, [f] truly I *am* thy servant; I *am* thy servant, *and* [g] the son of thine handmaid: [h] thou hast loosed my bonds.

17 I will offer to thee [i] the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will [k] call upon the name of the LORD.

18 I will [l] pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people,

19 In [m] the courts of the LORD's house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD.

o lvi. 13. lxxxvi. 13.
p Is. xxv. 8. xxxviii. 5. Rev. vii. 17. xxi. 4
q xxxvii 24. xciv. 18.
r lxi. 7. Gen xvii. 1 1 Kings ii. 4. viii 25 ix. 4. Luke i. 6. 75.
s xxvii 13. Is. liii. 8.
t 2 Cor. iv. 13. Heb. xi. 1.
u Num. xiv. 6—9. Prov. xxi. 28. 2 Pet. i. 16—21.
x 3.
y xxxi 22. 1 Sam. xxvii. 1.
z 2 Kings iv. 16. 28 Jer. ix. 4, 5. Rom. iii. 4.
a li. 12—14. ciii. 2. Is. vi. 5—8. Rom. xii. 1. 1 Cor. vi. 20. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.
c 2 cv. 1. Is xii. 4.
b 17. Luke xxii. 17, 18. 20. 1 Cor. x. 16 20. xi 25—27.
d 18. xxii. 25 lvi 12. lxvi 13—15 Jon. i. 16 ii. 9. Nah i. 15. Matt. v. 33.
e xxxvii. 32, 33. lxxii. 12. 1 Sam. xxv. 29 Job v. 26. Luke xvi. 22 Rev i. 18. xiv 13.
f lxxxvi. 16. cxiii. 12. John xii 26. Acts xxvii. 23. Jam. i 1.
g lxxxvi. 16.
h cvii. 14—16. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11—13 Is. lxi. 1. Rom vi. 22.
i l. 14. cvii 22. Lev vii. 12. Heb. xiii. 15.
k 13. Acts ii. 42.
l 14 xxii. 25. lxxvi. 11.
m xcvi. 8. c. 4. cxviii. 19, 20. cxxii. 3. 4. cxxxv. 2 2 Chr. vi. 6.

former kindness, and the consolations he vouchsafed, and the hope of recovering them, encourage and allure him to return by repentance, faith, and prayer; and this purpose is strengthened by every token and taste of returning peace and comfort. This seems to have been the Psalmist's experience.

V. 8, 9. Rescued by special grace from death and ruin, comforted from distressing sorrow, and recovered and upheld, after grievous falls, the Psalmist determined to walk as in the sight of God in the 'land of the living.' The original word is plural, *lands:* so that the promised land cannot exclusively be intended; but rather the Psalmist meant to say, that he would walk before God while he lived here; and expected at last to enjoy his presence in heaven, and serve him for ever and ever.

V. 10, 11. "I believed, and therefore spoke," that is, 'I called on God under my distresses,' in expectation of help from him alone. But 'I was so discouraged and afflicted, that in the hurry of my mind, I could place no reliance on any man, but thought even those deceivers in whom before I had the greatest confidence.' Some expositors, supposing that David wrote the psalm during the life of Saul, or very soon after his death, conclude that he referred to Samuel especially, who had anointed him to the kingdom, as if he had deceived him with vain hopes. Or, if a later date be assigned, it may be thought that he intended Nathan, by whom he had been assured that Solomon should succeed him. He may, however, most naturally be supposed to refer to Ahithophel's treachery, Absalom's rebellion, and the revolt of Israel; which so astonished and afflicted him, that he was ready to suspect every one about him; though the event proved that he had many faithful zealous friends. His faith in God's mercy and truth, amidst his fears and suspicions concerning men, remained unshaken, and gained the victory.

V. 12. Some render this verse thus: "What shall I "render unto the LORD? All his benefits overcome me!" 'I am so overwhelmed with his abundant goodness, that I 'am lost in wonder, and know not how to express my gratitude.'

V. 13. 'I will call all my friends together to rejoice 'with me; and taking the cup, which we call *the cup of* 'deliverance, (because when blessed and set apart, we are 'wont to commemorate the blessings we have received,) 'I will magnify the power, goodness, and faithfulness of 'God my Saviour before all the company; and then give 'it to them, that they may praise his name together with 'me.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) It seems to have been customary among the Jews thus to take the cup of *deliverances*, when celebrating their solemn feasts, as well as when offering sacrifices of thanksgivings for peculiar mercies: and it is thought that our Saviour, when complying with this custom at his last passover, thence took occasion to institute the Lord's supper; which hath ever since been to Christians the cup of Salvation, and a memorial of his immeasurable love, in giving himself to death for their sins; and a grateful acknowledgment of the inestimable benefits they receive through his atoning sacrifice. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 15. The Lord accounts the death of his saints a very important event. He will not allow their enemies to cut them off before his appointed time. The circumstances of their death are regulated by infinite wisdom and love, for their final benefit: that solemn event often proves a precious opportunity to the survivors, and tends greatly to the honour of God: and it always issues in their complete felicity. The word rendered *saints*, may either mean those who obtain mercy from God, or such as have been taught by him to show mercy. Our Lord seems to have had it in view, when he said, "Blessed are the merciful; for "they shall obtain mercy."

V. 16. "I confess before thee, that I am thy servant, "&c. Thou hast loosed my bonds." 'The recent deliverance which I have experienced, lays me under new, and stronger obligations than ever, to serve thee, with all the power and influence which I possess, and I thus avow my purpose of so doing.' (*Note*, lxxxvi. 16.)

V. 17—19. "Calling on the name of the LORD," sometimes means, celebrating his praises, and acknowledging his mercies, as well as prayer and supplication. The Psalmist, when calling on God for deliverance during his distress, had solemnly vowed to make the most public acknowledgments of his goodness, when his prayer should be answered. And now he brought his thank-offerings to the sanctuary, and there in the presence of all Israel blessed and praised the Lord: calling on all the congregation to join him in this reasonable service.

PSALM CXVII.

A prophetical call to all nations to praise God for his mercy and truth, 1, 2.

O [a] Praise the LORD, all ye nations: [b] praise him, all ye people.
2 For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD *endureth* for ever. Praise ye the LORD.

a lxvi 1.4.lxvii.4. lxviii 3 lxxxvi. 9. Is xxiv 15, 16. xlii. 10—12. Rom. xv. 11. Rev. xv 4
b cxlviii. 11—14. cl. 6. Rev. v. 9. vii 9, 10.
c lxxxv. 10. lxxxix. 1. c. 4, 5. Mic. vii 20. Luke i. 54, 55. Rom. xv. 8, 9.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

We should not only be satisfied and *delighted*, when "the "LORD hath heard our voice and our supplications;" but should love him on that account, as well as for his own essential excellencies and all his innumerable benefits. But we are never so greatly affected with his condescension and kindness, as when he hath relieved us out of extreme distress. The poor sinner, when awakened to a sense of his state and character, recollects that he must shortly die, and fears lest he should sink under the righteous and everlasting wrath of God; then "the sorrows of death and the pains "of hell get hold of him, and he finds trouble and sorrow." But let such persons, without delay, call upon the Lord, and say, "O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my soul:" and they will find him most gracious, and true to his promise, and will learn how his perfect justice coincides with his abounding mercy: for he is as ready to teach the simple, and uphold the feeble, and defend the poor who trust in him, as he is to pardon the guilty, and sanctify the unholy: and having raised them up from this low estate, they will learn to love him and call upon him as long as they live. His ways are not as ours are: he pardons criminals, and relieves the indigent, that they may be encouraged to come again and again, and may learn to love prayer; because "he delights in the prayer of the upright." Let then those "who labour, and are heavy laden, come to him, "that they may find *rest* to their souls;" (*Matt.* xi. 28—30.) Let believers keep close to their *rest;* and if they be at all drawn from it, let them make haste to return, remembering how "bountifully the LORD hath dealt with "them." Having "delivered our souls from death, our "eyes from tears, and our feet from falling," we should deem ourselves bound "to walk before him," and as in his presence. But when we shall enter our heavenly rest, our deliverance from sin and sorrow will be complete; our tears will be finally wiped away, and our feet will no more slip; but we shall behold the glory, and walk in the presence of God, in the land of the living, with inconceivable delight.

V. 10—19.

When we are discomposed by temptations: we had in general better keep silence if possible, for we are apt to speak very unadvisedly: and our conviction of man's deceitfulness may sometimes lead us, before we are aware, to impeach the divine veracity, and to treat even those as *liars*, who would encourage us from the promises of God's word. But true faith will at length prevail in every conflict; and being humbled for our distrust of God's word, we shall experience his faithfulness. What shall the redeemed sinner, when his heart is full of joy and gratitude; or what shall any of us, who have been delivered from urgent trouble and distress, "render unto the LORD for "all his benefits towards us?" We cannot in any way profit him, or offer him any thing which he hath not first given unto us; and our best is unworthy of his acceptance: yet we ought to devote ourselves and all we have to his service and glory. Whilst we enjoy the comfort of his salvation in our secret communion with him, we should also make an open profession of our faith and love, and avow our dependence on him, and obligations to him, by taking the cup of salvation, and remembering the bleeding love of our divine Saviour, in that ordinance which he hath instituted for that purpose: thus joining ourselves to him and to his people, and with them calling upon his name, that we may be enabled by his grace to walk consistently with our profession. Thus every sinner, who hath found peace and deliverance through the blood of Christ, should pay his vows in the presence of all his people. Thus every true son of the church, whose bonds have been loosed, and who is become the servant of God, should frequently offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving, as well as join in other parts of his solemn worship. And every believer, when he hath received any recent mercy, should express his gratitude, by this memorial of that precious blood-shedding which hath purchased all our mercies; and should avow his purpose of devoting his future life to the service of the God of his salvation. Such are the true saints of God, in whose lives and deaths he will be glorified: no enemy or event can deduct from their appointed period on earth; much less shall any destroy their souls. But when the measure of their trials and services is accomplished, their God and Saviour will remove them, in the best manner, to that new Jerusalem, where they will pay their vows with all the redeemed, and offer eternal sacrifices of exalted praise and thanksgiving, "to him who loved them, and washed them from their "sins in his own blood:" and their bodies also shall at length be raised incorruptible to join the sacred worship, and share that glorious felicity. Let us then "give diligence to make our calling and election sure;" let us trust the Lord in the path of duty: let us fear no danger, and decline no difficulty in his service: and let us learn to consider the day of our death as the period of our labours and conflicts, and our entrance into rest, into glory, and felicity.

NOTES.

PSALM CXVII. V. 1. 'This psalm, like the hundred and tenth, seems to be altogether prophetical of the joy that all the world should conceive, at the coming of the Messiah to give salvation, first to the Jews, and then to all other nations, according to his faithful promise.—St. Paul applies the first words of it to this business; (*Rom.* xv. 11:) and some of the Hebrews justify the application.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

PSALM CXVIII.

The psalmist exhorts all orders of men in Israel to praise God, 1—4. *He shows by his own experience how good it is to trust in the Lord,* 5—18. *In blessing him for deliverance and advancement, and calling on the people to join in his triumphant praises, he predicts the coming and the kingdom of the Messiah,* 19—29.

O [a] GIVE thanks unto the LORD; for *he is* good: because his mercy *endureth* for ever.

2 Let [b] Israel now say, that his mercy *endureth* for ever.

3 Let [c] the house of Aaron now say, that his mercy *endureth* for ever.

4 Let [d] them now that fear the LORD say, that his mercy *endureth* for ever.

5 I [e] called upon the LORD * in distress: the LORD answered me, *and* [f] *set me* in a large place.

6 [g] The LORD *is* † on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?

7 The LORD [h] taketh my part with them that help me: [i] therefore shall I see *my desire* upon them that hate me.

8 *It is* [k] better to trust in the LORD, than to put confidence in man.

9 *It is* better to trust in the LORD, [l] than to put confidence in princes.

10 [m] All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD will I ‡ destroy them.

11 They [n] compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD I will destroy them.

12 They compassed me about [o] like bees; they are [p] quenched as the fire of thorns: for [q] in the name of the LORD I will § destroy them.

a 29. cvi. 1 cvii. 1. cxxxvi. 1 1 Chr xvi. 8. 34. Jer. xxxiii. 11.
b cxv. 9—11. cxxxv. 19, 20. cxlv. 10 cxlvii. 19, 20 Gal vi. 16. Heb xiii 15 1 Pet ii 9, 10
c cxxxv. 1—3 1 Pet. ii. 5 Rev. i. 6 iv. 7—11. v 8—10.
d xxii 23 Rev. xix. 5.
e xviii. 6. xl. 1—3. lxxvii 2. cvii. 12. 19. cxvi. 3. 4. cxx 1. cxxx. 1. 2. Gen xxxii. 7. 9—11. 1 Sam. xxxi. 6—8 Mark xiv. 34—36.
* Heb. *out of distress* cxxx 1.
f xviii. 19. xxx 8.
g xxvii. 1—3. xlvi. 1. 11 lvi 4. 9. 11 cxlvi 5 Jer xx 11 Mic vii. 8—10 Rom. viii 31 Heb. xiii. 6
† Heb *for me*
h liv. 4 lv 18 1 Chr xii 18. liv 7 lix 10. xcii. 11. cxlii 8
k xl 4 lxv 8. 9. Jer. xvii 5—7. Mic. vii 5—7
l cxlvi 3—5 Is. xxx. 2, 3 15—17. xxxi 1. 8. xxxvi. 6, 7. Ez. xxix. 7.
m 2 Sam. v. viii. x Zech xii. 3. xiv 1—3. Rev. xix 19—21. xx. 8, 9.
‡ Heb. *cut them off*
n xxii. 12—16. lxxxviii 17. 1 Sam xxiii. 26. 1 Chr xix. 10.
o Deut. i. 44
p lviii 9. lxxxii. 14, 15. Ec. vii. 6. Is xxvii. 4. Nah. i 10
q xx. 1. 5. 1 Sam. xvii. 45. 1 Chr. xiv. 10, 11. 14—16. 2 Chr. xiv. 11, 12. xvi 7—9. xx. 17—22. xxxii. 7, 8.
§ *cut down*

V. 2. 'For the merciful kindness of the Lord towards 'us hath prevailed, (or has been *confirmed* to us;) and his 'truth for ever, Hallelujah.' (*Notes, Rom.* xv. 8—13.) God promised to Abraham, that in Christ his Seed all nations should be blessed: he confirmed that promise when he sent the Saviour, raised him from the dead, exalted him at his right hand, and called the Gentiles into the church: but a still more literal and extensive accomplishment of it will take place at the Millennium.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We are the very persons, whom the Holy Spirit here addresses, and calls to join our Hallelujahs with those of his ancient people: and "therefore we ought to give the more "earnest heed to the things which we have heard." The very circumstance of our being the professed worshippers of the true God, by means of the Gospel of Christ, that "Seed of Abraham, in whom all nations shall be blessed;" is a sufficient demonstration that the Scriptures are divinely inspired; that the mercy of God hath prevailed; and that he is ever mindful of his promise, and faithful to it even to a thousand generations. But let us take care that none of us receive this gift of God in vain: let us seek the fulfilment to us, personally, of those promises which ensure the believer's eternal salvation: and, while we make it our business to glorify our God in word and deed, let us still pray, that *all* the nations of the earth may show forth his praises, for having called them out of darkness into the marvellous light of his blessed Gospel.

NOTES.

PSALM CXVIII. V. 1—4. David is thought to have composed this psalm, after his advancement to the throne, and his victories over his enemies round about: and probably it was sung by the priests, Levites, and congregation of Israel, with David at the head of them, as they marched up to the tabernacle to render public thanks for these benefits. 'David, rejected of Saul and 'the people, in the appointed time obtained the kingdom. 'Under his person in all this was Christ lively set forth.—'Because God, by creating David king, showed his mercy 'towards his afflicted church; the prophet doth not only 'thank God himself, but exhorteth all the people to do 'the same.'

V. 5. 'We are here taught, that the more troubles op-'press us, the more ought we to be instant in prayer.'—"The LORD heard," (or answered,) "me by enlargement." When the Israelites, being straitened by the Canaanites, were enabled to drive them away and possess their inheritance, the Lord heard them, (as he did Jabez;) and "en-"larged their coast." David brought out of the cave, and made king over all Israel; Christ freed from the grave, and made Head over all things to his church; the slave of sin made free, and become the servant of God; and the believer "delivered from the bondage of corruption into the "glorious liberty of the children of God;" are instances illustrative of the Psalmist's meaning, to which many others might be added.

V. 7. *See*, &c. The Septuagint renders this very properly, "I shall look on all mine enemies." 'I shall meet 'them with boldness, look them in the face without fear; 'and witness either their submission or destruction.'

V. 8, 9. Some render these verses, 'It is better for a 'man to *betake* himself to the LORD, than to trust in men, '&c. even princes.' The unfaithfulness, changeableness, weakness, and mortal nature of men, however distinguished, render all confidence in them vain and insecure: and the Lord's jealousy for his own honour induces him to punish those who are guilty of this idolatrous confidence, and to encourage such as betake themselves to him in danger and distress.

13 [r] Thou hast thrust sore at me, that I might fall: but the LORD helped me.
14 The LORD [s] *is* my Strength and Song, and is become my Salvation.
15 The [t] voice of rejoicing and salvation *is* in the tabernacles of the righteous: [u] the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.
16 The [x] right hand of the LORD is exalted: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.
17 I shall not [y] die, but live, and [z] declare the works of the LORD.
18 The LORD hath [a] chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death.

r xviii. 17, 18. lvi 1—3. 1 Sam. xx. 3. xxv. 29. 2 Sam. xvii. 1—3. Matt. iv. 1—11. Heb. ii. 14.
s xviii. 1, 2 Ex xv. 2. Is. xii. 2. xlv 17 22—25. Matt i 21—23.
t xxx. 11, 12. xxxii. 11 xxxiii. 1. cxix 54. 111. Deut. xii. 12. Is. li 11 lxv 13. Acts ii. 46, 47 xvi. 34. Rev. xviii. 20 xix. 1—5
u xliv. 3. xlv 4 lx 12 lxxxix 13. xcviii. 1. Is. li. 9, 10.
x Ex. xv. 6. Acts ii. 32—36.
y vi 5. Is xxxviii. 16—20 Hab. i. 12. John xi. 4. Rom. xiv. 7—9.
z xl. 5. 10. lxxi. 17, 18. cvii 22 cxix. 13. cxlv. 4. Jer. li. 10.——a lxvi 10—12. xciv. 12, 13 2 Sam. xii. 10. xiii, xvii. Job v. 17, 18. xxxiii 16—30. Prov. iii. 11, 12. Jon. ii. 6. 1 Cor. xi. 32. 2 Cor. i. 9—11. Heb. xii. 10, 11.

19 [b] Open to me the gates of righteousness: [c] I will go into them, *and* I will praise the LORD:
20 This [d] gate of the LORD, into which the righteous shall enter.
21 I [e] will praise thee: for thou hast heard me, [f] and art become my Salvation.
22 [g] The Stone *which* the builders refused, is become [h] the Head-*stone* of the corner.
23 This is * the LORD's doing; [i] it *is* marvellous in our eyes.
24 This *is* [k] the day *which* the LORD hath made; [l] we will rejoice and be glad in it.

b Is. xxvi. 2.
c ix. 13, 14 lxvi. 13—15. xcv. 2. c. 4 cxvi. 17, 18. Is. xxxviii. 20 22.
d xxiv. 3, 4, 7. 9. Is. xxvi. 2. xxxv 8—10. Rev. xxi 24—27. xxii. 14, 15.
e xxii 23, 24. lxix. 33, 34. cxvi. 1.
f 14. Ex. xv. 2. Is. xii. 2. xlix. 8.
g Matt. xxi. 42. Mark xii. 10, 11. Luke xx. 17. Acts iv. 11. Eph ii 20—22. 1 Pet. ii. 4—8.
h Zech iv. 7.
* Heb *from the* LORD. Acts ii. 32—36. iii. 14, 15. v. 31. 39. Eph i. 19—22.
i Job v. 9. Acts iv. 13. xiii. 41.
k Zech iii. 9. Matt. xxviii. 1. 8. John xx 19, 20. Acts xx 7. Rev. i. 10.——l lxxxiv. 10. 1 Kings viii. 66. 2 Chr. xx. 26—28. Neh. viii. 10. Is. lviii. 13.

V. 10—12. The nations bordering on Canaan confederated against David, and compassed him about, like swarms of bees, as if they would sting him to death. But, depending on the assistance of the Lord, he gained repeated victories over them; so that their rage terminated like the fire kindled amongst thorns; which is vehement, and makes a great blaze and noise, and consumes the thorns, and then is extinguished without much effect. Every victory David gained was an earnest of further success; and he trusted, that by the help of the Lord he should be able to destroy all his enemies. Thus the Redeemer, personally, and in his church, hath been opposed by all the nations of the earth; but destruction from the Lord is the inevitable consequence of persisting in that opposition, however numerous and formidable the opponents may appear. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 13. Perhaps Saul was meant, as that enemy who had thrust sore at David that he might fall. When Satan tempted Christ, and afterwards, when he prevailed to have him crucified, and assailed him with all his power in that hour of darkness; he thrust sore at the church, to destroy her at once in the person of her Representative. The believer has often occasion to use the words with a similar application.

V. 14. 'In that he was delivered, it came not of him-'self, or of the power of man, but only of God's favour: '' therefore he will praise him.' (*Note, Ex.* xv. 2.) The name JAH, used in the text referred to, which is here exactly copied, occurs many times in this psalm.

V. 15, 16. David's deliverance from Saul, and his exaltation to the throne, were typical of Christ's resurrection and ascension: and on the Lord's day, when his resurrection is especially commemorated, the dwellings of true believers all over the earth resound with the voice of joyful and thankful praises; because "the right hand of the "LORD hath done valiantly, and is exalted."

V. 17, 18. The triumph of David over his persecutors was an earnest of further mercies and continued protection; that he might "declare the works of the LORD." He had been sharply chastened and tried: but he "was "not given over to death:" but preserved to be a highly honoured instrument of glorifying God and promoting Israel's prosperity. Christ, having suffered unknown agonies, when "the chastisement of our peace was upon him, "was not given over unto death," but rose from the dead, and said to his servant John, "I am He that liveth "and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore; "and have the keys of death and of hell." By his Gospel he declares the works of the LORD throughout the earth; and "because he liveth," all his true disciples "shall live "also."

V. 19—24. David, preserved from death, triumphant over his enemies, and now going up to the temple to offer his thank-offerings, attended by the thousands of Israel, seems here to call upon the porters and other Levites, to open the gates of the sanctuary for his admission. These are called *the gates of righteousness;* because of the characters of those who offered *acceptable* worship, in the courts of God, and because of the nature of the services there performed. They who were within seem to have sung responsive, "This *is* the gate of the LORD, into "which the righteous shall enter:" and then the whole company, perhaps in parts, sang the following verses.—David's advancement to the throne, notwithstanding the opposition which had long been made to it, was referred to: but the whole passage is evidently a prediction of Christ. When he arose from the grave, he ascended into heaven, as the Fore-runner of all his redeemed people; and he demanded the opening of those gates of righteousness, that he and they might enter in, and praise the Lord. The ministering angels may be considered as opening the gates of heaven, into which the righteous alone can enter; and then the whole church in chorus, celebrates the praises of God, for having heard their prayers, and become their salvation. The redeemer doubtless is also that "Stone which the builders rejected," and would have thrown aside as worthless among the rubbish; but which by the mighty power of God, and to the astonishment of the apostles and disciples, became the chief corner-stone, supporting the whole spiritual temple, and uniting the several parts of it into one building, "an "habitation of God through the Spirit." (*Marg. Ref.*)

m xx. 9. xxii. 21. lxix. 1. 13. n xc. 17.

25 [m] Save now, I beseech thee, [n] O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, [n] send now prosperity.

o Matt. xxi. 9. xxiii. 39. Mark xi. 9, 10. Luke xix. 38. John xii. 13. p cxxxiv. 3. Num. vi. 23—26.

26 [o] Blessed *be* he that cometh in the name of the LORD: [p] we have blessed you out of the house of the LORD.

q 1 Kings xviii. 21. 39.

27 [q] God *is* the LORD, which hath [r] shewed us light; [s] bind the sacrifice with cords, *even* unto [t] the horns of the altar.

r xviii. 28. xxxvii. 6 Esth. viii 16. Is. ix. 2. lx. 1. Mic vii. 9. Mal. iv. 2. John viii. 12. 1 Pet ii 9.

s li. 18, 19. 1 Kings viii. 63, 64 1 Chr. xxix. 21. Heb xiii 15.

t Ex. xxvii. 2. xxxviii. 2.

28 Thou *art* [u] my God, and I will praise thee: *thou art* my God, I will exalt thee.

u cxlv 1 cxlvi. 2. Ex. xv. 2. Is. xii. 2. xxv. 1 9.

29 O [x] give thanks unto the LORD; for *he is* good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

x 1. ciii. 17 Ezra iii. 11. Is. lxiii. 7.

And as the chief priests, scribes, and Pharisees of old refused this Foundation-stone of the church; so many of the wise, and learned, and professedly religious, of every age and nation ever since, have rejected it, and many of them have long endeavoured to substitute some other in its place. But by the marvellous interposition of the Lord, their attempts have been frustrated, and proved ruinous to themselves and adherents alone. The day of thanksgiving also, which David and Israel celebrated, was but a shadow of that blessed day which saw the Redeemer risen from the dead: that was indeed "the day which the LORD had made" for his people to rejoice in: and it hath ever since been commemorated every week in the Christian church, and in most parts hath had a more solemn annual commemoration. The twenty-second and twenty-third verses are quoted six times in the New-Testament, and expressly applied to Christ; nay, many of the Jewish Rabbies acknowledge this to be a prediction of the Messiah.

V. 25, 26. The word rendered, "*Save now*," is *Hosanna;* which seems equivalent to our modern congratulatory prayer on the accession of a monarch to the throne, "God "save the king." It is evident that the Jews had this passage in mind, when they said before Christ, at his entrance into Jerusalem, "Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed "is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in "the highest." They meant to welcome him as the promised Messiah: but they totally misunderstood the nature of his kingdom and salvation. And our Lord also himself referred to this prophecy, when he said to the priests and rulers, "Ye shall not see me henceforth; till ye shall say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." The priests from the sanctuary seem to have answered David and his company in the latter clause, "We have blessed "you out of the house of the LORD." At length the whole congregation, having met in the courts of the sanctuary, joined in solemn sacrifices and ardent praises: which were typical of the joy and praise of the church on earth and in heaven, on account of the Redeemer's exaltation.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—18.

Whether the believer reviews his former experience, or traces back his comforts to the everlasting goodness and mercy of God; or whether he looks forward, and adverts to those future blessings which are secured to him by the promises of the new covenant; he will be sure to find abundant cause for joy and praise: he will desire to animate others in their several stations, to unite in this delightful work: and this always was, and always will be, the substance of the redeemed sinner's grateful song, "The LORD "is good, because his mercy endureth for ever." No poor sinner, in deep distress, ever yet called earnestly upon him, who was not afterwards enabled to say, "The LORD an-"swered me, and set me at liberty:" and every answer to our prayers is an evidence that he is on our side; and then we need not fear what man can do unto us. Whether few or many help us; if he take part with them, they who hate us will be treated as enemies. Seeing we allow that it is far "better to trust in the LORD, than to put confidence "even in princes;" but we should take care to act consistently with our judgment: we should not pay court to the rich and powerful, as if they could make us happy or miserable; but without any undue compliances, we should conscientiously do our duty to them and to all men, and trust in the Lord alone to accept and bless us. We may indeed be compassed with enemies, and be disquieted by their malice: but in the name of the Lord we shall be delivered from them, and be victorious over them all, and their rage will only effect their own destruction. And though Satan thrust sore at us, that we may fall into sin or misery; yet trusting in our almighty Friend, we may make head against him and his legions; for "the LORD is the strength and song" of every believer, "and is become his salvation." As we need not dread the rage, so we should not envy the carnal, vain, and vanishing mirth, of the ungodly. For the voice of rational rejoicing and of salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous; whilst they enjoy the love, are safe under the protection of the powerful and valiant right hand, and are employed in praising the name of the Lord. With peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost, and liberty to "cast all their cares upon him who careth for them," they possess a lively hope of an incorruptible inheritance: their bodies indeed must drop into the grave; yet they shall not die eternally; "but live, and declare the works of the "LORD:" and though he chasten them for their good, repeatedly and sharply, yet he will not "give them over "unto death."

V. 19—29.

Renewed mercies and deliverances send believers again and again to the courts of the Lord, that they may enter in and praise his name; and at last, delivered from death and every evil, they will enter the gates of heaven to praise him for evermore. He hath generally chosen and honoured those whom man despised: he hath done good to his people by some, of whom it was said, "How shall "these men save us?" And none are more apt to mis-

PSALM CXIX.

Contains a miscellaneous collection of wise maxims, pious ejaculations, holy purposes, gracious experiences, &c.; which cannot with ease and simplicity be arranged under any particular heads; there frequently being little connexion between one sentence and another; and the whole, as Mr. Henry *remarks, 'rather a chest of gold rings, 'than a chain of gold links.'*

ALEPH.

[a] BLESSED *are* the * undefiled in the way, who [b] walk in the law of the LORD.

a i. 1—3. xxxii. 1, 2 cxii 1. cxxviii 1 Matt. v. 3—12. Luke xi. 28 John xiii. 17. Jam i 25. Rev. xxii 14.
* Or, *perfect*, or *sincere* 2 Kings xx. 3 2 Chr. xxxi 20 21. Job i 1 8 John i. 47 Acts xxiv. 16 2 Cor. i 12. Tit ii. 11, 12
b Ez. xi 20 Hos. xiv 9 Luke i. 6. 1 Thes. iv. 1, 2.

take, and mislead others in these matters, than they who by prescription are deemed, and deem themselves, builders in Zion. We should not then be discouraged by contempt and neglect from "occupying with our talent, till the LORD "come:" but attend to our proper work, whatever acceptance it meets with from man, and desire no more but to be approved of God. Every good gift is from him, and the glory of every good work belongs to him: and when beneficial changes are brought about, which "are marvel-"lous in our eyes," we should acknowledge it to be his doing. Gracious deliverances give occasion to days of joy and gladness; such are days which the Lord hath made, and we should remember to rejoice in a holy manner: for carnal mirth and sensual indulgence, when we are rejoicing in the goodness of God, are like offering his corn and wine to Baal. (*Hos.* ii. 8.) Our thanksgiving on earth must always be accompanied with prayers for further mercies, and the continuance of our prosperity; our Hallelujahs with Hosannas. We should ever pray for those who "come "in the name of the Lord," and who evidently in their proper station act by his authority and for his glory; and the blessing of his servants, out of his sanctuary, should be highly valued by the greatest of princes, as eminently conducive to their prosperity. All our success should animate us to abound in spiritual sacrifices to the Lord, who giveth us light and comfort. If he be our God, our Portion, and Salvation, the Object of our cordial worship, and the Lord of our choice, we shall render him willing obedience, and exalt him as we are able: and we shall here begin, and for ever continue to give thanks to him, who is "good, and whose "mercy endureth for ever." In all these things our Redeemer is the grand pattern and exemplar of his people. Delivered from great distress, which he endured in our behalf: placed upon a glorious throne, according to his confidence in his heavenly Father, and in answer to his fervent prayers; having overcome every enemy which compassed him about, or "thrust sore at him that he might fall," and ever living to declare the works of the Lord; he hath opened the gates of righteousness to all his people; he hath become our Way of access to his Father's presence, and the Foundation of our hopes and of our souls; and he hath shown us the way to conquer by patience, faith, and prayer. Contemned of the builders, he is became the Foundation and Corner stone of the whole church: and his resurrection, and ascension, and exaltation were marvellous in the eyes of numbers, who acknowledged and rejoiced in them as the Lord's doing. When he left the grave a glorious day commenced, which knows no night: our Sun of righteousness arose to set no more: and our weekly commemoration of that great event on the Lord's day is the earnest of, and preparation for, our celebrating an eternal sabbath in heaven to his glory. Let us then welcome the return of this day which the Lord hath made, and be glad and rejoice in it: let us beseech him to send prosperity to his preached Gospel, and by it to save the souls of men: let us welcome those who come as ambassadors in the name of Christ; as an evidence that we welcome him to our hearts, and shall welcome him when he comes to judgment: and let us join our prayers for, and kindness to, those who belong to the Redeemer, with our spiritual sacrifices of praise to him our Lord, our God, our Saviour, and our Portion.

NOTES.

PSALM CXIX. V. 1. It is generally allowed, that David composed this most instructive psalm: and it is most probable that he committed to writing, in a detached manner, the several reflections, maxims, and ejaculations contained in it, as they occurred to his mind, amidst the varied scenes of his eventful life; and that, towards the close of it, he collected them into order, for the benefit of his people, and that of the church in every age. The psalm consists of twenty-two sections, (each containing eight verses;) according to the number of the letters in the Hebrew alphabet: and every verse in each section, in the original, begins with that letter which stands as the title to it. It may be supposed that this arrangement was formed, principally, to assist the memory of the reader. The psalm may be considered in a special manner as the touchstone of genuine experience: and so far as any man's views, desires, purposes, and affections, coincide with those of the Psalmist, he may be sure that they come from the influence of the sanctifying Spirit, but no further. The reader's thoughts indeed will frequently be led to the Saviour himself; because he was perfectly what believers are in a measure: and their conformity to him is the evidence of their interest in his divine righteousness. *The word of God*, under different terms, according to the several parts of which it is composed, is mentioned in almost every verse. Sometimes indeed the connexion will lead the attentive reader to think more of one part than of others: but in general the oracles of God, as then extant, are intended; and it is probable that the term was commonly selected which best suited the metrical arrangement. Six or seven distinct words are used in the first section of eight verses, viz. *Law, testimonies, precepts, statutes, commandments, judgments*, and *ways*. Most or all of these terms have been already explained: (*Marg. Ref.*) but in some instances, it will be

2 Blessed *are* they that [c] keep his testimonies, *and that* [d] seek him with the whole heart.

3 They also [e] do no iniquity: they walk in his ways.

4 Thou hast [f] commanded *us* to keep thy precepts diligently.

5 O that [g] my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!

c 22. 146. xxv. 10. cv. 45. Deut vi. 17. 1 Kings ii. 3. Ez. xxxvi. 27. John xiv 23. d 10 Deut. iv. 29. 2 Chr. xxxi. 21. Jer. xxix. 13. e 1 John iii. 9. v. 18. f Deut iv. 1. 9 v. 29—33. vi. 17 xii 32. xxviii. 1, &c xxx 16. Josh. i. 7 Jer. vii 23. Matt. xxviii 20. John xiv. 15. 21. Phil iv. 8 9. 1 John v. 3 ——g 32 36. 44, 45. 131 159. 173. li. 10. Jer. xxxi. 33. Rom. vii. 22—24. 2 Thes iii. 5. Heb. xiii. 21.

6 Then [h] shall I not be ashamed, when [i] I have respect unto all thy commandments.

7 I will [k] praise thee with uprightness of heart, [l] when I shall have learned † thy righteous judgments.

8 [m] I will keep thy statutes: [n] O forsake me not utterly.

h 31. 80. Job xxii. 26. Dan. xii 2, 3. 1 John ii. 28. iii. 20, 21. i 128 John xv. 14. Jam. ii 10, 11. k 171 ix. 1. lxxxvi. 12, 13 1 Chr. xxix 13—17. l 12. 18, 19. 27. 33, 34 64 73. 124 xxv 4, 5. 8. 10. cxliii 10. Is. xlviii. 17. John vi. 45 † Heb *judgments of thy righteousness.* 138——m 16. 106. 115. Josh. xxiv. 15.——n 116, 117. 176. xxxviii. 21, 22 li. 11 Phil. iv. 13.

necessary again to consider them along with the context.—As the pardoning mercy of God in Christ is the only source of a sinner's happiness; so the actual enjoyment of that happiness is inseparably connected with devoted obedience, and in a great measure consists in it. The word rendered *undefiled*, means *perfect*, or *upright*, and marks the sound character, the true believer, who sincerely embraces the salvation of God, and conscientiously walks according to his commandments in his habitual conduct.

V. 2, 3. The testimonies of God are the declarations of his truth, and will, however attested; whether by express declarations, or by instituted ordinances, as pledges of his love to his upright worshippers: and they who credit his word, and attend on his ordinances, and thus seek him with an *undivided* heart, are happy, and shall be happy. (*Marg. Ref.*)—"*Assuredly* they practise no iniquity; they walk in "his ways;" which "are pleasantness and peace."

V. 4. What then doth God command us, but diligently to do those very things in which true happiness is to be found? What doth he forbid us, but to make ourselves and others miserable?

V. 5. 'David acknowledgeth his imperfection, desiring 'God to reform it, that his life might be conformable to 'God's word.' (*Notes*, xix. 8—14. *Rom.* vii. 12—25.) 'The faithful soul, enraptured with the contemplation of 'that blessedness which is the consequence of serving 'God, but conscious, at the same time, of an inability to 'attain to it, sighs after the refreshing and strengthening 'influences of divine grace. She groans earnestly within 'herself, and at length breathes forth a wish, that the 'Spirit of truth and love would fix and establish her in a 'holy course of thinking, speaking, and acting on all occa-'sions; and would prevent her from turning aside out of 'it, to the right hand or to the left.' (*Horne.*)—The sudden transition from the preceding reflection to this fervent ejaculation is very beautiful.

V. 6. 'All the commandments have the same Author, 'and the same sanction. He who thinketh to atone for failure 'in one, by the observa ion of another,—is a hypocrite, and, 'unless he repent, will be brought to shame, if not before 'men here, yet before men and angels hereafter.' (*Horne.*) —Notwithstanding manifold imperfections, that man will never be thus put to shame, who unreservedly has respect to all God's commandments, as the rule of his conduct, and humbly repents of every deviation from them.

V. 7. 'The Scriptures contain an account of God's 'righteous judgments; or his decrees and determinations 'concerning us, with a history of cases and precedents, 'entered upon record for our admonition. By these we 'are to form our opinion and regulate our conduct: and 'when we shall have so learned these, as to walk accord-'ing to them, we shall praise God with an upright heart.' (*Horne.*)

V. 8. 'He refuseth not to be tried with temptations; 'but he feareth to faint, if God succour not his infirmity 'in time.' (*Notes*, i. xxxii.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS, on ALEPH.

It is the will of God that we should wisely seek our own happiness: our self-love indeed should be properly directed and subordinated; but it cannot and ought not to be extirpated. Experience, (as well as the sacred Scriptures,) testifies, that "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk "in the law of the LORD." Had sin never existed, misery had been unknown: and now that the way of pardon and reconciliation has been opened by the Lord Jesus Christ, we reascend to felicity in proportion as we are renewed to holiness; and it is our highest privilege on earth to commune with God, and bear his image; to attend on his ordinances, rely on his promises, and, avoiding all iniquity, to walk in his ways. Believers are indeed not exposed to the condemning sentence of the law; yet the Lord "hath "commanded them to keep his precepts diligently;" and their obligations to obedience are increased in proportion to the mercies they have received. Indeed this grateful obedience corresponds to the dispositions of their hearts. The genuine disciple of Christ could not rely on His righteousness for justification, did he not see that excellency and beauty in it, which make him long to transcribe it in his own conduct, and to have his soul cast into the very mould of it. His heart consents to every precept of the holy law that it is good; he would not have one of them repealed, mitigated, or altered; he only grieves that he no more comes up to this perfect standard, and, with many a sigh, he says to the Lord, "O that my ways were directed to keep thy "statutes!" He knows, that if a man only respects some of the commandments, and expects by one instance of obedience to purchase an indulgence for disobedience in another, his hypocrisy will be detected by his partiality; and that if he be not made ashamed in this world, everlasting contempt will be his portion. Therefore he desires to have respect unto *all* God's commandments. And as he could have no confidence before the mercy-seat now, so he could not hope to stand with confidence before the judgment-seat at last, if he allowed himself to despise or violate one of them. This man therefore will not only pray to be directed and enabled to obey, as far as he knows the will of God,

BETH.

9 Wherewithal [o] shall a young man cleanse his way? [p] by taking heed *thereto* according to thy word

10 With [q] my whole heart have I sought thee: [r] O let me not wander from thy commandments.

11 [s] Thy word have I hid in mine heart, [t] that I might not sin against thee.

12 [u] Blessed *art* thou, O LORD: [x] teach me thy stautes.

13 With my lips have [y] I declared all the judgments of thy mouth.

14 I have [z] rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as *much as* in all riches.

15 I will [a] meditate in thy precepts, and [b] have respect unto thy ways.

16 I will [c] delight myself in thy statutes: [d] I will not forget thy word.

GIMEL.

17 [e] Deal bountifully with thy servant, *that* [f] I may live, and keep thy word.

18 ‡ Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold [g] wondrous things out of thy law.

19 I *am* [h] a stranger in the earth: [i] hide not thy commandments from me.

20 My [k] soul breaketh for the long-

o xxv. 7. xxxiv. 11. Job i. 5. xiii 26. Pro i. 4. 10. iv. 1 10—17. v 7, &c. vi. 20, &c. vii 7, &c. Ec. xi. 9, 10. xii. 1. Luke xv 13, &c 2 Tim. ii 22. Tit ii. 4—6

p 11 97—105. 1 1—3. xix 7—11. lxxviii. 4—8 Deut. vi. 6—9. xvii 18—20. Josh. i 7 John xv 3 2 Tim iii. 15—17. Jam. i. 21—25.

q 2 34. 58 69. lxxviii 37 1 Sam. vii. 3 2 Chr. xv 15. Jer. iii. 10. Hos. x 2 Zeph. i. 5, 6 Matt. vi 24 Col. iii 22. 1 John ii. 15.

r 21 118. 133.176. xxiii. 3. cxxv. 5 cxliii. 8—10. Prov. ii. 13. xxi 16. Is xxxv. 8. Ez. xxxiv. 6. 2 Pet. ii. 15. 24.——s 97 xxxvii. 31. xl. 8. Job xxii. 22. Prov. ii. 1 10, 11 Is li. 7 Jer xv. 16. Luke ii. 19 51 Col. iii. 16 ——t xix 13.——u 1 Tim. i. 11. vi. 15 ——x 26, 27. 33 64. 66. 68. 71, 72. 108 124, 125 135. xxv. 4, 5. lxxxvi. 11. cxliii. 10. Luke xxiv. 45. John xiv. 26. 1 John ii 27 ——y 46. 172 xxxiv 11. xxxvii. 30. xl. 9, 10. lxxi. 15—18. cxviii. 17. Matt x. 27. xii. 34, 35. Acts iv. 20.——z 47. 72 77 111. 127. 162. xix. 9, 10. cxii. 1. Job xxiii 12. Jer. xv 16. Matt. xiii. 44. Acts ii. 41—47.

a 23 48 78. 97. 131 148. i. 2. Jam. i 25.

b 6. 117.

c 14. 24. 35. 47. 70. 77. 92. xl 8. Rom. vii 22. Heb. x 16, 17.

d 11. 83 93 109. 141. 176. Prov. iii 1. Jam i. 23. 24

e 65.124.132. xiii. 6. cxvi 7 John i. 16 2 Cor ix. 7—11 Phil. iv. 19.

f Rom viii 2—4. Eph. ii. 4, 5. 10. Tit ii. 11, 12. 1 John ii. 29. v. 3, 4

‡ Heb. *Reveal.* Is. xxix 10—12 18. xxxii. 3. xxxv. 5. Matt. xiii. 15. xvi. 17 John ix. 39. Acts xxvi. 18. 2 Cor. iii. 14—18. iv. 4—6. Eph. i. 17, 18. Rev. iii. 18

g 96 Hos. viii.12. 2 Cor. iii. 13 Heb viii. 5 x 1.——h xxxix 12. Gen. xlvii. 9 1 Chr. xxix. 15 2 Cor. v. 6 Heb. xi 13—16 1 Pet. ii 11.——i 10 Job xxxix 17 Is lxiii 17 Luke ix 21. 45 xxiv. 45 ——k 40 131. 174 xlii. 1 lxiii. 1. lxxxiv 2 Pro. xiii. 12. Cant. v. 8. Rev. iii. 15, 16

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but to be taught it, in all those things, which have hitherto been concealed from him; and he is disposed with uprightness of heart, to praise the Lord for every new discovery which he makes in his righteous judgments. As his desire and purpose are to keep the statutes of God, so his dependence is upon him to enable him and comfort him in so doing. And though the Lord may leave such a servant to feel his own weakness, when struggling with difficulties and temptation: yet he will hear his prayer, when he earnestly entreats him that he would not *utterly* forsake him.

NOTES.

V. 9. Many maxims and rules have been laid down for regulating the manners and forming the principles of young persons: but a constant attention to their conduct, and an habitual comparison of their opinions, words, tempers, affections and actions, with the sacred Scriptures, so as to aim daily at nearer and nearer conformity, is of itself sufficient, and without this all else is totally inadequate. We may suppose that David made this inquiry for his own use, in the dangerous and important season of youth; and then published it in his old age for the benefit of others. 'He, who became man for our salvation, passed through 'this state of youth undefiled, that he might, as it were, 'reclaim, and consecrate it anew to God. Let every young 'man frequently meditate on this circumstance.' (*Horne.*)

V. 10. *O let*, &c. "Do not thrust me away from "thy commandments."—"Do not cause me to wander, "&c."—The Psalmist was conscious that God might justly reject his imperfect services; and that both the will and power of obeying, as well as pardon and acceptance, were to be sought from his free mercy and grace.

V. 11. David treasured up the truths, promises, precepts, and instructions of the sacred oracles in his memory, and endeavoured to form his judgment, to direct his conscience, and to regulate his affections according to them: and having thus lodged them in his heart, they were securely hidden from every enemy, nor could he be robbed of them. Thus he used the Scriptures as his antidote against the contagion of sin and temptation.

V. 13. *Judgments.* This word seems to mean the decisions of the infinite wisdom and justice of God, whether they concern truths, facts, duties, or persons. By these decisions we ought to judge, and by them we shall be judged.

V. 14. 'Truth and holiness afford to the sincere be- 'liever a pleasure more exquisite, as well as more solid 'and enduring, than that which the miser feels at the 'acquisition of his darling wealth. These true riches we 'may always acquire.' (*Horne.*)

V. 15. 'Meditation is that exercise of the mind where- 'by it recals a known truth, as some kinds of creatures do 'their food, to be ruminated upon, until all the nutritious 'parts are extracted and fitted for the purpose of life.' (*Horne.*)

V. 17. "Recompense thy servant; I will live and "keep thy word." Or, "confer a favour on thy servant, "that I may live and keep thy word." The verse may be understood either way. 'He showeth that we ought not 'to desire to live, but to serve God.' If the Lord communicate to us the spiritual life abundantly, we shall be proportionably obedient to his word; and this will be both an additional obligation conferred on us, and a gracious recompense of our imperfect services hitherto.

V. 18. "Reveal," or *unveil* mine eyes, &c. The *moral law* of God showed the Israelites their need of a Saviour; and it also displays the holiness of God, the nature of heavenly happiness in conformity to him, and the believer's path through this evil world. But under the *ceremonial law*, the wonders of redeeming love were veiled. Believers among the Israelites well knew that the external institutions of the law typified some deep and spiritual mysteries: and they understood them, in proportion to their degree of divine illumination, and as far as was necessary for their support, comfort, and direction in the path of life; yet probably with much less distinctness than real Christians now do. But under every dispensation, the veil of prejudice, pride, and carnal affections, must be removed from the heart of fallen man; or he will never understand the nature and glory of divine truth. "If the "word of God be the lesson, the Spirit of God must be "the Teacher."

l Levi. 3. Job xxiii. 11, 12. xxvii. 10. Prov. xvii. 17. m 78. cxxxviii. 6. Ex. x. 3. xviii. 11. Job xl. 11, 12. Is. ii. 11, 12 x. 12. Ez. xxviii. 2—10. Dan. iv. 37. v. 22—24. Mal. iv 1. Luke xiv. 11. xviii. 14. Jam. iv. 6. 1 Pet v 5.—n 10. 118. Deut. xxvii. 15—26. xxviii. 15. xxx. 19. Neh ix. 16 29. Is. xlii. 24. xliii 28. Jer. xliv. 9—11. 16. 28, 29. Gal iii. 13—o 39. 42. xxxix. 8. xli. 10. lxix 9—11. 19, 20. cxxiii. 3, 4. 1 Sam. xxv. 10. 39. 2 Sam. xvi. 7, 8. Job xvi. 20. xix. 2, 3. Heb. xiii. 13.

ing *that it hath* unto thy judgments [l] at all times.

21 Thou hast [m] rebuked the proud *that are* [n] cursed, which do err from thy commandments.

22 [o] Remove me from reproach and contempt; [p] for I have kept thy testimonies.

23 [q] Princes also did sit *and* speak against me: *but* [r] thy servant did meditate in thy statutes.

24 Thy [s] testimonies also *are* my delight, [t] *and* ∮ my counsellors.

p xxxvii. 3. 6. 1 Pet. ii. 20. iii. 16, 17. iv. 14—16. q ii. 1, 2. 1 Sam. xx. 31. xxii. 7—13. Luke xxii. 66. xxiii. 1, 2. 10, 11. r 15. s 16. 77. 92. 143. 162. Job xxvii. 10. Jer vi 10. t 97—100. 104, 105. xix. 11. Deut xvii. 18—26. Josh. i. 8. Prov. vi. 20—23. Is. viii. 20. Col. iii. 16. 2 Tim. iii 15—17.—∮ Heb. *men of my counsel.*

V. 19—21. These verses contain arguments with which the Psalmist enforced his plea for divine teaching. Being a stranger on earth, and journeying to his home in heaven, he knew that he should lose his way, if the commandments of God were unknown to him, or mistaken by him. He had been led to desire the knowledge of the truths and precepts of revelation, with such intenseness, that his soul was constantly ready to break, or faint, when at any time he dreaded being left in ignorance and error. And he was sensible that the proud, the obstinate impenitent sinner, remained under the wrath and curse of God, and would meet with severe rebukes here, as as well misery hereafter: and therefore he earnestly deprecated the doom of such wicked men. 'This disposition is not a 'transient fit; but it is constant and uniform at all times.' (*Horne.*) 'Seeing man's life in this world is but a pas-'sage, what should become of a man, if thy word were not 'his guide?'

V. 22. 'Remove from me that disgrace and shame, 'unto which they expose me as a traitor; for I am not 'guilty of any such wickedness, but carefully observe thy 'testimonies.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 23. Saul and his courtiers, sitting in council, and speaking all manner of evil falsely against David, and conspiring together to take away his life; whilst he was meditating upon and praying over the word of God, that he might learn and practise his duty towards them and all men, and might find comfort from the precious promises; was a type of the Jewish sanhedrim, consulting together to put Jesus to death, whilst he was employed in healing and teaching the people, and doing all manner of good to those that were willing to receive benefit by him.

V. 24. The Psalmist not only found his joy and comfort in God's word; but he made it his counsellor; and closely adhered to its decisions, as princes do to the unanimous opinion of their most approved advisers.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS, on BETH and GIMEL.

The season of youth is peculiarly dangerous and important: the comfort and usefulness of future life often greatly depend on our conduct when the passions are most strong, and we are most destitute of knowledge and experience: and the hopes of the church and of society, for a succession of useful members, are placed upon the rising generation. Every one ought, therefore, to contribute all in his power to preserve young persons from the fatal effects of their own headstrong passions, of an ensnaring world, and of artful seducers, that they may not contract early bad habits, and form ruinous connexions. And when young persons are convinced of the desirableness of having their way made and preserved pure from the pollution of sin, their general rule is, to take heed to it according to the precepts, cautions, and encouragements of the word of God. Thus David from his youth sought the Lord with his whole heart; and in answer to his prayers was kept from wandering from his commandments: he reposited the sacred Scriptures in his inmost soul, and was by them kept from sinning against God. Let every youthful reader copy this example; yea, let us all be thus followers of him and of the Lord Jesus. If God be both perfectly holy and perfectly happy, and if his blessedness be the result of his infinite excellency; how absurd must it be to expect happiness by being contrary to him, and rebelling against him! Rather let this be our plea with him to teach us his statutes, that, being partakers of his holiness, we may also participate his blessedness; and then we may with propriety and efficacy declare the judgments of his mouth, for the instruction of others also. For the experienced believer finds far greater joy in the ways of his testimonies, than wealth can confer: and these joys and riches alone are attainable by all who covet and seek them. But then we must frequently meditate upon the precepts of our God, reduce our knowledge to practice, and have respect to all his ways; and if we be careful not to forget any part of his word, we shall soon delight ourselves in his ordinances and commandments. The Lord dealeth very bountifully with all his servants; who being delivered from the wrath to come, and raised from the death of sin, find true life in keeping his word: but they need more and more mercies, and long for fuller divine illumination. Every discovery which they make of the wondrous things revealed in the Scriptures, increases their earnest desire of having the eyes of their understanding opened to still clearer perceptions of divine truths: and every lively emotion of love and gratitude makes them long and pray for more fervent affections. As perfect knowledge and love are reserved for their portion in heaven; they feel themselves strangers here on earth: they fear missing their way, even in part; lest they should lose the solace of walking with God, by erring from his commandments. Their anxiety on this account often interrupts their enjoyment, and makes them "groan being "burdened:" especially if darkness and temptation so oppress their minds, as to render them afraid of having their portion with the proud and impenitent, whom God resists. This is the reproach which they most dread; though the contempt and calumny of men are sometimes distressing to their minds, and excite prayers for the removal of them. But when either princes or peasants speak against them, as the servants of God, they would be occupied in meditation on the Scriptures; not only because their delight is in his testimonies, but because they desire from thence to be counselled how to behave; in order that

DALETH.

25 My [a] soul cleaveth unto the dust: [x] quicken thou me [y] according to thy word.

26 I have [z] declared my ways, and thou heardest me: [a] teach me thy statutes.

27 Make me to understand the way of thy precepts: [b] so shall I talk of thy wondrous works.

28 My [c] soul * melteth for heaviness: [d] strengthen thou me according unto thy word.

29 [e] Remove from me the way of lying: and [f] grant me thy law graciously.

30 I have [g] chosen the way of truth; [h] thy judgments have I laid *before me.*

31 I have [i] stuck unto thy testimonies: O LORD, [k] put me not to shame.

u xxii. 15 xliv. 25. Is lxv. 25. Matt xvi 23. Rom vii. 22—24. Phil. iii 19. Col iii. 2
x 37 40. 88. 93. 107. 149 156. 159 lxxi 20. lxxx 18 Rom. viii. 2, 3
y Deut. xxx. 6. 2 Sam. vii 27—29.
z 105 xxxii. 5. xxxviii. 18. li. 1, &c. Prov. xxviii 13
a 12. xxv. 4. 8, 9. xxvii 11. cxliii. 8 — 10 1 Kings viii 36.——b lxxi. 17. lxxviii. 4. ov. 2 cxi. 4. cxlv. 5. Ex. xiii. 14, 15. Josh. iv. 6, 7. Acts ii. 11. Rev. xv. 3.

c xxii. 14. cvii. 26 Josh. ii. 11. 24.
* Heb *droppeth.*
d xxvii. 14. xxix. 11. Deut xxxiii. 25 Is xl. 29. 31. Zech. x. 12. Eph iii. 16. Phil iv. 13.
e 37. 104. 128 162. cxli. 3, 4 Prov xxx. 8. Is. xliv. 20. Jer. xvi. 19. Jon. ii, 8 Eph. iv. 22 — 25. 1 John i. 8 ii. 4. Rev. xxii 15
f 5. Jer. xxxi. 33. 34. Heb. viii. 10, 11.——g 29 111. 173. Josh. xxiv. 15. Prov. i. 29. Luke x. 42. John iii. 19—21. viii. 45. 1 Pet ii. 2. 2 John 4 ——h 24 52 Deut. xi. 18—20——i 48 115. Deut iv. 4 x. 20. Prov. xxiii. 23. John viii. 31. Acts xi. 23.——k 6. 80. xxv. 2. 20. Is. xlv. 17. Jer. xvii. 18. Rom. v. 5. 1 John ii. 28.

by well-doing they may put to silence those, who would falsely accuse them: and in every trouble and perplexity, they make them their delight and their counsellors. Such are the desires, purposes, and experiences of the true Christian, in proportion to his degree of knowledge and grace: May the Lord help us to look in this glass, that we may know what we are; and that we may be directed in exercising repentance of sin, and faith in Christ, and 'in amending our lives according to his holy word.' And may we learn to avoid all altercation with our revilers, who can only injure us, when they interrupt our devotions, or ruffle our tempers.

NOTES.

V. 25. Many understand this verse, merely as a complaint on account of deep affliction and peril of death, and as a prayer for the preservation of life: yet the Psalmist seems to have been conscious, that, compared with his better judgment and the perfect standard of duty, his affections were too apt to cleave to worldly objects which are but dust; so that he prayed for *enlivening* grace to render him more spiritually-minded. The word rendered *quicken me,* signifies, *cause me to live;* and may mean either, *preserve my life, give me life,* or *let me have more abundant life;* or according to a mode of expression peculiar to our language, Let me not only *live,* but be *lively;* Let me have "life more abundantly." (*Marg. Ref.*) As the preservation of David's life from Saul's persecution was engaged for by special promise; so quickening grace in answer to prayer is promised in every part of scripture, or at least such prayers accord to the spirit of the whole sacred volume.

V. 26. 'We should freely and ingenuously *declare* to God in prayer our sins, our temptations, our sorrors, and our undertakings: it argues love, confidence, and sincerity; it is a means of acquainting us with our own state, of which generally we are ignorant; and it will not fail to procure those aids from above, of which we stand in need. God will *hear us;* he will pardon us our offences, strengthen us in our trials, dispel our grief, and prosper the work of our hands upon us.' (*Horne.*) It is worthy of special notice, how often, and in what varied connexions, David, in this psalm, prays to be taught the statutes of God; though he seems to have been more intimately acquainted with the sacred oracles, as then extant, than almost any other man was: but he knew, that divine teaching alone could enable him rightly to understand the Scriptures, and to apply general rules to all the variety of particular cases, which occurred in the course of his life. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 28. *Heaviness.* David's heaviness might in part arise from his outward trials: but he seems to have spoken as one distressed in mind, because he got no more ground against sin, and as needing strength to resist temptation. 'Let us not marvel if sin bring us to the knowledge of sorrow, since he who "knew no sin," was yet, on our account, so intimately acquainted with grief. In the garden his soul melted for heaviness. Our transgressions deserve an eternity of sorrow: let us not therefore repine at any portion of it, that may fall to our share in time.—No, blessed Jesus, let us suffer with thee, both as a means and pledge of our future glorification with thee. Only strengthen us, according to the promises in thy word.' (*Horne.*)

V. 29, 30. *The way of lying,* and *the way of truth,* are here opposed to each other. *The way of truth* means that *true way* which God hath revealed, by which we may come to him and walk with him. The *way of lying* means therefore all those false ways, by which men deceive themselves and others, or are deceived by Satan and his instruments. False doctrine, therefore, hypocrisy, and whatever is contrary to the faith and holiness of the Gospel, are intended by the way of lying. The sound of the words indeed has led some to suppose, that David had been habitually addicted to the sin of lying, from which he prayed to be delivered; and some instances are mentioned in which he deviated from truth. But though a believer may fall into any sin; he cannot habitually practise any one, knowing it to be so: and the original by no means admits of this lax interpretation. "Grant me thy law graciously," is a prayer that God would *in mercy* write his law in the Psalmist's heart, and enable him to obey it; which he would consider a special instance of undeserved favour or grace.—Having "chosen the way of truth," he laid the judgments of God before him for hourly direction, and admonition.

V. 31. The word rendered *stuck,* is the same which is before translated, *cleave:* and the conflict between grace cleaving to the Lord's testimonies, and the remainder of indwelling sin cleaving to the dust, is best understood by those who "delight in the law of God after the inward man, but find another law in their members warring against the law of their mind," so that, "they cannot do the things that they would." The Psalmist adhered to the testimonies of God, however, so closely, notwithstanding this inward conflict, that neither temptations nor

32 I will [l] run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt [m] enlarge my heart.

HE.

33 [n] Teach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes; and [o] I shall keep it *unto* the end.

34 [p] Give me understanding, and [q] I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall [r] observe it with *my* whole heart.

35 [s] Make me to go in [t] the path of thy commandments; [u] for therein do I delight.

36 [x] Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, [y] and not to covetousness.

37 * Turn [z] away mine eyes from beholding vanity; *and* [a] quicken thou me in the way.

38 [b] Stablish thy word unto thy servant, [c] who *is devoted* to thy fear.

39 [d] Turn away my reproach which I fear: [e] for thy judgments *are* good.

40 Behold [f] I have longed after thy precepts: [g] quicken me in thy righteousness.

VAU.

41 [h] Let thy mercies come also unto me, O LORD, *even* thy salvation, according to thy word.

42 So shall I † have wherewith to answer him that reproacheth me: [k] for I trust in thy word.

l Cant. i. 4. Is. xl. 31. 1 Cor. ix. 24—26. Heb. xii. 1.
m 45. xviii. 36. Job xxxvi. 15, 16. Is. lx. 5. lxi. 1. Luke i. 74, 75. John viii. 32 36. 2 Cor. iii. 17. vi. 11. 1 Pet. ii 16.
n 12. 26, 27. Is. liv. 13. John vi. 45.
o 8. 112. Matt. x. 22. xxiv. 13. 1 Cor. i. 7, 8. Phil. i. 6. 1 John ii. 19, 20. 27. Rev. ii 26.
p 73. cxi. 10. Job xxviii. 28. Pro. ii. 5, 6. John vii. 17. Jam. i. 5. iii. 11—18.
q Mat. v. 19. vii. 24. Jam. i 25. ii. 8—12. iv. 11.
r 10. 58. 69.
s 27. 36, 173. Ez. xxxvi. 26, 27. Phil. ii. 13. Heb. xiii. 21.——t xxiii. 3. Pro. iii. 17. iv. 11. 18. viii. 20. Is. ii. 3. xlviii. 17.——u 16. Is. lviii. 13, 14. Rom. vii. 22. 1 John v. 3.——x li. 10. cxli. 4. 1 Kings viii. 58. Jer. xxxii. 39. Ez. xi. 19, 20.——y x. 3. Ex. xviii. 21. Ez. xxxiii. 31. Hab. ii. 9. Mark vii. 22. Luke xii. 15. xvi. 14. Eph. v. 3. Col. iii 5. 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10. 17. Heb. xiii. 5. 2 Pet. ii. 5. 14.
* Heb. *Make to pass.*——z Num. xv. 39. Josh. vii. 21. 2 Sam. xi. 2. Job xxxi. 1. Prov. iv. 25. xxiii. 5. Is. xxxiii. 15. Matt. v. 23. 1 John ii. 16.

a 25. 40.
b 49. 2 Sam. vii 25—29.
c ciii. 11. 13. 17. cxiv. 19. cxlvi. 11. Jer. xxxii 39—41.
d 22. 31. xxxix. 8. lvii 3. 2 Sam. xii. 14. 1 Tim. iii 7. v. 14. Tit. ii. 8.
e 20. 43. 75. 123. 131. xix 9. Deu. iv. 8. Is. xxvi. 8. Rom. ii 2. Rev. xix. 2.
f 5. 20. Matt. xxvi. 41. Rom. vii. 24. 2 Cor. vii. 1. Gal. v. 17. Phil. iii 13, 14.
g 25. 37. 88. 107. 149. 156. 159. Mark ix. 24. John v. 21. x. 10. 1 Cor. xv. 45. Eph. ii. 5. 3 John 2.
h 58. 76, 77. 132. lxix. 17. cvi. 4, 5. Luke ii. 28—32.
i iii. 2. xlii. 10. lxxi. 10, 11. cix. 25. Matt. xxvii. 40—43. 63.——† Or, *answer him that reproacheth me, in a thing.* 2 Sam. xvi. 7, 8. xix. 18—20.——k 49. 74. 81. lvi. 4. 10, 14. lxxix. 19, &c. 2 Sam. vii. 12—16. 1 Chr. xxviii. 3—6. Acts xxvii 25.

persecutions should induce him to draw back. So also did the apostle, and so do all that delight in the law of God.

V. 32. "I will run the way of thy commandments; "for thou wilt enlarge my heart." This is the most literal rendering. 'By this he showeth, that we can neither 'choose good, cleave to God's word, nor run forward in his 'way, except he make our hearts large to receive grace, 'and willing to obey.'

V. 33. They, who are taught by the Lord the way of his statutes, will keep it to the end: and the reason why so many draw back is intimated; namely, they have only been taught by men. (1 *John* ii. 19, 20.) 'He showeth 'that he cannot follow on to the end, except God teach 'him oft times, and lead him forward.'

V. 34. 'Much understanding is needful, in order to 'the observation of the law; that we may know what is 'commanded, and what is forbidden, and how far; that 'we may avoid the snares laid for us in the way of duty; 'that we may respect things according to their due rank 'and worth; that we may do good works in their proper 'place, time, and manner: above all, that the affections 'may be directed by the judgment, not the judgment by 'the affections.' (*Horne.*) "With my whole heart," 'not only in outward conversation, but also in inward af-'fection.'

V. 35. *Delight.* 'Happy the soul, that can say, "Therein do I delight." (*Horne.*) The character, described in the seventh of Romans, "delighted in the law of "God, after the inward man;" and the longings and prayers of the man after God's own heart continually remind us of the struggles and complaints, spoken of in that well known portion of holy writ.

V. 36. In proportion as the heart is *inclined* by divine grace, to the testimonies of God; to 'desire what he pro-'mises and love what he commands,' the inclination or propensity to covetousness must be mortified: and when the Lord leaves a man to himself, his heart will of course be inclined to evil. 'Hereby meaning all other vices, because 'that covetousness is the root of all evil.'

V. 37. 'Help me to overlook those worldly honours 'and fading beauties, which we are apt to behold with 'too much admiration; and with lively affections and vi-'gorous endeavours, to persist in the pursuit of thy favour, 'and in the way which thou hast set before me.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The eyes seem put for all the senses, which are the inlets of temptation to the heart, and through which every kind of concupiscence is excited.

V. 38. The promises of God's word greatly relate to the preservation and sanctification of the true believer. David, being conscious that he was the Lord's servant, and much afraid of offending or forsaking him, prayed to have these promises *established*, or performed to his soul; that the effects of the deceitfulness of his heart, and of the force of temptation, might be prevented.

V. 39. 'Let me not fall to thy dishonour; but let my 'heart still delight in thy gracious word.' The excellency of the judgments, decisions, maxims, or precepts of the sacred word, would aggravate the guilt and disgrace of acting contrary to them; and this seems to have been the reproach that David was afraid of.

V. 40. 'Doth not my heart thy precepts love,
'And long to see thy face?
'And yet how slow my spirits move,
'Without enlivening grace.' (*Watts.*)

V. 41, 42. 'He showeth that God's mercy and love 'is the first cause of our salvation.' 'By trusting in 'God's word he assureth himself to be able to confute the 'slanders of his enemies.' When David was driven away by Absalom, Shimei loaded him with reproaches, as if God had rejected him for his crimes, and as if his confidence in God had been presumptuous. When Christ was nailed to the cross, the chief priests reviled him, saying, "He trusted in God: let him deliver him now if he will "have him; for he said, I am the Son of God." But the restoration of David to his throne, and the resurrection of Christ from the dead, furnished a sufficient answer to these reproaches: and the complete salvation of true believers will for ever silence and put to shame, all those who have derided and slandered them, during their trials and difficulties.

43 And [l] take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth; [m] for I have hoped in thy judgments.

44 So shall I [n] keep thy law continually, for ever and ever.

45 And [o] I will walk * at liberty: [p] for I seek thy precepts.

46 I will [q] speak of thy testimonies also before kings, and [r] will not be ashamed.

47 And [s] I will delight myself in thy commandments, [t] which I have loved.

48 My [u] hands also will I lift up [x] unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and [y] I will meditate in thy statutes.

l 13. l. 16. li. 14, 15. lxxi. 17, 18. Eph. i. 13. Jam. i. 18.
m 52 120. 175. vii. 6—9. ix. 4. 12. xliii. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 23.
n 33. 34. Rev. vii. 15. xxii. 11.
o 133. Luke iv. 13. John iv. 34—36 Jam. i. 25.
p ii. 12. 2 Pet. ii. 19
* Heb. *at large.*
32 ——p 19. 71. 94. 148. 162. Prov ii. 4, 5. xviii 1 Ec. i. 13. John v 39. Eph. v. 17.
q cxxxviii. 1 Dan. iii. 16—18. iv. 1—3. 25—27. Mat. x. 18, 19. Acts xxvi. 1, 2. 24—29.
r Mark viii. 38. Rom. i 16. Phil. i 20. 2 Tim. i. 8 16. 1 Pet iv 14—16. 1 John ii. 28.
s 16. 24 cxii. 1. John iv. 34 Phil. ii. 5 1 Pet. ii.21.
t 48. 97. 127. 140. 167 174. xix. 7—10. Job xxiii. 11, 12 Rom. vii. 12 16. 22.
u x. 12. Ez. xliv. 23. Mic. v. 9.
x Matt. vii 21. John xiii. 17. xv. 14. Jam. i 22—25.——y 15. i 2.

V. 43. When David was left in uncertainty and distress about his personal concerns, his confidence in discoursing upon the truths of the Scriptures, and the faithfulness of God to his promises, was abated: he therefore prayed that he might not be so far discouraged, as to be entirely put to silence on these favourite subjects; seeing he had avowed his hope that God would decide for him and against his enemies, according to his perfect wisdom, justice, and truth.

V. 44. The language of this verse is peculiarly emphatical, "I shall keep thy law perpetually, for ever, yea, for "ever and ever." Perfect obedience will constitute a large proportion of heavenly happiness to all eternity.

V. 45. The service of God is perfect freedom; every deviation is proportionable slavery to sin and Satan.

V. 46. David, before his accession to the throne, was often in the presence of Saul, and of Achish king of Gath, and afterwards he became a companion of kings: but he was determined in no case to conceal his religion, or to be ashamed of speaking his whole mind on that subject.

V. 48. To *lift up the hands*, implies earnestness and encouragement in any business; thus David purposed to take courage, and be very earnest in keeping God's commandments. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS, on DALETH, HE, and VAU.

Whilst the children of this world cleave wholly to the dust of the earth as their portion, and are neither alarmed nor humbled on that account; the children of light are often greatly burdened, because of the remains of carnal affections in their hearts. Their judgment and choice lead them to "seek those things which are above:" yet they feel that their souls often grovel here on earth; and whilst others perhaps think that they are soaring to the very heavens in faith and love, they are complaining before God that "their souls cleave to the dust;" and beseeching him to enliven their affections, and invigorate their endeavours, that they may rise superior to worldly cares and interests, and be more entirely taken up about the superior concerns of eternity. And his word encourages, and by his grace he will answer and grant, these good desires which he hath planted in our hearts.—The experienced believer communes with his God in the confidence of faith and love: he unreservedly declares before him all his ways, and all the difficulties and perplexities that he meets with; nay, he confesses before him, without desiring to conceal or to palliate any thing, all the sins of his life and of his heart; and the consciousness of this being his habitual practice encourages his hope of pardon and assistance from his heavenly Father. When we indeed desire to obey God's precepts, we may be sure that he will hear our prayers to be made acquainted with them: and with all our external advantages we shall need this divine teaching; for otherwise our natural pride, self-love, and love of sin, together with our contracted prejudices, will close our minds against the truth, and involve us in error and uncertainty.—They who most delight in serving God, and in speaking of his wondrous works, may for a season be in great heaviness, and their souls be even melted within them through manifold temptations: but they will pray, and the Lord will hear: and he hath promised that "as "their day is, so shall their strength be." Having chosen the way of truth, and laid the Scriptures before us as our rule, we may pray in faith to be kept at a distance from all false doctrine and hypocrisy, and to be graciously led into a fuller knowledge of the divine will: and sincerity in our hearts towards God will best preserve us from all dissimulation in our dealings with men. When we have entered upon this course of life, we must persevere in it: and the Lord will never suffer those to be put to shame, who "have stuck to his testimonies," steadfastly professing his truth and doing his will, without being moved by the frowns or smiles of the world to turn aside from him. But though the believer habitually travels on the way to heaven, yet he is often grieved to find that he gets on no faster; and he still prays to be set at liberty from every remainder of the bondage of sin, "that he may run "the way of God's commandments with an enlarged "heart." He desires to proceed with increasing speed, even unto the end: he wants knowledge in order to practice: he measures the degree of men's wisdom by that of their piety and obedience to God: he prays to be made of good understanding in the way of godliness; and to be inclined and enabled to walk in it, not only because it is the path of duty, but because he delights in it. Yet he still feels his heart capable of entertaining an inordinate desire after worldly things, and of coveting wealth by which they may all be purchased. Against these emotions of covetousness he watches; and he prays unto his God not to permit his heart to be in any degree inclined to it. He knows that all below is vanity and vexation of spirit: but he fears lest through the outward senses concupiscence should be excited in his heart: and therefore he entreats the Lord to turn away his eyes, and to close all his senses against every object, which can pollute his imagination, or kindle forbidden desires in his heart; or which might cause him to loiter in the way in which he would be quickened and not retarded. He therefore pleads the promises of God's word, and desires that they may be con-

ZAIN.

49 [z] Remember thy word unto thy servant, [a] upon which thou hast caused me to hope.

50 [b] This *is* my comfort in my affliction: [c] for thy word hath quickened me.

51 The [d] proud have had me greatly in derision: [e] *yet* have I not declined from thy law.

52 I [f] Remembered thy judgments of old, O LORD; and have comforted myself.

53 [g] Horror hath taken hold upon me, because of the wicked that forsake thy law.

54 [h] Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.

55 I have remembered thy name, O LORD, [i] in the night, and have [k] kept thy law.

56 This I had, [l] because I kept thy precepts.

z cv. 8 42. cvi 4. 45. Gen. viii. 1. xxxii 9 Job vii 7 Is. lxii. 6. *Marg.*
a 43. 81. 147. lxxi. 14. 2 Sam. v. 2 vii. 25 Rom. xv. 13.
b 173. xxvii 13. xxviii. 7. xlii. 8 11. xciv 19. Jer. xv. 16. Rom v. 3—5. xv 4 Heb. vi. 17—19. xii. 1, 12.
c 25. Ez xxxvii. 10. John vi. 63. Jam i. 18 1 Pet. i. 3. ii. 2.
d 21. 69. cxxiii. 3, 4. Jer. xx. 7. Luke xvi. 14. 15. xxiii. 35.——e 21 157. xliv. 18. Job xxiii. 113. Is. xlii. 4 Acts xx 23, 24. Heb xii. 1—3 ——f lxxvii 5 11, 12 cv. 5. cxliii. 5. Ex. xiv 29, 30. Num. xvi. 3, &c. Deut. i 35, 36. iv. 3, 4. 2 Pet. ii. 4—9.

g 136 158. Ezra ix 3. 14 x. 6. Jer xiii. 17. Dan. iv. 19. Hab. iii. 16. Luke xix. 41 42. Rom. ix. 2, 3 2 Cor xii. 21. Phil iii. 18.
h lxxxix 1 ci. 1 Gen. xlvii. 9. Heb. xi 13—16.
i xiii 8. lxiii. 6. cxxxix. 18 Gen. xxxii. 24—28 Job xxxv 9, 10. Is. xxvi. 9. Luke vi. 12. Acts xvi. 25.
k 17. 34. John xiv. 21. xv. 10.
l 165. xviii. 18—22 1 John iii 19—24.

firmed with him, and performed to him; as one who would devote himself to the fear and worship of his name: and he prays to be delivered from the reproach of hypocrisy, or apostacy, or a disgraceful walk, which he more dreads than the contempt of men. Knowing that all the judgments of God are just and good, he above all things dreads falling under his rebuke, or condemnation; and to be assured of escaping them, he longs after his precepts, and to make progress in his righteousness. But when he hath done all, he feels himself to be a poor sinful creature: his only dependence still is upon the rich mercies of God, and he desires the salvation which is promised in his word. Every present deliverance from sin and trouble serves to silence the reproaches of his calumniators: and he knows that when his salvation shall be completed, every accuser will be answered, and every aspersion wiped from his character. In the mean time he wants encouragement and assistance in speaking of the word of truth, of the happiness of God's people, and of his righteous judgments, for the quickening of some, and the conviction of others, with whom he converses. He has no idea of final happiness, or of perfect liberty, but in keeping of the divine law continually, even for ever and ever: and therefore he now seeks out God's precepts, that he may obey them; in order that on earth he may, as much as possible, anticipate the liberty and felicity of heaven. Should such a believer be called, either by the duties of his station, or by persecution, to stand before kings; he will neither be ashamed nor afraid to speak of God's testimonies with all plainness and simplicity. If bonds and imprisonment should be the consequence; he will find delight in those commandments which he hath loved: and in every case he will seek his pleasure, not from the indulgence of sensual appetites or malignant passions, but in diligently studying and obeying the commandments of his God. Something of this mind of Christ is in every true disciple: but very few of them have arrived at that maturity of judgment, and vigour of holy affections, which David possessed. Our evidence, however, that we are the people of God is exactly proportionable. All is defective in our judgment and affections which comes short of this; all false and delusive in our supposed experience which runs counter to it.

NOTES.

V. 49. The Psalmist seems here especially to mean the promise of the kingdom to himself and his posterity, which God had made to him, when he thought of no such thing; and thus raised in him expectations which subsequent events threatened to frustrate. But the same plea is good, as to any expectation which is clearly grounded on the word of God; 'Remember, O Lord, that thou hast given this promise, and encouraged my hope in it: and whatever appearances may be, I must wait and pray for the accomplishment of it; for thou wilt never disappoint the expectation, which thy own word hath excited.'

V. 50—53. Some render these verses in connexion, as follows: "This is my comfort in my affliction: that thy "word quickens," or enlivens, "me; that, while the "proud exceedingly deride me, I do not decline from thy "law; that I remember thy righteous judgments of old, "and thence encourage myself; that the tempest arises "against me from the wicked, who forsake thy law."—The effect of the sacred word in animating the Psalmist's hope, zeal, and diligence; his consciousness of adhering to the commands of God, though "filled with the con-"tempt of the scornful;" his meditation on the righteous judgments of God on his enemies, and his interpositions in behalf of his servants: and the evidently bad character of his furious persecutors, combined to encourage his hope of a happy event to his distresses. Or, the "horror" which he felt, when he reflected on the doom that awaited the wicked, was a testimony of his conscience, that he was actuated by a spirit of love, and not of revenge, and thus a source of comfort. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'The haughty infidel 'will scoff at the true servant of God, for one part of his 'conduct; the insolent worldling will ridicule him for an-'other: but neither will induce him to disbelieve, or to 'disobey.' (*Horne.*) 'I have called to mind, O Lord, 'how, in all foregoing ages, thou hast suffered good men 'to fall into calamities, thereby to render them at last the 'more illustrious: and with this consideration also I com-'forted myself.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 54—56. The Psalmist in these verses still seems to be pointing out the sources of his consolation. In his wanderings from place to place like a weary pilgrim, wherever he pitched his tent, he solaced himself, by composing and singing hymns and psalms, in praise of the statutes and ordinances of God. He meditated when others slept, on the divine perfections, and thus was confirmed in his purposes of obeying the divine law: and indeed all his supports and the cheerful composure of his mind under his dangers and calamities, were a gracious recompense of his obedient regard to the word of God.

CHETH.

57 *Thou art* [m] my Portion, O LORD: [n] I have said that I would keep thy words.

58 [o] I entreated thy * favour with *my* whole heart: [p] be merciful unto me according to thy word.

59 I [q] thought on my ways, and [r] turned my feet unto thy testimonies.

60 I [s] made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments.

61 [t] The † bands of the wicked have robbed me: [u] *but* I have not forgotten thy law.

62 At [x] midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee, because of [y] thy righteous judgments.

63 I *am* [z] a companion of all *them* that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts.

64 The [a] earth, O LORD, is full of thy mercy: [b] teach me thy statutes.

TETH.

65 Thou hast [c] dealt well with thy servant, O LORD, according unto thy word.

66 [d] Teach me good judgment and knowledge: for [e] I have believed thy commandments.

67 [f] Before I was afflicted I went astray; [g] but now have I kept thy word.

68 Thou *art* [h] good, and doest good; [i] teach me thy statutes.

69 The [k] proud have forged a lie against me: *but* [l] I will keep thy precepts [m] with *my* whole heart.

m xvi. 5 lxxii 26. cxlii. 5 Jer x. 16 Lam. iii. 24. n 106. 115 lxvi 14. Deut xxvi 17, 18 Josh. xxiv 15 18. 21. 24—27. Neh. x. 29, &c.
o 10. iv 6. li. 1—3. lxxxvi. 1—3. Hos. vii. 14.
* Heb. *face* xxvii. 8. Job xi. 19. *Marg.*
p 41. 65 76 170 lvi. 4 10 cxxxvii. 2. Matt. xxiv 35
q Lam iii. 40 Ez. xviii. 28 30. Hag. i. 5. 7. Luke xv. 17—20. 2 Cor. xiii 5.
r Deut iv. 30, 31 Jer. viii. 4—6 xxxi. 18, 19 Ez. xxxiii. 14—16. 19. Joel ii. 13. 2 Cor xii. 21.
s xcv 7, 8. Ezra x 6—8. Prov. xxvii. 1 Ec. ix. 10. Gal. i. 16.
t 95 iii. 1 1 Sam. xxx. 3—5 Job i. 17 Hos. vi. 9 Prov xxiv. 29
y 7 75. 106 137 xix 9. Deut. iv. 8. Rom. vii. 12
a xxxiii. 5. civ. 13. cxlv. 9.
b 12 26. xxvii. 11. lx. ii. 3. xlviii. 17, 18. Matt. xi. 29.
c 17 xiii. 6. xvi. 5, 6. xviii. 35, &c xxiii 5, 6. xxx 11 cxvi. 7. 1 Chr. xxix. 14.
d 34 lxxii. 1. 2. 1 Kings iii. 9. 28. Prov. ii. 1—9. viii. 20. Is. xi. 2—4. Matt. xiii. 11. Phil. i. 9. Jam iii 13—18
e 128. 160. 172 Neh ix. 13, 14.
f 176 lxxiii. 5, &c. Deu xxxii. 15. 2 Sam. x. 19. xi. 2, &c. 2 Chr. xxxiii 9—13. Prov i. 32 Jer. xxii. 21.
g 71. 75 Jer. xxxi. 18, 19. Hos ii 6, 7. v. 15. vi 1. Heb. xii. 10, 11. Rev. iii. 19.
h lxxxvi. 5. cvii 1 cvii 1 cxlv. 7—9. Ex. xxxiii. 18, 19. xxxiv. 6, 7 Is. lxiii. 7. Matt. v. 45. xix. 17. Mark x. 18. Luke xviii 19.
i 12. xxv. 8, 9.
k xxxv. 11. cix. 2, 3. Job xiii. 4. Jer. xliii. 2, 3. Matt. v. 11, 12. xxvi 59, &c. Acts xxiv 5. 13.
l 51. 157.
m 34. 58. Matt. vi. 24. Jam. i. 8.

† Or. *companies.*
u 176. 1 Sam. xxiv 9—11 xxvi. 9—11. Rom xii. 17—21.
x 147. 164. xlii. 8. Mark i. 35 Acts xvi. 25
z 79. 115 xvi. 3. ci. 6 cxlii. 7. Mal iii 16—18. 2 Cor. vi 14—17. 1 John i. 3 iii. 14.

V. 57—63. In the former section, the Psalmist stated the chief sources of his consolation: in this, he expresses his full confidence, that God was his Portion; and "the "reason of this hope that was in him." He had formed, and avowed, his purpose of adhering to the words of God, keeping them as his valued treasure, and observing them in his habitual conduct: He had earnestly from his inmost soul sought the favour of God, and the mercy promised in his word. He had thought on his ways, in order that he might repent of all his sins, and do works meet for repentance; forsaking every evil course, and turning his feet into the paths of truth and holiness. Having "come to him-"self," and "considered his ways;" he made no delay to comply with the dictates of his conscience, in obeying God's commandments: (*Marg. Ref.*) and when the wicked laid snares for him, robbed him, or persecuted him, he was not, by this unmerited ill usage, so discomposed as to forget the law of God; but still made it the rule of his conduct. Nay, his distress and dangers rendered him the more earnest in his religion; and every interposition of God for his deliverance and the confusion of his persecutors, and the recollection of the Lord's righteous judgments of old, excited in him such lively gratitude, that he often arose, even in the middle of the night, to bless and thank his God. At the same time, he chose for his companions, not the most wealthy, ingenious, or valiant, but the most pious persons that he knew; and while hated by the wicked, he was welcomed with affection and reciprocal regard, by all that feared God and kept his precepts. He could appeal to the Searcher of hearts for the truth of all this: and therefore he could not doubt, but that the Lord was his Portion, and his everlasting Felicity. It is exceedingly desirable to be habitually disposed to bless God in all circumstances; as there is no situation on earth, in which a sinner has not cause to be thankful; much more a believing sinner. We are not indeed required to arise at midnight to give thanks to our God; but if we are by any means kept from sleep, it will prove a comfortable and profitable employment: and when we consider for what vile purposes multitudes are awake at that hour; we shall feel some shame to be more reluctant to retrench from our sleep in order to serve our God, than they are in serving their divers lusts and passions. (*Notes, Acts* xvi. 25—40.)

V. 64. 'The knowledge of God's word is a singular 'token of his favour.'

V. 66. This verse may literally be rendered; "Teach "me goodness, judgment, and knowledge; for I have "believed thy commandments." Thou hast shown great 'kindness to me, O Lord, teach me to imitate thy good-'ness.' 'The word (translated *judgment*,) signifies, the 'faculty of discerning, distinguishing, and judging rightly 'of things moral and spiritual; as the palate doth of meats, 'by their different flavours and qualities. Without this 'taste, we mistake falsehood for truth in our studies, and 'wrong for right in our practice; superstition and enthu-'siasm may pass with us for religion, or licentiousness may 'intrude under the notion of liberty: in a word, our learn-'ing and knowledge prove useless, if not prejudicial to 'us. A sound mind therefore, should above all things, be 'desired of God in our prayers.' (*Horne.*) David had *believed* the divine authority and excellency of the holy law; and that it was worthy of all obedience; the rule of happiness as well as of duty.

V. 67. 'He confesseth, that before he was chas-'tened, he was rebellious, as man by nature is.' 'The 'use of God's rod is to bring us home to himself.' (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 68. 'Thou art kind, O Lord, and in thy kindness 'teach me thy statutes.' (*Septuagint.*) 'Thou art, in 'thine own nature, kind and good,—who designest our 'good, even when thou afflictest us; take what methods 'thou pleasest with me, only teach me effectually to do as 'thou wouldst have me.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The Psalmist seems to say, 'Thou art so good, that I shall consider the sharpest afflictions as sent in kindness, in order to teach me thy statutes.'

n xvii. 10. lxxiii. 7. Is. vi. 10. Acts xxviii. 27. o 16. 38. xl. 8. Rom. vii 22. p 67. xciv. 11, 12. Is. xxvii 9. 1 Cor. xi. 32.

70 Their [n] heart is as fat as grease; [o] *but* I delight in thy law.

71 *It is* [p] good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.

72 The law of thy mouth *is* [q] better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.

q 14 111.127. 162. xix. 10. Prov. iii. 14, 15. viii. 10, 11. 19. xvi. 16. Matt. xiii 44–46.

V. 70. The fat in animals is supposed to be without feeling. That insensibility of heart to God's promises, threatenings, and judgments, and to the concerns of other men, which results from indulged luxury, lust, or avarice, is aptly described by this similitude. 'Their heart is indurate and hardened with prosperity and vain estimation of themselves.'——The word of God is 'the delight of temperate and holy persons, who gladly fly from large companies, full tables, costly meats, and rich wines, to enjoy in private the more exalted pleasures of abstinence, meditation, and prayer. (*Horne.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS, on ZAIN, CHETH, and TETH.

The Lord himself teaches and enables his servants to rely on his word: yet he often delays to answer their expectations, in order to excite their desires, to exercise their faith, to prove their sincerity, and to perfect their patience. This leads them to remind him of his promises, and humbly to plead for their accomplishment. Thus they often find the sweetest comforts when they are most afflicted: for as the sacred word was the instrument by which they were quickened when dead in trespasses and sins; so the Comforter revives and cheers them, when they are ready to faint under trials, by giving them cordials from the same unfailing resource. Infidels, Pharisees, misers, libertines, and all the sons of pride and rebellion, will deride as visionaries and enthusiasts those who thus speak of communion with God and joy in him: but we must not on that account "decline "from his word." The remembrance of his judgments of old on the despisers of his servants, and his deliverance of them from trouble, may give us comfort under such contempt: and the prospect of that perdition which awaits the impenitent, may well fill us with horror whenever we think of them, and turn all our resentment into compassion and prayers. The believer dwells on earth, in the body, as in the house of his pilgrimage; ere long he will be "absent from the body and present with the Lord:" in the mean time the word and works of God supply him with subjects for joyful meditation and grateful praise. In the season of affliction, and in the silent hours of the night, he remembers the name of his God, and is thus animated to cheerful obedience: and the Lord graciously recompenses these services by rendering the observance of his precepts daily more easy and pleasant. Who can be sufficiently thankful, that sinners when penitent may rejoice in the infinite and all-sufficient God, and hope that he will, to all eternity, employ his perfections in rendering them happy! But what words can express the folly and madness of those, who prefer this present world as their portion, though it be connected with the everlasting wrath of God! Yet so depraved is man, that we are all disposed to make this bad choice; and special grace alone can enable us to say from our experience, "Thou art my Portion, O "Lord; I have said, that I will keep thy words." Yet surely the favour of the Almighty is worthy of being "entreated with our whole heart;" and we cannot be too instant with him to be merciful unto us according to his word: and no one ever thus entreated him in vain. We should frequently think on our ways, and review our past and present conduct with great accuracy, comparing all our thoughts, words, and works with the law of God; if we would either perceive our perishing want of the salvation of the Gospel, or our need of repentance, and of turning our feet into the ways of holy obedience. As the interests of eternity are at stake, it behooves sinners to make haste and not delay, to escape from the brink of that tremendous precipice on which they have so long trifled; and the believer will be equally in haste to obtain assurance of his safety, and to glorify his God by keeping his commandments. If the wicked combine to defraud us of our property, and the proud forge lies against us; we should be rendered the more obedient and attentive to the precepts of God, that we may ensure the true riches and live down calumny. It argues great grace, when we can be cheerful and thankful under great injuries, without being interrupted by regretting our losses, or resenting our ill usage, from praising the Lord for all his righteous judgments; and when troubles and dangers that break our rest, only make us to solace ourselves the more with thankfulness for our remaining unmerited mercies. The more the wicked hate God's people, the greater union should subsist amongst them; that they may comfort and edify, and pray for, each other. Thus the communion of saints assists, as well as evidences, their communion with God. In this grand concern, party-distinctions, and other discriminations should be but little regarded: for were we all like our Master, even the saint upon a throne would associate with the saint in a cottage, without deducting from his real dignity, and without leading his poor brother to neglect the duties of his inferior station: and we should all prefer the company of the meanest and simplest who fear God and keep his precepts, to that of the most polished, ingenious, or honourable of the ungodly. As the earth is filled with the unmerited blessings of Providence, and with the glad tidings of free salvation; we should be instant in prayer to be taught the statutes of the Lord, that our hearts also may be filled with his mercy, grace, and peace: and repetitions in our requests will not be condemned, unless they be vain and unmeaning. Every past mercy of God to his servants, according to his word, encourages them to pray for more wisdom and grace; that "their love may more and more "abound in knowledge and in all judgment;" and that having believed, they may experience, the happiness of keeping God's commandments. To the reproach of our fallen nature, prosperity commonly produces ungodliness: and adversity is the frequent means of exciting men to the consideration of religious subjects. Many have said, "Be-"fore I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept "thy word:" and "it was good for me, that I was af-"flicted, that I might learn thy statutes." This should reconcile the afflicted to their trials, and teach them to improve them; and it should lead us all to leave our com-

JOD.

73 [a] Thy hands have made me and fashioned me: [t] give me understanding, [u] that I may learn thy commandments.

74 They that [x] fear thee will be glad when they see me; because [y] I have hoped in thy word.

75 [z] I know, O LORD, that thy judgments *are* * right, and *that* [a] thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.

76 Let, I pray thee, [b] thy merciful kindness be † for my comfort, according to thy word unto thy servant.

77 Let [c] thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live: [d] for thy law *is* my delight.

78 Let [e] the proud be ashamed; for they dealt perversely with me [f] without a cause: *but* [g] I will meditate in thy precepts.

79 Let [h] those that fear thee turn unto me, and those that have known thy testimonies.

80 Let my heart be [i] sound in thy statutes; [k] that I be not ashamed.

CAPH.

81 My soul [l] fainteth for thy salvation: [m] *but* I hope in thy word.

82 Mine [n] eyes fail for thy word, saying, [o] When wilt thou comfort me?

83 For I am become [p] like a bottle in the smoke; [q] *yet* do I not forget thy statutes.

84 [r] How many *are* the days of thy servant? [s] when wilt thou execute judgment on them that persecute me?

a c. 3. cxxxviii. 8. cxxxix. 14—16. Job x. 8—11.
t 34. 125. 144. 169. 1 Chr. xxii. 12. 2 Chr. ii. 12. Job xxxii. 8. 2 Tim. ii. 7. 1 John v. 20.
u cxi. 10. Jam. iii. 13.
x 79. xxxiv. 2—6. lxvi. 16. Mal. iii. 16.
y 49. 147. cviii. 7. Gen. xxxii. 11, 12. Luke xxi. 33.
z 7. 62. 128. 160. Deut. xxxii. 4. Job xxxiv. 23. Jer. xii. 1.
* Heb. *righteousness.* Gen. xviii. 25. Rom. iii. 4, 5.
a xxv. 10. lxxxix. 30—33. Heb. xii. 10, 11.
b lxxxvi. 4. cvi. 4, 5. 2 Cor. i. 3—5.
† Heb. *to comfort me*
c 41. li. 1—3. Lam. iii. 22, 23. Dan. ix. 18.
d 24. 47. 174. i. 2. Heb. viii. 10—12.
e 21. 51. 85. xxxv. 26.——f 86. vii. 3—5. xxv. 3. xxxv. 7. lxix. 4. cix. 3. 1 Sam. xxiv. 10—12. 17. xxvi. 18. John xv. 25.
g 23. i. 2.
h 63. 74. vii. 7. cxlii. 7.
i xxv. 21. xxxii. 2. 2 Chr. xii. 14. xv. 17. xxv. 2. xxxi. 20, 21. Prov. iv. 23. John i. 47. 2 Cor. i. 12.
k 6. xxv. 2, 3. 1 John ii. 28.
l 20. 40. xlii. 1, 2. lxxiii. 26. lxxxiv. 2. Cant. v. 8. Rev. iii. 15, 16.
m 74. 114.
n 123. lxix. 3. Deut. xxviii. 32. Prov. xiii. 12. Is. xxxviii. 14.
o lxxxvi. 17. xc. 13—15.
p xxii. 15. cii. 3, 4. Job xxx. 30.
q 16. 61. 176.
r xxxix. 4, 5. lxxxix. 47, 48. xc. 12. Job vii. 6—8.
s vii. 6. Rev. vi. 10, 11.

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cerns to the disposal of God, seeing we know not what is good for us. For it is far better to learn by sufferings to delight in God's word, and to value it more than thousands of gold and silver; than by prosperity to grow callous, and ripe for eternal destruction. But how dreadful is the case of those who are hardened in sin, even in the furnace of affliction! Let us then still beseech our God, "who is "good, and doeth good," to teach us his statutes, and to incline our hearts to faith, obedience, and submission to his holy will.

NOTES.

V. 73. 'Thy hands have made and established me; "Make me wise, and I shall learn thy commandments:" 'and thus be capable of answering the grand purpose of 'my creation.'

V. 74. 'It will be a great encouragement to all good 'men when they see me delivered out of all these trou-'bles: for thereby they will be confirmed in their belief 'of thy faithfulness to thy promises; on which, it will 'appear that I have not vainly depended, though I stay 'long for the performance.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)—David's cheerfulness under his trials, also, was suited to comfort the hearts of those pious persons who witnessed it.

V. 75. 'These heavy afflictions which have befallen 'me are perfectly righteous, and will only make thy 'faithfulness at last the more illustrious.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) —It should also be noted, that chastening is a promised blessing to the children of God; who are bound to own the fulfilment of the promise, while enduring the salutary discipline.

V. 76. The persuasion that sin is pardoned and God reconciled, with peace in the heart and conscience by the power of the Holy Spirit, according to the promises of Scripture, will make the believer comfortable even before his trials are removed. For this David prayed, as well as for deliverance.

V. 77. Without pardoning mercy, the sinner remains under the sentence of eternal death; and without experiencing the tender compassion of God, the believer has little enjoyment of life here, or hope of eternal life hereafter: but they who delight in God's law, will surely at last rejoice in his tender mercies.

V. 78, 79. Or, "The proud shall be ashamed, &c." 'Those that fear thee, and have known thy testimonies, 'shall be turned to me.' It may be considered as the language of assured hope, rather than of prayer.

V. 80. The word rendered *sound*, signifies *perfections; soundness of heart*, denotes thorough integrity and sincerity in professed dependence on God and devotedness to him; and this is opposed to every kind and degree of hypocrisy: as the vigorous appearance, which springs from a firm and healthy constitution, differs from that corpulency and florid complexion, frequently attending some fatal diseases, or a decay of the vital parts.

V. 81, 82. Some think that David here spoke the language of the ancient church, as waiting for the coming of the promised Messiah, the salvation of God, and the consolation of Israel. But he seems rather to have expressed the state of his mind whilst he expected to be delivered by his merciful God, from his sins, his foes, and his fears. Nothing short of this could satisfy his soul: for this he longed and hoped on the ground of God's promises: but "hope deferred made his heart sick and faint:" and his eyes were fatigued, and failed, in looking out for the tokens and comforts of this expected salvation; as all know to be the case, when they long and look in vain for the arrival of some expected and much beloved friend.

V. 83. Bottles made of skins would shrivel up, and become unsightly and useless, by hanging in the heat and smoke. Thus David seemed to himself to become useless and despicable through the infirmities of age, and his manifold trials and sufferings.

V. 84. David here either inquired, How long the Lord would permit his servant to be thus afflicted? Or, whether he meant him to spend his few remaining days under persecution: and to close his life without seeing Him arise to plead his cause, and avenge him on his unrighteous persecutors? The time seemed long, from Samuel's anoint-

85 The [t] proud have digged pits for me, [u] which *are* not after thy law.

86 All [x] thy commandments *are* * faithful: [y] they persecute me wrongfully; [z] help thou me.

87 They had [a] almost consumed me [b] upon earth; [c] but I forsook not thy precepts.

88 [d] Quicken me after thy loving kindness; [e] so shall I keep the testimony of thy mouth.

LAMED.

89 [f] For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.

90 Thy [g] faithfulness *is* † unto all generations: [h] thou hast established the earth, and it ‡ abideth.

91 They [i] continue this day according to thine ordinances; for [k] all *are* thy servants.

92 Unless [l] thy law *had been* my delights, [m] I should then have perished in mine affliction.

93 I [n] will never forget thy precepts: for with them thou hast quickened me.

94 [o] I *am* thine, save me; [p] for I have sought thy precepts.

95 The [q] wicked have waited for me to destroy me: *but* [r] I will consider thy testimonies.

96 I have [s] seen an end of all perfection: *but* [t] thy commandment *is* exceeding broad.

t 78. vii. 15. xxxv. 7. xxxvi. 11. Prov. xvi. 27. Jer. xviii. 20.
u lviii. 1, 2.
x 138. 142. 151. xix. 9. Rom. vii. 12.
* Heb. *faithfulness.*
y 78. vii. 1—5. xxxv. 7. 19. xxxviii. 19. lix. 3, 4. Jer. xviii. 20.
z lxx. 5. cxlii. 4—6. cxliii. 9.
a 1 Sam. xx. 3. xxiii. 26, 27. 2 Sam. xvii. 16.
b Matt. x. 23.
c 51. 61. 1 Sam. xxiv. 6, 7. xxvi. 9. 24.
d 25. 40. 159.
e 2. 146. xxv. 10. lxxviii. 5. cxxxii. 12.
f 152. 160. Matt. v. 18. xxiv. 35. 1 Pet. i. 25. 2 Pet. iii. 13.
g Deut. vii. 9. Mic. vii. 20.
† Heb. *to generation and generations.* lxxxix. 1, 2. c. 5. *Marg.*——h lxxxix. 11. xciii. 1. civ. 5. Job xxxviii. 4—7. 2 Pet. iii. 5—7.——‡ Heb. *Standeth.*

i cxlviii. 5. c. Gen. viii. 22. Is. xlviii. 13. Jer. xxxiii. 25.
k Deut. iv. 19. Josh. x. 12, 13. Judg. v. 20. Matt. v. 45. viii. 9.
l 24. 77. 143. Rom. xv. 4.
m xxvii. 13. xciv. 18, 19. Prov. vi. 22, 23.
n 16. 50. John vi. 63. 1 Pet. i. 23.
o lxxxvi. 2. Josh. x. 4—6. Is. xli. 8—10. xliv. 2. 5. lxiv. 8—10. Acts xxvii. 23, 24.
p 27. 40. 173.
q 61. 69. 85—87. x. 8—10. xxvii. 2. xxxvii. 32. xxxviii. 12. 1 Sam. xxiii. 20—23. 2 Sam. xvii. 1—4. Mat. xxvi. 3—5. Acts xii. 11. xxiii. 21. xxv. 3.
r 24. 31. 111. 127. 129. 167.
s xxxix. 5, 6. 23. xviii. 14. 17. 1 Sam. ix. 2. xvii. 8. 49—51. xxxi. 4, 5. 2 Sam. xiv. 25. xvi. 23. xvii. Ec. i. 2, 3. ii. 11. vii. 20. xii. 8.——t xix. 7, 8. Matt. v. 18. xxii. 37—40. Mark xii. 29—34. Rom. vii. 7. 12. 14. Heb. iv. 12, 13.

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ing David to the kingdom, till God, by inflicting judgment on his persecutors, fulfilled his promises: especially as it was spent in great danger and hardship.

V. 85. In order to take the wild beasts, in those countries where they abound, they dig deep pits, and cover them over carefully with turf, supported by very slender twigs. The wild beasts walking over these pits fall in, and are taken alive. Thus David's enemies employed craft, as well as power, for his ruin; without regard to the law of God, nay, in direct contempt of it!

V. 86. The Psalmist contrasts the commandments of God, as requiring truth and faithfulness, with the unfaithful and iniquitous conduct of his persecutors: and this encourages his hope and prayer for deliverance.—"All thy commandments are *truth.*"

V. 87. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 88. 'Preserve my life, raise me from this death-'like condition, animate me by thy grace; that I may 'keep thy testimonies.'

V. 89, 90. Or, "Thou art for ever, O LORD, thy "word, &c." The word of God is as unchangeable and everlasting as his own existence. It is established *in the heavens*, beyond the reach of the revolutions of this lower world; and its accomplishment is as certain, as the motions of the heavenly bodies, which are not at all affected by the convulsions and vicissitudes of the earth and its inhabitants.

V. 91. The heavens, and earth, and all the hosts of them, still keep their stations or perform their courses according to the original appointment of the Creator: and shall man, who alone is endued with reason and formed for immortality, be single in rebellion against him?

V. 92. David delighted to study the word of God: he took pleasure in the truths, promises, and precepts contained in it: and thus he was preserved from sinking under the weight of his troubles. He was directed how to act in the most difficult circumstances, and escape the destructive machinations of his enemies; and he derived encouragement from the most afflictive situations.

V. 93. The benefit that the Psalmist had often derived from the precepts of the sacred word, by means of which he had been made alive to God, and animated in his service, so greatly endeared them to him, that having hid them in his heart, he was persuaded he should never forget them.

V. 94. 'He proveth *by effect*, that he is God's child; 'because he seeketh to understand his word.' 'Let it be 'remembered, that no man can say to God, with a good 'conscience, "I am thine;" unless he can also go on and 'say, "I have sought thy precepts." 'Since, after all, "his servants we are to whom we obey;" and if sin be 'our master, how can we say to a Master whose interest 'is directly opposite, "I am thine?" (*Horne.*)

V. 95. Amidst the virulent persecution of the wicked, the Psalmist considered the testimonies of God, or his truths and promises; till his fears were allayed, and his heart was established in confidence and obedience.

V. 96. 'David in his time had seen Goliath the 'strongest overcome, Asahel the swiftest overtaken, Ahi-'thophel the wisest befooled, and Absalom the fairest 'deformed.' (*Henry.*) He had seen the vanity of all created good; the vexation of that estate which men account the summit of earthly bliss; the imperfection of the most accomplished human characters; the wretched close of the most prosperous lives; and the miserable disappointment of those who trusted in men, or idolized earthly possessions and enjoyments. The more he was acquainted with men and worldly things, the more he was convinced, that the former were imperfect at best, and the latter wholly insufficient to make him happy: but the fuller knowledge he attained of the sacred Scriptures, the more excellent, extensive, and perfect they appeared; a perfect rule for his conduct and ground for his hope, a guide to happiness, and a source of present comfort. Or, the more fully he understood the extent, spirituality, and excellence of the divine law; the more clearly he discerned the imperfection of all human obedience: "by the law is the knowledge of sin;" the breadth of the commandment

u 43. 113. 127. 159. 165. 167. i. 2. Deut. vi 6—9. xvii. 19. Josh. i. 8. Prov. ii. 10. xviii. 1.

MEM.

97 u O how love I thy law! it *is* my meditation all the day.

98 Thou x through thy commandments, hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for * they *are* ever with me.

x 104. Deut. iv. 6. 1 Sam. xviii. 5. 14. 30. Prov. ii. 6. Col. iii. 16.

* Heb. *it is ever with me.* 17. 30. 105. Jam. i. 25.

shows the scantiness of man's best righteousness, and recommends the righteousness of the Redeemer, as alone commensurate with its extensive and holy requirements: and the whole word of God shall endure for ever, when all things on earth shall come to an end and perish.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS, on JOD, CAPH, and LAMED.

As the Lord hath made us and fashioned us capable, *by the faculties* of our rational souls, of knowing, loving, worshipping, and enjoying him; as we are now rendered incapable, *by the blindness of our understandings and the depravity of our hearts*, of this employment and felicity; and as the Gospel opens a way for our recovery to the image of God, and the capacity of his service and favour: so we ought continually to beseech him by his Holy Spirit, to give us understanding, that we may learn and do his will; and our prayers will be prevalent, when they spring from a humble desire of being enabled by his grace to answer the end of our creation and redemption. They who fear and serve God love to associate together, and to converse concerning their common faith and hope in his word: but they are especially rejoiced, when they see such as have trusted in the promises of God under very severe trials, and have been delivered; because this relieves them also from their fears and encourages their hopes. It is easy to acknowledge that all the judgments of God are right, with reference to others: but to be fully assured of this truth, when his afflicting hand lieth heavy on us; and to allow his wisdom, justice, goodness, and faithfulness, under our acutest sufferings, is no common attainment even among true believers: and as far as this assurance prevails, we shall be cured of our murmurs, and rendered thankful and submissive under every trial. It is, however, evident, not only that God is faithful and merciful, *though* he afflict his people: but that he afflicts them *in faithfulness and mercy:* such loving corrections are promised in his covenant, and without them we should be ruined. But whilst we are taking these needful but unpleasant medicines, we may beg of the Lord that his merciful kindness may be for our comfort: and faith, patience, and prayer will surely make way for the consolations of the Holy Spirit. For the abundant mercies and tender compassions of our Father come to all who trust in him and delight in his law: and they shall neither sink in trouble, nor be finally baffled by temptation; for as their Redeemer liveth, they shall live also, even for ever and ever. The pride and blasphemy, the perverseness, iniquity, oppression, and deceit of the enemies of God, are certain fore-runners of their confusion and destruction: and whilst his servants meditate on his testimonies, they may despise the boastings, menaces, and insults of those who hate them for righteousness' sake. Indeed it is best, in such circumstances, to live retired, and to commune with our God, our Bibles, and our own hearts; lest we be engaged in contentions, which produce only sin and sorrow. But when they who fear God, and have known his righteous testimonies, imbibe jealousies and prejudices, and become reserved, or opposers of us, the trial is very heavy. We ought, however, to examine our conduct, and be humbled for those sins and indiscretions which have occasioned this unfavourable judgment of us: and we should then apply to him who hath all hearts in his hand, beseeching him to turn them unto us, that they may counsel and comfort us in our difficulties. Above all, we should pray for a *sound heart* in God's statutes: and then all aspersions or suspicious appearances will vanish in due time, and our disgrace will terminate in honour, either here or in a better world. But shame will be the lot of unsound professors, more than of any other workers of iniquity. Happy are they who long for the salvation of God, and hope in his word, waiting for the performance of his promises, in attendance on his ordinances, and obedience to his precepts. Their intense desires and sharp trials may make their souls ready to faint; and delays may cause their eyes to fail, whilst they are saying, "When "wilt thou comfort me?" Afflictions, slanders, infirmities, and persecutions, may render them despised, and thrown aside as a broken vessel, or a bottle in the smoke: but as they do not forget God's statutes, he will not be regardless of their distresses. The days of their mourning shall be ended: though they appear tedious, they are but for a moment compared with that eternal felicity which they are working out for them: and at length vengeance will be executed on all who harassed and tried to ensnare them, in defiance of the authority and law of God. The commandments are true and faithful guides in that path of peace and safety which the testimony of God reveals, and his promise secures to every believer. *Nature* is most disquieted by suffering wrongfully: but *faith* and *grace* are encouraged by that very consideration; for we cannot so confidently expect help from God, when we suffer as evil-doers, as when, like our Master, we do well and suffer for it. Wicked men may *almost* consume the believer on earth; but as neither fear, nor dejection under sufferings, induces him to forsake the divine precepts, so the Lord will support him in obeying them, and deliver him out of all his troubles: and should men prevail to kill the body, they will only liberate the soul, and hasten its entrance on unsullied joys. We should therefore seek in the first place to be invigorated and animated by the loving-kindness of the Lord, to hold fast his truth, and adhere to his precepts; and then we may cheerfully leave all our concerns in his hands. For the engagements of his covenant are established on a firmer basis than the earth itself: his faithfulness remaineth to all generations, and to eternity: and all the hosts of heaven, in serving the Lord and doing his will, concur in accomplishing his promises to his people. May we have grace, in our respective places, to do his will in like manner: then we may be sure that we shall not perish in our afflictions, and every recollection of his precepts will animate our hopes, and enliven our affections; as by them the Lord at first quick-

99 I have more understanding [y] than all my teachers: [z] for thy testimonies *are* my meditation.

100 I [a] understand more than the ancients, [b] because I keep thy precepts.

101 I have [c] refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word.

102 I have not [d] departed from thy judgments: [e] for thou hast taught me.

103 How [f] sweet are thy words unto my * taste! *yea, sweeter* than honey to my mouth.

104 [g] Through thy precepts I get understanding: [h] therefore I hate every [i] false way.

NUN.

105 Thy [k] word *is* a † lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

106 I have [l] sworn, and I will perform *it*, [m] that I will keep thy righteous judgments.

107 I am [n] afflicted very much:

y 2 Sam. xv. 24—26. 1 Chr. xv. 11—13. 2 Chr. xxix. 15, &c. xxx. 22. Jer. ii. 8. viii. 8, 9. Matt. xi. 25. xiii. 11. xv 6—9. 14. xxiii. 24, &c. Heb. v. 12. z 24. 2 Tim. iii. 15—17.
a 1 Kings xii. 6—15. Job xii. 12. xv. 9, 10. xxxii. 4—10.
b cxi. 10. Job xxviii. 28. Jer. viii. 8, 9. Matt vii. 24. Jam. iii. 13.
c 59, 60. 104. 128. xviii. 23. Prov. i. 15. Is. liii. 6. Iv. 7. Jer. ii. 36 Tit. ii. 11, 12. 1 Pet. ii. 1, 2. iii 10, 11.——d xviii 21. Prov. v. 7. Jer. xxxii. 40.——e Eph. iv. 20—24. 1 Thes. ii. 13. 1 John ii. 19. 27
f xix 10. lxiii. 5. Prov. iii. 17. viii. 11. xxiv. 13, 14. Cant. i. 2—4. v. 1.

* Heb. *palate.*
g [illegible] 102
h 128. xxxvi [illegible] 4. xcvi [illegible] 5 Prov. viii. 13 Am. v. 15. Rom. xii. 9. 2 Pet. ii. 20 Prov. iv. 12 Matt. vi. 13
k xix 8 Ps. cxix. 3. Prov. [illegible] 23 Eph. v. 13. 2 Pet. i. 19. † Or, *candle* xviii 28. Job xxix 3
l Ex. 12 Deut. 13. 14. 2 Ch. xv. 13, 14. Neh. xi. 29. Ec. v. 4, 5. Matt. v. 33. 2 Cor. viii. 5.
m 115 2 Kings xxiii. 3.
n vi 1—3 xxii. 14—18. xxxiv 19.

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ened us, when we were dead in sin. Thus shall we know that we are the Lord's, by his choice and purchase of us, and by our choice of him and devotedness to him: and seeking to know and do his precepts, and considering his testimonies, we may be sure of his salvation, however the wicked wait for us to destroy us. In fine, the enlarged knowledge of the word of God, in its length and breadth, will spoil our relish for the pleasures of sin, lessen our value of all earthly good, and take us off from all confidence in man, or in our own wisdom, strength, and righteousness. Thus we shall be led to seek our comfort and felicity from God alone; and to receive Christ Jesus as our "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." Being thus interested in his perfect obedience, we shall learn to copy his perfect example; and shall neither be satisfied with an imperfect holiness, nor with any portion that is not vast as our capacities and durable as our existence.

NOTES.

V. 97. 'He showeth that we cannot love God's word, 'except we exercise ourselves therein, and practise it.'

V. 98—100. 'The "commandments of God," were 'ever with David: the "testimonies" of God were his 'meditation; and "the precepts" of God it was his care 'to observe: therefore his wisdom exceeded the policy of 'his enemies, the learning of his teachers, and the expe-'rience of the ancients.' (*Horne.*) In David's circumstances, it was hardly possible that he should not be conscious of this; seeing every day's experience and observation confirmed it. In judging thus, he thought "soberly of "himself, and as he ought to think;" unless he would "call good evil and evil good, and put light for darkness "and darkness for light;" and he gave the whole honour of his proficiency to God, who had by his word given him this 'good understanding in the way of godliness.' It would not, however, be expedient for any man to speak thus of himself: except for some special purpose: but "the Spirit "of God spake" by the Psalmist, and it was proper that this commendation of the Scriptures should stand on record, for the honour of God, and the instruction of mankind in all subsequent generations.

V. 102. (*Note* 33.) 'Perseverance is the effect of 'instruction from above, by the spirit through the word: 'and our heavenly Teacher differeth from all others in 'this, that with the lesson, he bestoweth on the scholar 'both a disposition to learn, and an ability to perform.' (*Horne.*)

V. 103. 'The soul has its taste, as well as the body; 'and that taste is then in right order, when the words of 'Scripture are as sweet to the soul as honey is to the 'mouth. If they are not always so, it is because our taste 'is vitiated by the world and the flesh.' (*Horne.*)

V. 104. A full and clear knowledge of the precepts of the divine law, in their extent, spirituality, and excellence, is an introduction to a right understanding of the Gospel, and indeed of the whole Scripture; it is the best preservative from heresies and delusions, almost all of which may be traced to errors or ignorance in this respect: and where the heart as well as the mind has learned the precepts of God, a holy taste, as well as a sound judgment, will be the sure effect; and every false and evil way will be hated and shunned.

V. 105. 'The word of God discovereth to us our er-'rors; it showeth us where we have lost our way, and how 'we may recover it again. If we take this lamp in our 'hand, it will not only point out our course in general, 'but also direct us in every step, and guide our feet into 'the way of peace and holiness.' (*Horne.*)—The metaphor is taken from a man walking on a dangerous road, in the dark, except as he sees by a lamp, or lantern, where to set his feet, step by step, as he proceeds; but taking heed to his way by his friendly light, he passes on safely and even comfortably, where otherwise he must have fallen into mischief or destruction. Such is this world and our passage through it; such is man without revelation, or with revelation and without faith; and such is the use faith makes of revelation.

V. 106. David had bound his soul with a most solemn vow, to live devoted to God and obedient to his commandments. The preventing grace of God had inclined his heart to this; he doubtless depended on his continued help for ability to perform his vow; and "the keeping of God's "righteous judgments," to which he thus bound himself, was that of a sinner under a dispensation of mercy, and of a believer who is interested in the covenant of grace. Such a solemn vow is implied in baptism, in bringing our children to be baptized, and in our attendance on the Lord's table; and these public solemnities should be preceded by those secret transactions betwixt God and our souls, in which we accept of his proffered benefits, and yield up ourselves to his service.

[o] quicken me, O LORD, according unto thy word.

108 [p] Accept, I beseech thee, the free-will-offerings of my mouth, O LORD, and [q] teach me thy judgments.

109 [r] My soul *is* continually in my hand: [s] yet do I not forget thy law.

110 The [t] wicked have laid a snare for me: [u] yet I erred not from thy precepts.

111 [x] Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: [y] for they *are* the rejoicing of my heart.

112 I have [z] inclined mine heart to * perform thy statutes alway, *even unto* [a] the end.

o 25 88. cxliii. 11. p Num. xxix. 39. Hos xiv. 2. Heb. xiii. 15. q 12. 26 130 169. r Judg. xii. 3 1 Sam. xix. 5. xx. 3. Job xiii. 14. Rom. viii 36. 1 Cor. xv. 31. 2 Cor. xi. 23. s 83. 117 153. t 85. x. 8—10. cxxxiv 6, 7. cxl. 5. cxli 9. Jer. xviii. 22 u 51. 87. 95. Dan. vi. 10. Luke xx. 19—26 x 14. 127. 162. xvi. 6. Deut. xxxiii. 4. Is liv. 17. Acts xxvi 18. Col. i 12. Heb. ix. 15. 1 Pet i. 4. y 77. 92. 174. xix. 8. Jer. xv. 16. 1 Pet. i. 8. z 36. cxli. 4. Josh. xxiv. 23. 1 Kings viii. 58. Phil. ii. 13.——* Heb *do.*——a 33, 34. 1 Pet. i. 13.

SAMECH.

113 I [b] hate *vain* thoughts: but [c] thy law do I love.

114 Thou *art* [d] my Hiding-place, and [e] my Shield: [f] I hope in thy word.

115 [g] Depart from me, ye evil-doers: [h] for I will keep the commandments of my God

116 [i] Uphold me according unto thy word, that I may live: [k] and let me not be ashamed of my hope.

117 [l] Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe: [m] and I will have respect unto thy statutes continually.

118 Thou hast [n] trodden down all them that [o] err from thy statutes: for [p] their deceit *is* falsehood.

b xciv. 11. Is lv. 7. Jer iv. 14. Mark vii. 21. 2 Cor x. 5. c 97 103. d xxxii. 7. xci. 1, 2. Is. xxxii. 2. e iii. 3. lxxxiv. 11. f 81. cxxx. 5, 6. g vi. 8. xxvi. 5, 6. cxxxix 19. Matt. vii. 23. xxv. 41. h 106. Josh. xxiv. 15 i xxxvii. 17. 24. xli. 12 lxiii. 8. xciv. 18. Is. xli. 10. xlii. 1. k xxv. 2. Is. xlv. 17. Rom. v. 5. ix. 33. x. 11. 1 Pet. ii. 6. l xvii. 5. lxxi. 6. lxxiii. 23. cxxxix. 10. Is. xli 13. John x. 28, 29. Rom. xiv. 4. 1 Pet. i. 5. Jude 24. m 6. 48. 111, 112. n Is. xxv 10. lxiii. 3. Mal. iv 3. Luke xxi. 24. Rev. xiv. 20 o 10. 21 xcv. 10. p 29 lxxviii. 36. 37. 57. Is. xliv. 20. Eph. iv. 22. v. 6. 2 Thes. ii. 9—11. 2 Tim. iii. 13. Rev. xviii. 23.

V. 108. Praise and thanksgiving, with other devotional exercises, are the free-will-offerings of the mouth, which are acceptable to God through the sacrifice and mediation of Christ: and David in his afflictions could present no other oblations.

V. 109. David's life was continually in danger, and he was required at all times to exert himself, and use the greatest precaution, in warding off the assaults of his persecutors; but he would not violate the law of God, even in order to self-preservation.

V. 111. By faith to receive the truths which God had *attested*, and to embrace the promises that he had given, and thus to walk with him in his commandments and ordinances, formed that life which David chose to lead on earth, as introductory to his everlasting heritage in heaven: and the rejoicing of his soul in the exercise of faith, hope, love, and other pious affections, here below, was an earnest and pledge of those unalloyed pleasures reserved for him in the future world.

V. 112. 'The inclination of the heart to good is the 'work of God: but man is nevertheless, in this as in other 'instances, said to perform it, when he listens to the call, 'and obeys the motions of His grace.—We are not to judge 'of ourselves by what we sometimes say and do: but by 'the general disposition and tendency of the heart and its 'affections.' (*Horne.*)

V. 113. The word *vain* is not in the original; and some render the verse, "I hate *other* thoughts; but thy "law do I love." These *thoughts*, however, which the Psalmist hated, doubtless were vain or evil, and so, contrary to the law that he loved. 'Love and hatred are the 'two great and influencing affections of the human mind. 'Since the fall they have been misplaced. By nature 'we love vain thoughts and hate the law of God. "The "carnal mind is enmity against God, is not subject to "the law of God, neither indeed can be." But in the re-'newed mind the case is altered; its "delight is in the "law of God;" and therefore it cannot bear vain thoughts.' (*Horne.*)—In those *vacant* hours, which are spared from business, pleasure, company, and sleep, and which are spent in solitude, at home or abroad; unprofitable, proud, covetous, sensual, envious, or malicious imaginations occupy the minds of ungodly men, and often infect their very dreams. These are not only sinful in themselves, and evidential of the state of their hearts, and as such will be brought into the account at the day of judgment: but they excite the dormant corruptions, and lead to more open and gross violations of the holy law. The carnal mind welcomes and delights to dwell upon these congenial imaginations, and to solace itself by *ideal* indulgences, when opportunity of other gratification is not presented, or when it dares not venture on the actual transgression. But the spiritual mind recoils at them: such thoughts will intrude, but they are unwelcome and distressing, and are thrust out from time to time; whilst other subjects, from God's word, are stored up in readiness to occupy the mind more profitably and pleasantly, during the hours of leisure and retirement. And there is no better test of our true character, than the habitual effect of vain thoughts upon our minds; whether we love and indulge them, or abhor and watch against them. And by inquiring, to what subjects we habitually and allowedly revert, when present circumstances do not impose any one upon us, we may discover the prevalent disposition of our heart, whether we be carnal or spiritual; and may also learn whether pride, malice, avarice, ambition, or sensuality be the predominant corruption in our souls.

V. 116, 117. (*Note* 106.) 'He desireth God's conti-'nual assistance, lest he should faint in this race which 'he had begun.'—The Psalmist formed his purposes, under a consciousness of his weakness and the power of temptation, and in dependence on the promises of God. He therefore "watched and prayed, lest he should enter into "temptation," knowing that, "though the spirit was "willing, the flesh was weak." (*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* xi. 1—5. *Ps.* li. 11.) "Uphold me, and I shall live, &c." "Hold "thou me up and I shall be saved."—This spiritual and eternal life and salvation, as well as his perseverance in obedience, could only be secured by the supports of divine grace.

V. 118. Ungodly men, when endeavouring to deceive others, impose on themselves; and their boasted profi-

* Heb. causest to cease.
q 1 Sam. xv. 23. Jer. vi. 30. Ez. xxii. 18—22. Mal. iii 2, 3 Matt. iii. 12. vii. 23 xiii. 40—42. 49, 50.——r 111. 126—128.

119 Thou * puttest q away all the wicked of the earth *like* dross: r therefore I love thy testimonies.

s 53. Lev. x. 1—3. 1 Sam. vi. 20. 2 Sam vi. 8, 9. 1 Chr. xxi. 16, 17 30. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 21. 27.
Is lxvi 2 Dan. x. 8—11. Hab. iii. 16. Phil. ii. 12. Heb. xii. 21. 28, 29. Rev. i. 17, 18.

120 s My flesh trembleth for fear of thee: and I am afraid of thy judgments.

ciency in worldly wisdom, their deep laid stratagems, and all their crooked politics, at length disappoint their expectations, and leave them to hopeless contempt and misery.

V. 119. 'Ungodly men and hypocrites are mingled 'among the servants of God, as dross is blended with 'the pure metal; but the fiery trial of divine judgments 'discovereth the difference.' 'These dispensations in-'crease our love of God's word; because they give us 'sensible experience of its truth.' (*Horne.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS, on MEM, NUN, and SAMECH.

When grace is in lively exercise, the thirst and relish for "the sincere milk of the word" of God, become exceedingly strong, and show themselves by a daily and constant meditation on it, in all the intervals of needful business and conversation: and if the Lord has thus disposed our souls to love, study, and keep his truths, testimonies, and precepts, he will give us true wisdom. The diligent believer will after a time "have the word of Christ dwell-"ing richly and abundantly" in his memory, judgment, and affections; and having it ever with him, he will be wiser than his most sagacious enemies; and able to discern, escape, or profit by, all their machinations, and even to baffle every temptation of his most subtle adversary the devil. Nay, the simplest Christian, who by faith and prayer appropriates the information conveyed to him in the Scriptures of truth, will soon surpass, in useful knowledge and practical wisdom, the most learned teachers, the most renowned fathers, and the most aged and experienced persons, who, "leaning to their own understandings," reject or are but superficially acquainted with, the Oracles of God; for these are far surer guides to truth, than doctors, councils, or synods, ancient or modern. It will not indeed readily occur to the mind of a humble Christian, that he is thus wiser than his seniors and superiors; and he will suspect and fear the thought, when it presents itself: yet, daily reading his Bible, he must perceive how men deviate from that unerring standard of truth and wisdom, and run into error and delusion; he cannot, without ingratitude, deny what the Lord hath taught him; nor dares he, in an affected and voluntary humility, call darkness light, and light darkness, or prefer human conjectures to the decisions of the only wise God. But, "who is a wise "man, and endued with knowledge among us? Let him "show out of a good conversation his works with meekness "of wisdom." If the Lord hath indeed taught us, we "re-"frain our feet from every evil way, that we may keep "his word;" nor shall we depart from his judgments all our days. Our souls relish the words of God more than the mouth doth the sweetness of honey; and in proportion as, through his precepts, we get understanding, we shall hate and shun every way of sin and of hypocrisy. We do not use our knowledge ostentatiously, and to gain applause; but knowing what a dark and perilous path we tread, and how important each of our steps is to ourselves and to others, we use the word of God as a lamp, which we carry in our hands, that we may not stumble, be ensnared, or defiled; and that we may not only not quite miss our way, but that we may proceed uniformly with credit and comfort. Depending on the promised grace of God, the true Christian solemnly vows to keep his righteous judgments, and he determines to perform his vows. He is often greatly afflicted, but it chiefly grieves him that "he cannot do "the things that he would;" and his longing desire to become more holy dictates his daily prayers for quickening grace. He offers the free-will-offerings of his mouth, his grateful praises for former mercies, united with supplications for further instruction and assistance; and he depends only on mercy for the acceptance of his defective and defiled services. If we are indeed thus "led by the "Spirit," neither enemies nor dangers will induce us to forget the law of our God, or to wander from his precepts: but we shall choose his testimonies as our eternal heritage, and find his service our present rejoicing, even in the midst of tribulation and persecution; and we shall bestow pains, as well as pray, that our hearts may be inclined to perform God's statutes always even unto the end. In proportion as we are thus spiritually-minded, we shall hate all sinful thoughts, and delight in heavenly meditations; and shall flee to the Lord as our Hiding-place and Shield, from the incursions of vain imaginations, and satanical suggestions, as much as for protection from outward violence, hoping in his word for deliverance from them all. Would we make progress in thus keeping God's commandments, we must separate from evil-doers, and even drive them from our company, if they will intrude; unless we mean to sacrifice conscience to courtesy, which king David would not do. We must also rely entirely on the upholding of divine grace; or we shall never be safe, or able to have continual respect to all the Lord's statutes: but in this simplicity of intention and dependence, we shall be held up and live, and never be ashamed of our hope. Every affection of the soul must be engaged in keeping us steadfast in the ways of God. We must be allured by hope, and constrained by love, and even moved by fear. And it will be profitable for us often and seriously to consider the contempt and misery which are poured upon the wicked, and prepared for them; for assuredly they will be trodden down like mire, and put away like dross, or driven like chaff into unquenchable fire: and these reflections, on the doom of hypocrites and apostates, will induce us to cleave more steadily in love to God's testimonies. But if such subjects made David to exclaim, "My flesh trembleth for fear "of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments:" surely we, who fall so far below him in devout affections, should "fear, "lest a promise being left us of entering into heavenly "rest, any of us should be found to come short of it!"

AIN.

121 I [t] have done judgment and justice: [u] leave me not to mine oppressors.

122 Be [x] surety for thy servant for good: [y] let not the proud oppress me.

123 [z] Mine eyes fail for thy salvation, and for the word of thy righteousness.

124 [a] Deal with thy servant according unto thy mercy, and [b] teach me thy statutes.

125 I *am* [c] thy servant; [d] give me understanding, [e] that I may know thy testimonies.

126 *It is* [f] time for *thee*, LORD, to work: *for* [g] they have made void thy law.

127 Therefore [h] I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold.

128 Therefore [i] I esteem all *thy* precepts *concerning* all *things to be* right; [k] *and* I hate every false way.

PE.

129 Thy testimonies *are* [l] wonderful: therefore [m] doth my soul keep them.

130 The [n] entrance of thy words giveth light; [o] it giveth understanding unto the simple.

131 I [p] opened my mouth, and pant-

t vii 3—5. xviii. 20—24 lxxv 2. 1 Sam. xxiv 11—15. xxv. 28. 2 Sam. viii. 15. Acts xxiv. 16 xxv. 10, 11. 2 Cor. i. 12.
u xxxvii.33. lvii. 3, 4. 2 Pet. ii. 9.
x Gen. xliii. 9. Prov. xxii. 26, 27. Is. xxxviii. 14. Philemon 18, 19. Heb. vii. 22.
y 21. xxxvi. 11.
z 81, 82. lxix. 3. cxxx. 6. cxliii. 7. Lam. iv 17.
a 41. 76. 132. li. 1. lxix. 13. 16. lxxix 8. cxxx. 3, 4. 7. Dan. ix 18. Luke xviii. 13. 2 Tim i. 16—18.
b 12. 26 cxliii. 10—12. Neh. ix. 20.
c 94. lxxxvi. 16. cxvi 16. Rom. vi. 22.——d 34. 66. 2 Chr i. 7—10 2 Cor. iii. 5, 6. 2 Tim. ii. 24. Jam. i. 5 iii. 13—17.——e 11. 18, 19 29. Prov. ix. 10. xiv. 8.——f ix. 19. cii. 13. Gen. xxii. 10, 11. 14. Deut. xxxii. 36. Is xlii. 14.

g Jer. viii. 8. Hab. i. 4. Mal. ii. 8. Matt. xv. 6. Rom. iii. 31. iv. 14.
h 72. xix. 10. Prov. iii. 13—18. viii. 11. xvi. 16. Matt. xiii. 45, 46. Eph. iii. 8.
i 6. xix. 7, 8. Deut. iv. 8. Job xxxiii. 27. Prov. xxx. 5. Rom. vii. 12. 14. 16 22.
k 104. 118.
l 18. cxxxix. 6. Is. ix. 6. Rev. xix. 10.
m 2. 31. 146. xxv. 10.
n 105. Prov. vi. 23. Is. viii. 20. Luke i. 77—79. Acts xxvi. 18. Eph. v 13, 14. 2 Pet. i 19
o xix. 7. xliii. 3. Prov. i. 4. 22, 23. Rom. xvi. 18, 19. 2 Tim. iii. 15—17.——p 20. xlii. 1, Is. xxvi. 8, 9. 1 Pet. ii. 2.

NOTES.

V. 121, 122. Conscious of having adhered to justice and equity, even towards his persecutors, the Psalmist appeals to God from their unrighteous decisions: and he prays, that he may not be left in the hands of his proud oppressors; but that the Lord himself would become his Surety. 'Put thyself between mine enemies and me, as 'if thou wert my pledge.' As a rich person, by becoming *surety* for a poor man, rescues him from oppression or imprisonment: so the Lord delivers his servants from their enemies, and from impending ruin, by undertaking their cause. Christ our *Surety*, having paid our debt and ransom, rescues us from merited condemnation, and engages for all the blessings of complete salvation to every true believer.

V. 123. (*Note*, 82.) "Thy just promise." (*Old Version.*) 'The word, which hath promised it,' (salvation) 'is the word of truth, faithfulness, and righteousness; the 'attributes of God are engaged for its accomplishment,' 'and "He cannot deny himself." (*Horne.*) The justice of God, in deciding between David and his unjust oppressors, according to his word, might also be intended. (*Notes*, 2 *Thes.* i. 3—10.)

V. 125. 'I am devoted to thy service, and designed by 'thee to a high employment; enlighten my understanding, 'therefore, that I may fully know my duty.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) These repeated petitions no doubt were recollected by Solomon, when he prayed to the same effect. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* iii. 5—14.)

V. 126. They make void the law of God, who deny its obligation and authority, who obscure or explain away its meaning, and who render it of none effect by their traditions, or by their lives. When these evils become general, it is time for the Lord to take the matter in hand, and by his own power to silence infidels, profligates, pharisees, and antinomians; to stand up for the honour of his own word, and to maintain his own cause among men: for no other power can effect these purposes; and in such circumstances the whole honour will be given unto him. (*Marg Ref.*)

V. 127. 'As the wickedness of those increaseth, 'who "make void the divine law;" the zeal and love of 'believers should increase in proportion, to stem the tor-'rent: and this may be done, to a surprising degree, by a 'few persons who, after the example of the first Christians, 'can forsake all to follow their Master; who have the sense 'and the courage to prefer truth, wisdom, holiness and 'heaven, to falsehood, folly, sin, and the world; who can 'resolutely reject the glittering temptation, and say with-'out hypocrisy to their God, "I love thy commandments "above gold, yea, above fine gold." (*Horne.*)

V. 128. 'The more I consider them, the more I ap-'prove every one of them,—and abhor all those base and 'dishonest ways, whereby others advance themselves to 'riches and honours.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The word here rendered *false*, is the same which before is translated, *of lying*, (29.) The word for *way* is indeed different; but *the false way*, in this verse, and *the way of lying*, in the other, no doubt are entirely the same.

V. 129. The discoveries which the word of God makes of the mysteries of his nature, the perfections of his character, and the power of his works, and likewise of the invisible and eternal world, are suited to excite the highest wonder and astonishment. The harmony of the divine attributes in the mystery of redemption; the way of a sinner's acceptance, and the method of giving peace to his conscience, without giving the least encouragement to sin; the rule and example of obedience, and all the motives and obligations to it, are most worthy of our admiration, love, and gratitude; and it is owing entirely, either to the depravity of our hearts, or to the familiarity of our thoughts with these subjects, that we are no more affected by them.

V. 130. The words of God *enter* the soul when, being read, or heard, they are understood, believed, stored up in the memory, and used to regulate the judgment and conduct. They then give a satisfactory light to the mind upon every subject that they treat of; and speedily communicate more useful knowledge upon the most important topics, to the simplest believer, than the acutest philosophers have been able to develope through successive generations. 'The simple idiots, that submit themselves to God, have 'their eyes opened, and their minds illuminated, so soon 'as they begin to read God's word.'—'Thus will the 'Scriptures give to the simple, in a few days, an under-'standing in those matters, which philosophers for centu-'ries sought in vain.' (*Horne.*)

ed: for [q] I longed for thy commandments.

132 [r] Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, * as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name.

133 [s] Order my steps in thy word; and [t] let not any iniquity have dominion over me.

134 [u] Deliver me from the oppression of man: so will I keep thy precepts.

135 [x] Make thy face to shine upon thy servant: [y] and teach me thy statutes.

136 [z] Rivers of waters run down mine eyes; because they keep not thy law.

q 40. 162. 174. Heb. xii. 14.
r 124. xxv. 18. Ex. iv. 31. 1 Sam. i. 11 2 Sam. xvi. 12. Is lxiii. 7—9.
* Heb. *according to the custom towards those*, &c. cvi. 4.
s 116. xvii. 5. xxxii. 8. cxxi. 1. 1 Sam. ii. 9.
t xix. 13. Rom. vi. 12—14. vii. 23, 24
u 122. lvi. 1, 2. 13. cv. 43—45. Ex. xi. 17—20. xxxvi. 24—27. Luke i. 74, 75. Acts ix. 31.
x iv. 6. lxxx. 1. 3. 7. 19. Num. vi. 25, 26 Job xxxiii. 26 Rev. xxii. 4, 5
y 12. Job xxxiv. 32. xxxv. 11. xxxvi. 22. Luke xxiv. 45.
z 53. 158. 1 Sam. xv. 11. Jer. ix. 17, 18. xiii. 17. xiv. 17. Ez. ix. 4. Luke xix. 41. Rom ix. 2, 3

TZADDI.

137 [a] Righteous *art* thou, O LORD, and upright *are* thy judgments.

138 Thy [b] testimonies, *that* thou hast commanded, *are* † righteous, and very ‡ faithful.

139 My [c] zeal hath § consumed me; because [d] mine enemies have forgotten thy words.

140 Thy word *is* [e] very ‖ pure: therefore thy servant loveth it.

141 I *am* [f] small and despised: [g] *yet* do not I forget thy precepts.

142 Thy righteousness *is* [h] an everlasting righteousness, [i] and thy law *is* the truth.

a xcix. 4. ciii 6. cxlv. 17. Deut. xxxii. 4. Neh. ix. 33. Jer. xii. 1. Dan. ix. 7. 14. Rom. ii. 5. iii. 5, 6. ix. 14. Rev. xv. 4, 5. xvi. 7. xix. 2
b 86. 144. xix. 7—9. Deut iv. 8. 45.
† Heb *righteousness*.
‡ Heb. *faithfulness*. 75.
c lxix. 9. 1 Kings xix. 10. 14. John ii 17.
§ Or, *cut me off*.
d liii 4. Mat. ix. 13. xii. 3—5. xv. 4—6 xxi. 13. 16. 42 xxii 29. Acts xiii 27. xxviii. 23—27.
e 128. xii. 6 xviii. 30. xix. 8. Pro xxx. 5. Rom. vii. 12. 16. 22. 1 Pet. ii. 2. 2 Pet. i. 21.
‖ Heb *tried*, or *refined*.——f xxii. 6. xl. 17 Pro xv. 16. xvi. 8. xix. 1. Is. liii. 3. Luke vi. 20. ix. 58. 2 Cor. viii. 9. Jam. ii. 5 ——g 109. 176. Prov iii. 1 ——h 144. xxxvi. 6. Is. li. 6. 8. Dan. ix 24. 2 Thes. i. 6—10 ——i 151. John xvii. 17. Eph. iv. 21

V. 131. As the man who has run himself out of breath opens his mouth to draw in the refreshing breeze, and eagerly pants for it: so the believer, wearied with the cares of life and his conflict with sin, longs for the consolations conveyed to him by the sacred word, and stands expecting and prepared to receive them into his heart.

V. 132. The love of the name or perfections of God, distinguishes the believer from all those who are carnally minded and enmity to God; for nothing availeth but faith, in Christ, "which worketh by love." The reconciled believer is dealt with according to the Gospel of grace; the unregenerate and unbelieving according to the strict and holy law. This David understood, and prayed earnestly to be dealt with, according to that gracious rule by which the Lord pardoned and recompensed his friends; not in that strict justice with which he punishes his enemies.

V. 133. The frequent ejaculatory prayers for divine teaching, upholding, &c. show how much the Psalmist understood and felt his entire dependence on God, not only for providential protection and the forgiveness of his sins: but also as to those things in which men in general *depend on themselves*, and assume the credit of any real or supposed difference subsisting between them and others: namely, the due exercise of their rational powers, and the right state of their hearts. 'O God, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works, do proceed, &c.' (*Liturgy.*) It is evident that David deeply felt that iniquity in one form or other would enslave him; unless God himself ordered and upheld his goings, according to the sacred word.

V. 136. Conformity to Christ is the standard of the believer's growth in grace. David had "that mind in him "which was also in Jesus Christ:" his grief was therefore intense, and his tears flowed as rivers down his furrowed cheeks, when he looked around, and saw multitudes ruining themselves and others, as well as dishonouring God, by impenitently despising and violating his holy law. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 137. 'The emperor Mauritius,—seeing all his 'children slain before his face, at the command of the 'bloody tyrant and usurper, Phocas, himself expecting 'the next stroke,—exclaimed aloud, in the words of David, "Righteous art thou, O LORD, and upright are thy judg-"ments." (*Horne.*) This story is a good exposition of the verse; and if satisfactorily authenticated, would be a most admirable exemplification of the genuine tendency of the doctrine contained in it: namely, confidence in God, and acquiescence in his will, under the severest calamities.

V. 138. 'Thou hast commanded justice by thy testi-'monies, and truth especially.' (*Old Version.*) This translation seems literal. The law commands perfect righteousness; and even the Gospel requires truth in the inward parts.

V. 139. The Psalmist's ardent love to the word, and zeal for the glory of God, threw his mind into a most distressing commotion, whilst he observed how his enemies forgot and neglected the most obvious truths and precepts of Scripture. His spirit was stirred within him: and he became even sick with uneasiness; whilst he found himself unable to stop the progress of their impiety and rebellion. In this he may be considered as the type of the Saviour. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 140. 'Gold hath need to be refined; but thy word 'is purity itself.'—The figurative term, used in the original, denotes the purity of the sacred Scriptures; which reflect the holiness of the Lord's character and government, and require of us, and lead us to, *purity* of heart and life. This purity of the Scriptures the carnal mind dislikes, but the spiritually minded love and relish it; and they perceive it equally in the righteous precepts, as in the faithful promises, and therefore they love the whole word of God.

V. 142. 'Men may decree wickedness by a law, or 'they may change their decrees, and with them, what was 'right to-day may be wrong to-morrow: but the law of 'God is righteousness and truth to day and for ever.' (*Horne.*) Perhaps the everlasting righteousness of God as a Saviour, which "is unto and upon all that believe," is intended; and not merely his righteousness as a Judge.

k 107. xviii. 4, 5. lxxxviii. 3, &c. cxvi. 3. cxxx. 1 Mark xiv 33, 34
* Heb. *found me.*
l 16. 57 Job xxiii 12. John iv. 34.

143 k Trouble and anguish have * taken hold on me: l *yet* thy commandments *are* my delights.

m 138. 152. Mat. v. 18. 1 Pet. i 23—25
n 34. 66. 73 169. 2 Cor iv 6. 1 John v. 20, 21.

144 The m righteousness of thy testimonies *is* everlasting: give me o understanding, and I shall live.

o Is vi. 9, 10 xxvii. 11 Jer. iv 22. Dan. xii. 10 Hos iv. 6. Matt. xiii. 19. John xvii. 3

(*Marg. Ref.*)—His law is the truth, as the standard of right and wrong, and his testimony, as to facts, doctrines, denunciations, and promises. (144.)

V. 144. 'So that the life of man, without the know-'ledge of God, is death.'

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS, on AIN, PE, and TZADDI.

Happy is the man who, from evangelical principles, doeth judgment and justice to all around him: he will have rejoicing in the testimony of his conscience, and confidence in the mercy and truth of his God, in the midst of slander and persecution: the Lord will be his Surety for good, and will not leave him in the hand of any proud oppressor. Delays may try his patience, whilst he waits for the salvation of God, and the performance of his faithful and righteous word: but in due time the Lord will do justice betwixt him and his enemies, and answer his largest expectations.—If we are indeed become the servants of God, whether in a low or in a lofty station; he will deal with us according to his mercy: and if we desire to know his will and our proper work, he will give us understanding that we may learn his testimonies. In proportion as we love his service and value his commandments, we shall be grieved to witness the neglect and contempt with which they are treated: we shall be sensible that *we* cannot stop the progress of infidelity and immorality, or of those "damnable heresies," which make void the holy law of God; and this will excite our prayers to him, to arise and work, and cause iniquity to stop its mouth.—If we can say, that "we love God's commandments more than much fine "gold;" if we really value the comforts and the cause of true godliness more than our worldly interests; and our love to the word of God gathers strength in proportion as we see others despise and trample upon it: we may hope to do something effectual, *as instruments*, by our example, prayers, influence, and talents, to stem the torrent of impiety. For we shall then venture the loss of every earthly advantage, and submit to any self-denial and suffering, in this important cause; and shall be as zealous and active in extolling and establishing, as wicked men are in decrying and vilifying, the truths and statutes of the Lord. But they who spiritually love *any* of his precepts, love them all, and esteem them all to be right: and they who hate any false way, hate them all, as dishonourable to God and ruinous to man. Increasing illumination, and closer meditation on divine subjects enhance the Christian's admiration and gratitude: and the wonders of redeeming love, which angels desire to look into, will fix the heart in the observance and adoration of them. When we simply receive the testimony of revelation by faith, with a due preparation of the heart, a new light pervades the understanding, and every object assumes another appearance: every view of spiritual things, in their glory and excellency, excites more ardent desires of clearer discoveries: nor can the longing, panting, thirsting, of the heaven-born soul, for more perfect knowledge and holiness, be ever satisfied till it arrives in the world above. To hunger and thirst after righteousness may here create uneasiness: but these desires shall be fully answered, when all of a contrary nature shall be eternally disappointed. The Lord regardeth with tender and fatherly mercy those who love his name: and if we cannot decide that we are of this happy number, we yet may pray unto him and say, "Look thou upon me, and be mer-"ciful unto me, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy "name." And this will be done with more encouragement, if we can sincerely add our petitions, that he would "order "our steps according to his word, and not let any iniquity "have dominion over us." When it is our aim and desire thus "to keep the Lord's precepts," he will deliver us from oppression or comfort us under it, by his presence and the light of his countenance; and will teach us more and more of his holy truth and will. But though exempted from sorrow on our own account, we must expect to be grieved for others, whilst in this vale of tears; nor can we do other than mourn to behold our fellow-creatures hurry by troops unto destruction, without our being able to prevent it. It behooves us, however, to submit to the justice of God in this, as well as in other matters; this will calm the tempest of our souls; and we shall allow his judgments to be righteous in the destruction of the wicked, though nearly connected with us, as well as in our own afflictions; and shall be induced to cheerful obedience and a firm reliance on his faithful promises. When our zeal is purified from bitterness and resentment against ungodly opposers; when it runs in the same channel with that of the Redeemer; and when it makes us willing to renounce, venture, and suffer for the benefit even of our persecutors, it is good evidence that we are true Christians, and it will be very useful to others also. Happy are they who love the whole word of God, because of its purity, and its purifying influence on their hearts; for this no unregenerate person can do. They who are noble in this world, if strong in the grace of God, will be mean in their own eyes, and willing to be despised by others: and they that are poor and low in the world, will be great in the sight of God, if neither fear, shame, nor covetousness, render them forgetful of his precepts. These are of immutable and everlasting excellence and obligation. The law of God is the truth, the standard of holiness, and the rule of happiness. Yet the divine obedience of Christ alone forms that everlasting righteousness which is testified to us in Scripture, and justifies the believing sinner. But they who are thus justified, learn to delight in God's commandments, and to copy that obedience by which they are accepted: the trouble and anguish which took hold on their consciences, end in sweet peace and confidence: they enter on a new state, bear a new character, and lead a new life. They are comforted under future trials, and at length are brought forth out of them all. May the Lord give us understanding, that we may see and walk in this way of peace and salvation; that we may here live the life of faith and grace, and at length be removed to the life of glory, vision, and fruition.

KOPH.

145 I [p] cried with *my* whole heart: hear me, O LORD: [q] I will keep thy statutes.

146 I cried unto thee; save me, * and I shall keep thy testimonies.

147 I [r] prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried: I [s] hoped in thy word.

148 Mine [t] eyes prevent the *night*-watches, that I might meditate in thy word.

149 [u] Hear my voice [x] according unto thy loving kindness: O LORD, [y] quicken me according to thy judgment.

150 They [z] draw nigh that follow after mischief: they are [a] far from thy law.

151 Thou *art* [b] near, O LORD; and [c] all thy commandments *are* truth.

152 Concerning [d] thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them for ever.

p 10. lxi. 1, 2. lxii 8. lxxxvi. 4. cii. *title.* cxlii. 1, 2. 1 Sam. i. 10. 15. Jer. xxix. 13.
q 44. 106. 115.
* Or, *that I may keep.* 134. Judges x. 15, 16. Matt. i. 21. Tit. ii. 14. iii. 4—8.
r v. 3. xlii. 8. lxxxviii. 13. cxxx. 6. Is. xxvi. 9. Mark i. 35.
s 74. 81. lvi. 4. cxxx. 5. Heb. vi 17—19.
t 62. lxiii. 1. 6. cxxxix. 17, 18. Lam. ii. 19. Luke vi. 12.
u v. 2, 3. lv. 2. lxiv. 1.
x li. 1. lxix. 16. cix. 21. Is. lxiii. 7.
y 25. 40. 156.
z xxii. 11—13 16. xxvii. 2 1 Sam. xxiii. 26. 2 Sam. xvii 16. Matt. xxvi. 46, 47.
a l. 17. Job xxi. 14. Prov i. 7. 22. xxviii. 9. Eph ii. 13, 14.
b xlvi. 1. lxxv. 1. cxlv. 18. Deut. iv. 7. Matt. i. 23.
c 138. 142.
d 144.160.lxxxix 34—37. cxi. 7, 9. Ec. iii. 14. Luke xxi. 33.

RESCH.

153 [e] Consider mine affliction, and deliver me: [f] for I do not forget thy law.

154 [g] Plead my cause, and deliver me: [h] quicken me according to thy word.

155 [i] Salvation *is* far from the wicked: [k] for they seek not thy statutes.

156 † Great [l] *are* thy tender mercies, O LORD: [m] quicken me according to thy judgments.

157 [n] Many *are* my persecutors and mine enemies; [o] *yet* do I not decline from thy testimonies.

158 I [p] beheld the transgressors, and was grieved; because they kept not thy word.

159 [q] Consider how I love thy precepts: [r] quicken me, O LORD, according to thy loving kindness.

160 Thy word *is* ‡ true *from* the beginning: [s] and every one of thy righteous judgments *endureth* for ever.

e 153. ix. 13. xlii. 3, 4. xxv. 19. Ex iii 7, 8. Neh ix 32. Lam. ii. 20. v. 1.
f 16. 98. 109. 141. 176.
g xxxv. 1. xliii. 1. 1 Sam. xxiv. 15. Job v. 8. Prov. xxiv. 23. Jer. xl. 20. 1. 34 li. 36. Mic. vii. 9. 1 Pet ii 23.
h 25. 40.
i lxxiii. 27. Job v. 4. Is xlvi. 12. lvii 19 Eph. ii. 17, 18.
k x. 4 Job xxi. 14, 15. Prov. i. 7 Rom iii. 11.
† Heb *many.*
l li. 1. lxxxvi 5. 13 15 1 Chr. xxi. 13. Is. lv. 7. lxiii 7.
m 149.
n iii. 1, 2 xxii. 12. 16 xxv. 19. lvi. 2 cxviii 10—12. Matt.xxiv. 9. xxvi 47. Acts iv. 27.
o 51. 110. xliv 17 Job xvii. 9. xxiii. 11 Is. xlii. 4. Acts xx. 23, 24. 1 Cor. xv. 58.
p 53. 136. Mark iii. 5
q 97. 153. 2 Kings xx. 3. Neh v. 19. xiii. 22 —— r 88. —— † Heb. *The beginning of thy word is true.* 86. 138. Prov. xxx. 5. 2 Tim. iii. 16. —— s 75. 142. 144. 152. Ec. iii 14 Matt. v. 18.

NOTES.

V. 145, 146. 'He showeth, that all his affections and 'whole heart were bent to God's word, for to have help in 'his dangers.'—The Psalmist is also at least as earnest to be enabled to keep the commandments of God, as to be rescued from his sufferings.

V. 147, 148. 'David delighted in prayer and meditation; therefore he was beforehand with the light itself; 'therefore his eyes prevented the watches, that is, the last 'of those watches into which the night was by the Jews 'divided. He needed not the watchman's call, but was 'stirring before it could be given. Climate and constitution will doubtless make a difference.—But by Christians 'who enjoy their health,—the sun should not be suffered 'to shine in vain, &c.' (*Horne.*) (*Mark* i. 35.)

V. 150, 151. 'If our enemies draw nigh to destroy 'us, God is still nearer to preserve us.' (*Horne.*)—He is indeed near, in his Providence, but we should, with David, pray that he may be graciously near us, to uphold our goings in his commandments, which are truth and righteousness; as well as to protect us against those that "follow "after mischief and forsake his law."

V. 152. 'This hath been my support, long before I 'fell into these troubles, that whatsoever thou hast testified to be thy will and pleasure is sure and steadfast, and 'shall never fail those that depend upon it.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 154. The original word, translated *deliver*, is taken from the office of a Redeemer, or next of kin among the Israelites, to whom it belonged to redeem the inheritance, or ransom the person of his impoverished or enslaved relative; and also to be his patron and defender against injustice and oppression; and the avenger of his blood, if he were slain.

V. 155. "The salvation of God is nigh them that fear "him;" for they seek to know and do the will of God; but, after all that hath been done by the great Redeemer, or revealed and promised in Scripture, or vouchsafed by a kind providence as 'means of grace;' yet, "salvation is "far from the wicked," or impenitent, "for they seek "not the statutes" of God.—Some explain the verse of temporal deliverance; 'Far be it from thee to afford any 'help to the wicked: for they have no regard to thy statutes; but only seek how they may satisfy their own 'lewd and cruel desires.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 157, 158. 'Persecution tempteth men to apostacy, 'and is the great trial of our fidelity to God and to his 'word. He who in such circumstances forgetteth his own 'sufferings, to commiserate the sin and folly of his persecutors, is a true follower of Jesus Christ.' (*Horne.*)—The original word, denotes *disgust* as well as *sorrow.* Thus our Lord looked round on the Pharisees "with anger, be-"ing grieved for the hardness of their hearts."

V. 159. The frequent though varied repetition of the ejaculatory prayer, "Quicken me, according to thy word," &c. shows that the Psalmist considered it as relating to objects of the highest importance. (*Note* 25.) The preservation of his temporal life, deliverance from his deep distresses, the communication of spiritual, and preservation to eternal, life; with animating, encouraging grace, and whatever was needful in order to his activity and vigour in obeying the commandments of God, amidst temptations, dangers, and sufferings, may be all considered as implied in the general terms; and sometimes one, sometimes another, to have been especially intended, according to existing circumstances.

V. 160. "The beginning of thy word is truth," &c. The first promise to fallen Adam of a Redeemer; or the first promise to Abraham concerning his posterity, was

SCHIN.

161 [t] Princes have persecuted me without a cause: but [u] my heart standeth in awe of thy word.

162 I [x] rejoice at thy word, [y] as one that findeth great spoil.

163 I hate and [z] abhor lying; *but* thy law do I love.

164 [a] Seven times a day do I praise thee, [b] because of thy righteous judgments.

165 [c] Great peace have they which love thy law, and * nothing shall offend them.

166 LORD, [d] I have hoped for thy salvation, [e] and done thy commandments.

167 My [f] soul hath kept thy testimonies; [g] and I love them exceedingly.

168 I have kept thy precepts and thy testimonies: [h] for all my ways *are* before thee.

TAU.

169 Let [i] my cry come near before thee, O LORD: [k] give me understanding according to thy word.

170 Let my supplication come before thee: [l] deliver me according to thy word.

171 My [m] lips shall utter praise, when thou hast taught me thy statutes.

172 My [n] tongue shall speak of thy word: [o] for all thy commandments *are* righteousness.

173 [p] Let thine hand help me; [q] for I have chosen thy precepts.

174 I have [r] longed for thy salvation, O LORD; [s] and thy law *is* my delight.

t 23. 157. 1 Sam. xxiv. 9—15. xxvi. 18. John xv. 25.
u iv. 4. Gen. xxxix. 9. xlii. 18. 2 Kings xxii. 19. Neh. v. 15. Job xxxi. 23. Is. lxvi. 2 Jer. xxxvi. 23—25
x 72. 111. Jer. xv. 16
y 1 Sam. xxx. 16. Prov. xvi. 19. Is. ix. 3.
z 29. 113. 128. ci. 7. Prov. vi. 16—19. xxx. 8. Am. v. 15. Rom. xii. 9. Eph. iv. 25. Rev. xxii. 15.
a 62. lv. 17
b xlviii. 11. xcvii. 8. Rev. xix. 2.
c Prov. iii. 1, 2. 7. Is. xxxii. 17. lvii. 21. John xiv. 27. Gal. v. 22, 23. vi. 15, 16.
* Heb. *they shall have no stumbling block.* Is. viii. 13—15. xxviii. 13. lvii. 14. Matt. xiii. 21. xxiv. 24. 1 Pet. ii. 6—8.
d 81. 174. cxxx. 5. 7. Gen. xlix. 18.——e iv. 5. xxiv. 3—5. 1. 23. John vii. 17. 1 John ii. 3, 4. f 5—8. 97. 111. 159. John xiv. 21—24. xv. 9, 10. Heb. x. 16, 17.——g xl. 8. Rom. vii. 22. 29. Luke x. 42.——r 81. 166. Gen. xlix. 18. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Prov. xiii. 12. Cant. v. 8. Rom. vii. 22—25. viii. 23—25. Phil. i. 23.——s 16. 24. 47. 77. 162. 167.
h xliv. 20, 21. xc. 8. cxxxix. 3. Job xxxiv. 21. Prov. v. 21. Jer. xxiii. 24. Heb. iv. 13. Rev. ii. 23.
i 145. xviii. 6. 2 Chr. xxx. 27.
k 144. 1 Chr. xxii. 12. 2 Chr. i. 10. Prov. ii. 3—5. Dan. ii. 21. Jam. i. 5.
l 41. lxxxix. 20—25. Gen. xxxii. 9—12. 2 Sam. vii. 25.
m 7. 1. 23. lxxi. 17. 23, 24.
n 13. 46. xxxvii. 30. xl. 9, 10. lxxviii. 4. Deut. vi. 7. Matt. xii. 34, 35. Eph. iv. 29. Col. iv. 6.
o 86. 138. 142. 144. Rom. vii. 12. 14.
p 94. 117. Is. xli. 10—14. Mark ix. 24. 2 Cor. xii. 9. Eph. vi. 10, &c. Phil. iv. 13.
q 30. 35. 40. 111. Deut. xxx. 19. Josh. xxiv. 15. 22. 1 Kings. iii. 11, 12. Prov. i.

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truth itself. All the righteous judgments of God, whether in the declarations of his word, or in the dispensations of his providence, concur in accomplishing that truth, and form a part of that great design, which shall surely be completed and endure for ever. 'Since thou first promisedst, even to the end, all thy sayings are true.'

V. 161. Saul and his princes persecuted David most unjustly: but he so reverenced the word of God, that he would not retaliate, or avenge himself upon them; and thus he constrained Saul himself to say, "Thou art more "righteous than I."

V. 162. 'I take far more delight in doing thy will, 'and in what thou hast promised to do for me, than in 'the completest victory over all my enemies.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 163. (*Notes* 29, 30.)

V. 164. 'That is, sundry times.'—'They who, like 'David, during a time of persecution, put their trust in 'God, and wait his decision of their cause, will always 'find reason to praise him seven times a day, or continu-'ally, for his just decrees, and "righteous judgments," 'concerning them.' (*Horne.*)

V. 165. 'Amidst the storms and tempests of the world, 'there is a perfect calm in the breasts of those who not 'only do the will of God, but love to do it. They are at 'peace with God, by the blood of reconciliation; at 'peace with themselves by the answer of a good consci-'ence, and the subjection of those desires which war 'against the soul; at peace with all men, by the spirit of 'charity; and the whole creation is so at peace with them, 'that "all things work together for their good." No ex-'ternal troubles can rob them of this great peace; no 'offences or stumbling-blocks, which are thrown in their 'way, by persecution or temptation, by the malice of 'enemies, or apostacy of friends, by any thing thy see, 'hear of, or feel, can detain, or divert them from their 'course. Heavenly love surmounts every obstacle, and 'runs with delight the way of God's commandments.' (*Horne.*) This beautiful note seems indeed rather to show what would be the case, did we perfectly love the law of God; and were indwelling sin not only dethroned, but destroyed, than what is generally, or perhaps in any instance, attained in this world. But love to the law of God is a sure proof of conversion, and is in ordinary cases attended by proportionable *peace;* all disturbance and disquietude arise from contrary sources; and all who love the law, shall be "kept "by the power of God through faith unto salvation." Other professed Christians may be offended and fall away, but these never shall.

V. 166. 'He showeth that we must first have faith, 'before we can work and please God.' To hope, on Scriptural grounds, for the salvation of God, and in this hope to obey his commandments, unreservedly and habitually, forms a sure pledge of eternal felicity, and a constant preparation for death and judgment.

V. 167, 168. 'The plea of having kept the divine 'precepts, in the mouth of David, or any other believer, 'intendeth sincerity, not perfection, and is alleged as an 'evidence of grace, not as a claim of merit.' (*Horne.*)

All, &c. 'I have no respect unto men, but see thee 'always before my eyes, as the Judge of my actions.'

V. 169. *Give*, &c. This may mean, not only that God has promised in his word to give wisdom to those who ask him for it; but also, that understanding, or wisdom, consists in having the mind enlightened and the judgment formed according to the truths and precepts of Scripture; which is the medium through which God gives (and man must seek,) true knowledge and wisdom; and the standard by which he judges of them, and distinguishes the genuine from all counterfeits.

V. 171. 'The word signifieth to *pour forth continually.*' "My lips shall pour forth praise; *for* thou hast taught me "thy statutes." This is more literal, and accords better to the context; the same particle is rendered *for* in the next verse.

V. 173, 174. (*Note* 5. 25. 166. *Rom.* vii. 14—25.)

t ix. 13. 14. xxx. 9. li. 14, 15 cxviii. 18, 19. Is. xxxviii. 19. u 75. Is. xxvi. 8. v. Rom viii. 28 1 Cor. xi. 31, 32. 2 Cor. iv. 17.

175 t Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee; u and let thy judgments help me.

176 I have x gone astray like a lost sheep; y seek thy servant; z for I do not forget thy commandments.

x Is. liii. 6. Ezr xxxiv. 6. 16. Matt x 6 xv. 24. xviii 12, 13. Luke xv. 4–7. John x. 16. 1 Pet. ii. 25.——y Cant i. 4. Jer. xxxi 18. Luke xix. 10. Gal. iv. 9. Phil. ii. 13. Jam. i 17.—— z 61. 93. Hos. iv. 6.

V. 175. *Let thy*, &c. Or, "Thy judgments shall "help me." The judgments of God on his enemies, the fatherly corrections of his people, the counsels of his word, and the ordinances or his house, are all helpful to the believer's sanctification, through the influences of the Holy Spirit.

V. 176. 'It is doubtful, whether David here speaks 'of his misery or his sin, or his wandering as an exile,— 'or going astray from the commandments of his God.' (*Horne.*) The simile, however, of a lost sheep is so generally applied to the latter case, and the language, thus interpreted, accords so to other parts of Scripture, that it is most probable his past sins, and his proneness to wander, were especially meant in this concluding confession and ejaculation. Perhaps it was written after he had gone so far astray in the matter of Bathsheba and Uriah; and being deeply convinced of his guilt and misery, he felt his need of the special aid of the good Shepherd, to bring him back to the fold of God. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS, on KOPH, RESCH, SCHIN, and TAU.

Supplications *with the whole heart* differ very widely from that lip-labour in which formalists confide, and are presented by those alone who long for God's salvation, and who love his commandments, but who are sensible of their inability to keep them. Great earnestness in any undertaking often interrupts our sleep; thus fervent love to the word of God, and delight in communion with him, will render us willing to deduct from the hours of rest and refreshment, rather than be prevented from attending on these needful and pleasant exercises. Though the Lord hath not seen good to give us positive injunctions in these matters, and though he is accessible at all hours: yet we may often detect ourselves, as defective in love, gratitude, and spirituality, by our slothfulness and self-indulgence; seeing we have been needlessly asleep, or employed in trifles, when we might have been improving our privilege of access to the mercy-seat, and to that sacred word in which we profess to hope. This should lead us to call upon God to hear our voice, and quicken us, according to his love, his wisdom, and his truth. When employed in the service of God, we need not fear, though "they draw "nigh that follow after mischief, and are far from his "law," in their temper and conduct; for He is near to defend us, and will vindicate the honour of his commandments against those who hate us for obeying them: and if we have depended on his testimonies, our constant experience will assure us that he hath established them for ever. He considers the weight and the continuance of our afflictions, and will plead our cause and deliver us; as we do not forget his law, but are more desirous of being invigorated in his ways than of exemption from trouble. But present safety and everlasting salvation are far from the wicked who neither observe, nor understand, nor even seek after the truths and statutes of the Lord: and, alas, how numerous are these careless presumptuous transgressors! The number, power, and malice of our persecutors should enhance our value for the tender mercies of the Lord, and our steady purpose not to decline from his ways. And in this frame of mind we shall rather grieve for the transgressors who are ruining themselves, than for the uneasiness that they occasion us. Happy are they who can appeal to God how cordially they love his law: his grace hath planted this love in their hearts; they are interested in all his precious promises, which from the beginning have been true and faithful; and they are brought into the way of those righteous judgments, every one of which is immutable and endureth for ever. When princes become persecutors, their frowns and menaces prove powerful temptations to apostacy or iniquity: and desire of self-preservation may dictate very unwarrantable measures: but they whose "hearts stand in awe of God's word," will rather endure the wrath of man, than break the law of their almighty Judge, and will prefer suffering to deliverance by sin. Nay, were there no denunciations of wrath on those that draw back for fear of the cross; their value for the promised blessings and consolations of the Scripture is so great, that they would not renounce them to save their lives, and to obtain all worldly advantages: for they rejoice in digging into those rich mines of everlasting truth and love, far more than their enemies can do in spoiling them of their earthly substance. Our dread and detestation of hypocrisy, fraud, and dissimulation, will be proportioned to our love of the truth and law of God: they, therefore, who cheat or impose upon their neighbours for their own gain, cannot really love the Gospel. The mercies of common providence, the righteous judgments recorded in Scripture, and the blessings conveyed to us by them, demand our constant tribute of praise; and were our hearts like that of David, we should not be so remiss and infrequent in this heavenly exercise: nor would even troubles and persecutions unfit us for it; seeing we have so many unmerited comforts, such glorious discoveries made to us, and such blessed prospects set before us, in our most trying circumstances. The believer, delighting in the law of his reconciled God, enjoys great peace of conscience and tranquillity of mind, even in this turbulent and unsettled world; and the promises of God assure him, that he shall not meet with any stumbling-block, over which he shall fall to rise no more. He hopes for the free salvation of the Gospel, and conscientiously obeys the holy commandments of the law: he keeps the testimonies of God, yea, loves them exceedingly; and attends on his worship, as one who knows that all his ways are before His eyes. Yet he will not rest in present attainments: he continues to cry unto his God for further instruction and sanctification, and for deliverance from his sins. Expecting the answer of his prayers, he determines that his lips shall render praises to his God. He knows that all God's commandments are righteousness itself, and therefore he

PSALM CXX.

The Psalmist prays to be delivered from his calumniator, whose doom he shows from God, 1—4. He complains, that his permanent abode is among the contentious and malicious, 5—7.

[a] A Song of degrees.

IN [b] my distress I cried unto the LORD, and he heard me.

2 Deliver my soul, O LORD, [c] from lying lips, *and* from a deceitful tongue.

3 * What shall be given unto thee? or what shall be † done unto thee, thou false tongue?

4 ‡ Sharp [d] arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper.

5 [e] Woe is me, that I sojourn in [f] Mesech, *that* I dwell in [g] the tents of Kedar!

6 My [h] soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace.

7 I ¶ *am for* [i] peace: but [k] when I speak, they *are* for war.

a cxxi—cxxxiv. *titles* b xviii. 6 xxx 7, 8. l 15. cvii. 13. cxvi. 3, 4. cxviii. 5. Is. xxxvii. 3, 4. 14, &c. xxxviii. 2—5. Jon. ii. 2. Luke xxii. 44 Heb v. 7. c xxxv. 11. lii. 2—4. cix. 1, 2. cxl. 1—3. Matt. xxvi. 59—62.

* Or, *What shall the deceitful tongue give unto thee? Or What shall it profit thee.* Job xxvii. 8. Matt. xvi 26. Rom. vi. 21.
† Heb. *added.*
‡ Or, It is as *the sharp arrows of the mighty* man *with coals of juniper.* lvii. 4. lix. 7. Prov. xi. 9. xii. 18. xvi. 27. xviii. 8 21. Jam. iii. 5—8.

d vii. 13. lii. 5 cxl. 9—11. Deut xxxii. 23, 24. Prov. xii. 22. xix. 5. ¶ Rev xxi. 8. e Jer ix 2, 3. 6. xv. 10 Mic vii. 1, 2. 2 Pet ii. 7, 8. Rev. ii. 13.——f Gen x. 2. Ez. xxvii. 13. *Meshech.* g Gen. xxv 13 Cant. i. 5. Is. lx. 6, 7 Jer. xlix. 28, 29.——h lvii. 4. 1 Sam. xx. 30—33. Ez ii. 6. Matt. x. 16. 36. Tit. iii 3.——i Or, a man *of peace* ——i xxxiv. 14 xxxv. 20. lv 20. 2 Sam xx. 19 Matt. v. 9. Rom xii. 18. Eph ii. 14—17. Heb. xii. 14. k 1 Sam. xxiv. 9—11. xxvi. 2—4.

will speak of them to others; whilst he chooses them as the rule of his own conduct, and begs for help from the powerful hand of the Lord, that he may be enabled to obey them. He longs for more complete salvation, and delights in the service of God; and he would live on earth, and hopes to live in heaven for ever, that he may show forth his praises: He values even afflictions, when they help him in following after holiness. He often looks back with shame and gratitude to his original lost estate, when, like a helpless sheep, he wandered from the fold of God, and was sought and brought back by the good Shepherd. He humbly confesses his manifold subsequent wanderings; but as he hath not forgotten the commandments of God, he still prays to be sought out, and brought home, and kept safe under the watchful eye and tender care of the chief Shepherd, who "purchased his flock with his own blood;" that he may know his voice, and follow him, and receive from him the gift of eternal life. To close our meditations on this important psalm, let us examine our intentions, desires, fears, hopes, affections, experiences, and tempers by it; that we may judge ourselves, whether we be led by the Spirit of Christ or not, and that we may discover what progress we make in the divine life. Let us frequently step aside from a vain world, to view ourselves in this sacred mirror; that we may discover and rectify what is wrong in our tempers and conduct, and be directed in our confessions, our watchfulness, and our prayers by it: remembering always, that the more we advance in holiness, the more we shall anticipate the joys of heaven; and as it were breathe the pure air of those celestial regions, even while we continue in the noisome dungeon of this evil world.

NOTES.

PSALM CXX. *Title.* No satisfactory reason hath been assigned, why this and the fourteen following psalms are entitled *Songs of Degrees.* Some think that it denotes, that they were peculiarly suited to mount the soul from earth to heaven: but others suppose that this title only relates to the manner in which they were set to music, and sung at the temple. 'This psalm seems to have been 'made by David when the calumnies of Doeg and others 'forced him to flee his country.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 3. Or, 'What shall a false tongue give to thee? 'And what shall it do to thee? What profit do you expect 'from this lying and slandering? What fruit had ye in 'those things, of which ye are now ashamed?'

V. 4. *Coals of.* The intenseness and duration of the misery of those who slandered the servants of God, are represented by the vehement and lasting heat which the wood of the juniper tree is said to yield, after it is reduced to charcoal; as well as by the sharp arrows of a mighty warrior, when he overtakes his enemy. Some, however, think, that the slandering tongue is described under these images. "It is as the coals of juniper, &c."

V. 5. *Kedar.* It is probable that David never actually resided in Mesech or Arabia; but the conduct of Saul, and Doeg, and the Ziphites, was so treacherous and impious, that he seemed to be situated among the wild Arabs who subsisted by war and violence. Some render the word *Mesech,* not as the name of a people, but adverbially—"Wo is me, that I sojourn *so long* in the tents of Kedar, "&c." Thus our Lord says, "How long shall I be with "you? How long shall I suffer you?"

V. 7. *I am,* &c. Or, "*I peace.*" David, though valiant in war, yet loved peace, and was very desirous of it: but his wise and blameless conduct only served to excite still more the envy and enmity of Saul and his courtiers.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Whilst we look, not to David only, but to Jesus the Prince of peace, and see him surrounded by ensnaring cavillers, and calumniated by lying lips and deceitful tongues; whilst we consider how long the holy Saviour sojourned in this wicked world, as in Mesech and in the tents of Kedar: whilst we attend to his blameless useful life, and the great object of his coming into the world, namely, "to make "and give peace by the blood of his cross;" and then view him hated, reviled, and persecuted even to death by the professed worshippers of God: we cannot marvel if the world hate and slander us too; we shall not court the friendship of those who would wage war with the Son of God himself, if he were on earth; and though uneasy, we ought not to murmur at being for a time constrained to dwell amidst the contentious and malicious. But let us follow David as he prefigured Christ: in our distress let us cry unto the Lord, and he will hear us; and deliver our

PSALM CXXI.

The Psalmist expects help from God; and shows the security of the church under the constant protection of the Almighty, 1—8.

[a] A Song of degrees.

I WILL [c] lift up mine eyes unto the [b] hills, from whence cometh my help.
2 [d] My help *cometh* from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.

3 He [e] will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.
4 Behold, [f] he that keepeth Israel [g] shall neither slumber nor sleep.
5 The LORD *is* thy Keeper; the LORD *is* [h] thy shade [i] upon thy right hand.
6 The [k] sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.
7 The LORD shall [l] preserve thee from all evil: [m] he shall preserve thy soul.
8 The LORD shall preserve [n] thy going out, and thy coming in, [o] from this time forth, and even for evermore.

a exx. title. b Or, *Shall I lift up mine eyes to the hills? whence should my help come?* Jer. iii. 23 c ii. 6. lxviii. 15, 16. lxxviii. 68. lxxxvii l. cxxiii. 1 Is. ii. 3 d xlvi l. cxxiv. 8. cxlvi. 5, 6. Is. xl 28, 29. xli. 13. Jer. xx. 11. Heb. xiii. 6. e xci. 12 1 Sam. ii. 9—Prov. ii. 8. iii. 23, 26. 1 Pet i 5. f xxvii. 1 xxxii. 7, 8. cxxvii. 1. Is xxvii. 3. g 1 Kings xviii 27 Ec. viii. 16. Rev. vii. 15. h Ex. xiii. 21. Is. iv. 5, 6. xxv. 4. xxxii. 2. Matt. xxiii 37. i xvi 8. cix. 31 k xci. 5. 10. Is xlix. 10. Rev vii. 16. l xci. 9, 10. Job v. 19, &c. Prov. xii. 21. Mat. vi. 13 Rom. viii. 28. 35—39. 2 Tim iv. 18. m xxxiv 22. xcvii. 10 cxlv. 20. n Deu xxviii. 6. 19. 2 Sam. v. 2. Ezra viii 21. 31. Prov. ii. 8. iii. 6. Jam. iv. 13—15.——o cxiii. 2. cxv. 18.

persons and reputations from lying lips, and every deceitful tongue. Let us possess our souls in patience, and follow after peace and holiness, and strive to overcome evil with good. Then, after our weary pilgrimage expires, we shall enter a land of eternal harmony, purity, and tranquillity. And as we must foresee the dreadful misery of all impenitent slanderers and liars, in the everlasting fire of hell; let us in meekness warn them of their danger, "If "peradventure God will give them repentance, to the ac-"knowledging of the truth; and that they may recover "themselves out of the snare of the Devil, who are taken "captive by him at his will." (2 *Tim.* ii. 25, 26.)

NOTES.

PSALM CXXI. V. 1. Some read this as an interrogation, "Shall I lift up, &c.?" as if the Psalmist had inquired whether it became him, as a worshipper of God, to look up to those hills for help on which idolaters worshipped their idols? But the sentence as it stands in our version, may mean that he would look up to the hill of Zion, or Moriah, on which the tabernacle was placed, for help from that God whose glory appeared above the mercy seat. If David was the writer of this psalm, (as it is most probable) it must relate to other dangers and difficulties, and not to those of his persecutions by Saul; for the hill of Zion was not in Israel's possession, nor was the ark placed there till long after Saul's death. 'Though I 'am driven, not only from my own palace, but from God's 'dwelling-place; yet my eyes shall ever be directed thither-'ward; from whence I expect a powerful aid, against 'those numerous enemies who are combined to destroy 'me.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 3, 4. 'Bishop Lowth supposeth the first two verses 'to be the language of David, when going out to war; and 'the answer of encouragement to be made by the high-'priest from the holy place.' (*Horne.*) If, however, the psalm was written when David was driven away from Zion by Absalom, this could not be so; yet it seems to have been composed in order to be sung responsively; and these verses form the response to the preceding avowal of confidence in God. 'In him thou hast a Guardian, who 'is not like all others, liable to sleep or death.—The 'Eye of his Providence upon thee is always open.'—"Behold He that keepeth Israel neither slumbereth nor 'sleepeth."

V. 5—8. As the pillar of cloud and fire shaded Israel in the wilderness from the scorching noon-day sun, and from the chilling cold and unwholesome influences of the night, over which the moon presides: so the Lord shelters his people from every open assault, and every insidious attempt of persecutors, seducers, or the powers of darkness.

'Nor scorching sun, nor sickly moon,
'Shall have his leave to smite;
'He shields thy head from burning noon,
'From blasting damps at night.—
'He guards thy soul, he keeps thy breath,
'Where thickest dangers come;
'Go and return, secure from death,
'Till God shall call thee home.' (*Watts.*)

—'He showeth that God's providence not only watches 'over his church in general; but also over every member 'of it.'

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

During the believer's wearisome pilgrimage and perilous warfare, he should constantly look unto him who bled on mount Calvary, and who now reigns upon the holy hill of Zion; in whom we have righteousness and strength, through whom we have access to the mercy-seat, and to JEHOVAH as our Father, and by whom we shall ere long be received into everlasting mansions. The Helper and Keeper of Israel is the almighty Creator of heaven and earth; and if he be for us, who can be against us? We should then inquire, whether we belong to this holy nation, this peculiar people? This being ascertained, we may dismiss our anxious cares and fears; or only be careful to use the appointed means, and be found in our proper work. The Lord will uphold our goings in his ways, that our footsteps slip not. He neither slumbereth nor sleepeth; he will keep his people night and day, in dangers, snares, temptations, and persecutions; from open and secret enemies: he will preserve them from all real evil, and make all seeming evil work together for their good: he will protect their lives, during the appointed period, and order all the circumstances of their departure: he will preserve their souls, and take care of them in going out and coming in; when present with their bodies, and when separated, and when again united to them, from this time forth for ever-

PSALM CXXII.

David expresses his joy at going up to the sanctuary, and extols the holy city, 1—5. He exhorts the people to pray for the peace of Jerusalem, and resolves to seek her good, 6—9.

[a] A Song of degrees of David.

I [b] WAS glad when they said unto me, [c] Let us go into the house of the LORD.

2 Our [d] feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem.

3 Jerusalem is [e] builded as a city that is compact together:

4 Whither [f] the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, unto [g] the testimony of Israel, [h] to give thanks unto the name of the LORD.

5 For [i] there * are set thrones of judgment, [k] the thrones of the house of David.

6 [l] Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: [m] they shall prosper that love thee.

7 [n] Peace be within thy walls, *and* prosperity [o] within thy palaces.

8 For [p] my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace *be* within thee.

9 Because of [q] the house of the LORD our God, [r] I will seek thy good.

a cxx—cxxxiv. *titles.* b xlii. 4. lv. 14. lxiii. 1—3. lxxxiv. 1, 2. 10. cxix. 111. c Is. ii. 3. Jer. xxxi. 6. l. 4, 5. Mic. iv. 2. Zech. viii. 21—23. d lxxxiv. 7. lxxxvii. 1—3. e. 4. Ex. xx. 24. 2 Chr. vi. 6. e 2 Sam. v. 9. Eph. ii. 20, 21. iv. 4—7. Rev. xxi. 10, &c. f lxxviii. 68. cxxxii 13 Ex. xxiii 17 xxxiv. 23, 24 Deu xii. 5. 11. xvi. 16. g Ex. xvi. 34. xxvi. 33, 34. xxxii 15. h lxvi. 13—16 cvii 22 cxvi 17—19. cxviii. 19. i Deut. xvii. 18. 2 Chr. xix 8. * Heb. *do sit.* k 2 Sam. viii. 18. 2 Chr xi 22. l li. 18. cxxxvii. 6, 7 Jer. li. 50. John xvii. 21. Eph. iv. 3. 2 Thes. iii. 16. m Gen. xii 3. Num xxiv 19. 1 John iii. 14. n 1 Chr. xii. 18. Is. ix. 7. liv. 13. John xiv. 27. Jam. iii. 18. o xlviii. 3. p xvi. 3. xlii 4. cxix 63. Eph. iv. 4—6. Phil. ii. 2—5 Jam. iii. 13—18 —— q xxvi. 8 lxix 9. lxxxiv. 1, 2. 10. 1 Chr. xxix. 3. John ii. 17. —— r cii. 13, 14. cxxxvii. 5, 6 Neh. ii. 10. xiii. 14.

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more. "Happy are the people that are in such a case; yea, "blessed are the people, who have the Lord for their God."

NOTES.

PSALM CXXII. V. 1, 2. This psalm seems to have been written for the use of the Israelites, when they went up to Jerusalem to celebrate their sacred feasts, (after the ark was removed thither;) and to have communion with God and with their brethren. Their journey would often be inconvenient, wearisome, and expensive: but the holy joy and benefit, which thence accrued, would amply repay them. Jerusalem was typical both of the church of true believers, and of the heavenly state; and the solemnities of Israel were equivalent to our public ordinances, and, when attended on in faith and love, earnests and foretastes of the worship and joy of heaven. It may be supposed, that the Psalmist rejoiced, not only in anticipating the pleasure of attending on the ordinances of God, but also in perceiving the people so generally and zealously disposed to the duties of religion.

V. 3—5. 'By the artificial joining and beauty of the 'houses, he meaneth the concord and love that were between 'the citizens.' Jerusalem was from this time the centre of the worship and government of Israel, and served as the bond of union among the tribes: and whilst that city remained compact and united, as their common head, they were safe and prosperous. The union also of the priesthood in Aaron's family with the kingdom in that of David, was very advantageous to their common interests civil and religious; when justice was administered according to the law of God, and regal authority protected and supported the worship of God at his temple. This typified the union of the priesthood and kingdom in the person of the Redeemer. David's sons were *chief rulers*, soon after the removal of the ark to mount Zion; (2 *Sam.* viii. 18.) so that the thrones of his family, as well as his own throne, were then established at Jerusalem.

V. 6. 'The members of the Israelitish church are 'exhorted to pray for its peace and welfare: what that 'church was, the Christian church militant on earth now 'is, and demandeth in like manner the prayers of all 'Christian people for its peace and welfare in a troublesome world. Its increase here below is, in reality, the 'increase of the Jerusalem above, of which it is a part, 'and ought to be a resemblance.' (*Horne.*) 'Happy 'shall they be who, from regard to the religion and justice 'administered in thee, O beloved city, contribute their 'endeavours, as well as prayers, for thy safety and prosperity.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 8, 9. The Psalmist concludes, by declaring his full purpose of using his authority and influence for the benefit of the holy city, from love to his brethren and his pious friends, but especially from love to God and his sacred service. Thus he gave all rulers, through succeeding generations, an example, in what manner to improve their talents, in promoting true religion among their subjects, without at all infringing on the rights of conscience.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The servants of God should exhort, and be glad to be exhorted, to attend on his ordinances. Indeed, they who love his name and seek his salvation, will rejoice when it is said unto them, "Let us go into the house of the LORD;" and the pleasure and profit, that they derive from the means of grace, will make them disregard inconvenience and fatigue in resorting thither. With what alacrity then should we think of going to the temple above, where our feet shall stand within the gates of the heavenly Jerusalem! and how cheerfully should we bear the cross, and welcome the stroke of death, in hopes of that immortal crown of glory!—Union and harmony are the ornament and stability of the church on earth: and if all the disciples of Christ were of one mind, and "kept the unity of the Spirit in the bond "of peace," their enemies would be deprived of their chief advantage against them. And if they were all more attentive to the commands, and submissive to the authority, of the Son of David, and referred their causes to his decision; they would be more like "the tribes of Israel," even the "tribes of the LORD, when they went up to the "testimony of Israel," the ark of the covenant, and the mercy-seat, "to give thanks unto the name of the Lord."

PSALM CXXIII.

The church expressing her confidence in God, and complaining of the contempt of the proud, 1—4.

[a] A Song of degrees.

UNTO thee, [b] lift I up mine eyes, [c] O thou that dwellest in the heavens.
2 Behold, [d] as the eyes of servants *look* unto the hand of their masters, *and* as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; [e] so our eyes *wait* upon the LORD our God, until that he have mercy upon us.
3 [f] Have mercy upon us, O LORD, have mercy upon us, [g] for we are exceedingly filled with contempt.
4 Our soul is exceedingly filled [h] with the scorning of those that are at ease, *and* with the contempt of the proud.

a cxx—cxxxiv. *titles.*
b xxv. 15. cxxi. 1. cxli. 8. Luke xviii. 13
c ii. 4. xi. 4. cxiii. 5, 6. cxv. 3. Is. lvii. 15. lxvi. 1. Matt. vi. 9.
d Josh. ix. 23. 27. x. 6.
e xl. 1—3. cxix. 82. 123 — 125 cxxx. 5, 6. Gen. xxxii. 26. xlix. 18. Lam. iii. 25, 26. Luke xviii. 1.
f lvi. 1, 2. lvii. 1. lxix. 13 — 16. Luke xviii. 11—13.
g xliv. 13—16. lxxxix. 50, 51. Neh. iv. 2—4. Is. liii. 3. Luke xvi 14. xxiii. 35
h lxxiii. 5 — 9. cxix. 51 Job xii 5. xvi 4. Jer. xlviii. 11. 27. 29 Acts xvii. 21. 32. xxvi. 24. 1 Cor. iv. 13.

PSALM CXXIV.

The church blesseth God for a marvellous deliverance, and exults in his protection, 1—8.

[a] A Song of degrees of David.

IF *it had not been* [b] the LORD who was on our side, [c] now may Israel say;
2 If *it had not been* the LORD who was

B. C. 1040.
a cxx—cxxxiv. *titles.*
b xxvii. 1. xlvi. 7. 11. liv. 4. lvi. 9. cxviii 6, 7. Is. viii. 9, 10. Rom. viii. 31. Heb. xiii. 5, 6.
c cxxix. 1.

But Satan's maxim has always been, to divide that he might conquer: and few Christians have been sufficiently aware of his design. Let all then, who love the cause of pure religion, pray for the peace, in order to the prosperity, of the church. Let us consider every one, who bears the image and seeks the glory of the Redeemer, as our brother, our companion, our fellow traveller, and our fellow soldier: without greatly regarding unessential differences or secular distinctions. Let us seek the peace and comfort of every true believer, the union and harmony of Christians amongst themselves, the security of the church against the assaults and devices of the common enemy, and the prosperity of all, whether in palaces or cottages, who use their influence and abilities to promote the cause of Christ, from love to his name. Let us, from zeal for the honour of our God, and good will to all our brethren, and delight in the ordinances of his house, seek to do good to every part of his church, by our prayers and example, and by every means in our power: and whilst we lament the abuses and divisions which prevail in the church on earth, let us solace ourselves with a foresight of the perfect harmony and tranquillity of the church in heaven; for perfect "peace will "for ever be within her walls, and prosperity within her "palaces."

NOTES.

PSALM CXXIII. V. 1. Some think that this psalm was composed for the use of the church, during the Babylonish captivity, or when persecuted by Antiochus Epiphanes: but others suppose it to have been written by Isaiah, on occasion of the scoffing boasts and menaces of Sennacherib and Rabshakeh; while others are of opinion that David wrote it during Absalom's rebellion.

V. 2. 'Behold we wait on thee, submitting ourselves 'to this severe punishment, as poor slaves to the stroke of 'their offended master or mistress; and resolving to bear 'it patiently, till thou——in much pity remove it.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)—The expectation of deliverance from God under the injuries of men, as faithful servants depend on their masters for redress and protection, seems also especially meant.

V. 3, 4. These verses represent the persons spoken of, as living on scorn and contempt, (even as a man lives on his daily provisions,) till they were satiated with them, and knew not how to endure any more; yet still exposed to the insulting scoffs and taunts of their prosperous and haughty oppressors: but in this extremity they humbly sought mercy from God, to pardon their sins, and to comfort them under the cruel treatment of their enemies; and they renounced all other hope of support and deliverance.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Our merciful God, from his throne in the heavens, that high, and holy, and glorious place, where he displays his more immediate presence, looks down to behold the affairs of men, and hears the prayers of his afflicted people; being able and ready to redress their grievances, whenever they look up to him for help and deliverance. If then we are become his servants by faith in Jesus Christ; if we rely on his mercy, observe his directions, and expect our recompense from him, and not from man: we may also confidently look to him as our Master, to provide for, comfort, and defend us; and he will certainly require it of all those who interrupt or injure us whilst employed in his work. Being thus observant of his hand, and waiting for his mercy; we need not be disconcerted if we meet with scorn and insults from the pampered worldling or the proud infidel, from the sensual, self-indulgent, and prosperous sons of rebellion and impiety. Indeed contempt is very hard to bear: but the servants of God should not complain, if they are treated as his beloved Son was; and they cannot be more filled than he was with "the scorning of those "that are at ease, and the contempt of the proud." Let us then, when ready to faint under this trial, look unto Jesus, copy his meekness and patience, and by faith and prayer cast ourselves upon the mercy of our God. Ere long the proud and luxurious scorner will be filled with his own devices; and the despised believer inherit the throne of glory.

on our side, [d] when men rose up against us;

3 Then [e] they had [f] swallowed us up quick when [g] their wrath was kindled against us:

4 Then [h] the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul:

5 Then [i] the proud waters had gone over our soul.

6 Blessed *be* the LORD, [k] who hath not given us *as* a prey to their teeth.

7 Our [l] soul is escaped [m] as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers; the snare is broken, and we are escaped.

8 Our [n] help *is* in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

d ii. 1, 2. iii. 1. xxii. 12, 13 16. xxxvii. 32. Num. xvi. 2, 3.
e xxvii. 2. xxxv. 25. lvi 1, 2. lvii 3. lxxiv. 8 lxxxiii. 4. Esther iii 6. 12, 13.
f Num. xvi. 30—34. Prov i. 12. Jer. li. 34 Jon. i. 17.
g lxxvi. 10 1 Sam. xx. 30—33. Dan. iii. 19. Mat. ii. 16 Acts ix. 2 xxvi 11.
h xviii. 4 xlii. 7. lxix. 15 Is viii. 7, 8. xxviii 2. lix. 19 Jer. xlvi. 7, 8 Dan. ix. 26. Rev. xii 15, 16. xvii. 1. 15.
i xciii. 3, 4. Job xxxviii. 11. Jer. v. 22.
k xvii. 9—13. cxviii 13. cxl. 5, 6. Ex. xv. 9, 10. Judg. v. 30, 31. 1 Sam. xxvi. 20. Is x. 14—19 ——l 1 Sam. xxiii. 26, 27. xxiv. 14, 15. xxv. 29 2 Sam. xvii 2 21, 22. Jer. v. 26 ——m xxv 15. xci 3. Pro vi 5 Jer. v. 26. xviii 22 2 Tim ii 26 ——n cxv. 12. cxxi. 2. cxlvi. 5, 6. Gen. i. 1. Is. xxxvii. 16—20. Jer. xxxii. 17. Acts iv. 24.

PSALM CXXV.

The security of the faithful, 1—3. *A prayer for them, and a prediction of the ruin of apostates and of the ungodly,* 4, 5.

[a] A Song of degrees.

THEY [b] that trust in the LORD *shall* [c] *be* as mount Zion, *which* cannot be removed, [d] *but* abideth for ever.

2 *As* [e] the mountains *are* round about Jerusalem, so [f] the LORD *is* round about his people from henceforth, even for ever.

a cxx, &c. *titles*
b xxi. 7. xxv. 3. xxxiv. 22. lxii. 2, 6. cxviii. 8, 9. cxlvii. 11. 1 Chr. v. 20. Prov. iii. 5, 6. Jer. xvii. 7, 8. Eph. i. 12, 13. 1 Pet 21.
c cxxxii. 13, 14. Is. xii. 6. xiv. 32. li. 3. 11. 16. lii. 1. 7, 8. Ob. 21. Mic iv. 2. Zech. i. 14. 17. Rev. xiv. 1.
d Matt. xvi. 16—18.
e Lam. iv. 12.
f xxxiv. 7. Deu. xxxiii. 27. Is. iv. 5. Zech. ii. 5. John x. 28, 29.

NOTES.

PSALM CXXIV. V. 1—3. The title ascribes this psalm to David; so that, abiding by this authority, we must look for the occasion of it in the history of that prince; though it is not easy to determine the particular deliverance to which it refers;—it may be applied to any season of special danger or distress to the church, or believers, from which they have been beyond expectation rescued. Had Israel's Helper been any other than the almighty and everlasting God; their numerous, powerful, and furious enemies must at once have destroyed them; as a voracious beast or bird of prey, or sea-monster, swallows alive the helpless animal that falls in its way. Israel had no power to deliver himself; and all other help, but that of God, must have been ineffectual. This seems peculiarly suited to Hezekiah's deliverance from Sennacherib; to which some learned men, notwithstanding the title, suppose the psalm to refer. Indeed, it would equally suit Israel's deliverance from Pharaoh and his army.

V. 4—8. Overwhelming torrents, or the furious waves of the stormy sea; the voracious jaws of lions, tigers, or wolves: and the craft and skill of the fowler, in deceiving and ensnaring the poor unsuspecting bird, form three striking illustrations of the danger to which the people of God had been exposed from their fierce, violent, and deceitful enemies: yet God had wonderfully delivered them; and they were filled with admiring gratitude when they recollected the extreme danger to which they had been exposed, and found themselves brought into a secure and happy situation. And as God had helped them, they were determined to confide in future on his protection alone.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The church of God in every age hath been opposed by numbers of powerful, enraged, and cruel enemies: fierce persecutions, bloody wars and massacres, and wide-spreading destructive heresies, have alternately threatened to swallow her up; as the furious billows were ready to overwhelm the feeble bark in which Jesus was asleep. But notwithstanding the machinations of hell, in aid of the efforts of human malice and power, the despised cause of Christ still maintains its ground: the proud waters have not yet overwhelmed and swallowed her up. "Blessed be the LORD, "who hath not given her up as a prey unto the teeth of "her furious enemies." But recollecting her dangers and helplessness, well may she say, "If it had not been the "LORD, who was on our side, we should have been swal-"lowed up quick, when men," when the powers of darkness, "were so enraged at us." The believer also recollecting his perilous situation, previous to his conversion, and the surprising manner in which he hath been rescued, the dangers from which he hath narrowly escaped, and the difficulties from which he hath been extricated, notwithstanding his own ignorance, folly, and feebleness, will readily make the same thankful acknowledgment, and ascribe all the honour of his salvation to the power, mercy, and truth of Israel's God. He will consider himself as a shipwrecked mariner marvellously saved from the tumultuous waves, as a poor lamb snatched from the jaws of the greedy wolf, or as the helpless bird set at liberty from the fowler's snare, in which it had heedlessly got entangled. Ere long every true Christian, being finally delivered from troubles, enemies, sins, and dangers, will look back on the way in which the Lord hath led him with admiring gratitude; and celebrate his mercy and truth in eternal songs of praise. Let us then *now* begin to praise him for the past, "if in-"deed Satan's snare be broken, and we be delivered;" and let us rejoice that our help for the time to come, "is in the "name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth."

NOTES.

PSALM CXXV. V. 1. It does not clearly appear on what occasion, or by whom, this psalm was written: some, however consider it as referring to the invasion of Judah by Sennacherib, and the miraculous deliverances granted to Jerusalem, in answer to the prayers of Hezekiah and Isaiah. —The security of the church implies the security of every true member of it.

V. 2. "Jerusalem! The mountains are round about "her! And the LORD is round about his people from "henceforth for evermore." This is a literal translation.

3 For [g] the rod of * the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous; lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity.

4 [h] Do good, O LORD, unto *those that be* good, and to *them that are* [i] upright in their hearts.

5 As for [k] such as turn aside unto their [l] crooked ways, the LORD shall lead them forth [m] with the workers of iniquity: *but* [n] peace *shall be* upon Israel.

PSALM CXXVI.

The joyful surprise of the church when delivered from captivity, 1—3. *A prayer for a more complete deliverance; with assurances of a happy event to all the sorrows of God's people,* 4—6.

[a] A Song of degrees.

WHEN the LORD * turned again the captivity of Zion, we were [b] like them that dream.

2 Then [c] was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: [d] then said they among the heathen, The LORD hath † done great things for them.

3 The [e] LORD hath done great things for us, *whereof* we are glad.

4 [f] Turn again our captivity, O LORD, [g] as the streams in the south.

5 They [h] that sow in tears shall reap in ‡ joy.

6 He [i] that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing § precious seed, [k] shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves *with him.*

g cii. 9. 14. Pro. xxii. 8. Is. x. 5. xiv. 5, 6. xxvii. 8. 1 Cor. x. 13. Rev. ii. 10.
* Heb. *wickedness.*
h xli. 1—3. li. 18. lxxiii. 1. Is. lviii. 10, 11. Heb. vi. 10. 1 John iii. 17—24.
i xxxii. 2. lxxxiv. 11. cxix. 8. Lam. iii. 25. John i. 47. Rev. xiv. 5.
k xl. 4. ci. 3. 1 Chr. x. 13, 14. Prov. xiv. 14. Jer. ii. 19. Zeph. i. 6. Heb. x. 38.
l Pro. ii. 15. Is. lix. 8. Phil. ii. 15.
m Matt. vii. 23. xxiv. 48—51.
n cxxviii. 6. Is. liv. 10. 13. Ez. xxxvii. 26. Hos. ii. 18. John xiv. 27. Gal. vi. 16. 1 Pet. i. 2.

a cxx. &c. *titles.*
* Heb. *returned the returning of Zion.* liii. 6. lxxxv. 1. Ezra i. Job xlii. 10. Jer. xxxi. 8—10. Hos. vi. 11. Joel iii. 1.
b Job ix. 16. Mark xvi. 11. Luke xxiv. 11. 41. Acts xii. 9.
c xiv. 7. liii. 6. cvi. 47, 48. Ezra iii. 11. Job viii. 21. Is. xxxv. 10. xlix. 9—13. Jer. xxxi. 12. 13. xxxiii. 11. Rev. xi. 15—17.
d Num. xxiii. 23. Josh. ii. 9—11. ix. 9, 10. Neh. vi. 16. Zech. viii. 22, 23. Rom. xi. 15.
† Heb. *magnified to do with them.*
e xviii. 50. xxxi. 19. lxvi. 5, 6. lxviii. 7, 8. 22. Ezra vii. 27, 28. Is. xi. 11, &c. xii. 4—6. li. 9—11. liii. 9, 10. lxvi. 14. Luke i. 46—49. Eph. i. 18—22. Rev. xii. 10. xix. 1—7.——f lxxxv. 4. Hos. i. 11.——g Josh. iii. 16. Is. xli. 18. h cxxxvii. 1. Is. xii. 1—3. Jer. xxxi. 9—13. Joel ii. 17. 23. Matt. v. 4. John xvi. 20—22. i 2 Cor. vii. 8—11.——‡ Or, *singing.*——i xxx. 5. Job xi. 13—17. Is. lxi. 3. Jer. l. 4, 5. Gal. vi. 7, 8.——§ Or, *seed basket.*——k Is. ix. 2, 3. Luke xv. 19—24. Acts xvi. 29—34. Rev. vii. 15—17.

The surrounding mountains only *seemed* to render the holy city impregnable: but the power of the almighty God effectually secures his true people.

V. 3. The persecuting rage and power of the wicked *fall* upon the righteous, but they do not *rest upon them*, or prevent them from possessing and enjoying their allotted inheritance. They are permitted, moderated, and sanctified, for their trial, correction, and spiritual proficiency: but if augmented and continued according to the desire of their enemies, they might become a too powerful temptation, and at length induce them to put forth their hands unto iniquity. (*Matt.* xxiv. 21, 22. 1 *Cor.* x. 13.)

V. 4, 5. Uprightness before God, and kindness to men, characterize true believers, for whom the Psalmist here prays.—The way of holiness is straight; there are no windings or shiftings in it; it is a uniform course of piety, integrity, sincerity, and kindness. But the ways of sinners are crooked: they shift from one pursuit to another, and turn hither and thither to deceive; they wind about a thousand ways to conceal their base intentions, to accomplish their iniquitous projects, or to escape the punishment of their crimes: yet, disappointment, detection, confusion, and misery, are their inevitable portion.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The people of God trust in his mercy, truth, and power, and keep his commandments; they copy his example of goodness, and, with all their defects, are upright in their hearts. Their hopes and their souls are built upon that tried and precious Foundation, which God hath laid in Zion; on which the whole church is founded, and which "cannot be removed, but abideth for ever:" yea, the Lord himself is with them, and a protection round about them, "from henceforth even for ever." Their dread of sin and of apostacy, and their prayers to be kept from them, though by suffering or death, are the evidences that they shall not apostatize: for the Lord will proportion their strength to their trials, and make all things work together for their good; the malice and enmity of the wicked shall only prove a correcting rod, and not a destroying sword; and even this rod shall not rest upon them, lest they faint under the chastisement. And not only the prayers of their brethren, but the intercession of their Saviour, secure to them the upholding power and preserving grace of God. As to those who turn back unto their crooked ways, they never were true believers; and their apostacy is the detection of their hypocrisy. Their knowledge, conviction, and profession, will but enhance their condemnation, and "the LORD shall lead them forth with "evil-doers; but peace shall be upon" every Israelite *indeed*, in whom is no guile. LORD, number us with them, in time and to eternity!

NOTES.

PSALM CXXVI. V. 1—3. This psalm is generally thought to have been composed when the Jews were restored to their own land after the Babylonish captivity. Their restoration was effected in so sudden and extraordinary a manner, and was so delightful to them, that it seemed more like a pleasant dream than a reality. Even the heathen noted the hand of God in their deliverance, and allowed that he had done great things for them.—The whole event was typical of the spiritual redemption of the church, and of every believer, from the bondage of sin and Satan: and the word of God predicts a deliverance of the New Testament-church from her long continued captivity, which will occasion still greater surprise and exultation.

V. 4. The torrents or brooks in the southern deserts run off, or dry up, in the summer-months; but after the periodical rains they return again, and the channels are filled for the refreshment of the thirsty traveller: thus the Jews who were settled in their own country, prayed that their brethren might be brought back to replenish the land, which had lain so many years desolate.

PSALM CXXVII.

Every labour is vain, without dependence on God's blessing, 1, 2. *Children are gifts of God, and highly to be valued,* 3—5.

[a] A Song of degrees * for Solomon.

EXCEPT [b] the LORD [c] build the house, [d] they labour in vain that † build it: [e] except the LORD keep the city, [f] the watchman waketh *but* in vain.

2 *It is* [g] vain for you to [h] rise up early, to sit up late, to eat [i] the bread of sorrows: [k] *for* so he giveth his beloved sleep.

3 Lo, [l] children *are* an heritage of the LORD: *and* the fruit of the womb *is his* reward.

4 As [m] arrows *are* in the hand of a mighty man; [n] so *are* children of the youth.

5 [o] Happy *is* the man that hath ‡ his quiver full of them: [p] they shall not be ashamed, but they shall § speak with the enemies in the gate.

a cxx, &c *titles.* * Or, *of Solomon,* lxxii *title*
b xxxiii. 16—18. Prov. xvi. 9. xxi. 30, 31. Ec. ix. 11. 1 Cor. iii. 7.
c 1 Chr. xxii. 10, 11. xxviii. 10, 20. xxix. 19. 1 Cor iii. 9—15.
d 1 Cor. xv. 14. Gal. iv. 11.
† Heb are *builders of it in it.*
e cxxi. 3 5 Is. xxvii 3. Zech. ii. 4, 5.
f Cant. iii. 3 v. 7. Is. xxi. 5—12. lvi. 10. lxii 6. Jer. l. 12. 31. Ez. xxxiii. 2—9.
g xxxix. 5, 6. Ec. i. 14. ii. 1—11. 20. 23. iv. 8.——h Prov. xxxi. 15—18.
i Gen. iii. 17—19. Ec. vi. 7.
k iii. 5 iv. 8 Ec. v. 12. Jer. xxxi. 26. Ez. xxxiv. 25. Acts xii. 5, 6
l cxxviii. 3, 4. Gen. i. 28. xv. 4, 5. xxiv. 60. xxx. 1, 2. xxxiii. 5. xli. 51, 52. xlviii. 4. Deut. xxviii. 4. 1 Sam. i. 19, 20. 27. ii. 20, 21. 1 Chr. xxviii. 5. Is. viii. 18.
m Jer. l. 9.
n Prov. xvii. 6. xxxi. 28
o Gen. l. 23 Job i. 2 xlii 12—16.
‡ Heb. *filled his quiver with them.*
p Job v. 4. Prov. xxvii. 11.——§ Or, *subdue.* xviii. 47. Or, *destroy.*

V. 5, 6. The tears, with which the poor captives at Babylon had accompanied their repentance and prayers; the grief, with which on their return they beheld, and attempted to repair, the desolations of their city and temple; and all the hardships, which they endured in that pious attempt, would surely issue in joy and praise. As the poor husbandman, who perhaps wants his seed-corn to feed his family, and cannot part with it and witness their hunger without tears, and who with great labour and anxiety sows his good seed; will in due time rejoice in reaping and conveying home a plenteous harvest. The same is applicable to all the sorrows of a true Christian.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The hand of God should be acknowledged in all our mercies, whoever be the instrument of them: and if unexpected deliverance from outward captivity be so valued and rejoiced in, how ought we to value redemption from the wrath to come, and from the power of sin and Satan! The poor trembling sinner, being deeply convinced of his guilt and danger, having long sought and waited, with discouragement, for peace and liberty: when by looking to a crucified Saviour, he is freed from his burden, and receives peace to his conscience, and power to break off his sins; reviews the misery he has escaped, the price and method of his rescue, and the prospects which open to him, and can often scarcely believe his happiness a reality. The phantoms of a dream, or the sportive illusions of the waking imagination, could never present to his mind aught so welcome, as he now by faith perceives, and by grace experiences. Thus "is his mouth filled with laugh-"ter, and his tongue with singing:" and if his future conduct correspond to this happy beginning, even the ungodly will be constrained to own, that "The LORD "hath done great things for him." With what exultation then will the redeemed sinner rejoin, "The LORD "hath done great things for me, whereof I am glad!" Yet still he hath to struggle with many temptations, corruptions, and afflictions: he will seek, and not in vain, for renewed and more complete deliverance; he will often on earth renew his songs of grateful praise; but, when at last redeemed from death, he shall stand complete before the throne of glory, he will present his perfect praises with unalloyed rejoicing. In the mean time we should not be reluctant to sow in tears, whilst we remain in this world of sorrow. When we mourn for our sins, or sympathize with the afflicted, or suffer for Christ's sake, or endure chastisements, we are "sowing in tears to reap in joy." But let us be sure to sow *good seed,* to be thus watered with our tears, exercising repentance, faith, love, and patience, continuing instant in prayer, and in the use of every means of grace; and being unwearied in every good work, though we should meet with ingratitude and discouragement from every quarter: then we shall "doubtless come "again with rejoicing, bringing our sheaves with us," for none of our labours, sorrows, or prayers, will be lost; and if others are not profited by them, they will return into our own bosom, and augment our gracious and eternal reward. But whether we rejoice in present comforts, or solace ourselves under sorrows, in hope of this glorious event, let us not forget our brethren in tribulation: but let us pray for the support of every suffering saint; and for the deliverance of the church from oppression, from the defilement of heresy and iniquity, and from the debilitating effect of division. Let sinners also recollect, how dreadful their case will be, if they have all their little joy in this mourning world, and nothing hereafter but weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth: and let us all remember that "God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that "also shall he reap."

NOTES.

PSALM CXXVII. *Title.* It is probable, that Solomon composed this psalm, when he succeeded to the throne of Israel, and was about to build the temple: for the same *particle* is used which is elsewhere translated *of.* "A Song "of degrees, or psalm of Solomon:" Or, a most excellent song of Solomon.

V. 1. The duty of constantly and entirely depending on God, in every undertaking, is here inculcated. The Psalmist did not mean, that diligence, vigilance, and skill should not be employed; but that God should be depended on, or they must be employed in vain. "Paul may plant, and "Apollos water; but God alone giveth the increase."

V. 2. Whilst others perplex themselves with fruitless cares and incessant labours, about their worldly provision, often to no purpose; God in this way of reliance on him giveth *sleep* to his beloved people: he enables them to do their duty cheerfully, and to leave the event with him in the confidence of faith, and thus to close their eyes in sleep without useless solicitude.

PSALM CXXVIII.

The blessedness of the righteous, personal and domestic, temporal and spiritual, 1—6.

[a] A Song of degrees.

BLESSED *is* [b] every one that feareth the LORD; that [c] walketh in his ways.

2 For [d] thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy *shalt* thou *be,* [e] and *it shall be* well with thee.

3 Thy wife *shall be* as [f] a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like [g] olive plants [h] round about thy table.

a cxx. &c. *title.* b ciii. 11. 13 17. cxii. 1. cxv 13. cxlvii 11 Luke i. 50. c i. 1—3. lxxxi. 13. cxix. 1 Luke i. 6 Acts ix. 31. 1 Thes. iv. 1.

d Gen. iii. 19. Deut. xxviii. 4, 5. 39. 51. Judg. vi. 3—6. Ec. v. 18, 19. Is. lxii. 8. lxv. 13. 21—23. e Ec. viii 12. Is. iii 10 Jer xxii. 15 1 Cor. xv.58. f Gen. xlix 22. Prov. v. 15—19. Ez. xix. 10. g lii. 8. cxliv. 12. Jer. xi 16. Hos xiv. 6, 7. Rom. xi. 24.—h cxxvii. 5.

V. 3—5. When worldly men are eagerly pursuing their temporal interests, they commonly profess that they only mean to provide for their families after them. But it entirely depends on the Lord, whether they shall have any children or not; or whether their children shall live with them, and survive them, or whether they will be a comfort, or a grief to them. They, however, who trust in God and walk in his ways, may hope to be comforted in their children; receiving them as a heritage from him, and bringing them up in his fear, they may expect, and will not generally be disappointed, that, as they defended their offspring in helpless infancy, so these will be their defence, and ornament in the decline of life. 'Such children shall 'be able to stop their adversaries' mouths when their godly 'life is maliciously accused.' 'In a house full of dutiful 'children consisteth the happiness of their parents, who 'then can never want friends; friends that will at no time 'be ashamed, but will at all times rejoice to appear for 'them, to meet their enemies and accusers in the gate, or 'place of judgment, there to answer any charge against 'them, to vindicate them in their persons, their good 'name, or their property. It is a glorious sight to behold 'children thus standing forth in defence of their parents. '—It is a Chinese proverb, that when a son is born into 'a family, a bow and arrow are hung before the gate.' (*Horne.*) Parents in general are apt, like Jacob, to be most attached to the children of their old age: but the sons of their youth must be their champions and defenders, and their good conduct reflects most honour on the parent who brought them up.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Whether we build, or plant, or defend our habitations and property, we should remember that our labour and watching will be in vain, except the Lord build, and plant, and watch with us. We should therefore diligently use the proper means, and then expect his blessing; that we may trust in him without presumption. Thus the minister in his labours and watching for the good of souls; thus the Christian in seeking to grow in grace, and to guard against temptation; and thus the sinner in coming to the Saviour, should use all appointed means with persevering application, and yet rely on the Lord alone to render them effectual. This is the method of being safe and easy. For want of attending to this rule, many labour and watch to no purpose. In vain they rise early, sit up late, eat the bread of sorrows, and bereave their souls of good, to provide for themselves and families: whereas, "seeking first the king-"dom of God and his righteousness," using moderate diligence in their lawful callings, and casting all their care on God, they would have all needful success, without uneasiness and vexation. But if we enjoy either outward sleep or inward tranquillity, we should give God thanks for it: and we ought never to forget that the rest, the peace, and the provision, which he giveth to his beloved, are far preferable to the much greater prosperity of the wicked.—It ill becomes the professed servants of God to murmur because children are withheld; and still worse to fret because they have a numerous offspring: children are in Scripture considered as a heritage, and a reward from God to his people; and shall we deem them our incumbrance? as if He could not provide for many as well as for a few! When trained up according to his word, they generally prove the best defence, ornament, and comfort in declining years, if parents and children are spared to each other: and they are the seed of the church, and often prove the support of religion, after the decease of their parents. Children also should remember their obligations to their parents, and study to requite them, by being ready to supply their wants, to vindicate their characters, and to protect them from oppression, in their old age. In this case they would be as arrows in the hand of the mighty man; and happy would he be who had his quiver full of them; he need neither be ashamed, nor afraid, to meet his enemies in the gate. Yet all earthly comforts are precarious; but the Lord will assuredly comfort and bless those who trust and serve him: and they who zealously seek the conversion of sinners, will assuredly find their spiritual children to be their joy and crown in the day of Jesus Christ. May all his ministers receive abundantly "this "heritage and gift, that cometh of the Lord!"

NOTES.

PSALM CXXVIII. V. 1. 'Some think this was a 'form prescribed to be used at the blessing of their mar-'riages; when they wished the new-married couple all 'manner of happiness, especially a long life in peaceable 'times.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) It is probable, that this opinion occasioned the insertion of the psalm in 'the form for the 'solemnization of matrimony,' in our church. No blessing can warrantably be expected in any situation of life, except by those who "fear God and walk in his ways;" and they will be blessed in every station.

V. 2. 'The world esteemeth them happy which live 'in wealth and idleness: but the Holy Ghost approveth 'them blest that live on the mean profit of their labours.'

V. 3. The opinion above-mentioned illustrates the propriety of the blessedness secured to a pious man being here viewed with a special respect to the comforts of the married state: for on that supposition newly married persons are exclusively addressed. Yet it is worth while for those who, either from supposed religious motives, or from an idea that wives and children hinder men's

4 Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the LORD.

5 The LORD shall [i] bless thee out of Zion: and [k] thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life.

6 Yea, [l] thou shalt see thy children's children, *and* [m] peace upon Israel.

i xx. 2 cxviii. 26. cxxxiv 3. Is. ii. 3. Eph. i. 3.
k cxxii. 6. Is. xxxiii. 20.
l Gen. l. 23. Job xlii. 16.
m cxxv. 5. Is. lxvi. 12. Gal. vi. 16.

PSALM CXXIX.

Israel remembers his manifold trials and merciful deliverances, 1—4. *And predicts the utter ruin of his implacable enemies,* 5—8.

[s] A Song of degrees.

*MANY a time [b] have they afflicted me [c] from my youth, [d] may Israel now say:

2 Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth; [e] yet they have not prevailed against me.

3 The [f] plowers plowed upon my back; they made long their furrows

s cxx. &c. *titles.*
* Or, *Much.*
b Ex. i. 12—14. 22. v. 7—19. Judg. ii. 15. x. 8—12. 1 Sam. xiii. 19.
c Jer. ii. 2 Ez. xxiii. 3 Hos ii. 15. xi. 1.
d cxxiv. 1.
e xxxiv 19. cxviii. 13. cxxv. 1. Job v. 19. Matt. xvi. 18. Rom. viii. 35—39. Rev. xii. 8, 9.
f cxli. 7. Is li. 23.

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interest or comfort, are averse to marriage, either in their own case or that of others, to consider this verse, in which a faithful wife, and a flourishing offspring are considered as most valuable blessings; and some of the most beautiful images in nature are employed by the Holy Spirit, to show what a solace, and ornament, and comfort they are to those who fear God. Would such language have been suggested to the inspired writers, if marriage had been a less holy or less happy state than celibacy? It is observable that Solomon, who probably wrote this psalm, and who afterwards multiplied wives vastly beyond all that preceded him, here speaks of one wife, and no more, as a blessing to a pious man. Polygamy, though connived at, does not seem, even then, to have been general; and certainly it is unnatural, and contrary to domestic comfort.

V. 5, 6. Whatever may be the dispensations of Providence towards believers; (for general rules always admit exceptions, and the preceding verse should be considered as a general rule, not as an express promise;) yet, they shall be blessed out of Zion, "with all spiritual blessings in "heavenly things in Christ Jesus." The concluding part of these verses seems to be made difficult in the application of it, by being translated in the *future* tense, and not in the *imperative* or *optative* mood, according to the original. "The LORD shall bless thee out of Zion: and mayest "thou," or I pray that thou mayest, "see the good of "Jerusalem all thy days: yea, that thou mayest see thy "children's children and peace upon Israel." (*Gen.* xxiv. 60.) It cannot be supposed, that every pious man shall see prosperous times, and a flourishing family; and live to old age. But such a wish and prayer were perfectly suited to the occasion. 'Mayest thou be so happy as to 'see Jerusalem the seat of justice and religion, in a flou-'rishing condition all thy life long. And live to such a 'good old age, as to see thy children's children, and the 'whole nation all the while in a prosperous tranquillity.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Such as fear God and walk in his ways are the only happy persons, whatever their station in life may be. Nor will their comfort be diminished, if they labour hard in any honest calling, for the subsistence of themselves and families, and if they have only the necessaries, without any of the luxuries of life. Indeed their happiness does not consist in relative comforts; and many of them having all things in God, seek not wives and children, or are resigned if bereft of them: yet religion, whilst it teaches the duties of every relation in life, best ensures the comfort of each. Marriage is peculiarly honourable and blessed to him who enters it in the fear of God, and desires to walk with his family according to his will: and he may expect that his wife will be "as a fruitful vine, by the "sides of his house, and his children as olive branches "round about his table." But the Lord "will bless his "people out of Zion:" they shall see and taste of the blessings of his church all the days of their life: and whether they be spared, like old Israel, to see their children's children, and the church in prosperity on earth, or not; they shall certainly share the peace of the heavenly Jerusalem, and bequeath the blessing of God as a legacy to their posterity.

NOTES.

PSALM CXXIX. V. 1, 2. It is not improbably conjectured that this psalm was composed about the time when Sennacherib invaded Judah: but this is no more than conjecture. From the days of Jacob, the ancestor of the nation; and still more, from the time when Pharaoh and the Egyptians began to oppress his descendants, the history of Israel had been almost one uninterrupted narrative of the hardships, injuries, and oppressions, to which they had been exposed from a variety of enemies and persecutors: and yet, God had effectually interposed in their behalf, and no assailant had so prevailed against them, as to destroy them from being a people; nor have they to this day. The same may be said of the true church of God, and indeed in some sense of every believer. 'The church now af-'flicted, ought to remember how that her condition hath 'been such from the beginning, to be molested most grie-'vously by the wicked; yet in time she hath ever been 'delivered. Many a time have the righteous been 'under persecution, from the hour when Cain rose up 'against his brother Abel to this day. Like the bush 'which Moses saw in the desert, the church hath burned 'with fire, yet hath not been consumed; and for the same 'reason; because God is in the midst of her. He who 'took our nature upon him was also "afflicted from his "youth:" but his enemies prevailed not finally against 'him.' (*Horne.*)

V. 3. They not only scourged us so severely, 'that 'the marks of it might be seen as plain as the furrows 'are, which a plowman makes in the ground; but long

g Ezra ix. 14. Neh. ix. 33. Lam. i. 18. iii. 22. Dan ix. 7. h cxxiv. 6, 7. cxl. 5—11. i lxxxiii. 4—11. cxxii. 6. Esth. vi. 13 ix. 5 Is. x. 12 xxxvii. 22. 28, 29 35. Zech. i. 14. 17. xii. 3. 6. k xxxvii 2. xcii. 7. Jer. xvii. 5, 6.

4 The g Lord *is* righteous: he hath h cut asunder the cords of the wicked.

5 Let them all i be confounded and turned back that hate Zion:

6 Let them be k as the grass *upon* the house-tops, which withereth afore it groweth up;

l cxxvi. 6. Is. xvii. 10, 11 Hos. viii. 7. Gal. vi. 8.

7 Wherewith the mower filleth not his hand, nor l he that bindeth sheaves his bosom.

m cxviii. 26. Ruth. ii. 4.

8 Neither do they which go by say, m The blessing of the Lord *be* upon you: we bless you in the name of the Lord.

PSALM CXXX.

The Psalmist, in deep distress, cries unto God, confessing his sin, and determines patiently to wait for his gracious forgiveness, 1—6. He exhorts Israel to hope in God's mercy and plenteous redemption, 7, 8.

a A Song of degrees.

b OUT of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord.

2 Lord, hear my voice; c let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.

3 If thou, Lord, d shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?

4 But e *there is* forgiveness with thee, f that thou mayest be feared.

a cxx. &c. *titles.* b xvii. 4—6. 16. xxv. 16—18. xl. 2. xlii. 7. lxix. 1, 2. 14, 15. lxxi 20. lxxxviii. 6, 7. cxvi 3, 4. Lam. iii. 53—55. Jon. ii. 2. 4. Heb. v. 7. c v. 1, 2 xvii. 1. lv. 1, 2. lxi. 1, 2. Neh i. 6. 11. Is xxxvii. 17. Dan. ix 17—19. d cxliii. 2. Job ix. 2, 3. 20. x. 14. xv. 14. Is. liii. 6. John viii. 7—9. Rom iii. 20—23. e xxv. 11. lxxxvi. 5. ciii. 2, 3 Ex. xxxiv. 5—7 Is. i. 18. lv. 7. Jer. xxxi. 34. Dan. ix. 9. Mic. vii. 18—20. 2 Cor. v. 19. Eph. i. 7. Col. i. 14. f ii. 11, 12. 1 Kings viii. 39, 40. Jer. xxxiii. 8, 9 Hos. iii 5. Acts ix. 31. Heb. xii. 24—28.

'continued our vexation and torment.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)—The strong figure here employed seems, however, to mark out all the various refinements of cruelty, by which tyrants and persecutors have tortured the people of God: as Pilate not only scourged Jesus, but delivered him to be crucified.

V. 4. In order to torture, they first bound, the sufferer; and in like manner the enslaving of Israel was needful in order to afflict him: but from time to time the righteous God broke the strong cord, or rope, in which he was bound.

V. 5. "They shall all be confounded, &c." The whole passage is evidently a prediction, and not an imprecation. He that hath delivered Israel, and confounded his foes, will continue to do so, till all that persist in enmity to his people shall be destroyed.

V. 6—8. The flourishing and the withering of grass is the constant Scriptural emblem of the prosperity and the ruin of ungodly men. But *persecutors* are like the worthless grass which grows upon the tops of houses, and withers without coming to any perfection, and consequently hath no blessing pronounced upon it, or employed about it, according to the pious salutations then in use to reapers and mowers. (*Note, Ruth* ii. 4.) The clause rendered "He that bindeth sheaves," seems to denote the *gleaners*, who, having gathered ears of corn, and bound them in small bundles, put them in the skirts of their garments, which were held up for that purpose. For reapers or binders do not put the sheaves into their bosom. There would not only be nothing worth reaping, but nothing worth gleaning.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

If we considered how Jesus was scourged, wounded, bruised, and crucified for us; how prophets, apostles, and saints have been treated in all ages; and how the church hath been afflicted and persecuted from her infancy hitherto: we should not complain of hard measures if we were called to endure sharper sufferings than are at present allotted to any of us. And did we remember how Jesus arose and reigns; how his people have been supported, and have triumphed, in sufferings and death; and how the church still subsists like the burning but unconsumed bush; we need not be anxious about the event respecting ourselves, or the cause of God. He is righteous, and as he hath, so he will, cut asunder the cords which unite persecutors to each other, or with which they would bind his people as sheep for the slaughter. Nor can all nature furnish an emblem sufficiently expressive of the confusion, contempt, and misery, which will overtake all that hate the church and cause of Christ. They will sink for ever under the unmingled curse and wrath of God, and all spectators will exclaim, "So let all thine enemies perish, "O Lord!"

NOTES.

PSALM CXXX. V. 1, 2. David is generally supposed to have been the writer of this psalm; though his name is not prefixed to it: but some think that it was composed when he was convinced of his exceedingly heinous guilt in the matter of Uriah, and was in deep inward distress on that account; while others are of opinion that he wrote it when in danger of being overwhelmed by the persecuting rage of Saul: and indeed the *general* acknowledgemnt of criminality, in common with other men, does not well accord with David's state of mind, when crying for mercy after his deplorable fall. It seems, however, that inward distresses, arising from the consciousness of sin, concurred with outward troubles and dangers, in sinking him into those depths from whence, (like Jonah from the whale's belly,) he earnestly cried unto the Lord; and was heard and delivered: and therefore it is reckoned one of the penitential psalms. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 3, 4. 'If I were the most innocent person in the 'world; yet if thou, Lord, shouldst strictly examine my 'life, and proceed against me according to my deserts, '—I should certainly be condemned. (*Bp. Patrick.*) —To "mark iniquity," in this connexion, implies, to strictly observe every man's conduct, comparing all and every part of it with the holy law, and punishing all deviation from that perfect standard, according to the strict demands of impartial justice. This will be the measure

g xxvii. 14. xxxiii. 20. xl. 1. lxii. 1. 5 Gen. xlix. 18. Is. viii 17. xxvi. 8. xxx. 18. Luke ii. 25. 38.
h cxix. 42. 49. 81. 114. Heb. vi 18
i lxiii. 6. cxix. 147. Acts xxvii 29.
* Or, *which watch unto the morning.* cxxxiv. 1. Is. xxi. 8.

5 I [g] wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, [h] and in his word do I hope.

6 My soul [i] *waiteth* for the LORD more than they that watch for the morning; *I say, more than* they * that watch for the morning.

7 [k] Let Israel hope in the LORD: [l] for with the LORD *there is* mercy, and with him *is* plenteous redemption.

8 And [m] he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

k xl. 3. cxv. 9—13. cxxxi. 3. Zeph. iii. 12.
l 14. Rom. v. 20, 21. Eph. i 7, 8. 1 Tim ii 5, 6. 1 John iii 1, 2. Rev. v. 9.
m ciii. 3, 4. Matt. i 21 Rom. vi. 14. Tit. ii. 14. 1 John iii. 5—8.

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of the Lord's dealings with all the impenitent and unbelieving; but he does not so mark iniquity as to exclude the penitent and believing from mercy and forgiveness, according to the Gospel. "For there is forgiveness with him:" or *a propitiation*, as the original word signifies, and as it is translated by the Septuagint; for "without shedding of "blood there is no remission;" and "it is not possible "that the blood of bulls and of goats can take away sin." —But with God, there is forgiveness, through a propitiatory sacrifice, for those that avail themselves of this gracious provision of his love and mercy. "That thou mayest be "feared." 'Thou most graciously invitest us unto thy 'service, by thy readiness to pardon all that are truly 'penitent; without the hope of which we could not so 'much as think of becoming religious.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) —Without the hope of forgiveness, no humble and contrite sinner could escape despair; and none else "have the fear "of God before their eyes." So that without this hope there could be no genuine piety among the fallen descendants of Adam. (*Note, Gen.* xxii. 10—12.) For if there were no forgiveness with God, men would not only be without hope, but without the regeneration of the Holy Spirit, and so be given up to the desperate enmity of their fallen nature. But the consciousness of guilt, and the fear of wrath, united with the hope of mercy, bring the sinner into a proper disposition to seek and wait for salvation: and as hope and filial love dispel slavish fear, humble reverence and a dread of dishonouring his gracious Friend, gather strength in the believer's soul.

V. 5, 6. The word of God reveals and promises forgiveness to the penitent: faith credits this revelation, and waits with humble expectation the fulfilment of the promise, and obtaining the joy of God's salvation. Thus the Psalmist "waited for the LORD, more than they that "watch for the morning." Some understand this of the Psalmist's being earlier at his devotions than the watchers were at the sanctuary, who resorted thither at the break of day. But perhaps it means that he longed for some tokens of God's pardoning love, more eagerly than the bewildered benighted traveller, or the endangered mariner, looks out for the dawn. (*Acts* xvii. 29.) 'My soul 'waiteth for the Lord, and longeth for his comfortable pre-'sence more than the watchman who is forced to be awake 'the whole night, waiteth for the break of day, that he 'may be discharged. (*Bp. Hall.*)

'I wait for thy salvation, Lord,
'With strong desires I wait;
'My soul, invited by thy word,
'Stands watching at thy gate.
'Just as the guards that keep the night,
'Long for the morning skies,
'Watch the first beams of breaking light,
'And meet them with their eyes;
'So waits my soul to see thy grace,
'And more intent than they,
'Meets the first openings of thy face,
'And finds a brighter day.' (*Watts.*)

V. 7, 8. 'The church of Israel was exhorted to hope in JEHOVAH, because with him there was mercy, and plenteous redemption,' (or, *a great redemption.*) 'And of what nature was that redemption? A redemption from sin: "He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities;" and consequently from all trouble and misery, which are but the effects of sin, and will cease when that shall be finally taken away. Now what is this but the Gospel itself?' (*Horne.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Whilst sin is plunging millions of unbelievers into the depths of hell to rise no more; even believers are often brought by it under deep distress of conscience, fears of wrath, outward calamities, and sore temptations. What need then have we to watch against every approach of this only evil! Yet even from those depths into which sin hath cast us, we should without delay, and with extraordinary earnestness, cry unto the Lord: nor can any deep dungeon or cavern, or even deep guilt, exclude the relenting sinner from the presence of his merciful God, who will raise all that make supplication to him from the depths of distress, from the gates of hell, from the borders of the grave, and at length from the grave itself. Indeed should the Lord so mark all our iniquities according to his holy law, as to deal with us with the rigour of strict justice, what man could endure the trial, or venture into his awful presence? But there is abundant forgiveness with him, which he can honourably exercise: so that the chief of sinners may now bow before his mercy-seat, become his acceptable worshipper, and at length stand accepted before his holy tribunal. And faith in his mercy and truth, confirmed by experience, form the soul to the holy fear and love of the Lord our God. Happy then are they who hope in his word of promise, and wait for the discoveries of his pardoning mercy, in the appointed way. Their anxious fears may indeed disquiet them, whilst the Lord proves their faith, sincerity, and humility, by salutary delays. But the day will dawn, and the Sun of Righteousness arise upon them to set no more. Then they will rejoice, and encourage their brethren to hope and wait for the Lord; and exhort all their fellow-sinners to seek his salvation: seeing that "with him there is mercy, and plenteous redemption" through the atoning blood of Jesus, "who shall redeem "his people from all their iniquities." (*Notes, Matt.* i. 21. *Tit.* ii. 14.)

a cxxii. cxxiv. cxxxiii. *titles.*
b Num. xii. 3. Deut. xvii. 20. 1 Sam. xvi. 13. 18. 22. xvii. 15. 28, 29. xviii. 23. Matt. xi. 29. Acts xx. 19. 1 Thes. ii. 6, 7. 10.
c lxxviii. 70—72. Jer. xvii. 16. xlv. 5. Am. vii. 14, 15. Rom. xii. 16.
* Heb. *walk*
† Heb. *wonderful.* cxxxix. 6. Job xlii. 3. Rom. xi. 13.
d xlii. 5. 11. xliii. 5. lxii. 1. *Marg.* 1 Sam. xxiv. 10. xxv. 32, 33. xxx. 6. 2 Sam. xv. 25. 26. xvi. 11. 12. Is. xxx. 15. Lam. iii. 26.
‡ Heb. *my soul.* Luke xxi. 19. John xiv. 1, 2.
e Matt. xviii. 3, 4. Mark x. 15. 1 Cor. xiv. 20.

PSALM CXXXI.

David professes humility and resignation, and exhorts Israel to hope in God, 1—3.

[a] A Song of degrees of David.

LORD, [b] my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: [c] neither do I * exercise myself in great matters, or in things too † high for me.

2 Surely I have behaved and [d] quieted ‡ myself [e] as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul *is* even as a weaned child.

3 [f] Let Israel hope in the LORD ‖ from henceforth and for ever.

f cxv. 9—11. cxxx. 7. cxlvi. 5. Jer. xvii. 7, 8.
‖ Heb. *from now.* cxv. 18. Is. xxvi. 4.

PSALM CXXXII.

The Psalmist pleads David's pious care about a stated residence for the ark; and entreats the Lord to take possession of his temple, and to bless his priests and people, 1—10. He shows the promises of God to David, and to his family, 11—18.

[a] A Song of degrees.

LORD, [b] remember David, *and* [c] all his afflictions;

B. C. 1004.
a cxx. &c. *titles.*
b xxv. 6, 7. Gen. viii. 1. Ex. ii. 24. Lam. iii. 19. v. 1.
c 1 Sam. xviii.—xxx. 2 Sam. xv—xx.

NOTES.

PSALM CXXXI. V. 1, 2. David was accused by his brethren as an aspiring man, who was actuated by pride and ambition in the services which he performed: and by Saul as aiming to dethrone him and usurp the kingdom. But he could appeal to God, that he should have been well satisfied in privacy and obscurity, and in the meaner occupations of a shepherd, without intermeddling with affairs of state, or other "matters too high "for him." Indeed he had learned to be as indifferent about such worldly advantages, as the weaned child becomes to the milk, when it has learned to relish other nutriment. 'Committing myself to thy care, and depending 'on thy providence, as a child that is newly weaned doth 'upon its mother: just so do I silence my natural desires, 'and am content to be disposed of as thou pleasest.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The clause rendered "Surely I have, &c." is literally, "If I have not, &c." That is, 'Then let my 'enemies prevail against me.' (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 3. 'And let all good men, in like manner, modestly 'place their hope and confidence in the Lord,—and choose 'rather to be depressed, than by any undue means to raise 'themselves to greatness and honour.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The proud man is insolent in his deportment, and despises mean persons, situations, and occupations; he is vainglorious and ambitious, aspiring after great connexions and important employments, engaging in deep schemes and speculations, and courting observation and applause. But he, who is conscious of his unworthiness and insufficiency, will be satisfied in a low situation, and with any honest employment, and will reluctantly leave any obscure station to exercise himself in great matters which appear too high for so mean a person. The grace of God also teaches the believer quiet submission to humbling dispensations, and indifference about worldly acquisitions; so that having acquired a relish for heavenly things, his soul is weaned even from those objects to which he once was most addicted; at least he is aiming at and praying for this happy frame of spirit. Yet appearances may be against him. The Lord may call him forth, and make it his duty, to engage in important and public undertakings; and his zeal and love may be censured as ambition and ostentation, by rivals or enemies: yet his appeal will be made to the heart-searching God, and sometimes this may be done even before his accusers. Genuine humility in the highest stations in society, or in the church, will appear by teachableness, patience under delays and contradictions, persevering benevolence, a determination to use no unhallowed means, and a quiet spirit under reproaches and unjust suspicions. Thus did the lowly Jesus pursue his heavenly path: he was accused of claiming honours which it was supposed did not belong to him, and on this accusation he was condemned to death: but his resurrection and exaltation completely refuted the vile calumny. Of him David was the type; and every one of his disciples must copy his example of humility, of heavenly-mindedness, of active love, and of patience under the cross: and let all such Israelites hope in the Lord, under every reproach and affliction, from henceforth and for ever.

NOTES.

PSALM CXXXII. V. 1. 'There are those that 'think Solomon penned this psalm: because he concludes 'his prayer at the consecration of the temple, with some 'part of it: (8—10. 2 *Chr.* vi. 41, 42:)—and it is not 'an improbable conjecture.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)—David had endured many afflictions, before he came to the throne: but he would use no unhallowed means of obtaining that dignity, which he knew was intended for him. In this he was the type of Christ, who willingly endured the cross before he entered into his glory. Afterwards, besides many trials and sorrows, David laid himself out with earnest zeal for the glory of God, and especially in preparing for the temple, which Solomon his son was chosen to build; who thus besought God, in concert with his people, to remember his pious father's labours and sorrows, and to prosper the design about which his heart had been so much engaged.

2 How [d] he sware unto the LORD, *and* vowed unto [e] the mighty *God* of Jacob;

3 Surely [f] I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed;

4 I will not [g] give sleep to mine eyes, *or* slumber to mine eyelids,

5 Until [h] I find out a place for the LORD, * an [i] habitation [k] for the mighty *God* of Jacob.

6 Lo, we heard of it [l] at Ephratah; [m] we found it in the fields of the wood.

7 We [n] will go into his tabernacles; we will [o] worship at his footstool.

8 [p] Arise, O LORD, into thy rest; thou and [q] the ark of thy strength.

9 Let [r] thy priests be clothed with righteousness; and [s] let thy saints [t] shout for joy.

10 For [u] thy servant David's sake, [x] turn not away the face of thine anointed.

11 The LORD hath [y] sworn *in* truth unto David, he will not turn from it, [z] Of the fruit of thy † body will I set upon thy throne.

12 [a] If thy children will keep my covenant, and my testimony that I shall teach them; [b] their children shall also sit upon thy throne for evermore.

13 For [c] the LORD hath chosen Zion: [d] he hath desired *it* for his habitation.

14 This *is* [e] my rest for ever: [f] here will I dwell; [g] for I have desired it.

15 I will ‡ abundantly [h] bless her provision; [i] I will satisfy her poor with bread.

16 I will also [k] clothe her priests with salvation; and [l] her saints shall shout aloud for joy.

17 There [m] will I make the horn of David to bud; [n] I have ordained a ∮ lamp for mine anointed.

18 [o] His enemies will I clothe with shame: [p] but upon himself shall his crown flourish.

d lvi 12. lxv. 1. lxvi 13, 14. cxvi. 14—18. cxix. 106.
e 5. xlvi. 11. 1. 1. cxlvi. 5, 6. Gen. xlix. 24
f Ec ix. 10. Hag. i. 4. Mat. vi 33
g Gen. xxiv. 38. Ruth iii. 18. Prov. vi 4.
h 2 Sam. vi. 17. 1 Chr. xv. 3. 12. Acts vii. 46.
* Heb. *habitations.*
i 1 Kings viii 27. 2 Chr ii 6. Is. lxvi. 1. Acts vii 47—49. Eph. ii 22.
k 2.
l Ruth i 2. 1 Sam xvii 12. Mic. v. 2.
m 1 Sam vii 1. 1 Chr. xiii. 5, 6.
n v. 7. lxvi. 13, 14. cxviii. 19. cxxii. 1. Is. ii. 3.
o xcv. 6. xcix. 5. 9. Lam ii. 1.
p lxviii 1. Num. x. 35, 36. 2 Chr. vi. 41, 42.
q lxxviii. 61.
r 16. xciii. 1. civ. 1. Job xxix. 14. Is. lxi 10. Rom xiii. 14. 1 Pet. v. 5 Rev. xix. 8.
s xxxv. 26, 27. lxviii. 3. lxx. 4. Judg. v. 31.
t xlvii. 1 Ezra iii. 11, 12. Zeph. iii. 14. Zech. ix. 9.
u 1 Kings xi. 12, 13. 34. xv. 4, 5. 2 Kings xix. 34.
z 2 Sam. vii. 12. 1 Kings viii. 25. 2 Chr. vi. 16 Luke i. 69, 70 Acts ii. 30.
† Heb. *belly.*
a lxxxix. 30—35.
b cii. 28. cxv. 14. Is. ix. 7 lix. 21. Luke i 32, 33.
c lxxvi. 1, 2. lxxviii. 68, 69. Is. xiv 32. Heb. xii 22.
d xlviii. 1—3. lxviii. 16. lxxxvii. 2.
e 8. Is. xi. 10. lxvi. 1. Zeph. iii 17.
f lxviii 18. lxxvi. 2. cxxxv. 21. 1 Kings viii. 13. 27. Is. viii. 18. xii. 6. lvii. 15. Joel iii. 21. Eph. ii. 22. Heb. xii. 22. Rev xxi 23.
g lxxxvii. 2.
‡ Or, *surely.*
h cxlvii. 14. Ex. xxiii. 25. Lev. xxvi 4, 5. Deu. xxviii. 2—5. Prov. iii. 9, 10. Hag. i, 6. 9. ii. 16—19 Mal. ii. 2. Matt xiv. 19—21. 2 Cor. ix. 10, 11.
i xxii. 26. xxxiii. 18, 19 xxxvi. 8. xxxvii. 3. 19. Deut. xiv. 29. Is. xxxiii. 16. Jer. xxxxi. 14. Matt. v. 6. vi. 32, 33. Mark viii. 6—9.——k 9. cxlix. 4. 2 Chr. vi. 41. Is. lxi. 10. Gal. iii. 17.——l Zech. ix. 9. 15—17. John xvi. 24.——m xcii. 10. cxlviii 14. Ez. xxix. 21. Luke i 69.——n 1 Kings xi 36. xv. 4. 2 Chr. xxi. 7. Luke ii. 30—32 ——∮ Or, *candle.*——o xxi 8, 9. xxxv. 26. cix. 29. Job viii. 22. Dan. xii. 2.——p lxxii. 8—11. Is. ix. 6, 7. lvii. 10—12. Matt. xxviii 18. Luke i. 32, 33. Rev. xi. 15. xvii. 14.

V. 2—5. Nothing is recorded concerning this vow in the history of David: but perhaps when his own house was nearly finished, he vowed that he would not inhabit it, till he had pitched upon a place in which to station the ark, as it had been placed at Shiloh. Or perhaps, having procrastinated too long, amidst his difficulties upon his first accession to the throne, he made one morning a solemn vow, that he would come to a decision in this matter, before he went to rest. Some think, that the very spot on which the temple should be built, was intended: and that David made this vow on the morning, when the pestilence came upon Israel because he had numbered the people; and that the threshing-floor of Ornan was pointed out to him, in consequence of this resolution. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 6. Some learned men are of opinion that Jerusalem, not being at a great distance from Bethlehem, was within the district called Ephratah: and others think that Shiloh, in the tribe of Ephraim, is meant; because the *Ephraimites* are once called *Ephrathites.* (*Judg.* xii. 5. *Original.*) According to this opinion, the meaning of the verse is that David had heard how long the ark had been stationed at Shiloh; whereas when he went to seek this sacred symbol he found it in a solitary field near a forest. But perhaps the proper interpretation is, that when he lived at Bethlehem-Ephratah, he had often heard of the ark, and how it was neglected: and in the prospect of being king, he had determined to place it in a more conspicuous situation. Accordingly after his accession to the throne, he went in quest of it, and found it at Kirjath-jearim, an obscure place situated near a wood; and thence he conveyed it to the royal city, where a splendid temple was afterwards prepared for it. Christ the true ark of the covenant was first heard of at Bethlehem-Ephratah, and found there among the cattle, as if he had been in the fields of the wood.

V. 8. (*Note*, 2 *Chr.* vi. 41, 42.) The ark was never removed from the holy of holies in the temple, till the captivity, when it was lost or destroyed. This was therefore the Rest of the symbol of the Lord's gracious presence with his people.

V. 9. 'Thy priests will be clothed,' &c. It may be expected that thou, O Lord, wilt overrule this happy event for a very great blessing to thy priests, and by their means to thy people.

V. 10. 'I beseech thee, have a respect to the sincere 'piety of my father David, and thy gracious promise to 'him; and upon that account deny me not, but grant the 'petitions of thy servant, who, by thy special appoint-'ment, succeeds him in the government of thy people.' (*Bp. Patrick*)

V. 11, 12. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 17. After the decease of David, his kingdom was made to bud forth in his successive descendants, until at length it was established in the person of the Messiah: and the kings, who as lamps, were situated in Jerusalem, arising from David the first anointed of the family, at length introduced the Light of the world, and the glory of Israel. (*Notes*, &c. *Ps.* lxxxix. 19—37.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord will recompense the labours and afflictions of his faithful servants, in blessings upon their children; es-

PSALM CXXXIII.

A commendation, and a twofold illustration, of the excellency of harmony among brethren, 1—3.

[a] A Song of degrees of David.

BEHOLD, [b] how good and how pleasant *it is* for brethren to dwell * together in unity!

2 *It is* [c] like the precious ointment upon the head, [d] that ran down upon the beard, *even* Aaron's beard; that went down to the † skirts of his garments;

3 As the dew of [e] Hermon, *and as the dew* that descended upon the mountains of Zion: [f] for there the LORD commanded the blessing, [g] *even* life for evermore.

a cxxii. cxxiv. cxxxi. *titles*
b cxxii. 6—8. Gen. xiii. 8. xlv 24. 2 Sam ii. 26, 27 Is. xi. 6—9. 13. Jer xxxii. 39 John xiii. 35. xvii. 21. 1 Cor. i. 10. Eph iv. 3—6. Phil. ii. 5. Heb. xiii. 1. 1 Pet. iii. 8. 1 John iii. 16—19
* Heb. *even together.*
c cxli. 5. Prov. xxvii 9. Cant. i. 3. John xii. 3.
d Ex. xxx. 25—30. Lev viii. 12.
† Heb *mouth.* Ex. xxviii 32. xxxix. 23. Job xxx 18.
e Deut. iii. 8, 9. iv 48. Josh xiii. 11.
f xlii. 8. Lev. xxv. 21. Deut. xxviii 8.
g xvi. 11. xxi. 4. John iv 14. v. 24. vi. 50, 51. 68. xi. 25, 26. Rom. v. 21. vi. 23. 1 John ii. 25. Rev. i. 18.

pecially such as carry on the same pious designs, and pray to be remembered for their sake. They who have in them the mind of Christ, will prefer the honour of God and the welfare of his church to their own indulgence, ease, or emolument; and will counteract their propensity to procrastination, by engaging themselves as soon as possible to execute useful purposes, to whatever self-denial or weariness they may be exposed. But we should first, without delay, seek to have our own hearts made "an habitation of God "through the Spirit." Though external splendour or exactness are by no means essential to godliness: yet they who have it in their power, should be vigilant and diligent in bringing the ordinances of God into public view, and in establishing them in decency and regularity; that the people in general may be encouraged to "go into his tabernacles, "and worship at his footstool." When we have used the proper means, we may confidently expect the Lord's presence and blessing; and when his ministers are clothed with righteousness and salvation, his saints will shout for joy. But if the Lord answered the prayers, grounded on his covenant with David, he will never turn away his face from us, when we plead the covenant made with his anointed Prophet, Priest, and King. In him the promises, which were ratified to David, have their full completion: his church is that Zion which he hath chosen and desired for his habitation, in which he will rest and be glorified for ever: whilst he blesses the spiritual provisions of his house, to the nourishment of the souls of his people; he will not withhold from his poor the food convenient for their bodies: and blessed are they who are employed to dispense either the bread of life or bodily sustenance to his needy servants, out of love to him, and to them for his sake; receiving his salvation themselves, and contributing to the comfort of his saints. But whilst the crown shall flourish in the person of the Son of David, and his people rejoice in his honour and felicity; all his enemies will be clothed with everlasting shame and misery.

NOTES.

PSALM CXXXIII. *Title.* This psalm seems to have been penned when all the tribes of Israel had concurred in placing David on the throne, or rather after that their subsequent prosperity had evinced the happy effects of that union; when, instead of the tribes wasting each other by civil contests, they all harmoniously joined in removing the ark to Mount Zion, and in celebrating the sacred ordinances of their religion. 'It was as fitly used by the first 'Christians, to express their joy for the blessed union of 'Jews and Gentiles; and may now serve the uses of all 'Christian societies, whose happiness lies in holy peace and 'concord.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 1. In the union of brethren, all that is reasonable, beneficial, beautiful, and pleasant, (however divided in other things,) meet together.

V. 2. The sacred ointment, which God had prescribed for the unction of his priests to their office, being poured upon the head of Aaron, (and of succeeding high priests,) flowed thence upon his beard, and down on the collar of his vestment, near the place where he bore the names of the twelve tribes, diffusing fragrancy around. This was an emblem of the graces of the Holy Spirit, which through our great High Priest are communicated to all believers; and it also aptly represented the pleasant and beneficial effects of harmony in society, when, united under one common head, every member in his proper station shares, and contributes to, the peace, stability, and prosperity of the whole community.

V. 3. This verse may be rendered, "As the dew of "Hermon; so is this which descends, &c.;" and means, that as the gentle dews descending on mount Hermon rendered it fruitful and delightful; so the dew of heavenly love distilling upon the worshippers on mount Zion, would render them fruitful in good works, happy in themselves, and blessings to all around them. For on that mount, (the type of the true church which is all one in Christ Jesus,) the Lord hath commanded his blessing, even life for evermore. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

No encomiums or illustrations can sufficiently display the excellency, pleasantness, and manifold benefits of harmony among brethren, in families, in civil society, in nations, and especially in the church of Christ: for "love "is of God; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in "God, and God in him." It is the fruit of the Spirit, the image of Christ, the evidence of our union with him, and the ornament of his Gospel. With it human happiness begins on earth, and will be completed in heaven. It tends to fruitfulness in all good works, and to the spread of vital godliness: it inhabits especially, as a visitant from heaven, those favoured spots, where the Lord commands his blessing, and gives eternal life; and whilst it prepares the soul for further communications from above, it is the certain effect of the pouring out of the Spirit, to give success to the preaching of the Gospel. Surely the professed followers of the meek and lowly Jesus have long enough experienced the painful and fatal effects of discord and angry controversy; by which Christianity has been disgraced, and wounded in the house of its friends! May

PSALM CXXXIV.

The Psalmist exhorts the watchers in the sanctuary to bless the Lord; and they pray for a blessing on him, 1—3.

[a] A Song of degrees.

BEHOLD, [b] bless ye the LORD, all ye servants of the LORD, [c] which by night stand in the house of the LORD.

2 [d] Lift up your hands * *in* the sanctuary, and bless the LORD.

3 The [e] LORD, that made heaven and earth, [f] bless thee out of Zion.

PSALM CXXXV.

Exhortations to praise God for his goodness, his special kindness to Israel; his power shown in the works of creation and providence; and his judgments on the enemies of his people, 1—14. *The vanity of idols, and the folly of idolaters,* 15—18. *All orders of men in Israel called on to praise the Lord,* 19—21.

[a] PRAISE ye the LORD; [b] Praise ye the name of the LORD; praise *him,* [c] O ye servants of the LORD.

2 Ye [d] that stand in the house of the LORD, in [e] the courts of the house of our God.

3 Praise ye the LORD; [f] for the LORD *is* good: sing praises unto his name; [g] for *it is* pleasant.

4 For [h] the LORD hath chosen Jacob unto himself, *and* Israel for [i] his peculiar treasure.

5 For [k] I know that the LORD *is* great, and *that* our LORD *is* above all gods.

6 [l] Whatsoever the LORD pleased; *that* did he in heaven and in earth, [m] in the seas, and all deep places.

a cxx. &c. *titles.* b ciii. 21. cxxxv. 1, 2. 19—21. 1 Chr. xxiii. 30—32. Rev. xix. 5.
c cxxx. 6. Lev. viii. 35. 1 Chr. ix. 33. Luke ii. 37. Rev vii. 15.
d xxviii. 2. lxiii. 4. cxli. 2. Lam. ii. 19.
e Or, *in holiness.* xxvi. 6. 1 Tim. ii. 8
e cxxiv. 8. cxlvi. 5, 6.
f xiv. 7. xx. 2. cx. 2. cxxviii. 5. cxxxv. 21. Rom. xi. 26.

a xxxiii 1, 2. xcvi 1—4. cvi. 1. cvii. 8. 15. cxi 1. cxii. 1. cxliii. 1. cxvii. cl. 6.
b vii. 17. cii. 21. cxiii. 2, 3. cxlviii. 13. Ex xxxiv. 5—7.
c cxiii. 1. cxxxiv. 1. cxlix. 1—3.
d 1 Chr. xvi 37—42 xxiii 30. Neh. ix. 5. Luke ii. 37.
e xcii. 13. xcvi. 8. cxvi. 19.
f cvi. 1. cviî. 1. cxviii 1. cxix. 68. cxxxvi. 1. cxlv. 7, 8. Matt. xix. 17.
g xxxiii. 1. lxiii. 5. xcii. 1, 2. cxlvii. 1
h xxxiii. 12. Deut. vii. 6, 7. x 15. 1 Sam. xii. 23. Is. xli. 8. xliii. 20, 21. Zech. ii. 10—12. 1 Pet. ii 9
i Ex. xix 5, 6. Deut. xxxii 9. Mal. iii. 17. Tit ii. 14.
k xlviii. 1 lxxxvi. 8—10 lxxxix 6. xcv. 3. xcvi 4, 5. xcvii 9. Deut. x 17. Is. xl. 22. 25. Jer. x. 10, 11. Dan. iii. 29 vi 26, 27.—l cxv. 3. Is. xlvi 10 Dan. iv. 35. Am. iv. 13. ix. 6. Matt. xxviii. 18.—m cxxxvi. 13—15. Matt. viii. 26, 27 xiv 25.

all that love the Lord at length make trial how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity, "forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, as "God for Christ's sake hath forgiven them." Then will they find their own hearts joyful, and the truth diffuse its blessed influence on every side; and heaven will, as it were, come down and dwell on earth. And may God be pleased to send peace, unity, and concord, together with the Gospel of peace and love, to all the nations of the world!

NOTES.

PSALM CXXXIV. V. 1—3. It seems that David appointed some of the priests and Levites to watch all night in the sanctuary, by regular courses: and they are here exhorted to spend the hours in joyful songs of praise. Thus the service of the sanctuary would be a shadow of the unceasing worship of heaven. It is probable that this psalm was composed to be sung each night, when the watch was set; and that the first two verses were sung by the precentor of those who were about to leave the sanctuary; and the third verse by the Levites, who succeeded them.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

If our hearts were filled with the love of God, as his holy law commands, our mouths would be filled with his praises: and though our frail bodies would need rest, yet our souls would never be weary of his pleasant service. No time would then be a burden to us; nor would it be needful to waste the hours by trifling conversation and vain amusements, or by inordinate animal indulgence: but all the time, which could be spared from needful business and recreation, would be delightfully employed in meditation, and in celebrating the praises of our God. All that comes short of this, is equally distant from perfection; it is the effect of the fall, and the remainder of depravity: and without some portion of this spirit we are not Christians. But the servants of God, who minister in his sanctuary, are peculiarly bound to set an example of this cheerful and constant engagement of heart, in the worship and work of God. They, as well as others, should be thankful to be reminded of their duty, and exhorted "to lift up "their hands in the sanctuary, and praise the LORD:" and we should especially pray for a blessing out of Zion on those who excite us to attend on our duty. Ere long all the true servants of God shall praise him in the sanctuary above, and bless his name, and be blessed in him, uninterruptedly for evermore.

NOTES.

PSALM CXXXV. V. 1, 2. 'This perhaps was 'the morning hymn, which the precentor called upon the 'Levites to sing, at the opening of the gates of the temple; 'as the former was sung at the shutting up the gates in 'the evening.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 3. 'As his nature is most excellent, so He is the 'Fountain of all the good we enjoy; and no employment 'is so delightful as to acknowledge his perfections, and 'commemorate the benefits we have received from him, 'by singing psalms and hymns of praise and thanksgiving.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 4. *For the,* &c. (*Notes, Ex.* xix. 5.)

V. 5, 6. Other nations indeed praised their gods, and celebrated their imaginary exploits: but the Psalmist, in the most decided manner, declared that he knew JEHOVAH was far above them all; and alone worthy to be thus adored and honoured; as the great Creator and absolute Sovereign of the universe.

7 He [n] causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; [o] he maketh lightnings for the rain; [p] he bringeth the wind out of his treasures.

8 Who [q] smote the first-born of Egypt, * both of man and beast.

9 *Who* [r] sent tokens and wonders into the midst of thee, O Egypt, [s] upon Pharaoh, and upon all his servants.

10 Who [t] smote great nations, and slew mighty kings;

11 [u] Sihon king of the Amorites, and Og king of Bashan, [x] and all the kingdoms of Canaan:

12 And [y] gave their land *for* an heritage, an heritage unto Israel his people.

13 [z] Thy name, O LORD, *endureth* for ever; *and* thy memorial, O LORD, † throughout all generations.

n cxlvii. 8. Gen. ii. 5, 6. 1 Kings xviii. 1. 41—45. Job v. 10. Jer. x. 13. li. 16. Zech. x. 1.
o Job xxviii. 25, 26. xxxviii. 25—28.
p cvii. 25. cxlviii. 8. Job xxxviii. 22, 23. Jon. i. 4. John iii 8.
q lxxviii. 51. cv. 36. cxxxvi. 10. Ex. xii. 12. 29, 30. xiii. 15.
* Heb *from man to beast.*
r lxxviii. 43—50. cv. 27—29. Ex. vii.—xv. Deut. iv. 34. Neh ix. 10. Is. li. 9, 10. Jer. xxxii. 20, 21. Acts vii. 36.
s cxxxvi. 15.
t xliv 2, 3. cxxxvi. 17—22.
u Num. xxi. 21. 35. Deut. ii. 30—37. iii. 1, &c. Neh. ix. 22.
x Josh. x.—xii.
y lxxviii. 55. cxxxvi. 21, 22. Num. xxxiii. 54. Josh. xi. 23.
z viii. 1. 9. lxxii. 17. cii. 12. 21. Ex. iii. 15. xxxiv. 5—7. Hos. xii. 5. Matt. vi. 9. 13.
† Heb. *to generation and generation.* lxxxix. 1. *Marg.*

14 For [a] the LORD will judge his people, and [b] he will repent himself concerning his servants.

15 The [c] idols of the heathen *are* silver and gold, the work of men's hands.

16 They have mouths, but they speak not; [d] eyes have they, but they see not:

17 They have ears, but they hear not; neither is there any breath in their mouths.

18 [e] They that make them are like unto them: *so is* every one that trusteth in them.

19 [f] Bless the LORD, O house of Israel: bless the LORD, O house of Aaron:

20 Bless the LORD, O house of Levi: ye that fear the LORD, bless the LORD.

21 Blessed be the LORD [g] out of Zion, [h] which dwelleth at Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD.

a vii. 8. 1. 4. xcvi. 13.
b Deu. xxxii. 36. Judg. x 16. 1 Chr. xxi. 15. Hos. xi. 8, 9. Am. vii. 3. 6. Jon. iv. 2
c cxv. 4—8. Deu. iv. 28. Is. xxxvii. 19. xl. 19, 20. xliv. 9—20. xlvi. 6, 7. Jer. x. 3, &c. Hab. ii. 18, 19. Acts xvii. 29.
d Is. vi. 10. Mat. xiii. 14—16.
e xcvii. 7. cxv. 8. Is xliv. 18—20. Jer. x. 8. 2 Cor. iv. 4.
f cxv. 9—11. cxviii. 1—4. cxlv. 10. cxlvii. 19, 20. cxlviii. 14. Rev. xix. 5.
g lxxvi. 2. cxxxiv. 3. 2 Chr. vi. 6.
h xlviii. 1. 9. cxxxii. 13, 14. Is. xii. 6.

V. 7. (*Notes, Job* xxviii. 23—28. xxxviii. 22—30.) 'Among the Greeks and Romans, we meet with a Jupiter 'possessed with the thunder and lightning, and an Æolus ruling over the winds: the Psalmist teacheth us to restore 'the celestial artillery to its rightful owner.'—'It is a great 'instance of the divine wisdom and goodness, that lightning should be accompanied by rain, to soften its rage, 'and prevent its mischievous effects.' (*Horne.*)

V. 8—12. (*Notes on the texts referred to in the margin.*)

V. 14. *Repent.* 'If he judge his people, or punish 'them, he will compassionate their sorrows.' 'He will 'be pacified towards his people.

V. 15—21. (*Notes, &c. Ps.* cxv. 3—11.) In the Scripture referred to, the exhortation is to "trust in the "LORD;" here it is "to bless the LORD." They who trust in the Lord, honour him, and shall daily have more and more cause to praise him.—'The honour the heathens 'give to their lifeless images ought to excite you all 'with the greater devotion, to praise the Lord of the 'world.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

How lamentable it is, that we should need so much exciting to praise our God, and yet be so negligent and formal in this reasonable service, in which we have such cause to abound! But his servants must on earth be trained up to that holy exercise, in which they are to be occupied for ever in heaven: and in his courts his ministers must instruct, and go before them, in this sacred employment.—The essential goodness and excellency of the Lord would entitle him to our utmost love and praise, were it possible for us to be free from other obligations to him: and the pleasantness of the work would endear it to us, if our hearts were free from the pestilence of sin. But to the Lord we owe our being, our rational powers, and all our outward comforts; which alone demand our warmest gratitude; and the peculiar favours vouchsafed to Britons, both in providence and in the spiritual advantages afforded us, place us in the same relation, and under the same obligations to him, with the Israelites of old. Whilst his moderate rains fructify our land, and we are generally exempted from fatal tempests and inundations: how often have the winds from his treasuries dispersed the preparations of our formidable enemies! How inexcusable then is our national infidelity, impiety, and licentiousness! "O "foolish people, and unwise, do ye thus requite the Lord!" He has, however, a remnant among us, "whom he has "chosen unto him, through sanctification of the Spirit, "unto obedience, and the sprinkling of the blood of "Jesus." These are indeed his *peculiar treasure* which he values, by whom he is loved and adored on earth, and in whom he will be eternally glorified. Happy then are they: their unchangeable Friend is equally great and good; and equally able and willing to defend, uphold, and bless them. "He doeth what he pleases in heaven, and earth, in the "seas, and in all deep places." It hath pleased him to make them his people; and it is his "good pleasure to "give them the kingdom." The tokens and wonders which he wrought for Israel, and the heritage that he gave them, were feeble shadows of the mercy he hath shown to his true Israel, the redemption wrought out, and the inheritance prepared for them: and every past and present favour, is a token and earnest of his future and eternal love. For he is immutably perfect, and the memorial of his wonders for his people shall endure throughout all generations: He will plead their cause, and judge between them and their enemies: and though he afflict and correct them, he will repent concerning them, and not be wroth with them for ever. (*Notes, Psalm* xc. 13.) Whilst therefore we detest the idolatries and impiety of the world around us; let us remember with gratitude who hath made us to differ; let us pity and pray for benighted heathens and deluded sinners; and let us, whether ministers or private Christians, whilst we trust and fear the Lord, bless him in his church on earth, rejoice in hope of praising

PSALM CXXXVI.

Exhortations to praise the Lord for his everlasting mercy; for all the blessings of creation, providence, and redemption; and for his glory displayed in them, 1—26.

O [a] Give thanks unto the LORD: for *he is* good: [b] for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

2 O give thanks unto [c] the God of gods: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

3 O give thanks to [d] the LORD of lords: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

4 To him [e] who alone doeth great wonders: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

5 To [f] him that by wisdom made the heavens: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

6 To [g] him that stretched out the earth above the waters: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

7 To [h] him that made great lights: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

8 [i] The sun * to rule by day: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

9 The [k] moon and stars to rule by night: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

10 To [l] him that smote Egypt in their first-born: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

11 And [m] brought out Israel from among them: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

12 [n] With a strong hand, and with a stretched-out arm: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

13 To [o] him which divided the Red Sea into parts: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

14 And made Israel to pass through the midst of it: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

15 [p] But † overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea: [q] for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

16 To [r] him which led his people through the wilderness: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

17 To [s] him which smote great kings: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

18 And slew famous kings: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

19 [t] Sihon king of the Amorites: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

20 And [u] Og the king of Bashan: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

21 And [x] gave their land for an heritage: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

22 *Even* [y] an heritage unto Israel his servant: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

a cvi. 1. cvii. 1. cxviii. 1. 2 Chr. vii 3. 6. Ezra iii. 11. Jer. xxxiii. 11.
b ciii. 17. 1 Chr. xvi 34. 41. 2 Chr. xx. 21. Luke i. 50. Jude 21.
c lxxxii. 1. xcvii. 7. 9 Ex. xviii. 11. Deut x. 17. Josh. xxii. 22. 2 Chron. ii. 5. Dan. ii. 47.
d 1 Tim vi. 16. Rev. xvii. 14. xix. 16.
e lxxii 18 lxxxvi. 10. Ex. xv 11. Job v. 9. Rev. xv. 3.
f xxxiii. 6. civ. 24. Gen. i. 1. Pro. iii. 19, 20 viii. 22—29. Jer. li. 15.
g xxiv. 2. civ. 2, 3. Gen. i. 9. Job xxvi. 7. xxxvii. 18. Is. xl. 22. xliv. 24. Jer. x. 12. Zech. xii. 1. 2 Pet. iii. 5—7.
h lxxiv. 16, 17. civ. 19. Gen. i. 14—19. Deut. iv. 19.
i cxlviii. 3. Jer. xxxi 35. Matt v. 45.
* Heb. *for the rulings by day.*
k viii 3. lxxxix. 36, 37. Job xxxi. 26.
l lxxviii. 51. cv. 36. cxxxv. 8. Ex. xi. 6. xii. 12. 29. Heb. xi. 28.
m lxxviii. 52. cv. 37 Ex. xii 51. xiii. 3 17. 1 Sam. xii. 6—8.
n Ex. vi. 6. xiii. 14 xv. 6. Deut. xi. 2—4. Is li. 9, 10 Jer. xxxii. 21. Acts vii. 36.
o lxvi 5, 6 lxxiv. 13. lxxviii. 13. cvi. 9—11 Ex. xiv. 21 22. 29. Is. lxiii. 12, 13. Heb. xi. 29.
p lxxviii. 53. Ex. xiv. 27, 28. xv. 4, 5. 10, 11. Neh. ix 10, 11
† Heb *shaked off.*
q lxv. 5. lxxix. 6—9. cxliii. 12. Ex. xv. 12, 13 Luke i. 71—74.
r lxxvii. 20 Ex. xiii. 18. xv. 22. Num. ix 17—22 Deut. viii. 2. Neh. ix 12. 19. Is xlix. 10. lxiii. 11—14.
s cxxxv. 10, 11. Josh. xii.
t Num. xxi. 28. Deut ii. 30—36. xxix. 7.
u Num xxi. 33. Deut. iii. 1, &c.
x xliv. 2, 3. lxxviii. 55. cv. 44. cxxxv. 12. Num. xxxii. 33, &c. Deut iii. 12—17. Josh. xiii.—xxi Neh ix. 21. 24.
y xlvii 4.

him in his holy habitation in heaven; and endeavour to glorify his name and recommend his truth, not only with our lips, but in our holy lives, and in copying the example of his righteousness, goodness, and truth, in all our dealings with our brethren and neighbours.

NOTES.

PSALM CXXXVI. V. 1. This psalm in many things resembles the preceding: but it is rendered remarkable by the repetition of the sweet sentence, "for his "mercy endureth for ever," at the end of every verse. By *mercy* we understand the Lord's disposition to compassionate and relieve those whom sin has rendered miserable and vile; his readiness to forgive and be reconciled to the most provoking of transgressors, and to bestow all blessings upon them: together with all the provision that he hath made, for the honour of his name in the redemption of sinners by Jesus Christ. The counsels of this mercy have been from everlasting: the effects of it will be eternal to all who are interested in it: and the Lord continues, from age to age, equally ready to show mercy to all who sue to him for it. The frequent repetition of this sentence shows how greatly the Lord delights in mercy, and deems himself honoured by the exercise of it; and teaches us that this attribute should be peculiarly dear to us, being the source of all our hopes and comforts.—'At every half 'verse, one half of the choir answers to the other in these 'words: "For his mercy endureth for ever:" a form of 'acknowledgment prescribed by David to be used continually in the divine service.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) 'A form 'highly proper for creatures, sinful creatures to use, whose 'great employment it is now, and will be for ever, to 'magnify the mercy and loving kindness of their God.' (*Horne.*)—'This was a common kind of thanksgiving, 'which the whole people used, when they had received 'any benefit of God; (*Marg. Ref.*) meaning that God 'was not only merciful to their fathers, but also continued 'the same to their posterity.'

V. 4. 'How many of those for whom the wonders of 'creation, providence, and redemption have been wrought, 'think none of them worthy their attention! Angels admire, and adore, where man will not deign to cast an eye, 'or employ a thought.' (*Horne.*)

V. 5—9. (*Notes, Gen.* i.)

V. 10—22. (*Notes on the texts referred to in the margin.*) The destruction of the Egyptians, Ammonites, and Canaanites, with their kings, was a display of God's justice towards them, but of his abundant mercy and goodness to his people.

23 Who [z] remembered us [a] in our low estate: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

24 And [b] hath redeemed us from our enemies: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

25 Who [c] giveth food to all flesh: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

26 O give thanks unto [d] the God of heaven: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

z cii. 17 cvi 43—45. Gen. viii. 1. Deut. xxxii. 36. Is. lxiii 9. Ez xvi. 3, &c. Luke i. 48 52.
a lxxii 12—14. cxiii. 7. cxvi. 6. cxlii. 6. 1 Sam. ii. 7, 8
b Ex.xv.13.Deut. xv. 15. Prov. xxiii. 10, 11. Is. lxiii. 9. Luke i. 68—74 Tit. ii. 14.
c civ. 27.cxlv.15. 16. cxlvii. 9.
d 1—3. cxv. 3. cxxiii. 1. Jon. i. 9. Rev. xi. 13.

PSALM CXXXVII.

The pious captives at Babylon bewail Zion's desolations, complain of the insults of their oppressors, and declare their inviolable attachment to Jerusalem, 1—6. They pray that God would remember the conduct of Edom; and they predict the doom of Babylon, 7—9.

BY [a] the rivers of Babylon, [b] there we sat down, yea, [c] we wept, when we remembered Zion.

2 We [d] hanged our harps upon the willows, in the midst thereof.

3 For [e] there they that carried us away captive required of us * a song; and they that † wasted us *required of us* mirth, *saying*, Sing us *one* of [f] the songs of Zion.

4 [g] How shall we sing the LORD's song in a ‡ strange land?

5 If [h] I forget thee, O Jerusalem, [i] let my right hand forget *her cunning*.

6 If I do not remember thee, [k] let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; [l] if I prefer not Jerusalem above § my chief joy.

a Gen ii. 10—14. Ezra viii. 21. 31. Ez i. 1.
b Neh. i 3, 4. ii. 3. Job ii. 12, 13 Jer. xiii. 17, 18. xv. 17. Lam. ii. 10. Ez. iii. 15.
c xlii 4. cii 9—14. Is lxvi. 10 Jer. li 50, 51. Lam. i. 15 ii. 11. 18. iii. 49—51. Dan. ix. 3. x. 2, 3. Luke xix. 41. Rev. xi 3.
d xxxiii.2. lxxxi. 2. Is xxiv. 8. Ez. xxvi. 13. Am. viii. 10. Rev. xviii. 22.
e cxxiv. 3, 4. Lam. ii. 15, 16.
* Heb. *the words of a song.*
† Heb. *laid us on heaps.* lxxix. 1. Neh. iv. 2. Jer. ix. 11. xxvi. 8. Mic.iii.12. Luke xxi. 6.
f ix. 14. lxv. 1. 1 Chr. xv. 27, 28. xvi. 7. Is. xxxv. 10. li. 11. Jer. xxxi. 12, 13. Rev. xiv. 1—3.——g Ec. iii. 4. Is. xxii. 12. Lam. v. 14. 15. Hos. ix. 5. Am. viii. 3.——‡ Heb *land of a stranger* Is. xlix. 13, 14. 21.——h lxxxiv. 1, 2. 10. cii. 13, 14. cxxii. 5—9. Neh. i. 2—4. ii. 2, 3. Is. lxii. 1. 6, 7. Jer. li. 50.——i Zech. xi. 17.——k xxii. 15. Is. xli. 17. Lam. iv. 4. Ez. iii. 26.——l Matt. vi. 33. Acts xx. 24. Phil. i. 20—25. 1 Thes. iii. 7—9.——§ Heb. *the head of my joy.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Repetitions, disgustful to the fastidious, are often salutary and necessary, because we are prone to overlook or forget the Lord's goodness and mercy: yet they convey a severe reproof, and should cause us to unite humiliation with our gratitude to our condescending Instructor. The works of creation proclaim the wisdom, power, and goodness of JEHOVAH, the "God of gods and Lord of lords:" while the continuance of the settled course of nature, and the blessings thus communicated by a kind Providence to a rebellious world, are proofs of his patience and ever-enduring mercy. Nay, his denunciations of vengeance against impenitent sinners should be considered as tokens of his mercy, and be improved as warnings to repent, and flee from the wrath to come: and his judgment upon persecutors and oppressors is evidently the effect of his mercy to his church. The destruction of opposing kings and nations, with a strong hand and an out-stretched arm, was as conducive to the good of Israel, as the manna, the water from the rock, and the conducting cloud. And in like manner, the crucifixion of our lusts, and the sharp corrections by which the Lord promotes our sanctification, are as blessed tokens of his mercy, as the forgiveness of our sins and the consolations of his Holy Spirit: and our complete salvation will be connected with the final destruction of all the enemies of God and of our souls. Blessed be his name who hath remembered us lost sinners, in our low estate, and hath provided salvation to us through his Son, and revealed it in his holy word: may we experience his redeeming power in our hearts, that being "saved from "our enemies, we may serve him in righteousness all our "days:" and may he, who giveth food to all flesh, feed our souls unto eternal life: and enliven our affections by his grace, that we may give thanks and praise to his holy name, "because he is good, and because his mercy endur-"eth for ever."

NOTES.

PSALM CXXXVII. V. 1—6. It is not known by whom this psalm was written: but the occasion is evident; and the pathetic abruptness, so suited to that occasion with which it opens, is admirably beautiful. The captive Jews, by the rivers of Babylon, sat down and wept, whilst they recollected their former prosperity: and especially they remembered with tears the desolate state of the holy city and the temple of God, their own destitution of sacred ordinances, and the apparently ruined state of the church and people of Israel: for these calamities were brought on them by their national transgressions, to which they had all contributed. No longer, therefore, able to divert their melancholy by singing songs of praise, they hanged their harps upon the willows, which grew in abundance in that moistened soil, which perhaps they were employed in cultivating. Their insulting victors and oppressors demanded of them, to gratify their curiosity, or administer to their entertainment, by singing one of the songs of Zion: by which they meant to deride their confidence in JEHOVAH, and to express their triumph over the religion, as well as over the city and country, of their poor captives. But they were not only indisposed (probably too much,) for joyful praise; but they would not, they could not, profane their sacred songs, to increase the insolence of their idolatrous masters; and therefore they said one to another, or to those who demanded this of them, "how shall we sing the LORD's song in a "strange land?" 'Neither fear nor favour could extort this 'service from our Levites, but they resolutely answered, 'As those songs were not made for pastime or sport; but 'in honour of the great Lord of the world: so, how can you 'imagine that miserable slaves are disposed to sing? and to 'sing those songs in the land where we are exiles, which 'recount the mercies of God to us, in our once flourishing 'country.'—(*Bp. Patrick.*) Yet Jerusalem, and the interests of religion were still uppermost in their thoughts and affections: and the Psalmist, in the name of his brethren, declared that he would rather be deprived of his skill in

7 [m] Remember, O Lord, [a] the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, * Rase *it*, rase *it*, *even* to the foundation thereof.

8 O [o] daughter of Babylon, [p] who art to be † destroyed; [q] happy *shall he be*, that ‡ rewardeth thee as thou hast served us.

9 Happy *shall he be*, that taketh [r] and dasheth thy little ones against § the stones.

m lxxiv. 18 lxxix. 8—12. Ex. xvii. 14. 1 Sam. xv. 2. Hos. vii. 2.
n Is. lxiii. 1—6. Jer. xlix. 7, &c. Lam. iv. 21, 22 Ez xxv. 12—14. Ob. 10—14. 18. 21.
* Heb. *Make bare.*
o Is. xlvii. 1—5. Jer. l 22. li. 53. Zech. ii. 7.
p Is. xiii. xiv. 4—24. xxi. 1—10. Jer. xxv. 12—14. l. li. Rev. xiv. 8—11. xvii. xviii.
† Heb. *wasted*
q cxlix. 6—8. Is. xiii 3—5. xliv. 23. Rev. xvii. 5, 6. 14. xviii. 6. 20——‡ Heb. *recompenseth unto thee thy deed which thou didst unto us.* Jer. l. 15—29. Rev. xviii. 6.——r Is. xiii. 16. Hos. x. 14. xiii. 16.
§ Heb. *the rock.*

PSALM CXXXVIII.

David praises the mercy and truth of God, who had answered his prayers, 1—3. He prophesies that all kings shall praise God and rejoice in his ways, 4, 5. He shows the Lord's dealings with the humble and the proud, and professes full confidence in him, 6—8.

A Psalm of David.

[a] I WILL praise thee with my whole heart: [b] before the gods will I sing praise unto thee.

a ix. 1. lxxxvii. 12, 13. ciii 1, 2. cxi. 1. 1 Cor. xiv 15. Eph. v. 19.
b lxxxii. 1. 6. cxix. 46. Ex. xxii 28. John x. 34—36. Acts xxiii. 5. Heb. i. 14.

music, and have his tongue cleave to the roof of his mouth, than forget the songs of Zion, or do otherwise than prefer the interests of the church to every personal advantage or pleasure. The persons immediately concerned seem to have been Levites, who had been singers at the temple, and who had brought their instruments along with them.

V. 7—9. The Edomites, though of the same stock with the Jews, were inveterate in their hatred of them, and excited the Chaldeans utterly to destroy their city and temple: and, for this and other injuries, their ruin had long been predicted. The destruction of Babylon, with every circumstance of terror and misery, had also been foretold: (*Marg. Ref.*) so that this was merely a prayer of the church for deliverance, in the predicted manner, with the extermination of their implacable enemies, root and branch, as Israel had been commissioned to destroy the Canaanites; and a declaration, that the persons employed in executing this vengeance on Babylon, and effecting this deliverance of his people, would be peculiarly favoured and prospered by Providence, though the work should be accompanied with the retaliation of those cruelties, which had been committed upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Babylon was a type of the antichristian corrupters and oppressors of the New Testament-church, which are likewise to be destroyed in a most dreadful manner. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When we are suffering the effects of our personal or national transgressions, we should recollect with godly sorrow our forfeited mercies, and our sins by which we have lost them; that by repentance and prayer we may seek deliverance and the restoration of our privileges. Whilst worldly men grieve for the loss of their outward prosperity; the believer mourns over his banishment from the ordinances of God, and for the despised and desolate state of religion: especially when he hears the insults and blasphemies of infidels, and profane scoffers; who being employed to correct the offending people of God, triumph, as if he could not, or would not, plead their cause. In such circumstances, it is hard to preserve the mind in tranquillity, and to be duly thankful for remaining unmerited mercies. Sacred things, however, must on no consideration be profaned to please ungodly men; nor the songs of Zion sung to gratify their humour or embolden their insolence. (*Matt.* vii. 6.) In such an evil day it is best to keep silence, or to complain unto God and among his people. Yet no calamity, no strange land, no prevalence of ungodliness, no despised oppressed state of the church, should induce us to forget Jerusalem. If personal advantages and prosperity ever render a professor satisfied at a distance from the ordinances of God, ashamed of his despised cause, or indifferent about the interests of the church, so as not to prefer them to his chief joy; a worse calamity has befallen him, than if his right hand withered, or his tongue cleaved to the roof of his mouth. For the Lord will not forsake his church in her low estate; he will execute predicted vengeance on all her persecutors, principals and accessaries: and if professed Christians join with them in their prosperity, they will be joined with them in the day of wrath. We cannot pray for promised success to the church of God, without implying a prayer for the ruin of her implacable enemies: and the instruments of good to the people of God, will in one way or other, be instrumental to the condemnation of impenitent sinners. It is more agreeable to be instruments of good to the people of God or to our fellow-sinners, than executioners of vengeance on his enemies: though the latter may be accepted and blessed, if men act in obedience to his command, and out of zeal for his glory. Let us however, be decidedly on the Lord's part; for his cause will at length prevail, and destruction will be to the workers of iniquity; but his true people, though here, as in a strange land, they are often insulted, despised, hated, and grieved, and put out of frame for singing the Lord's song; yet shall soon come to Zion, and resume their harps, and rejoice in their God for evermore. (*Isaiah* xxxv. 10.)

NOTES.

PSALM CXXXVIII. *Title.* The Septuagint entitles this 'A Psalm of, or for, David, Haggai, and Zechariah,' perhaps meaning, that these prophets taught the congregation to use it, in giving thanks for Israel's return from captivity.

V. 1. *Gods.* 'Thy holy angels shall be witnesses of 'my gratitude, which I will express in Psalms and Hymns, 'in the presence of the great assembly of the judges, that 'they may remember to whom they owe their power and 'authority.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) Perhaps the Psalmist also meant, that he would praise JEHOVAH in the presence of the most powerful heathen princes, in contempt of the subjects of their idolatrous worship, and as a protest against it.

2 I will worship [c] toward thy holy temple, [d] and praise thy name for thy loving kindness and for thy truth: [e] for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.

3 [f] In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, *and* [g] strengthenedst me *with* strength in my soul.

4 [h] All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O LORD, [i] when they hear the words of thy mouth.

5 Yea, [k] they shall sing in the ways of the LORD; [l] for great *is* the glory of the LORD.

6 [m] Though the LORD *be* high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: [n] but the proud he knoweth [o] afar off.

7 [p] Though I walk in the midst of trouble, [q] thou wilt revive me: [r] thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, [s] and thy right hand shall save me.

8 The LORD will [t] perfect *that which* concerneth me: [u] thy mercy, O LORD, *endureth* for ever: [x] forsake not the works of thine own hands.

c v. 7. xxviii. 2. xcix 5—9. 1 Kings viii. 29, 30. Dan vi. 10. d xxxvi 5, 6. lxxxv. 10 lxxxvi. 15 lxxxix 1, 2. e 4, 5 cxv 1 Is. lxiii 7 Mic vii 18—20. Luke i. 68—72. John i 17. Rom xv. 8, 9. e lvi 4. 10 Is. xlii. 21 Matt. v. 18 xxiv. 35. John x. 35 f xviii. 6. xxxiv. 4—6. lxxvii 1, 2. Is. lxv. 24. g xxxvii. 14. xxix. 11 lxiii 8. Is. xii. 2. xl. 29—31. xli. 10. Zech. x. 12 2 Cor. xii. 8—10. Eph. iii. 16. vi 10. Phil. iv 13. Col. i. 11. 1 Pet. v. 10. ——h lxxii. 11. cii 15. 22 Is. xlix 23. lx 3—5. 16 Rev xi. 15. xxi. 24. ——i xxii. 22 26, 27 li. 13 lxix. 30—32. lxxi 18. ——k Is lii 7—10 lxv. 14. lxvi. 10—14. Jer xxxi. 11, 12. Zeph. iii. 14, 15. Matt. xxi. 5—9. Luke xix. 37, 38.

l xxi 5 Ex. xv. 11. xxxiii. 18, 19. Is. vi. 1—3. Mal. i. 11. John xiii. 31, 32. xvii. 1. 2 Cor. iv. 6. Eph. i. 6 12. Rev iv. 11. v 12—14. vii 12 xix. 1. m li 17. cxiii. 5, 6. 1 Sam. ii. 7, 8. Prov. iii. 34. Is lvii. 15. lxvi. 2. Luke i. 51—53. xiv. 11. xviii. 14. Jam. iv. 6. 1 Pet. v. 5, 6. n Ex. xviii. 11 Job xl. 11, 12. Is. ii. 11. 17. Ez. xxviii 2—9. Dan. iv. 37. v. 20—24. Acts xii. 22, 23. o cxxxix. 2. Mat. xxv. 41. 2 Thes. d. 9 ——p xxiii 3, 4. xlii. 7, 8. lxvi. 10—12. Job xiii. 16. xix. 25, 26 ——q lxxi. 20, 21. lxxxv. 6. cxix. 49, 50. ——r xxxv. 1—3. lvi. 1, 2. 9. lxiv 7, 8 lxxvii 10. cxliv. 1, 2. Is. v. 25. ix. 12. 17. 21. x. 4. Mic. vii. 8—10. ——s xvii. 7. xviii 35. xliv 3 5—7. lx. 5. Is. xli. 10. Acts ii. 33. ——t vii. 2. Is. xxvi. 12. Jer. xxxii. 39, 40. John xv. 2. Rom. v. 10. viii. 28—30. Phil. i. 6 ——u c. 5. ciii. 17. ——x lxxi. 6—9. 17, 18. Job x. 3. 8. xiv. 15. Is. xlii. 16. xliii. 21. 1 Pet. i. 3—5. iv. 19. Jude 1.

V. 2. *Magnified*, &c. The accomplishment of the Lord's promises to David, notwithstanding all opposition and difficulties, peculiarly honoured his word of grace and truth. In like manner, that display of his glory which is made by his holy word, and the salvation there revealed, exceeds, and as it were eclipses, the glory of all his other works; and the giving and fulfilling his promises to sinners, are especially "to the praise of his glory," even the glory of his "grace," and truth, "wherein he hath abounded "toward us, in all wisdom and prudence."

V. 3. When God strengthens the faith, hope, love, patience, and holy fortitude of his afflicted servants, he strengthens them with strength in their souls: and though their outward trials and sufferings continue: yet their prayers are answered in the most desirable manner. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 4, 5. Perhaps David expected that his example and instructions would have a good effect on the neighbouring princes. These verses, however, are an evident and remarkable prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles, and of such a prevalence of true religion as hath not yet taken place on earth. The Lord Jesus in his agony prayed more fervently; he was strengthened with strength in his soul; he was at length raised from the dead; and then the Gentile nations, and at length some of their princes, heard and embraced the Gospel, and sang psalms of joyful praise, while walking "in the ways of the LORD;" "for great was the "glory of the LORD." What will it then be, when "all "kings shall fall down before him, all nations shall do him "service?"

V. 6. "He humbled himself and became obedient unto "death, even the death of the cross, wherefore God hath "highly exalted him." "Let that mind be in you which "was also in Christ Jesus." (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 7. *Revive*, or *Quicken*. (Note cxix. 25.) Either *preserve alive, restore to life, render lively* and cheerful, or "*give life more abundantly*;" David was kept alive, rendered lively, and made more earnest in religion by his sufferings: but Christ was restored to life, as the first fruits of the resurrection, of which all his people shall participate.

V. 8. 'Though my enemies rage never so much, yet the Lord, who hath begun his good work in me, will continue his grace to the end.'

'Grace shall complete what grace begins,
'To save from sorrows and from sins:
'The work that wisdom undertakes,
'Eternal mercy ne'er forsakes.' (*Watts.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We ought to glory in ascribing glory to our God; and when we can praise him with our whole heart, we need not be reluctant for the whole world to witness our gratitude and joy in him. They who rely on his loving kindness and truth through Jesus Christ, will be sure to find him faithful to his word. In performing his promises, he more magnifies his perfections, than in all his other works; of which he hath given us an illustrious specimen and earnest, in sending the promised Saviour "to be the propitiation for "our sins:" and "If he spared not his own Son—how "shall he not with him freely give us all things?" In the day that the Redeemer cried in the agony of his soul, he heard him, and strengthened him to finish the arduous work assigned to him; having humbled himself even to the death upon the cross, he is now exalted to the throne of glory. And for his sake the Lord will strengthen all who fervently pray in his name, that they may be carried through all their trials; (*Eph.* iii. 16. *Col.* i. 11.) their experience will more and more embolden them in saying, "Though I walk "in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou wilt "stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine ene-"mies, and thy right hand shall save me." Yea, the Lord will perfect the salvation of every true believer: and though he hath been often provoked to destroy the works of his hands, as Creator: (*Isaiah* xxvii. 11:) yet he will never forsake those whom he hath created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works. Let then all who trust in and call upon him, praise him with joyful hearts. "Let them sing in "the ways of the LORD; for great is the glory of the "LORD;" in order that sinners may hear, and be convinced that they are a happy people, and be induced to seek his face. And they will not seek in vain: "For though the "LORD be high, yet he hath respect to every lowly" humbled sinner: but the proud, the impenitent and unbelieving, are known by him as his enemies, and will be banished far from his blissful presence. Nor will kings and princes be excepted from this general rule. They too must hearken

PSALM CXXXIX.

David contemplates, with adoring surprise, the omniscience and omnipresence of God, 1—13. *He praises him as his all-wise and bountiful Creator, and for his numberless mercies,* 14—18. *He avows his abhorrence of the wicked: and prays to be proved and directed in the right way,* 19—24.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

O LORD, [a] thou hast searched me, and known *me.*

2 Thou [b] knowest my down-sitting and mine up-rising; thou [c] understandest my thought [d] afar off.

3 Thou * compassest [e] my path and my lying down, [f] and art acquainted *with* all my ways.

4 For [g] *there* is not a word in my tongue, *but,* lo, O LORD, [h] thou knowest it altogether.

5 Thou hast [i] beset me behind and before, [k] and laid thine hand upon me.

6 *Such* [l] knowledge *is* too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot *attain* unto it.

7 [m] Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

8 If [n] I ascend up into heaven, thou *art* there; if I make my bed [o] in hell, behold, thou *art there.*

9 If I take [p] the wings of the morning, *and* [q] dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;

a 23 xi. 4, 5. xvii. 3. xliv. 21. 1 Kings viii. 39 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. Jer xii 3. xvii. 9, 10 John xxi. 17 Heb iv 13 Rev. ii 18 23.
b lvi. 8. Gen. xvi 13. 2 Kings xix. 27 Prov. xv. 3 Is. xxxvii. 28. Zech. iv. 10
c xciv. 11. Matt. ix. 4. Luke ix. 47. John ii. 24, 25. 1 Cor. iv. 15.
d Ez. xxxviii. 10, 11. 17
* Or, *winnowest.* Job xiii. 26, 27. xiv. 16, 17. xxxi. 4. Matt. iii. 12
e 18. cxxi. 3—8. Gen. xxviii. 10—17. 2 Sam. viii. 14. xi. 2—5. 27.
f 2 Sam. xii 9—12 Prov. v 20, 21. Ec xii 14. Is. xxix. 15. Jer. xxiii. 24. John vi. 70, 71 xiii. 2. 21 Acts v. 3, 4.
g xix. 14. Job viii. 2 xxxviii. 2. xlii 3. 6—8. Zeph. i 12. Mal iii 13—16. Matt. xii. 35—37 Jam. i. 26. iii 2—10.
h l. 19—21. Jer. xxix. 23 Heb. iv 12, 13.
i Deu. xxxiii. 27. Job xxiii. 9, 10.
k Ex. xxiv. 11. Rev. i. 17.
l xl. 5. cxxxi. 1. Job xi. 7—9. xxvi. 14. xlii. 3. Prov. xxx 2—4. Rom xi 33.
m Jer xxiii 23, 24. Jon. i 3 10. Acts v 9.
n Ez. xxviii. 12—17 Am. ix 2—4 Ob 4
o Job xxvi. 6. xxxiv. 21, 22. Prov. xv. 11. Jon ii 2
p xviii 10 xix. 6. Mal. iv. 2
q lxxiv 16, 17. Is. xxiv. 14—16.

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to the words of his mouth, and humble themselves before his mercy-seat; that being made partakers of his grace, they may rejoice in his ways, and use their pre-eminence in advancing his glory: otherwise, where the Saviour is, thither they cannot come. Lord, hasten that time, when all the kings of the earth shall praise thy name, and be obedient to the words of thy mouth.

NOTES.

PSALM CXXXIX. *Title.* It is probable that David wrote this psalm, when accused of traitorous designs against Saul; as a solemn appeal to God that he was, in that respect, entirely innocent.

V. 1. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'I am accused of grievous 'crimes, O Lord: but my comfort is, that thou seest I 'am not guilty of them.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The language employed in this and the following verses, is taken from the affairs of men; who by diligent search find out those things which had been carefully concealed from them.

V. 2. *Thought.* 'He confesseth that neither our actions, 'thoughts, nor any part of our life, can be hid from God, 'though he seem afar off.' 'My inclinations are so per-'fectly understood by thee, that before I have conceived 'any design it is visible to thee.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

'My thoughts, before they are my own,
'Are to my God distinctly known.
'He knows the words I mean to speak,
'Ere from my opening lips they break.' (*Watts.*)

V. 3. Men are most tempted to sin, either when being from home, they are no longer under restraint from those neighbours or relations whose censure they dread; or when in secret, as in the bed-chamber, they have no apprehension of being detected by any human eye: but the Psalmist recollected that God saw him, and was present with him, in every situation; as He "compassed his path and bed, "and was acquainted with all his ways," even those which he most carefully concealed from his fellow-creatures. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 6. 'When we reflect that "all things are naked "and open to him with whom we have to do;" that al-'though he dwelleth in the highest heavens, he surveyeth 'not only the outward acts, but even the very hearts and 'imaginations of men on earth; must not each of us cry 'out, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me! it is "high, I cannot attain unto it:" 'I cannot admire it 'enough; for I cannot conceive of it aright!' (*Horne.*) —'The constant consideration of God's actual presence 'would be the readiest way in the world to make sin to 'cease from among the children of men, and for men to 'approach to the blessed estate of the saints in heaven, who 'cannot sin; for they always walk in the presence, and 'behold the face of God.' (*Bp. Taylor.*) It should, however, be noted, that if it were possible for unregenerate men thus habitually to think of the eye of God always upon them; it would no more change their carnal enmity into love, than it does that of evil spirits. Nothing but regeneration, and the sanctification of the Holy Spirit, can make fallen men holy; and the efficacy of all means depends on his powerful operation to render them successful.

V. 8. *Bed in hell,* &c. 'An uncomfortable place to 'make a bed in, where there is no rest day or night; yet 'thousands will make their bed for ever in those flames.'—(*Henry.*) Should any one murder himself to terminate his sorrow, and escape the remorse of conscience or the consequences of his sins, he must certainly be disappointed. Yet the presence of God, with the senseless corpse in the grave, could not in any degree cause this disappointment, or produce the least effect: but his presence with the disembodied spirit, in the invisible world, as an angry Judge, must in that case be as dreadful as it is unexpected. This then is one passage, where the word *Sheol* cannot mean exclusively *the grave,* without rendering the sacred writer's argument absurd or frivolous.

V. 9. *Wings.* Or, *sun-beams.* Could I travel as fast as the rays of light, &c. 'The same considerations, which 'should restrain us from sin, should also encourage us to

r lxiii. 8. lxxiii. 23. cxliii. 9, 10. Is. xli. 13.

s x. 11—13. xciv. 7. Job xxii. 12—14. Is. xxix. 15.

t Job xii. 22.

10 Even [r] there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

11 If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; [t] even the night shall be light about me.

u Ex. xiv. 20. xx. 21. Job xxvi. 6. xxxiv 22 Dan ii. 22. Heb. iv. 13

* Heb. *darkeneth not.*

† Heb *as* is *the darkness, so* is *the light.*

12 Yea, [u] the darkness * hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: † the darkness and the light *are* both alike *to thee.*

x Job x. 9—12. y xxii. 9. 10. lxxi. 6. Job xxxi. 15. Is. xliv. 2 xlvi. 3. Jer. i. 5.

z Gen. i. 26.

a xcii 4, 5. civ. 24. cxi. 2. Job v. 9. Rev. xv. 3.

‡ Heb. *greatly.*

13 ¶ For [x] thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast [y] covered me in my mother's womb.

14 I will praise thee; [z] for I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made; [a] marvellous *are* thy works; and *that* my soul knoweth ‡ right well.

§ Or, *strength*, or *body.*

b Job x. 9—11. Ec. xi. 5.

c lxiii. 9. Eph. iv. 9.

15 My § substance was not hid from thee, [b] when I was made in secret; *and* curiously wrought [c] in the lowest parts of the earth.

16 Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and [d] in thy book ‖ all *my members* were written, * *which* in continuance were fashioned, when *as yet there was* none of them.

d lvi 8. Mal iii. 16. Rev. xx 12.

‖ Heb. *all of them.*

* Or, what *days they should be fashioned.*

e xl. 5. Prov. viii. 31 Is. lv. 8, 9. Jer xxix. 11. Eph. iii. 9, 10.

f xxxxi. 19. xxxvi. 7.

g xl. 12

h 3 iii. 5 xvi 8—11. xvii. 15. lxiii. 6, 7. Is. xxvi. 19 Dan. xii. 2. 1 Thes. v 10.

17 How [e] precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! [f] how great is the sum of them!

18 *If* I should count them, [g] they are more in number than the sand: [h] when I awake, I am still with thee.

i v 6. ix. 17. lv. 23. lxiv. 7. xciv. 23. Is xi. 4.

k vi 8. cxix. 115. Matt. vii. 23. xxv. 41. 2 Cor. vi. 17

19 [i] Surely thou wilt slay the wicked, O God: [k] depart from me therefore, ye bloody men.

l lxxiv 3, 9 lxxiv. 18. 22, 23. Job xxi. 14, 15. Is. xxxvii. 23. 28, 29. Jude 15. Rev. xiii. 6.

m ii. 1—3. Ex. xx. 7.

20 For [l] they speak against thee wickedly, *and* [m] thine enemies take *thy name* in vain

n xv. 4. xxxi. 6. 2 Chr. xix. 2. Rev ii 2. 6.

o cxix. 136. 158. Jer. xiii. 17. Mark iii. 5. Luke xix. 41. Rom. ix. 1—3.

21 [n] Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate thee? [o] and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee?

p ci 3—8. Luke xiv. 26.

22 I [p] hate them with perfect hatred; I count them mine enemies.

'work righteousness; and comfort us under all our sor-'rows; namely, the thought, that we are never out of the 'sight and protection of our Maker. The piety and cha-'rity which are practised in cottages; the labour and pain 'which are patiently endured in the field, or on the bed of 'sickness; the misery and torment inflicted by persecu-'tion in the mines, the gallies, and the dungeons, are all 'under the inspection of JEHOVAH, and are noted by him 'against the day of recompense.' (*Horne.*)

V. 13. 'My most retired thoughts and contrivances, 'and my most secret desires, are apparent to thee: whose 'I am, and by whom I was wrapt up in my mother's 'womb, than which nothing is more hidden and dark.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 14. 'A work so astonishing, that before the Psal-'mist proceeds in his description of it; he could not help 'breaking forth in rapture at the thought.' (*Horne.*)—The verse may be rendered, perhaps more literally; "I "will praise thee, for in considering thy wonders, I am "filled with astonishment. Thy works are admirable; "and my soul knoweth it exceedingly!"

V. 15. 'By the lowest parts of the earth, is undoubt-'edly to be understood the womb, where the fœtus is gra-'dually formed, and matured for the birth, like plants 'under ground. The process is compared to that in a piece 'of work wrought with a needle, or fashioned in a loom, 'which, with all its beautiful variety of colour, and pro-'portion of figure, ariseth by degrees unto perfection, 'under the hand of the artist from a rude mass of silk, '&c.' But 'whereas the human artificer must have the 'clearest light, whereby to accomplish his task; the di-'vine work-master effecteth all his wonders, in the dark 'and narrow confines of the womb.' (*Horne.*)

V. 16. 'When the matter, out of which I was made, 'was without any form, it was visible to thee, how every 'muscle, vein, and artery, with all the rest of my body, 'should be wrought, out of the pattern of them which 'was in thy mind: and accordingly in time, when there 'was not so much as one of them, they were all fashioned 'for the several uses to which they were designed, and 'not the smallest of them omitted or left imperfect.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 17, 18. David delighted to meditate upon the works and perfections of God; such thoughts were precious to him: the glory displayed in them was infinite, the mercies communicated to him were innumerable as the sand; they were new every morning, and were increased with every returning day. (*Lam.* iii. 22, 23.) 'The thoughts 'or counsels of JEHOVAH, concerning David, his appoint-'ment to the throne, his troubles and preservations in the 'midst of them, were precious and delightful subjects of 'meditation and praise; never to be exhausted of the rich 'matter they contained. With these in his mind he lay 'down at night to rest; and when he awoke in the morn-'ing, his thoughts naturally recurred to the pleasing theme: 'He began where he had left off; and found himself, in 'heart and soul, still present with God, still ruminating 'on him and his works. The mercies of God, in the re-'demption of the church according to the divine decree; 'how precious are they to believers! How great is the sum, 'far exceeding all human arithmetic to name them! Let 'them be to us the constant subjects of contemplation.—'Let death find us engaged in this employment; which 'when we awake, and arise from the grave, we shall re-'sume and prosecute to eternity, in the presence of God.' (*Horne.*)

V. 19—22. It is probable that when David composed this psalm, his character lay under a load of calumny: but he could appeal to God that he would have no fellowship with ungodly and cruel men, whom he knew God would destroy: he detested their characters and conduct, and could not endure their company. Being enemies and blasphemers of God, he considered them as his enemies. For the godly man hath the same friends and enemies with his Lord, as

q 1. xxvi. 2. r Deut. viii. 2. 16. Job xxxi 6 Prov. xvii 3 Zech xiii 9. Mal. iii. 2, 3. 1 Pet i. 7.

23 q Search me, O God, and r know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:

24 And s see if *there be any* * wicked way in me, t and lead me in u the way everlasting.

s vii 3, 4. xvii. 3. Prov. xxviii 26. Jer. xvii 9, 10. * Heb. *way of pain*, or, *grief*. Heb. xii 15, 16.

t xxv. 8, 9. cxix. 1. 32. cxliii. 10.——u Matt. vii. 14. John xiv. 6. Col. ii. 6.

far as he knows the real characters of men: yet this is entirely consistent with loving their persons, praying for them, and being kind to them; for we do not know, but they may yet be converted and reconciled to God. The clause rendered, "Thine enemies take thy name in vain," may mean, that they called God to witness the truth of their lying accusations: but it may be translated, "They lift up "themselves in vain;" as they will surely be cast down.

V. 23, 24. The Psalmist began by professing his belief, that God had searched him out and known him; and he concluded by praying, that "He would search him, and "know his heart and his thoughts:" he did not wish to decline the investigation: he desired to have his real character ascertained, and the springs of his conduct laid open; that he might know himself, and discover every sinful part of his conduct, and repent of it; and that he might be led in the good old way, unto everlasting life; as well as be vindicated from calumnies and suspicions.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—12.

It is more profitable to meditate on divine truths with application to our own cases, and with hearts lifted up to God in prayer; than with a speculative, curious, and disputing frame of mind. The omniscience and omnipresence of God are generally acknowledged: yet they seldom produce their practical effect upon the hearts and conduct of mankind; because they are seldom apprehended by a true and vigorous faith. Hence it is that such numbers allow that their Judge is witness to their whole conduct: and yet are careful to save appearances with their fellow-criminals; whilst they transgress in secret, and amuse their depraved imaginations with every kind of speculative wickedness. Nay, even true believers, through weakness of faith, are often very wavering in obedience, and easily discouraged from it by the trivial circumstances of time, place, company, or solitude. We should therefore by meditation and prayer seek to have our minds suitably affected with the firm belief and habitual recollection, that the just, the holy, the almighty God, fully searches us out, and knows us, however our fellow-creatures may mistake or misrepresent our characters. We should seriously consider, when we are alone, or in company, in the shop, the market, the place of worship, or the closet, that the eye of God is upon us; that "he observeth our down-sitting, and our up-rising, and "understandeth our thoughts," whether good or bad, before they become distinctly observed by our own minds, or influential upon our conduct: that he compasseth and investigateth our path, and is accurately acquainted with all our ways; and that he will bring every secret work into judgment, with every word of our lips, and every thought of our hearts. For our God surrounds us continually, and so lays his hand upon us, that we cannot move, or think, without his cognizance and consent. Such meditations are suited to restrain us from sin, even in seasons when secrecy and present advantage give force to Satan's temptations; and to counteract the sinful inclination as soon as it begins to move. Who would dare, if thus suitably impressed, to defraud or deceive his neighbour; to gratify in secret his lust, or malice; or to assume a mask of piety to cover his avarice, injustice, ambition, or sensuality? Recollections of this kind are equally calculated to encourage the believer, in his secret prayers, meditations, self-denial, and almsgiving; his well meant but misrepresented endeavours to do good; and in his conscientious obedience in the midst of slanders and reproaches, or in the most obscure station in society. We soon indeed find, that we cannot comprehend the manner, in which the infinite God knoweth all things: but whilst faith apprehends the truth upon his sure testimony, humility adores the mystery, and confesses, that "such knowledge is too wonderful for her: and it is so "high she cannot attain unto it." The belief of God's omnipresence is intimately connected with that of his omniscience, and is of similar efficacy. Should the guilty wretch desire to shun the presence of that God, whose power he cannot resist, and whose mercy he scorns to supplicate; whither shall he flee from him, who is an infinite and all-pervading Spirit? Were it possible for him to find admission into heaven, the displays of the glorious holiness of JEHOVAH would be intolerable to him. The grave, nay the centre of the earth, could not place him at a distance from his righteous Judge: the presence of a God of vengeance kindles the flames of hell: were it possible for him to fly with the velocity of the sun-beam to the most distant regions, or through the immensity of space, he would still meet the presence of his offended God, from whom no darkness can conceal him, "for the darkness and the light "to him are both alike." On the other hand the believer cannot be removed, or banished, from the supporting comforting presence of his almighty Friend; who was with Joseph in the prison, with the three young Jews in the fiery furnace, and with Daniel in the lion's den. Should the persecutor's rage take away his life, his soul will the sooner ascend into heaven, and be more sensibly present with his Father and Friend, to his unutterable joy. The grave cannot separate his body from the love of his Saviour, who will raise it incorruptible and glorious. Could he even enter the place of torment, the presence and love of God would prevent his feeling misery. A desolate island, or the remotest region inhabited by the worst of savages; the sultry heat of the torrid zone, or the benumbing cold of polar regions; the deep dark dungeon, cavern, or mine, can by no means exclude him from his God. Whilst he is in the path of duty, he may be happy in any situation, by the exercise of faith, and hope, and prayer. But should he sinfully shift his duty, and, like Jonah, attempt to flee from the presence of the Lord; his arm would arrest, his frown dismay, and his rod correct him, in every place. We should then inquire what the Lord would have us to do, and whither remove? and pray that his gracious presence may always attend us: and then we shall have every thing to hope, and nothing to fear, in life, in death, or in the eternal world.

PSALM CXL.

David prays for deliverance from his malicious persecutors, and predicts their ruin, 1—11. He professes his confidence that God would rescue and bless all his afflicted people, 12, 13.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

a DELIVER me, O LORD, from the evil man: preserve me from the * violent man;

2 Which b imagine mischiefs in *their* heart; c continually are they gathered together *for* war.

3 They have d sharpened their tongues e like a serpent; f adders' poison *is* under their lips. Selah.

4 g Keep me, O LORD, from the hands of the wicked: h preserve me from the violent man; who have purposed to i overthrow my goings.

5 The k proud have hid a snare for me, and cords, they have spread a net by the way-side; they have set gins for me. Selah.

6 l I said unto the LORD, Thou *art* my God: m hear the voice of my supplications, O LORD.

7 O GOD the Lord, n the Strength of my salvation, o thou hast covered my head in the day of battle.

8 p Grant not, O LORD, the desires of the wicked: further not his wicked device; † lest they exalt themselves. Selah.

9 *As for* the head of those that compass me about, q let the mischief of their own lips cover them.

a xlii. 1. lix. 1—3. lxxi. 4. * Heb. *man of violence* 4. 11. xviii. 48. *Marg.* Hab. i. 2, 3. b ii. 1. 2. xxi. 11. xxxvi. 4. xx. viii. 12. lxii. 3. lxiv. 5, 6. Prov. xii. 20. Hos. vii. 6. Mic. ii. 1—3. Nah. i. 11. c lvi. 6. cxx. 7. 1 Sam. xxiii. 19—24. xxiv. 11, 12. xxvi. 1, &c. d lii. 2, 3. lvii. 4. lix. 7. lxiv. 3, 4. Pro. xii. 18. Is. lix. 3—5. 13. Jer. ix. 3. 5. Jam. iii. 6—8. e Gen. iii. 13. Prov. xxiii. 32. Matt. xii. 34. 2 Cor. xi. 3. f lviii. 4. Rom. iii. 13, 14.

g xvii. 8, 9. xxxvi. 11. xxxvii. 32, 33—40. lv. 4—3. lxxi. 4. h 1 i xvii. 5. Prov. xviii. 5. k x. 4—12. xvii. 8—13. xxxv. 7. xxxvi. 11. lvii. 6. cxix. 69. 85. 110. cxxiii. 3, 4. cxii. 9, 10. cxlii. 3. Prov. xxix. 5. Jer. xviii. 18. 20. 22. Luke xi. 53. 54. xx. 20—23. l xvi. 2. 5, 6. xxxi. 14. xci. 2. cxix. 57. cxlii. 5. Lam. iii. 24. Zech. xiii. 9. m xxxii. 7, 8. xxviii. 2, 3. lv. 1, 2. lxiv. 1. n xviii. 1, 2. 35. xxvii. 1. xxviii. 7, 8. lix. 17. lxii. 2, 7. lxxxix. 26. xcv. 1. Deut. xxxiii. 27—29. Is. xii. 2. o cxliv. 10. 1 Sam. xvii. 36, 37. 45. 2 Sam. viii. 6, 14. p xxvii. 12. xciv. 20, 21. 2 Sam. xv. 21. Job v. 12, 13. † Or, *let them* not *be exalted*. Deu. xxxii. 27. q vii. 16. lxiv. 8. xciv. 23. Esth. v. 14. vii. 10. Prov. x. 6. 11. xviii. 7. Matt. xxvii. 25.

V. 13—24.

The omnipresent God is our Creator, and has a right to possess and dispose of us as his property: he comprehends our whole frame, which is his marvellous workmanship. 'The wise and kind contrivance, with which our bodies are formed, should excite our reverent admiration and gratitude: and surely we ought not to use our members and senses, which the Lord hath so curiously fashioned in the womb, as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin. But our immortal and rational souls are a still more noble work and gift of God. Yet had it not been for his precious thoughts of love to us, our reason and immortality would, through our sins, have proved the occasion of our eternal misery. How should we then delight to meditate on his love to sinners in Jesus Christ, the sum of which exceeds all computation; the mercies thence derived are numberless as the sands of the sea! Every morning we awake more indebted, and ought to be more grateful, than before: but when we shall awake in the world of glory, how shall we admire and bless our God for this precious salvation! Yet this God of infinite mercy will most surely destroy all the impenitent workers of iniquity. We should therefore warn our fellow sinners to flee from the wrath to come: and protest against their crimes by separating from their company. But those bloody men, who persecute God's people, and thus join cruelty to their impiety and blasphemy, are most eminently the enemies and haters of God himself; and should therefore be shunned with marked abhorrence by all who love him and his cause: yet we should still pray for their conversion and salvation.—As the Lord knows us perfectly, and we are much strangers to ourselves: we should earnestly desire and pray to be searched and proved, in his providence, and by his word and Spirit: thus we shall best be preserved from self-deception, gradually purified from our remaining sinfulness, and led in the way of everlasting life: and these our desires and prayers will evidence our sincerity, and forward our comfortable assurance, that we are the children of God. (*Note, John* iii. 19—21.)

NOTES.

PSALM CXL. *Title.* It is evident that David composed this psalm, when persecuted by Saul, slandered by Doeg, and betrayed by the Ziphites and others. (*Notes*, lii. cxx.) 'When he came to the kingdom, and had settled 'the service of God, in the manner which we read in the 'first of Chronicles, he delivered it to the master of music, to be sung at certain times at the tabernacle. But it 'was not found, I suppose, (no more than the two foregoing, and the four following,) till some time after the 'other books of psalms were published; and so they were 'placed here all together by him that collected this book.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 1, 2. Saul, or Doeg, was the evil man, and the man of violence: but there were many others who concurred in all the designs formed against the life of David, and who were employed in devising plans for that purpose; as Caiaphas and Judas had many helpers in their machinations against the life of the holy Jesus.

V. 3. 'Slander and calumny must always precede and 'accompany persecution; because malice itself cannot excite people against a good man as such; to do this he must 'first be represented as a bad man. What can be said of 'those who are busied in this manner, but that they are "a generation of vipers," the brood of the old serpent, that 'grand accuser and calumniator of the brethren; having 'under their tongues a bag of poison, conveying instant 'death to the reputation on which they fasten? Thus 'David was hunted as a rebel, Christ was crucified as a 'blasphemer, and the primitive Christians were tortured 'as guilty of incest and murder.' (*Horne.*)

V. 7. *Covered*, &c. 'He calleth to God with lively 'faith, being assured of his mercies: because he had before time proved, that God helped him ever in his dangers.' (1 *Sam.* xvii. 34—36. 45—50.)

V. 9. Some render this verse, "The poison of those "that compass me about, *even* the mischief of their own "lips, shall cover them." (3.) The original word trans-

10 Let [r] burning coals fall upon them: [s] let them be cast into the fire; [t] into deep pits, that they rise not up again.

11 * Let not † an [u] evil speaker be established in the earth: [x] evil shall hunt the violent man to overthrow *him*.

12 I know that [y] the LORD will maintain the cause of the afflicted, *and* the right of the poor.

13 [z] Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto thy name: [a] the upright shall dwell in thy presence.

r xi. 6. xviii. 13, 14. xxi. 9. cxx. 4 Gen. xix 24. Ex. ix. 23, 24. Rev. xvi 8, 9.
s Dan. iii. 20—25. Matt. xiii. 42. 50.
t Iv. 23. Prov. xxviii. 10. 17. Rev. xx. 15. xxi. 8
* Or, *Let not an evil speaker, a wicked man of violence, be established in the earth; let him be hunted to his overthrow.*
† Heb. *a man of tongue*
u xii. 3, 4. Prov. vi. 17. xii. 13. xvii. 20. xviii. 21.
x vii. 14—16. ix. 16. xxxiv. 21. Prov. xiii. 21. Is. iii 11
y ix. 4. 17. 18. x. 17, 18. xxxii.24. lxxii 4. 12—14. cii. 17. 1 Kings viii 45. 49 Pro xxii. 22, 23 xxiii. 10, 11. Is xi. 4. Jer. xxii. 16. Matt. xi. 5 ——z xxxii. 11. xxxiii. 1. Is. iii. 10.——a xvi. 11. xxiii. 6. lxxiii. 24. John xiv. 3. xvii. 24. 1 Thes. iv. 17. Rev. vii. 14—17 xxi. 24—27

PSALM CXLI.

David earnestly requests the acceptance of his prayers, to be preserved from sinful words, works, and indulgences, 1—4. He desires the reproofs of the righteous, whom he will recompense by his prayers; and hopes to win on his people when afflicted, 5, 6. He complains that his friends were cruelly slain, professes confidence in God, and predicts the fall of the wicked, 7—10.

A Psalm of David.

LORD, I cry unto thee: [a] make haste unto me; give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto thee.

2 Let [b] my prayer be * set forth before thee [c] *as* incense; *and* [d] the lifting up of my hands *as* [e] the evening sacrifice.

a xl 13. lxix. 17, 18 lxx. 5. lxxi. 12. cxliii. 7. Job vii 21.
b Prov. xv. 8.
* Heb. *directed.* v. 3.
c Ex xxx. 7—9. 34—38. Lev. x. 1, 2. xvi. 11—13. Num xvi. 35. 46—48 Mal. i. 11. Luke i. 9, 10. Rev. v. 8. viii 3, 4.
d xxvii. 2. lxiii. 4. cxxxiv. 2. 1 Tim ii. 8.
e Ex. xxix. 39—42. 1 Kings xviii. 36 Ezra ix. 4. Dan. ix. 21. Acts iii. 1.

lated *the head*, signifies also *poison*, especially the poison of serpents, which is collected in their heads.

V. 10. 'Their lips, which uttered mischief against 'others, shall be the means of covering themselves with 'confusion, when out of their own mouths they shall be 'judged. Those tongues, which have contributed to set 'the world on fire, shall be tormented with the hot burning 'coals of eternal vengeance; and they who, with so much 'eagerness and diligence, have prepared pits for the destruc- 'tion of their brethren, shall be cast into a deep and bottom- 'less pit, out of which they will not rise up again any more 'for ever.' (*Horne.*)

V. 11. "A lying lip is but for a moment;" it serves a present purpose, and often proves for a while very successful: but at length it defeats its own purposes, and never effects established prosperity. The original is, "A man of "tongue;" one who does not bridle his tongue—The similitude of evil, or punishment, hunting the violent man, as the hounds do the fleeing animal, through all its windings and doublings, till they seize upon it, is very emphatical.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The seed of the old serpent, instigated by their father, will unite subtlety with violence, in executing the mischiefs which they have imagined in their hearts against the children of God: slanders will be devised to cloke their unprovoked malice; they will sharpen their tongues to ruin their reputation, as the serpent's fatal bite envenoms the blood; for "adders' poison is under their lips." Especially they will lay artful stratagems to overthrow their goings, and to betray them into some real or seeming crime, which may furnish them with a plausible handle against them. All this we have seen illustrated in the history of David the type, but it is still more manifested in the history of Christ, the great Antitype. In such circumstances therefore we should especially watch and pray, that the Lord would "hold up our goings in his ways, that our foot-steps slip "not." He is the Strength of salvation to all, who trust and worship him as their God: he will hear their prayers, and cover their heads in the day of battle: every former deliverance is an earnest of future and final victory: and they may unreservedly pray, that he would not grant the desires of the wicked, nor further their wicked devices, lest they grow more insolent. We may also be confident, that false accusers will, by their lies and perjuries, bring mischief upon themselves, even the burning coals of divine vengeance, which will sink them into the fire and deep pit of hell, to rise no more; except timely repentance prevent the fatal doom. For "an evil speaker shall not "be established in the earth: evil shall hunt the violent "man to overthrow him." But when the Lord hath proved the faith and patience of his afflicted people, he will maintain their cause, and do them justice against their oppressors. And beyond all doubt, the righteous shall dwell in God's presence, and give him thanks for evermore.

NOTES.

PSALM CXLI. *Title.* This psalm is generally allowed to have been written by David, when driven among the Philistines, by the implacable persecution of Saul. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xxvii.)—'Nobody need wonder, that there 'are so many prayers founded on the same subject: for that 'persecution endured long, and they were made upon 'different occasions, or for different purposes; and 'David loved to spend his time in such devout medita- 'tions.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 2. Or, 'My prayer shall be set before thee; *as* 'incense, &c.' When driven from the courts of the Lord and the communion of his people, the Psalmist purposed to be as regular and constant at his devotions, as the priests were in burning incense, and offering the sacrifices morning and evening: and he prayed, that his fervent supplications might be accepted, even as if presented at the sanctuary, being presented with a believing reference to the typical expiation and intercession there made. It is probable, that this psalm was composed, at the time of

3 [f] Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; [g] keep the door of my lips.

4 [h] Incline not my heart to *any* evil thing, [i] to practise wicked works with men that work iniquity: [k] and let me not eat of their dainties.

5 Let [l] the righteous * smite me; *it shall be* a kindness: and let him reprove me; *it shall be* an excellent oil, *which* shall not break my head: [m] for yet my prayer also *shall be* in their calamities.

6 When [n] their judges are overthrown in stony places, [o] they shall hear my words; [p] for they are sweet.

7 Our [q] bones are scattered at the grave's mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth *wood* upon the earth.

8 But [r] mine eyes *are* unto thee, O GOD the Lord: in thee is my trust; † leave not [s] my soul destitute.

9 Keep me [t] from the snares *which* they have laid for me, and the gins of the workers of iniquity.

10 Let [u] the wicked fall into their own nets, whilst that I withal ‡ escape.

f xvii 3—5. xxxix. 1. lxxi. 8. Jam i 26 iii. 2. g Mic. vii. 5. h cxix. 36. Deut. ii. 30. xxix. 4. i Kings viii. 58. xxii 22. Is lxiii. 17 Matt vi. 13. Jam. i. 13. i 1 Cor. xv. 33. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Rev. xviii. 4. k Num. xxv. 2. Prov. xxiii. 1—3. 6—8. Dan. i. 5—8. Acts x. 13, 14. 1 Cor. x. 27, 28. 31. l 1 Sam. xxv. 31—34. 2 Sam. xii. 7—13. 2 Chr. xvi. 7—10. xxv. 16. Prov. vi 23. ix. 8, 9. xv. 5. 22. xix 25. xxv. 12. xxvii. 5, 6. Gal. ii. 11—14. vi. 1. Rev. iii. 19. —— * Or, *smite me kindly and reprove me; let not* their *precious oil break my head*, &c ——— m li. 18 cxxv. 4. Matt. v. 44 2 Tim. i. 16—18. Jam. v. 14—16. ——— n 1 Sam. xxxi. 1—8. 2 Sam. i 17, &c. 1 Chr. x. 1—7.

o 2 Sam ii 4. v. 1—3. 1 Chr. xi. 1—3. xii 38 p xlv. 2 2 Sam. ii 5, 6. 1 Chr. xiii. 2. Luke iv. 22 q xliv. 22. 1 Sam. xxii 18, 19. Rom. viii 36. Heb. xi 37. Rev. xi. 8, 9. r xxv. 15 cxxiii. 1, 2 2 Chr xx. 12. † Heb *make not my soul bare.* s xxv. 16, 17. cii. 17. cxliii. 3, 4. Is xli. 17. John xiv. 18. t cxix. 110. cxl. 5. cxlii 3 Jer. xviii. 22. Luke xx. 20. u vii. 15, 16 xxxv. 8. xxxvii. 14, 15. lxiv. 7, 8. cxl. 9. Esth. vii. 10. Prov. xi. 8. ——— ‡ Heb. *pass over*

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the morning or evening sacrifice; and that David, (as Daniel afterwards,) offered his prayers with his face towards Zion. The word, however, rendered *sacrifice*, does not signify the lamb for a burnt-offering every morning and evening, but the meat-offering which accompanied it. (*Num.* xxviii. 4, 5.) This is supposed by some learned men to have been typical of our Saviour's holy and useful life, by which he "fulfilled all righteousness," and set us "an example that we should follow his steps;" as the lamb slain typified his expiatory sufferings. So that the Psalmist seems to have selected this word, to express his desire that his prayers might be accepted, as the meat-offering at the sanctuary; rather than as the burnt offering, in order the more clearly to exclude the idea of expiation.

V. 3, 4. David, surrounded by idolaters, who would watch all his words and actions, suspect him as a spy or an enemy, or want to draw him into idolatry, besought God to enable him so to bridle his tongue, that he might not give them any advantage against him; and so to govern and rule his heart, that he might not be seduced into any sinful compliances. In such company he feared, lest he should be tempted to trifle, to dissemble, or to speak inconsistently with his character as a zealous worshipper of the true God; or, as some think, lest he should be led to express his sense of the ill usage he had received from Saul in an unbecoming manner, and therefore he prayed for a guard to be placed before his mouth. He was also aware that corrupt examples continually before his eyes might gradually draw him aside; and he prayed that his heart might not be inclined to any evil thing, or to join the impieties and iniquities of the Philistines; and that he might not be tempted by their idolatrous feasts or hospitable entertainments, to eat of such things as were forbidden by the law of God. *Incline not*, &c. evidently means 'Keep my heart so, that I may not be suffered to incline to evil.' (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 5. Jealous of himself in so ensnaring a situation, the Psalmist prayed, that some pious friends might ever be present to reprove him sharply, if he yielded to temptation. This he would take most kindly, sensible that it would neither break his head, nor cause him to hang it down in dejection: but being insinuating and healing, like an excellent oil, it would be very useful to him; and he would requite the benefit by praying for them in their calamities, if he had no other way of expressing his gratitude. Or, This would enable him the more fervently, and as with renewed vigour, to pray against *their wickedness*, (that of the idolaters,) which he had been almost induced to imitate. Perhaps David obliquely hinted at the slanders of Saul and his party; from which he distinguished the censures of the pious Israelites, who might blame him for going into the land of the Philistines.

V. 6. This verse may mean, according to our translation, that David, foreseeing the ruin of Saul and his party, the present *judges* of Israel, as if they had been cast from the sides of a rock, or cut in pieces in rocky places by the enemy, without being able to escape; hoped, that the Israelites would then hearken to his salutary admonitions, which they now disregarded. 'The people 'which followed their wicked rulers in persecuting the 'prophet, shall repent and turn to God, when they see 'their wicked rulers punished.' The following is a literal 'translation: "Their judges have been dismissed in "the sides of the rock, and have heard my words, "that they were sweet." 'David mentions his own 'behaviour to his implacable enemy, whose life he had 'spared at two several times, when he had it in his 'power to destroy him. Their judges, or princes, "have "been dismissed, in the sides of the rock," when I had 'them at an advantage, and they only heard me expostulate with them in a manner so mild and humble, 'that even Saul himself was overcome, and—wept. Yet 'how have my people also been by them most miserably 'butchered!' (*Horne.*)

V. 7. This probably refers to the slaughter of the hundred and eighty-five priests and their families, by Doeg at Saul's command, because they were supposed to favour David. The bones of this company, murdered on his account, were thrown at the grave's mouth, as plentifully, and as disregarded, as the chips scattered about by one that cleaveth wood upon the ground. In this verse the word *sheol* certainly means the grave.

V. 9. 'Not only preserve me from the snares, which my persecutors have laid for me; but likewise from the allurements of all other wicked men, especially the idolatrous Philistines among whom I sojourn.'

V. 10. 'David escaped all the snares that were laid 'for him on every side; he lived to see the death of Saul, 'who fell in battle with the Philistines, and those Philis-'tines subdued by himself and his subjects.' (*Horne.*)

PSALM CXLII.

David complains of his persecutors, and expresses his confidence and joy in God, 1—7.

[a] A Psalm *of David giving instruction.* xxxii. liv. *titles.*
[a] 1 Sam xxii 1, 2. xxiv. 3 Heb. xi. 38.

* Maschil of David; A Prayer [a] when he was in the cave.

[b] xxviii 2 lxxvii. 1, 2. cxli. 1.

I CRIED unto the LORD with my voice; [b] with my voice unto the LORD did I make my supplication.

2 I [c] poured out my complaint before him; [d] I shewed before him my trouble.

3 When [e] my spirit was overwhelmed within me, [f] then thou knewest my path. [g] In the way wherein I walked have they privily laid a snare for me.

4 † I looked on *my* right hand, and beheld, [h] but *there was* no man that would know me: [i] refuge ‡ failed me; no man cared for my soul.

[c] xlii 4 cii *title.* 1 Sam. i. 15, 16. Is. xxvi. 16. Rom viii 26.
[d] xviii 4—6 Phil. iv 6, 7 Heb. v. 7.
[e] xxxi. 14. lxi. 2. cii 4 cxliii. 4. Mark xiv. 33—36.
[f] i. 6. xvii. 3. cxxxix. 2—6. Job xxiii. 10.
[g] xxxi 4 xxxv. 7, 8. lvi 6. cxl. 5. cxli. 9. Jer. xviii 22 Matt. xxii. 15.
† Or, *Look on the right hand and see*

[h] xxxi. 11, lxix. 20 lxxxviii. 8. 18. Job xix 13—19. Matt xxvi. 56. 2 Tim. iv 16.
[i] 1 Sam. xxiii 11—13. 19, 20 xxvii. 1 ——— ‡ Heb *perished from me; no man sought after my soul.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The believer will maintain communion with his God, wherever he goes; the greater his trials are, the more fervent will his prayers be; and when they are presented through the Saviour's oblation and intercession, they will be as acceptable to God, as the daily sacrifices and burning of incense were of old. We have always need to entreat the Lord to set a watch before the door of our lips; but especially when we are constrained to associate with ungodly men; where we shall continually be urged to speak, and tempted to speak improperly, out of fear, shame, or complaisance; and where we can scarcely speak at all, without giving them some cause of error, prejudice, or offence. If surrounded by such contagious examples, we shall likewise have especial cause to keep our hearts with all diligence, and to pray continually, that they may not be "inclined to any evil thing, or to practise wicked "works with men that work iniquity." Our appetites also must be bridled: lest they be bribed by their luxuries, or we be prevailed upon by seducing solicitations, to sanction their excesses or iniquities, by the least approach to inordinate indulgence. If it be our cross to be cast into such a situation, we may expect that the Lord will preserve us in it; though it will require extraordinary watchfulness and constancy in prayer, and we are generally most remiss on such occasions: but if any from carnal motives run into such temptations, they seldom escape unpolluted or unwounded. In all places, however, we should fear sin more than suffering; and rather be desirous to honour God, than to recommend or advance ourselves. Such desires will not only dictate our prayers; but induce us to welcome the rebukes of our heavenly Father, and also the reproofs of our brethren. We should indeed study to profit by the *reproaches* of our enemies, and by the severe rebukes of those who mean well, but are unskilful: but that *reproof*, which is given with prudence, meekness, piety, and affection, insinuates, and lubricates like a healing ointment. It causes little pain or irritation, and produces abundant good. And no benefactors are more entitled to our gratitude and our prayers, than reprovers of this character; because none serve us in a more disinterested and self-denying manner. Yet, alas, flatterers are generally more favoured, even by professing Christians; and this plain-dealing is lamentably sunk into disuse, to the unspeakable detriment of true piety! We should be unwearied in our endeavours to do good: those instructive and affectionate words, which sinners despised in their prosperity, may perhaps be attended to in adversity; or when the ruin of ringleaders, or associates in iniquity, concurs in showing them their danger and misery: and we should watch for such opportunities. Nor should any injuries make us reluctant to do good to our opponents: even though they have wasted the church, as king Saul, and as Saul of Tarsus did, till the bones of the Lord's ministers and people lie scattered abroad, as the chips around him who heweth wood. Indeed, if we be not exposed to such calamities, our bones will soon lie scattered at the mouth of the grave; and others will moralize over them, as we are wont to do, when we traverse a burying ground, and behold an opened grave. Let us then lift our eyes unto God the Lord, and trust in him that our souls shall not then be left destitute: let us entreat him to rescue us from the snares of Satan and of all the workers of iniquity, that we may escape and be blessed for ever, whilst the wicked fall into their own nets and perish.

NOTES.

PSALM CXLII. *Title.* On one occasion David, driven from the court of Achish, with only a very small company, hid himself in the cave of Adullam; where at length he was joined by a considerable number of adherents: (1 *Sam.* xxii. 1, 2.) On another, he was hidden in a cave when Saul and his army came to seek for him; thus he was in extreme danger, till Saul, by inadvertently entering the cave, put himself in his power, and gave him an opportunity of showing his determination not to injure his prince, and also of escaping for the present. (1 *Sam.* xxiv.) It is not certain, to which of these events this psalm belongs. But, however that may be, David seems to have formed the substance of his prayer, in the extremity of his danger, into a psalm, when he had obtained deliverance: though some think that it ought to be rendered in the present tense, as the very prayer which he made in the cave.

V. 1—3. 'Though destitute of human help, I will 'not despair of safety; but with more fervent cries implore 'the divine succour. I will lay before God all the 'sad thoughts which perplex my heart; and representing 'the miserable straits wherein I am, expose myself to 'him as an object of his pity.'—'Now that I am utterly 'at a loss, and ready to faint away in the confusion of my 'thoughts; thou knowest very well a way for my escape: 'though by the intelligence they,' (Saul and his party,) 'hold with my enemies, they have blocked up all the 'passages which I am acquainted with, and laid ambushes 'for me in every road.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

k xlvi. 1. 7—11. lxii. 6, 7. xci. 2. 9, 10. John xvi. 32. 2 Tim. iv. 17.
l xvi. 5. lxxiii. 26. cxix. 57. Lam iii 24.
m xxxvii. 13. lvi. 13.
n xliv. 24—26. lxxix. 8. cxvi. 6. cxxxvi. 23 cxliii 3. 7.
o iii 1. xxxviii. 19. lvii. 3, 4. lix 3. 1 Sam. xxiv. 14.
p title ix. 13, 14. xxxi. 8. lxxxviii. 4—8. cxliii. 11. Acts ii. 24.
q vii. 6, 7. xxii. 21—27. xxxiv. 2. cvii. 41, 42. cxix. 74.
r xiii. 6 cxvi. 7. cxix. 17. Jam. v. 11.

5 I cried unto thee, O LORD: I said, k Thou *art* my Refuge *and* [l] my Portion m in the land of the living.

6 Attend unto my cry: n for I am brought very low: deliver me from my persecutors; o for they are stronger than I.

7 Bring p my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name: q the righteous shall compass me about; for r thou shalt deal bountifully with me.

PSALM CXLIII.

David earnestly deprecates the severity of God's judgment, complains of his enemies and distresses, and strengthens his faith by meditating on the works of God, 1—5. He fervently prays for comfort, guidance, quickening, and deliverance; and foretels the destruction of his enemies, 6—12.

A Psalm of David.

HEAR my prayer, O LORD, give ear to my supplications: a in thy faithfulness answer me, *and* in thy righteousness.

2 And b enter not into judgment with thy servant: for c in thy sight shall no man living be justified.

a xxxi. 1. lxxi. 1. 2 Sam. vii. 25. Dan ix. 16. 1 John i. 9.
b cxxx. 3. Job xiv. 3.
c Job iv. 17. ix. 2. xv. 14. xxv. 4 Ec. vii. 20. Rom. iii. 20. Gal. ii. 16 1 John i. 10.

V. 4. The original is in the imperative, "Look thou "on my right hand, &c." Some consider it, as a prayer to God to look on the extremity of his case, others as a kind of soliloquy. 'Look about thee, O my soul, if thou canst 'spy any hope of relief from thy best and most powerful 'friends. There are none of them that dare to own thee, 'nor do I know whither to flee for safety.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 6. 'O let my importunate cry prevail for some 'relief, which will come most seasonably in this extreme 'necessity. Rescue me now, that I may not fall into the 'hands of my persecutors, who are every way, (except 'in these cries unto and confidence in thee,) much too 'strong for me.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 7. The cave in which David was hidden, was like a prison to confine him, till Saul should come and put him to death; unless God mercifully delivered him, according to his word, of which he did not allow himself to doubt. Nay, he anticipated the season, when his grateful praises would attract the notice of all the pious Israelites; and when he should be as much surrounded by admiring multitudes, as he was now shunned by all. In this he was a type of Christ, as deserted in the garden; and as exalted to be a Prince and Saviour.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

There can be no situation so distressing, perilous, or disgraceful, in which faith will not derive comfort from God by fervent prayer. In our great perplexities, when our spirits are overwhelmed by distress, and filled with confusion and discouragement, and when we see snares laid for us on every side, we may reflect with comfort that "the "LORD knoweth our path;" and if we aim to walk in his way, he will protect and guide us, and extricate us from every danger and difficulty. Indeed few men choose to know their afflicted and persecuted acquaintance, which might expose them to expense, inconvenience, and peril: and refuge may in this sense fail us, and no one appear to care for our lives or souls. But the Lord will be the Refuge of his people on earth, and their Portion in heaven, that "land of the living." Thus he delivered David from his powerful persecutors, after he was brought very low; he raised him from the cave, in which he seemed to be imprisoned as a condemned criminal for execution: he advanced him to the throne, compassed him about with the righteous, dealt bountifully with him, and turned his complaining prayers into joyful praises. Thus he raised the crucified Redeemer from the prison of the grave to the throne of glory, and made Him head over all things, for his church. Thus the poor convinced sinner, when every other refuge fails, and he is shut up under sin, cries for help, and is brought forth out of prison to praise the Lord, in the company of his redeemed people: and thus every believer will be finally delivered from this evil world, from sin, and death; that, with mutual congratulations, the whole company of the redeemed may rejoice, and praise their God and Saviour for evermore.

NOTES.

PSALM CXLIII. V. 1. 'There are passages which 'incline us to apply this psalm to David's flight from Absalom; for then he had most reason to fear, lest God 'should deal with him according to his sins, which he de'precates with such a deep sense of his unworthiness, that 'it hath made this to be numbered among the penitential 'psalms, and it is the last of them.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) David had the faithfulness of God to depend on, according to the promises made to him by name, and to Solomon, and his posterity by him, notwithstanding his personal unworthiness; and his cause was righteous, when called to withstand Absalom's unnatural rebellion.

V. 2. The Psalmist, having appealed to the justice of God to decide betwixt him and his enemies, was reminded, that neither he, nor any other man, could stand in judgment before God, according to the tenor of his righteous law. 'The thoughts of such a trial are enough to appal 'the soul of the best man living, to make his flesh tremble, 'and all his bones shake, as if he stood at the foot of mount 'Sinai, and beheld JEHOVAH ready to break forth upon 'him in the flame of devouring fire.' (*Horne.*) 'If 'thou shouldst proceed according to the rigour of thy 'law, the best man living, (much less so great a sinner 'as I,) will not be acquitted at thy tribunal.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The connexion of this verse, with the preceding and the following verses, in which it is evident the Psalmist

3 For [d] the enemy hath persecuted my soul; [e] he hath smitten my life down to the ground; [f] he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead.

4 Therefore [g] is my spirit overwhelmed within me; [h] my heart within me is desolate.

5 I [i] remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands.

6 I [k] stretch forth my hands unto thee: [l] my soul *thirsteth* after thee, as a thirsty land. Selah.

7 [m] Hear me speedily, O LORD: [n] my spirit faileth: [o] hide not thy face from me; * lest I be [p] like unto them that go down into the pit.

8 Cause me [q] to hear thy loving-kindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: [r] cause me to know the way wherein I should walk: [s] for I lift up my soul unto thee.

9 Deliver me, O LORD, from mine enemies: [t] I † flee unto thee to hide me.

10 [u] Teach me to do thy will; [x] for thou *art* my God: [y] thy Spirit *is* good; lead me into [z] the land of uprightness.

11 [a] Quicken me, O LORD, for thy name's sake: [b] for thy righteousness' sake [c] bring my soul out of trouble.

12 And [d] of thy mercy cut off mine enemies, and destroy all them that afflict my soul: [e] for I *am* thy servant.

d vii. 1, 2 xvii. 9—13. xxxv. 4. liv. 3 cxlii. 6. e vii 5. 2 Sam. ii. 22. xviii. 11. Is. xxv. 5. li. 23. f xxxi. 12, 13. lxxxviii. 4—6. Ez xxxvii. 11. g lv 5 lxi. 2. lxxvii. 3. cii. *title* cxxiv. 4. cxlii. 3. Job vi 27 h xxv. 16 cii. 3, 4. cxix. 81—83 Luke xxii. 44. i xlii. 6. lxxvii. 6. 10—12 cxi 4. Deut. viii 2, 3. 1 Sam xvii. 34—37 45—50. Is. lxiii 7, &c. Mic. vi. 5 k xliv. 20. lxxxviii. 9 Job xi 13 l xlii. 1, 2. lxiii. 1. lxxxiv. 2 Is. xxvi. 8, 9. xxxv. 7. John vii. 37. m xiii 1—4. xl. 13. 17. lxx. 5. lxxi. 12. n xl. 12. lxix. 3. Is lvii. 16 Luke xxi. 26.——o xxii. 24. xxvii. 9. lxix. 17. Is. viii. 17 ——* Or, *for I am become*, &c.——p xxviii. 1. lxxxviii. 4—6. 10 11. Is. xxxvii. 18.

q xxx. 5. xlii. 8. xlvi. 5. *Marg.* lix. 16. Gen. xxxii. 24—29. Hos. vi. 3. r 10. v. 8. xxv. 4, 5 xxvii. 11. xxxii. 8. cxix. 34 73. Pro. iii. 5, 6. Is. xxx. 21. xlviii. 17. s xxv 1 lxxxvi. 4 Lam. iii. 41. t xxxi. 2—4. lvi. 9 lxi 3, 4 cxlii. 5. Prov. xviii. 10 Heb vi. 18. † Heb *hide me with thee.* u xxv 4, 5 8, 9. 12. cxix. 5—7. 12 35. cxxxix. 24 Mat xxviii. 20. Col i 9, 10. 1 Thes iv. 1, 2. Heb xiii 21. x xxii 1. xxxi. 14. cxviii 28. cxl. 6. y Neh ix. 20. Is. lxiii. 14 John xiv 26. xvi. 13—15. Rom. v. 5. viii. 2. 14—16. 25. xv. 13. 30 Gal. v 22, 23. Eph. iv. 30 v 9. 2 Tim. i. 7.——z Is. xxvi. 10.——a lxxxv. 6 cxix. 25. 37. 40. 88. 107. cxxxviii. 7 Eph ii 4, 5 ——b 1. ix. 7, 8 xxxi 1. lxxi. 2.——c xxv. 17. xxxiv. 19 xxxvii 39, 40. xci. 15, 16. Rev. vii. 14—17.——d liv. 5. lv. 23. cxxxvi 15—20. 1 Sam. xxiv. 12—15. xxv 39. xxvi. 10 ——e cxvi 16 cxix 94.

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was referring the cause between him and his adversaries to the decision of the just Judge of the world, renders it peculiarly important in the argument, concerning a sinner's justification before God. (*Note*, *Rom.* iii.)

V. 3. Absalom, Ahithophel, and their zealous adherents, pursued David with unrelenting malice; they drove him from his city and palace, and at once turned his singular prosperity into desolation, almost like death: as a warrior at one stroke beats his enemy to the ground. Thus he was driven in to obscure corners in disgrace and distress: and at the same time the consciousness of guilt and inward disconsolation and temptation, served to shut him up, as in a dark dungeon; while the triumphs of his enemies made his cause to be considered as lost, so that he was no more noticed by the Israelites in general, than if he had been long dead.

V. 4. (*Note*, cxlii. 3.)

V. 5. The Psalmist may be supposed, in this extremity, to have revolved in his mind all his former escapes and deliverances from the time when "the LORD delivered him "from the paw of the lion and the bear," from the sword of Goliath, and the javelin of Saul, through all his subsequent persecutions, and every danger, till the time when he composed the psalm. But, it is also probable, that he meditated on all the displays of the power, truth, and mercy of God to his people, from the beginning of the world; in order to encourage his drooping hope, and revive his desponding soul.

V. 6. 'I long for relief, and expect it with as eager 'a desire, as the parched ground does the refreshing 'shower.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) "The joy of God's salvation," however, seems to have been more prominent in the Psalmist's mind, than any outward deliverance, when he used this most striking similitude.

V. 8. 'Though this night be sad: yet let me hear—'better news—in the morning.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) Perhaps this was written when David heard of Ahithophel's counsel to slay him. (*Notes*, iii. 2 *Sam.* xvii.) In this emergency he earnestly lifted up his soul to God, and prayed to be directed what methods to adopt for his safety; or rather how to act in consistency with his duty.

V. 10. 'Whose guidance I beseech, as well as defence, 'that I may do nothing, (no not for my preservation,) but 'what is perfectly agreeable to thy laws.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) *Thy Spirit.* When we consider the darkness and pollution of the sinner's heart, and recollect how men resist the Holy Spirit; and how even believers often quench his emotions, grieve him by their perverseness, and pollute his temple by their sins; and also reflect, that he not only enters the soul, as a Sanctifier to prepare us for future happiness; but as a Comforter, and as the first-fruits of that happiness; and how he perseveres in his work of love and power, notwithstanding our folly and ingratitude: we shall perceive a peculiar propriety in this epithet of "*good*," as applied to God the Spirit. His condescension, compassion, and kindness can be equalled by nothing but the bleeding love of Emmanuel, and the mercy of God the Father in sending us such a Redeemer and Sanctifier. The *goodness* of the Spirit formed a very encouraging plea to the broken hearted Psalmist, who, conscious of his unworthiness, could scarcely hope, that this divine Comforter, whom he had grieved, would return any more to rejoice his drooping heart.

V. 11, 12. 'These verses should be rendered in the 'future; and then the Psalm will end as usual, with an 'act of faith and assurance, that all those mercies which 'have been asked shall be attained.' (*Horne.*) "Thou "wilt quicken me, &c." (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The believer has not only the *faithfulness*, but the *righteousness*, of God engaged in his behalf; because he is made the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus: much more then may he be confident, that he has justice on his side in those causes, which are pending betwixt him and his persecutors before the supreme Judge. But he will not forget, that in himself and in his best actions, he is a sinner, and

PSALM CXLIV.

David praises God for his goodness to him, and his condescension to the human race, 1—4. He prays for God's powerful interposition to deliver him from his enemies, 5—8. He promises to praise God, 9, 10. He renews his prayers for personal and public prosperity, and shows the happiness of God's people.

A Psalm of David.

BLESSED *be* the Lord* my Strength, which [a] teacheth my hands † to war, *and* my fingers to fight;

2 My ‡ Goodness, [b] and my Fortress: my high Tower, and my Deliverer; my Shield, and *he* in whom I trust; [c] who subdueth my people under me.

3 LORD, [d] what *is* man, that thou takest knowledge of him! [e] *or* the son of man, that thou makest account of him!

4 [f] Man is like to vanity: [g] his days *are* as a shadow that passeth away.

5 [h] Bow thy heavens, O LORD, and come down: [i] touch the mountains, and they shall smoke.

6 [k] Cast forth lightning, and scatter them, and destroy them.

7 [m] Send thine § hand from above; rid me, and [n] deliver me out of great waters, from [o] the hand of strange children;

8 Whose [p] mouth speaketh vanity, and [q] their right hand *is* a right hand of falsehood.

* Heb. *my Rock.* xviii. 2 31 lxxi. 3. xcv. 1. Deut. xxxii. 30, 31. Is. xxvi. 4 *Marg.*
a xliv. 3, 4. lx. 12. 2 Sam. xxii. 35. 2 Cor. x. 4. Eph. vi. 10, 11.
† Or, *to the war,* &c.
‡ Or, *mercy.*
b 2 Sam. xxii. 2, 3. 40—48. Jer. xvi. 19.
c xviii. 47. cx. 3
d viii. 4. Job vii. 17 xv. 14. Heb. ii. 6.
e cxlvi. 3, 4.
f xxxix. 5, 6. lxii. 9. lxxxix. Job iv. 19. 1—3 Ec. 14. xii. 8.
g cii. 11. 23. 16. civ. 14. 2 Sam. xiv. 15. 1 Chr. xxix. Ec. Job viii. 9. vii. 13. Is. lxiv. xviii.
h 1, 2. Ex. xix. 1 Chron. i. 3—13. Hab. iii. 3—6. Heb. xii. 18.
i xviii. 13, 14. xcvii. 17, 18. Dan. xxii. 12 15.
k vii. 12. xxi. 12. lv. 5. Deut. xxxii. 23. 42.
m xviii. 16. 2 Sam. xxii. 17. Matt. xxvii. 43.
§ Heb. *hands.*
n lxix. 2 14, 15 xciii. 3, 4. Rev. xii. 15, 16. xvii. 15.
o 11. liv. 3. Neh. ix. 2 Mal. ii. 11.
p x. 7. xii 2. xii. 6. lviii. 3. lxii. 4. cix. 2, 3. Is. lix. 5—7.
q Is. xliv. 20. Matt. v. 30. Rev. xiii. 16, 17.

that he cannot be justified at God's tribunal by his own obedience: and this consideration will keep him as a humble penitent, pleading guilty, crying for mercy, living by faith, and perceiving more and more preciousness in Christ, to the end of his days. Nor need the trembling sinner who hath lately discovered that he caunot stand in judgment before God, be discouraged on that account: for the greatest of saints have confessed the same. But what must be the presumption and delusion of those who despise free grace, and expect heaven as the wages of their scanty formal services! Nay, some of them have even arrogantly thought of meriting for others also!—The justified believer, having peace with God, will experience the enmity of the world, and the temptations of Satan. This enemy at least, will persecute our souls; and he often smites our life to the ground by his seducing and discouraging suggestions. When he can prevail with us to commit sin, and the Lord is provoked to hide his face; he next insinuates that God will no more be gracious; and thus he causes us to indulge despondency and hard thoughts of God, and we dwell in darkness as if we were cast off to perish. But meditation and prayer will recover us from these distresses: whilst we muse on the works of God, we shall be encouraged to hope in him; and then the mourning soul strives to return to him, as the infant stretches out its hands towards an indulgent mother, and thirsts for his consolations as the parched ground for refreshing rain. And if the imminent peril of death renders men vehement in calling out for speedy relief; much more will the believer call upon God, to hear him speedily, when his spirit faileth, and through the hiding of his face, he seems like them that go down in the pit. But this night of distress and discouragement shall usher in a morning of consolation and praise. They who trust in the Lord, shall hear of his loving-kindness: and he will "cause those to know the way wherein they should walk, "who lift up their souls unto him." Let us then flee to the Lord to hide us from every enemy; entreating him to teach us to do his will, and to guide us by his good Spirit, in the straight way of holiness, to the land of perfect righteousness and peace. And the more we are slandered and persecuted, the more fervently should we pray that we may not only find peace and comfort, but that "by well-doing we may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men." Nor will the good Spirit of our God disdain to be the Guide, Sanctifier, and Comforter of poor sinners, who seek these blessings in the Redeemer's name. The Lord counts all as his enemies who are enemies to his people; and in mercy to their souls he will cut off all that afflict and injure them: but we should especially seek the destruction of our sins, our worst enemies, that we may be more devotedly God's servants; and then his righteousness and mercy concur in securing an answer to our prayers for complete and eternal deliverance.

NOTES.

PSALM CXLIV. V. 1. This psalm was no doubt written by David, after his accession to the throne over all Israel; and when he had gained some of his first victories over the neighbouring nations: but before he had finished his wars against them. "Blessed be the LORD my "Strength," 'who of a poor shepherd has made me a 'valiant warrior and mighty conqueror.'

V. 2. *My goodness.* The GOD *on whose goodness and 'mercy I depend;' or, 'My supreme Good;* or, *The 'Author of all that is good in me.'* (*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* xxii. 2, 3.) 'My Deliverer unto me,' (the literal translation,) 'for the prophet cannot satisfy himself with any words.'

V. 3, 4. *What is*, &c. (*Note*, &c. *Psalm* viii.) 'Man 'is now become like vanity, or instability itself; his days 'are fleeting and transient as a shadow, which glides over 'the earth, vanishes, and is seen no more.' Such was 'human nature: but the Son of God has taken it upon 'himself, rendered it immortal, and exalted it to heaven.' (*Horne.*)

'Now, what is man, when grace reveals
'The virtue of a Saviour's blood?
'Again a life divine he feels,
'Despises earth, and walks with God.

r xxxiii 2, 3. xl. 3. xcviii. 1. cxlix 1. Rev. v. 9, 10 xiv 3. lxxxi. 1—3 viii 2. 3. cl 3 1 Chr. xxv. 1. vi. 50 xxxiii. 1. 2 Sam. 6 19-25 viii. 1 Kings v. 4 * Or, victory xlv. 4 Is. xxvii 1 Jer. u cxl. 7 xvii. 4 Sam. 2 Sam xx 46. 17 6, x 7, 8. 2 Sam. 6, &c. xv 6 &c. xvii 1, y cxv. 14, cxxvii. 4, cxxviii. 3. xliv 3—5. Lam iv. 2. z Job xlii. 15 Prov. xxxi. 10—

9 I will r sing a new song unto thee, O God.: s upon a psaltery *and* an instrument of ten strings will I sing praises unto thee.

10 *It is he* t that giveth * salvation unto kings: u who delivereth David his servant from the hurtful sword.

11 Rid me, x and deliver me from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood:

12 That our sons *may be* y as plants grown up in their youth; *that* our daughters *may be* z as corner-stones, † polished *after* a the similitude of a palace:

13 *That* b our garners *may be* full, affording ‡ all manner of store; *that* c our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets:

14 *That* our oxen *may be* § strong to labour; *that there be* d no breaking in, nor going out; that *there be* no complaining in our streets.

15 Happy *is that* people, that is in such a case; *yea,* e happy *is that* people, whose God *is* the LORD.

† Heb. *cut.* a Cant. viii. 8, 9 1 Pet. iii. 6. b cvii. 37, 38. Lev. xxvi. 5. 10 Deu. xxviii. 8 Mal iii. 10. Luke xii. 16—20 ‡ Heb. *from kind to kind* c Gen. xxx. 29—31 Deut. vii. 13, 14. viii 13. xxviii. 4 § Heb. *ab e to bear burdens, or loaden with flesh* d Deu. xxviii. 7. 25. Judg v. 8. vi 3—6. 1 Sam. xiii. 17—23. xxxi. 7. Jer xiii. 17—19 xiv. 18. Lam i. 4—6. Zech viii 3—

5.——e xxxiii. 12. lxv. 4. cxlvi. 5. Deut. xxxiii. 29. Eph. i. 3.

nd what in yonder realms above,
ransom'd man ordain'd to be?
ith honour, holiness, and love,
Seraph more adorn'd than he.

'Nest the throne and first in song,
'M shall his hallelujahs raise;
'W wondering angels round him throng,
'An vell the chorus of his praise.'

(*Olney Hymns.*)

V. 5—8. The salmist perceived, that war was again preparing against hi on every side; and the number and power of his enem were so formidable, that, like a dreadful inundation, ey seemed ready to bear down and swallow up all befor them. But they were "strange "children," aliens to srael; so that their "mouth spake "vanity, and their rht hand was a right hand of ini-"quity;" they profe ed to be worshippers of idols, and blasphemed the God Israel, and they employed themselves in working wkedness; nay, if they made any league, and confirme it by giving the right hand, as a token of amity, the made no scruple of breaking it. David therefore expected, that God would appear for him against these idolaters, with similar tokens of his presence and power, as Is el had witnessed in Egypt, at the Red Sea, and at mount S ai. (*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* viii. 3—13. xxii.) —The deliverance an victories, that David expected and experienced from the Lo 's immediate interposition, were typical of the Redeemer's esurrection and exaltation; in which the miraculous power of God was gloriously manifested; and also of his victories over those that oppose the universal establishment of his kingdom, and of his "putting all his enemies under his feet;" of which event such passages may be considered as in some respects prophetical.

V. 10. The preservation and success even of idolatrous princes are, in Scripture, ascribed to God. "The LORD "strengthened Eglon against Israel." "By Naaman the "LORD had given deliverance to Syria." "Nebuchad-"nezzar my servant, will I bring against this land."—"The God of heaven hath given thee," (Nebuchadnezzar,) "a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory: and where-"soever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the "field and the fowls of the heaven, hath he given into "thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all."—"Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus whose "right hand I have holden to subdue nations before him, "&c." (*Is.* xliv. 27, 28. xlv. 1—6.) 'Though wicked 'kings be called God's servants, for as much as he useth 'them to execute his judgments: yet David, because of 'God's promise, and they that rule godly, are properly so 'called; because they serve not their own affections, but 'set forth God's glory.'

V. 11. The word *Rescue*, in the old translation, is more expressive than the term *Rid*, for which it is exchanged—*Right hand.* 'When they shake hands with 'others, as if they were their friends, they intend thereby 'to deceive them. (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 12—15. The prosperity of Israel, according to the promises of the national covenant, was one great end for which David was raised to the throne; and in all his undertakings and successes he kept this in view. If the surrounding idolaters were subdued, Israel would be at peace; and being united under the equitable administration of a pious king, they would be kept close to the worship of God, and by his blessing they would multiply exceedingly. Their sons would grow, as plants in a fruitful soil, in vigour and courage, to be the stability of the country: and their daughters, prudent, virtuous, healthful, industrious, and amiable, fitted to fill the important relations of wives and mothers, would be the ornament of their families, and of those into which they were married, and the bond of union betwixt them; as polished corner-stones both beautify and connect together the parts of a magnificent structure. Having peace abroad and harmony at home, their land, being well cultivated, might be expected to be very productive in corn, wine, oil, and every thing valuable, and their cattle to multiply exceedingly. No invader would break in among them; none would go forth into captivity, or be induced to emigrate; nor would there be any complaining of oppression or penury in their streets. These were the blessings engaged to Israel whilst they adhered to the service of JEHOVAH: and of which David hoped to put them in possession: in the ordinary course of providence they are generally conferred upon nations, where princes and people unite in maintaining the worship of God and obedience to his laws: and they are also typical of those blessings which the Son of David bestows upon his faithful subjects. 'If God give not

PSALM CXLV.

David zealously praises the greatness, power, goodness, and mercy of God, 1—10. *He celebrates the glory of his kingdom, and the bounty of his providence,* 11—16: *his justice, holiness, regard to the prayers of the upright, and care of those that love him; and his vengeance upon the wicked,* 17—21.

'to his children all these blessings, yet he recompenseth 'them with better things.'

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

If men become eminent for those things to which they were not regularly educated, and for which they have wanted many advantages; they should be the more deeply sensible that God himself hath been their Teacher. But though courage, strength, and military skill are gifts of the Creator, and all success is from him: yet they are seldom so used, as to warrant the successful warrior to say, "The LORD my Strength hath taught my hands to "war, and my fingers to fight:" for, alas! too frequently the great murderer from the beginning instigates ambitious, revengeful, and rapacious men, to destroy their fellow-creatures without cause. But they who are really disposed to give God the glory of their endowments and success, will seek grace from him to make a proper use of them; and praise him no less as "their Goodness," than as their Fortress, their Protector, and the Giver of their authority and prosperity.—Happy are they whom the Lord teaches to fight the good fight of faith, and to whom he gives that noblest victory and rule, the conquest and dominion over their own spirits! In the highest earthly exaltation, they will still recollect, how mean, sinful, and vile they are in themselves; they will be filled with admiring gratitude for the condescension of the great God to such rebellious sinners, and for every instance of his regard to them; and thus they will be preserved from self-importance and presumption in prosperity. They will not forget that "man is like unto vanity, his days are as a "shadow, that passeth away;" that the transition from a throne to the grave, or even to the depths of hell, is easy and frequent; that deliverance from the wrath to come, and a crown of unfading glory, are the most important concerns; and that living to the honour of God, and the benefit of his church, is far more desirable than all human exaltation and renown. Even in this life, success and authority rather expose men to trials and conflicts than secure exemption from them. But whilst we are doing our duty in our proper place, we may depend on God to defend and prosper us: and when our enemies are infidel, impious, or licentious, our encouragement to hope in him for help against them may proportionably increase. He, who bows the heavens and comes down, and touches the mountains and causes them to smoke, to melt, to remove, can find innumerable ways to confound the devices, dissolve the confederacies, and scatter the forces of his most potent foes; to deliver his people from dangers as imminent as if they were sinking in the depths of the ocean; and thus to turn all their fears and prayers into new songs of joyful praise. He giveth temporal deliverances to kings, and continueth, or restoreth, their health in answer to the prayers, or for the benefit, of their people: and he alone can give them eternal salvation, which they need as much as the meanest of their subjects, whilst they are commonly placed more out of the way of it; and yet to be saved from the hurtful sword, or the wasting sickness, without being delivered from the dominion of sin and the wrath to come, is no very enviable advantage. The higher any one is placed in society, the more entirely ought he to seek the public good, in preference to his own personal emolument or indulgence. No war ought to be undertaken, or victories desired, but for the sake of securing peace; the blessings of which are far more valuable than the most brilliant successes; to say nothing of the thousands that are slain in war, and too generally die in their sins. Wise, equitable, and pious princes and magistrates conduce much to the prosperity of nations: such blessings we should pray for, and when granted we should return thanks for them: as well as for our liberty, plenty, and other public benefits. It is a very pleasant sight to behold a nation increasing in population; families brought up in industry, honesty, and plenty, and fitted for the several stations in public and domestic life; not cut off by war, or wasted by famine or pestilence; and when all manner of abundance is stored in our garners, and clothes our fields and pastures. In many of these things we are a happy people: yet, alas! our numerous youths do not generally afford a pleasing prospect. Too many of the young men, of all ranks in this favoured land, grow up noxious plants, being early debauched in their principles and morals, and justly to be denominated infidel, profane, licentious, and dissipated; contracting and disseminating both mental and bodily diseases; and prepared to communicate vice, and ruin, and enfeebled constitutions, to the next generation. The daughters of the land indeed are sufficiently polished with exterior beauty and embellishment, and every superficial accomplishment: but few of them have the polishing of a corner-stone, as qualified to be the ornament of families, the cement of society, and a blessing to the land and to the next generation, by an attentive, judicious, and virtuous performance of the duties of domestic life; and still fewer are possessed of that adorning which the word of God most recommends. Whilst we abound in luxury and excess, and are free from irruptions of invaders, and the oppression of tyrants, there is still much complaining in our streets: yea, much extreme distress; through the vice, sloth, and extravagance, which prevail among the lower ranks in society, and through the enormous encouragement given by the affluent to those worthless minions that minister to their amusements, decorations, or excesses, attended with the neglect of the honest and industrious poor. Thus in proportion as we do not adhere to the worship and service of God, we cease to be a happy people, notwithstanding all our advantages. But there is a considerable remnant of another character; the subjects of the Son of David; who share the blessings of his authority and the fruits of his victories; and are a

David's [a] *Psalm* of Praise.

I WILL [b] extol thee, [c] my God, O King; and [d] I will bless thy name for ever and ever.

2 [e] Every day will I bless thee: and I will praise thy name for ever and ever.

3 [f] Great *is* the LORD, and greatly to be praised; [g] and his greatness * *is* unsearchable.

4 One [h] generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts.

5 I [i] will speak of the glorious honour of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous † works.

6 And [k] *men* shall speak of the might of thy terrible acts: and ‡ I will declare thy greatness.

7 They shall [l] abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness, and shall [m] sing of thy righteousness.

8 The [n] LORD *is* gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and § of great mercy.

9 The LORD *is* [o] good to all: and his tender mercies *are* over all his works.

10 [p] All thy works shall praise thee, O LORD; [q] and thy saints shall bless thee.

11 They shall speak of [r] the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power;

12 To [s] make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.

13 Thy [t] kingdom *is* an ‖ everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion *endureth* throughout all generations.

a c. *title* b xxx. 1. lxviii. 4. lxxi. 14, &c. ciii. 1, 2 Dan iv. 37. c xliv. 4. xlv. 1. 6. xlvii. 6—8. xlviii. 2, 3. xcv. 3. cxlix 2. Is. xxxiii. 22. Mal. i. 14. Matt xxv. 34. Rev. xix. 16. d 21. xxx. 12 lii. 9. cxiii. 1, 2. cxlvi. 1, 2. e lxxii 15 cxix. 164 Rev vii 15. f xlviii. 1 xcvi. 4. cxlvii. 5. Job v. 9 ix. 10. Rev. xv. 3. g cxxxix. 6. Job xi 7—9. xxvi. 14. Is xl. 28 Rom. xi 33. * Heb. there is *no search* h xliv 1, 2 lxxi 18. lxxviii. 3-7. Ex. xii. 26, 27. xiii 14, 15 Deut vi 7. Josh iv. 21—24. Is. xxxviii. 19. i xl 9, 10 lxvi. 3, 4. lxxi 17—19 24. xcvi 3. civ. 1, 2 cv. 2. Is. xii. 4 Dan iv 1—3 37 ——† Heb. *things*, or *words*. lxxii. 18 ——k xxii. 22, 23. 27. 31 xcviii. 2, 3 cxiii. 3. cxxvi. 2, 3. Josh. ii 9—11 ix. 9, 10 Ezra i, 2. Jer. l 28 Dan iii. 28, 29. vi 25—27. Hab. ii. 14.——‡ Heb. *thy greatness I will declare it.* xcii. 1, 2. cvii 21, 22. 31, 32.

l xxxvi 5—8. Is. lxiii 7. Matt. xii 34. 35. 2 Cor. ix. 11, 12. 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10. m xxxvi. 10. ii. 14 lxxi. 15, 16. 19. lxxii. 1—3. lxxxix. 16. Is. xlv. 24. 25 Jer. xxiii 6 Phil. iii. 7—9. Rev. xv. 3, 4 xix. 1—3. n lxxxvi 5. 15 c. 5. ciii. 8. cxvi. 5. Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. Num. xiv. 18. Dan. ix. 9 Jon. iv. 2. Mic. vii. 18—20. Rom. v 20, 21 Eph. i. 6. 8. ii. 4. § Heb. *great in mercy.* o xxv. 8. xxxvi. 6, 7. lxv. 9—13. civ 27, 28 Jon. iv. 11. Matt v. 45. Acts xiv. 17. xvii. 25 p xix. 1 xcvi 11—13. xcviii. 7—9. ciii. 22. civ. 24. cxlviii 1—13. Is xliii 20. xliv. 23. Rom. i. 19, 20 q xxii. 21. xxx 4 xxxii. 11. xcvii. 12 cxxxv 19—23. cxlviii. 14 Is xliii. 21. Heb. xiii. 15. 1 Pet ii. 5 9 Rev. vii. 9—12. xix. 5, 6 ——r ii 6—8 xlv 6, 7. lxxii. 1, &c. xciii. 1, 2 xcvi. 10—13. xcvii. 1, &c. xcix. 1—4. 1 Chr xxix. 11, 12 Is. ix 6, 7 xxiv. 23. xxxiii. 21, 22. Dan. vii. 13, 14 Zech. ix. 9 Matt. vi. 13 Mark xi. 9, 10. Rev. v. 12, 13. xi. 15—17.——s xcviii. 1. cv. 5. cvi. 2. cx 2, 3 cxxxv. 6—12. cxxxvi. 4, &c. Dan. iv. 34, 35. Matt. xxviii. 18. Acts ii. 8—11 Eph. i 19—21. iii 7, 8 Rev. xii 10 xix. 15, 16. t cxlvi 10 Is. ix. 7. Dan ii. 44. vii. 14. 27. 1 Tim. i. 17. Rev. xi. 15.——‖ Heb. *kingdom of all ages.* 1 Cor. xv. 24—28.

happy people, because "they have the LORD for their "God." They dwell among the ungodly, as among "strange children, whose mouth speaketh of vanity, and "whose right hand worketh iniquity: but they desire to be preserved from the contagion of their example. Their happiness is not placed in outward prosperity, nor even in flourishing families: but their endeavours are used, and their prayers are offered daily, that their sons may in their youth be planted and grow up in the courts of the Lord; that their daughters may be an ornamental part of God's spiritual temple, and be fitted in due time to be mothers in Israel, to train up a godly seed for the ensuing generation; that the number of Christians may increase, as the flocks in the fertile pastures of Canaan; that they who labour in the word and doctrine, may be strong in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, (1 *Cor.* ix. 9, 10;) that the good seed of the word may yield a vast increase; that persecutions, heresies, and divisions may be terminated: and that the church may be in peace, and prosper, without any murmurings, envyings, or contentions, to disgrace and weaken the cause of Christianity. These objects may we all ever keep in view, that, as one united phalanx, all who love Christ, may oppose the irruption of infidelity and iniquity, and promote the diffusion of truth and righteousness: for "Happy is that people that is in such a case; yea, happy "is that people whose God is the LORD."

NOTES.

PSALM CXLV. *Title.* From this psalm to the end of the book, we find unmixed praise and thanksgiving, without one complaint or petition. Probably David composed all these psalms towards the close of his life, when, as the setting sun breaks forth from behind intervening clouds, he shone forth and set in mild majesty and splendour: anticipating the employment and felicity of heaven, as he approached the mansions of the blessed. The psalm is composed alphabetically, each verse beginning with one of the Hebrew letters in order, except that *nun* is omitted.

V. 1, 2. The words rendered in these verses, "for ever "and ever," are peculiarly emphatical, and imply *endless duration*, if human language can convey that idea. Accordingly the Septuagint translates them by the most expressive terms that the copious Greek contains for an eternity to come. No doubt, therefore, the Psalmist expected to be employed for ever, yea, for ever and ever, in the high praises of his God, his King and Saviour.

V. 3. 'Hereby he declareth, that all power is subject 'to God, and that no worldly promotion ought to obscure 'his glory.'

V. 4. 'As the greatness of God our Saviour hath no 'bounds, so his praises should have no end: nor should the 'voice of thanksgiving ever cease in the church. As one 'generation drops it, another should take it up and prolong 'the delightful strain.' (*Horne.*) 'Forasmuch as the 'end of man's creation, and of his preservation in this life, 'is to praise God: therefore he requireth that not only we 'ourselves do it, but cause all others to do the same:' That is, as far as our influence can by any means extend.

V. 5—7. 'It shall be my business, in this present age, 'to speak of the dazzling splendour and beauty of thy 'majesty, which I want words to express, but which appears 'in thy stupendous works; which they that come after shall 'rehearse; and declare to their posterity what dreadful 'things were done by thy irresistible power, for the subver-'sion of our enemies: they shall continue the constant me-'mory of thy numerous benefits to us; which they shall no 'more cease to celebrate with their praises, than a spring doth 'to pour out water; but publish in their perpetual hymns, 'how just and faithful thou art to thy word.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 8. (*Note, Ex.* xxxiv. 5—7.)

V. 9—13. The God of love and mercy does good in various ways to every one of the fallen human race; and being full of compassion, he is ready to pardon, relieve, and bless, all that penitently, and in faith, seek his salvation, without respect to their past conduct. He is also ex-

14 The LORD [u] upholdeth all that fall, and [x] raiseth up all *those that be* bowed down.

15 The [y] eyes of all * wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season.

16 Thou [z] openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

17 The LORD *is* [a] righteous in all his ways, and † holy in all his works.

18 The LORD *is* [b] nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that [c] call upon him in truth.

19 He will [d] fulfil the desire of them that fear him: [e] he also will hear their cry, and will save them.

20 The LORD [f] preserveth all them that love him: but [g] all the wicked will he destroy.

21 [h] My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD: and [i] let all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever.

u xxxvii 24 xciv. 18. cxix. 117. Luke xxii. 31, 32.
x xxxviii. 6. xlii 5. cxlvi. 8 Luke xiii. 11—13.
y 9 civ 21, 27 cxxxvi 25 cxlvii. 8, 9 Gen i 30 Job xxxviii. 39 41. Joel ii 22. Matt. vi 26. Luke xii. 24. Acts xvii. 25.
* Or, *look unto thee.*
z civ. 28. cvii. 9. cxxxii. 15. Job xxxviii. 27.
a l. 6. lxxxix. 14. xcvii 2. xcix 3, 4. ciii 6. Gen xviii. 25 Deut. xxxii 4. 1 Sam. ii. 2, 3. Is. xlv. 21. Zeph. iii. 5. Zech. ix. 9. Rom. iii. 5, 6. 25, 26 Rev. iv. 8 xv. 3, 4. xvi. 5 7. xix. 2. 11.———† Or, *merciful*, or *bountiful.*
b xxxiv. 18. xlvi. 1. 5. Deu. iv. 7. 1 Kings xviii. 27, 28. Is. lviii. 9. John xiv. 23. Jam. iv. 8.
c xvii. 1. cxix. 2. Prov. xv. 8. Is. i. 15, 16 Jer. xxix 12, 13. Hos. vii. 14. Matt. vi. 5—8. xxiii 14. John iv. 24. 1 John iii. 20—22.
d xx. 4 xxxiv. 9. xxxvi. 7, 8. xxxvii. 4 19. Mat. v. 6. Luke i. 53. John xv. 7. 16. xvi. 24. Eph iii. 16—20. 1 John v 15
e xxxiv. 17. xxxvii. 39, 40
f xxxi. 23. xxxvii. 28. xcvii. 10. John x. 27—29. Rom. viii. 28—30. Jam. ii. 5. 1 Pet. i 5—8.———g i 6. ix. 17. Matt. xxv. 41. xxx. 12. li. 15. lxxi. 8. 15 23, 24. lxxxix. 1.———i lxvii. 3, 4 lxxxvi. 9. ciii. 22. cxvii. cl. 6 Rev. v. 11—14.

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ceedingly attentive to the wants and sufferings even of animals, according to their several tribes; and requires men to be so. (*Marg. Ref.*) All his creatures, according to their several natures, in one way or other, though unconsciously or involuntarily, subserve the display of his glory: but his saints, his redeemed people, who have obtained his mercy and devoted themselves to his service, are the royal priesthood in this august temple of the visible creation, who with admiring grateful hearts, zealously offer him the spiritual sacrifices of adoring praise and thanksgiving. They are the subjects of the mediatorial kingdom of the Redeemer on earth, and heirs of the kingdom in heaven, "which God "hath prepared for them that love him:" and it is their chief business and pleasure to celebrate the power and glory of that kingdom, which are also the grand subject of their praises. Thus, by their means, the sons of men, who had before not known the works and kingdom of God, become acquainted with them: and in this manner the kingdom of God comes, and is set up more diffusively on earth, and perpetuated from generation to generation, and will be so till the end of time; when, translated to heaven, it will endure for ever and ever. The Septuagint here adds another verse, (probably to complete the number of verses according to the Hebrew alphabet,) which is not found in the original. 'The LORD is faithful to all his words, and 'holy in all his works.' The sentiment in this verse is indeed entirely scriptural; but it so much resembles the seventeenth, that it is supposed by the best critics not to be genuine.

V. 14. "JEHOVAH is the Supporter of all that are fall-"ing, and Refresher of all that are dejected." 'Who 'being in misery and affliction would faint and fall away, 'if God did not uphold them: and therefore they ought 'to reverence him that reigneth in heaven, and suffer them 'selves to be governed by him.' This is also a direction to those who are ready to fall before temptation, or to sink under affliction, where to apply for help and comfort; even to "that God who comforteth those that are cast down."

V. 15, 16. (*Note*, civ. 27—30.)

V. 17. Perfect justice, truth, purity, wisdom, and love, invariably govern all the dispensations and works of God. And the more any man studies them in humble piety, the fuller conviction of this leading and satisfying truth will he receive.

V. 18. 'It is our happiness to have a King, that is not, 'like earthly princes, difficult of access; but one of whom 'his meanest subject may at any time obtain an audience, 'and be certain of having his request granted, if it be 'made "in truth," without wavering and without hypo-'crisy, with humble confidence and unwearied constancy; 'expecting salvation from God, from none but him, and 'from him only in the way of duty and obedience." (*Horne.*) —This is a just description of a right state of heart; but the Psalmist seems to have intended the encouragement of all sincere suppliants, (as distinguished from hypocrites,) however low and imperfect their attainments were.

V. 19, 20. They that call on God in truth *fear him;* and he will fulfil their desires; as they desire what he has promised. Thus they will learn to love him, and become conscious that they do love him: and, amidst all trials and temptations, the almighty God preserves those that love him. But the wicked, the impenitent, whether profane or hypocritical, he will destroy.

V. 21. 'All men ought to praise God to eternity, and 'may all do this.' The Psalmist thus concludes, as he had begun; except that he here called on others to do what himself had before determined on.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Such as, under troubles and temptations, abound in fervent prayer, shall in due season abound in grateful praise, which is the genuine language of holy joy. We can never extol our glorious God and Saviour in an adequate manner: we should therefore exert all our powers, and make new efforts to bless his name every day; and we may thus be delightfully employed for ever and ever, without exhausting the infinitely copious subject. For "the great Head of the "church is the King of all the earth, yea, he is great, and "greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable." Animated by our glorious theme, we should communicate all we have learned of his perfections and his works to our children; that when we join the songs of the church triumphant, the solemn service on earth may not be suspended for a moment; but that "one generation may praise his "works unto another, and declare his mighty acts." Whether our sphere be extensive or contracted, we should in it be continually "speaking of the glorious honour of his "majesty;" especially of his wondrous work of redemption; in order to stir up other men to speak of his power and terrible acts, whilst we declare his greatness. For nei-

PSALM CXLVI.

The Psalmist resolves to praise God, while he had any being, 1, 2. He dissuades from trusting in man, 3, 4. He encourages confidence in God, from a view of his power and goodness, as displayed in all his works, 5—10.

*Heb. *Hallelujah*. cv. 45.
a ciii. 1. 22. civ. 1. 35.
b lxiii. 4. lxxi. 14, 15. civ. 32. cxlv. 1, 2. Rev. vii. 9—17.

*PRAISE ye the LORD. [a] Praise the LORD, O my soul.

2 [b] While I live will I praise the LORD: I will sing praises unto my God, while I have any being.

3 [c] Put not your trust in princes, *nor* in the son of man, in whom *there is* no † help.

4 His [d] breath goeth forth, [e] he returneth to his earth; in that very day [f] his thoughts perish.

5 [g] Happy *is he* that *hath* [h] the God of Jacob for his help, [i] whose hope *is* in the LORD his God;

6 Which [k] made heaven and earth, [l] the sea, and all that therein *is*: which [m] keepeth truth for ever;

c lxii. 9. cxviii. 8. 9. Is. ii. 22. xxxi. 3. xxxvi. 6. Jer xvii. 5, 6.
† Or, *salvation*.
d civ. 29. Gen. ii 7. vi. 17. Job xiv. 10. xvii. 1. xxvii 3. Dan. v. 23.
e xc 3. Gen. iii 19. Ec. 12. 7.
f Job xiv. 21. xvii. 11. Is. ii. 22. Lam. iv. 20. 1 Cor. ii. 6.
g xxxiii. 12. lxxxiv. 12. cxliv 15. Deu. xxxiii. 29.
h xlvi. 7. 11 lxxxiv. 8. Gen. xxxii. 24—29. l. 17. Ex. iii. 6.
i xxxix. 7. lxxi. 5. Jer. xvii 7, 8.
1 Pet i. 21.——k xxxiii. 6. cxxxvi. 5, 6. c cxlviii. 5, 6. Gen. i 1. Jer. x 11. 12. xxxii. 17. John i. 3. Col. ii. 16. Rev xiv. 7.——l xcv. 5. Ex xx. 11. Job xxxviii. 8—11. Prov. 8. 28, 29.——m lxxxix. 2. 33. xcviii. 3. c. 5. Deu. vii Dan ix 4. Mic vii. 20 John x. 35. Tit. i. 2. Heb vi. 18.

ther Egypt's desolating plagues, nor the destruction of the devoted Canaanites, so proclaim the terror of the avenging justice of our God, as the cross of Christ does to the enlightened mind. But though we endeavour to make sinners know the terror of the Lord, that they may flee from the wrath to come; yet we should still more aim to lead them into the experience of his mercy, that "they may abundantly utter the memory of his great goodness, and sing of his righteousness:" for in the salvation of Christ we see it harmonize with mercy, and perceive that a just God is also gracious, full of compassion, and slow to anger. Indeed, "the LORD is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works;" and even impenitent sinners on earth are living monuments of his patience, and of his goodness to his enemies. All his works show forth his praises: but his saints bless his name with joyful hearts, and render him the reasonable service of love and gratitude. Being brought into his kingdom, as governed by the divine Redeemer from his mediatorial throne, they delight to discourse of its glory and to talk of his power. The perfections of their King, the honour of God the Father in his salvation, the privileges and character of his subjects, and their impregnable security; the reasonableness of his laws, and the mercy and equity of his administration; the favour he hath shown to rebels who submit to him, the benefits they have received, the inheritance prepared for them, and the price paid for their ransom, form their favourite topics. Fain would they make known to all the sons of men his mighty acts and the glorious majesty of his kingdom: that none might longer refuse submission to so gracious a prince, whose authority is established to all generations. The Lord's condescension likewise excites their liveliest gratitude: he regardeth the mean and the vile; he upholdeth all such as feel themselves falling into sin and misery, and apply to him for help; and he raiseth up all those that are bowed down with conscious guilt or deep distress. All creatures wait upon him, and are satisfied with meat in due season; and he saith to his believing poor, "Your Father knoweth what things you have need of." His justice and purity are always exercised in full perfection, whether he save or punish; yet he most delighteth that sinners should repent and live. He is therefore accessible at all times and in all places, to the most guilty of our fallen race; and he is nigh to hear, to pardon, and to save, all that call upon him in truth; so that none who hear the Gospel, are excluded from its blessings, but profane despisers, careless transgressors, and hypocrites. "For he will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he will hear their cry, and will help them." And having taught them to love his name and his holy ways, he will preserve them from the destruction of the wicked, who shall perish for ever. May we then fear his wrath, and seek his grace: may we love his name, and walk in his ways: then shall we speak from a full heart, whilst our lips utter his praise; and whilst we desire that "all flesh should bless his holy name for ever and ever."

NOTES.

PSALM CXLVI. V. 1. The Septuagint and the vulgate Latin ascribe this psalm to Haggai and Zechariah; from an opinion, perhaps, that it suited the times of those prophets; when the Jews found little encouragement to trust in the kings of Persia; but when, simply trusting in God, they were prospered. It seems, however, to have been written by David towards the close of his reign.

V. 2. *While*, &c. No doubt the following stanza gives the genuine meaning of the Psalmist:

'I'll praise my Maker with my breath;
'And when my voice is lost in death,
'Praise shall employ my noblest powers:
'My days of praise shall ne'er be past
'While life and thought and being last;
'And immortality endures.' (*Watts.*)

V. 3. *The Son*, &c. If he, who commonly styled himself the Son of Man, had not also been the Son of God, he must have been included in this general dissuasive: but on the contrary, all the particulars mentioned in the subsequent part of the psalm, were remarkably verified in him. —'Earthly princes, if they have the will, often want the 'power, even to protect their friends. And should they 'want neither will nor power to advance them: yet still all 'depends upon the breath in their nostrils, which, perhaps 'at the very critical moment goeth forth, they return to 'their earth; and all the thoughts of those, who hoped to 'rise by their means, fall into the same grave, and are buried with them for ever.' (*Horne.*)

V. 5. 'He, and he alone, is the truly happy man, 'who expects help from the mighty God who fed Jacob 'all his life long (*Gen.* xlviii. 15:) who trusts in him that 'is the Lord of the world, and hath made him his Friend 'so much, that he can call him his God'. (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 6. 'He encourageth the godly to trust only in the

7 Which [n] executeth judgment for the oppressed; [o] which giveth food to the hungry. The LORD [p] looseth the prisoners:

8 The LORD [q] openeth *the eyes of* the blind: the LORD [r] raiseth *them that are* bowed down: the LORD [s] loveth the righteous.

9 The LORD [t] preserveth the strangers: he relieveth the fatherless and widow; but [u] the way of the wicked he turneth upside down.

10 The LORD shall [x] reign for ever, *even* [y] thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the LORD.

n ix. 16. x. 14, 15. 18 xii. 5. lxxii. 4. ciii 6 Prov. xxii.22,23. xxiii. 10, 11. Is. ix. 4. Mal. iii 5.
o cvii 9. cxxxvi. 25 cxlv 15, 16 Jer. xxxi. 14. Luke i. 53. ix. 17
p lxviii.6. cv 17—20 cvii 10. 14—16. cxlii. 7. Is lxi. 1. Zech. ix 11, 12 Luke iv. 18. Acts v. 19. xvi. 26.
q xxxv 5. xlii.16. Is. xlii.18 Matt ix 30. xi 5 Luke xviii. 41, 42 John ix 7. 32, 33 Acts xxvi. 18 Eph i. 18.
r cxlv 14. cxlvii. 6. Luke xiii. 11—13 2Cor. vii 6.
s xi 7. Deut. xxxiii. 3 John xiv. 21—23 xvi 27.
t lxviii 5 Deut. x. 18, 19. xvi 11. Jer. xlix. 11. Hos. xiv. 3. Mal. iii. 5. Jam. i. 27.
u xviii 26 lxxxiii. 13—17. cxlv. 20 cxlvii 6. 2 Sam. xv 31. xvii. 23 Esth. v. 14. vii. 10. ix 25 Job v. 12—14 1 Cor. iii 19. ——— x x. 16. cxlv 13. Ex xv. 18. Is. ix. 7. Dan li 44 vi 26 vii. 14. Rev xi 15. ——— y cxlvii. 12. Is. xii. 6 xl 9. lii. 7 Joel iii.17.

PSALM CXLVII.

Exhortations to praise God for the wisdom, power, and goodness, displayed in providence, and in the care of his Church; in the changes of the weather, and the revolving seasons; and for giving Israel his word and ordinances, 1—20.

PRAISE ye the LORD: [a] for *it is* good to sing praises unto our God; for *it is* pleasant; [b] *and* praise is comely.

2 The LORD doth [c] build up Jerusalem: [d] he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel.

a lxiii. 3—5 xcii. 1. cxxxv. 3.
b xxxiii. 1. xlii. 4. cxxii. 1—4. Rev. v. 9—14. xix. 1—6.
c li. 18. cii 13—16. Neh. iii. 1, &c. vii. 4. Is. xiv. 32. lxii. 7 Jer. xxxi. 4 Dan. ix. 25. Matt. xvi. 18.
d cii. 20—22 Deut. xxx. 3. Ezra ii. 64, 65. viii. 1, &c. Is. xi. 11, 12. xxvii 13 lvi. 8 Jer. xxxii 37 Ez. xxxvi. 24, &c. xxxvii. 21 &c. xxxviii. xxxix. 27, 28 Eph. ii. 12—19

'Lord, both for that his power (by which all worlds were 'made and are upheld,) is able to deliver them from all 'danger; and for his promise' sake, his will is most ready 'to do it.'

V. 8. 'This verse was most exactly fulfilled in our 'Lord Christ, when he came to give salvation to us.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) So indeed are all the rest, both in respect of his miracles, and the spiritual blessings of his salvation.—(*Marg Ref.*)

V. 9. *Strangers*, &c. 'Meaning all that are destitute 'of worldly means and succour.'

V. 10. 'He assureth the church, that God reigneth 'for ever, for the preservation of the same.'

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In heaven when one Hallelujah closes, another commences: and sometimes the believer on earth is so carried above his fears, sorrows, and sins, as to emulate the incessant thanksgivings of the saints in light. If we desire to praise the Lord while we live, as our most delightful occupation, we shall certainly praise him "while we have "any being," even to all eternity. With these glorious prospects before our eyes, how mean do the pursuits of ambition, or connexions with the great, seem to us! and how needful doth it appear to dissuade men from this common but destructive idolatry! The fickleness, jealousies, selfishness, and weakness of man, and the intrigues and cabals of courts, render all dependence on princes delusory, even as to this present world. But were this dependence as stable as it is slippery, the uncertainty of life must expose to perpetual anxieties and disappointments all those who confide in such dying patrons. How little then could the friendship of all the princes of the earth do for us, in respect of judgment and the eternal world! "Happy is he" alone, "who hath the God of Jacob for his help, and whose hope "is in the Lord his God." He who "made the heaven, "and earth, the sea, and all that therein is," cannot want power to bless us; and his *goodness* is illustrious in every part of his providential government. But lest we should question his love to sinners, or his eternal truth and faithfulness to his word, behold the God of heaven assumes our human flesh, that he may become our Salvation! The eternal and coequal Son of God becomes the Son of man! Not to be without help, as the other children of men are, but to bring effectual help and eternal salvation unto us. And though he expired upon the cross for our sins, and was laid in the grave: yet his thoughts of love did not then perish, but he arose again to accomplish them; and he reigneth in Zion, her Lord and King, to all generations, to the praise and glory of God the Father; and when we trust in Emmanuel, then our faith and hope are rested on the God of Jacob. (1 *Pet.* i. 21.) To evince, that he was the Creator and Lord of all, when in his state of humiliation on earth; he rescued those who were oppressed by Satan, and executed judgment on that oppressor; he created food to bestow on the hungering multitudes; he opened the eyes of those who had been born blind; he raised up those who were bowed down with disease; and he showed himself the effectual Friend of the widow and of the destitute. But all this was only a specimen and an emblem of what he is doing every day. He still continually proclaims and grants "deliverance to the captives, and the "opening of the prison to those that are bound" in the chains of sin and Satan. He opens the eyes of our understandings, and raises up those who are bowed down with a load of conscious guilt, or by great distress of soul: he feeds those who hunger for salvation, with the Bread of life; and he is the constant Friend of the poor in spirit, of the destitute and helpless. In short, he loveth the righteous, and their righteousness is in and from him; but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down: and whilst he doeth these things by his grace, his providence ordereth all things for the good of those who trust and love him. Let sinners then flee to him; and let believers rejoice in him, as their gracious and covenanted Friend: and as "the LORD shall "reign for ever, even our God to all generations," let us without ceasing excite each other to praise his holy name.

NOTES.

PSALM CXLVII. V. 1, 2. 'This psalm also is by the Septuagint ascribed to Haggai and Zechariah: and in

3 He [e] healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their * wounds.

4 He [f] telleth the number of the stars: he calleth them all by *their* names

5 [g] Great *is* our LORD and of great power: † his understanding *is* infinite.

6 The LORD [h] lifteth up the meek: he casteth the wicked down to the ground.

7 [k] Sing unto the LORD with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God;

8 Who [l] covereth the heaven with clouds, who [m] prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains.

9 He [n] giveth to the beast his food, *and* to the young ravens which cry.

10 He [o] delighteth not in the strength of the horse: [p] he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man.

11 The LORD [q] taketh pleasure in them [r] that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.

12 Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem; [s] praise thy God, O Zion.

13 For [t] he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates; he hath [u] blessed thy children within thee.

14 ‡ He [x] maketh peace *in* thy borders, *and* [y] filleth thee with the § finest of the wheat

15 He [z] sendeth forth his commandment *upon* earth: [a] his word runneth very swiftly.

16 He [b] giveth snow like wool: he [c] scattereth the hoar-frost like ashes.

17 He [d] casteth forth his ice like morsels: [e] who can stand before his cold?

18 He [f] sendeth out his word, and melteth them: he causeth his wind to blow, *and* the waters flow.

e Ii. 17 Job v. 18 Is. lvii. 15. lxi 1 Jer. xxxiii 6. Hos. vi. 1, 2. Mal. iv. 2. Luke iv. 18
* Heb *griefs*. Is. i. 6, 7. viii. 3. cxlviii. 3. Gen xv. 5. Is xl. 26.
f xlviii. 1. xcvi. 4. xcix. 2. cxxxv 5 cxlv. 3. Jer. x. 6. xxxii. 17–19. Nah. i. 3. Rev. xv 3
† Heb. *of his understanding* there is *no number*. xl. 5 cxxxix. 17, 18. Is xl. 28. Rom. xi 33
h xxv 9 xxxvii. 11. cxlv 14 cxlvi 8. cxlix. 4. 1 Sam. ii. 8. Zeph. ii. 3. Matt. v. 5. Jam. iv. 10. 1 Pet. v 6.
i v. 23 lxxiii. 18, 19. cxlvi 9. 2 Pet. ii. 4–9.
k xlvii. 6, 7. lxviii. 32. xcii 1–3. xcv. 1, 2 cvii. 21, 22. Ex. xv. 20, 21. Rev v. 8–10.
l cxxxv. 7. Gen. ix. 14 1 Kings xviii. 44, 45. Job xxvi 8, 9. xxxvi. 27–33. xxxviii. 25–27. Is. v. 6.———m lxv. 9–13. civ 13, 14. Job v. 10 Jer. xiv. 22 Joel ii. 23 Am. v. 7, 8. Matt. v. 45. Acts xiv. 17. Jam v 17, 18.———n civ. 27, 28. cxxxvi. 25. cxlv. 15 Job xxxviii. 41. Matt. vi. 26. Luke xii. 24.———o xx. 7 xxxiii. 16–18. Job xxxix. 19, &c. Prov. xxi. 31. Is. xxxi. 1. Hos. i. 7.———p 1 Sam. xvi. 7 2 Sam. i. 23. ii. 18–23. Ec. ix 11.

q xxxv 27 cxlix. 4. Prov. xi, 20. xxxi 30. Zeph. iii 17. 1 Pet. iii. 4.
r xxxiii. 18. 22. 1 Pet. i. 13. 17.
s cxxxv. 19–21. cxlvi 10. cxlix. 2. Is xii. 6 liii. 7. Joel ii. 23.
t xlviii. 11–14. li. 18. cxxv 2. Neh. iii. 1. 3, &c. vi. 1. vii. 1. xii. 30. Lam ii 8, 9. iv. 12 Dan. ix. 25.
u cxv. 14, 15. cxxviii. 3–6. cxliv. 12. Is. xliv. 3–5. Jer. xxx. 19, 20 Zech. viii 3–5. Luke xix. 42–44
‡ Heb. *Who maketh thy border peace.*
x xxix. 11. cxxii. 6. Lev. xxvi. 6. 1 Chr. xxii. 9. Is. ix. 6. 7. lx. 17, 18 lxvi. 12. Zech ix. 3
y cxxxii. 15. Deu. viii. 7, 8. Ez. xxvii. 17.
§ Heb. *fat of wheat.* lxxxi. 16. *marg.* Deut. xxxii. 14.
z xxxiii. 9. cvii. 20 25. Job xxxiv. 29. xxxvii. 12. Jon. i. 4 Matt. viii. 8, 9. 13.———a lxviii. 11. 2 Thes. iii. 1. *marg.*———b cxlviii 8 Job xxxvii. 6.———c Job xxxvii. 9, 10. xxxviii. 29. Is. lv. 10.———d lxxviii. 47, 48. Ex. ix. 23–25. Josh. x. 11. Job xxxviii. 22, 23.———e Job xxxviii. 29, 30.———f 15. Job vi. 16, 17. xxxvii. 17.

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deed many expressions in it favour the supposition that it was composed as a song of praise for the restoration of the Jews to Jerusalem and their own land; but it seems better suited to the times of Nehemiah, when the walls were rebuilt, and the state re-established, than to the unsettled condition of the newly returned captives, when Haggai and Zechariah prophesied to them. For in their days, it could scarcely be said, that the Lord built up Jerusalem, and he had not then "strengthened the bars of her gates," (13) as they were not set up till long afterwards. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 3. He comforts us after our long sorrow, which 'had in a manner broken our hearts: and hath in some 'measure repaired our breaches, which like a festering 'wound, (*Is.* i. 5, 6,) endangered the life of our nation.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 4. 'Though it seem to man incredible, that God 'should assemble his church, being so dispersed; yet no 'thing can be too hard for him, that can number and name 'all the stars.' This thought naturally arose from the dispersed state of the Jews after the captivity, and was applicable to the Lord's gathering them into their own land. (*Am.* ix. 9.) 'He who does this (number and name the stars,) cannot be ignorant of the circumstances and situa-'tion of his elect.' (*Horne.*)

V. 5. (*Note, Is.* xl. 27—31.)

V. 6. (*Note, Neh.* xii. 27.)

V. 8. *Clouds*, &c. 'Clouds look melancholy; yet with-'out them we could have no rain, and consequently no 'fruit: thus afflictions look black, and dark, and unplea-'sant; yet from them come those showers that yield the 'peaceable fruits of righteousness.' (*Henry.*)

V. 10, 11. 'We need not be afraid though we are of 'little force, and have no armies of horse and foot to de-'fend us: for the LORD who fights for us hath no need of 'these (*Neh.* iv. 20;) and will not take part with our ene-'mies, because they are superior to us in the strength of 'their horses, and the nimbleness of their soldiers. But 'he delights to give those his assistance who worshipping 'him devoutly fear to offend him; and having no help in 'themselves, nor any earthly refuge to flee to, depend, 'notwithstanding, with a steadfast faith on his infinite mer-'cy.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 12—14. The Jews celebrated the dedication of the wall, (when it had been rebuilt, and the gates of it set up, under the pious care of Nehemiah,) with loud and earnest thanksgivings to God; (*Notes, Neh.* xii. 27—43.) and they were encouraged in future to hope confidently for peace and plenty. The last clause is literally, "He shall satisfy thee "with the fat of wheat."

V. 15—18. Till the Lord's time came, all the efforts of the Jews to recover liberty or prosperity were as unavailing, as the skill and power of man are to prevent the effects of frost and snow: but when he gave the command, every heart was speedily disposed to favour them; as the snow and ice melt, and the waters flow, when he sends a thaw, warm sun-beams, and a southern breeze: 'What the sun 'is to the world, the same is Christ to the church. When 'the heart of man turns away from him, then darkness 'succeeds to light; then faith fails, and all its fair produc-'tions wither, and the fertilizing streams of charity are 'frozen to the bottom.' 'But when he sendeth out his 'word, and bloweth with his Spirit: then faith revives, 'the hearts of men are warmed, and their understandings 'illuminated.' (*Horne.*) The snow is here compared to *wool*, and the ice to *morsels*: and it is well known that the snow keeps the ground warm and assists vegetation: so that, perhaps the ice, or hailstones are compared to *morsels*, not only from the solid form which they assume, but because of the nourishing and fertilizing effects which the frost produceth upon the ground.

g lxxvi 1. lxxviii. 5. ciii. 7. Deut. xxxiii. 2—4. Mal. iv 4 Rom iii. 2. ix. 4. 2 Tim. iii 15—17.
* Heb. *words* Ex. xx. 1, &c. Deut. iv. 12, 13. v. 22.
h Ex. xxi—xxiii Deut. iv. 1—8. 45 v. 31. vi. 1, &c.
i Deu. iv. 32—34. Prov xxix. 18. Is v 1—7. Mat. xxi. 33—41 Acts xiv 16 xxvi. 17, 18. Rom. iii. 1, 2. Eph ii. 12. v. 8. 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10.

19 He [g] sheweth his * word unto Jacob, [h] his statutes and his judgments unto Israel.

20 He hath [i] not dealt so with any nation: and *as for his* judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the LORD.

PSALM CXLVIII.

The Psalmist calls on all celestial beings to praise God their Creator, 1—6: *and on all terrestrial,* 7—10: *especially on all the race of man however distinguished,* 11, 12: *and this on account of his glory, and his love to his people,* 13, 14.

*Heb. *Hallelujah.* cxlvi. 1.
a lxxxix. 5. Is. xlix. 13. Luke ii. 14. Rev. xix. 1—6.
b ciii. 20, 21. Job xxxviii. 7. Is. vi. 2—4. Ez. iii. 12. Rev. v. 11—13.
c Gen. ii. 1.
d viii. 3. xix. 1—6. lxxxix. 36, 37. cxxxvi 7—9. Gen. i. 14—16. viii 22. Jer. xxxiii. 20

*PRAISE ye the LORD. [a] Praise ye the LORD from the heavens: praise him in the heights.

2 Praise ye him, [b] all his angels: praise ye him, [c] all his hosts.

3 Praise ye him, [d] sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light.

V. 19, 20. The pious Jews, when returned from their dispersions among idaloters, would be more impressed with the value of their sacred oracles and other special advantages, than they were who had never witnessed such scenes of darkness and ignorance.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The display of the glory of the divine perfections was intended in all the works of God; and to celebrate his praises forms the most suitable return for his benefits, of which we are capable. It is therefore both reasonable and acceptable, pleasant and becoming, for us to abound in this blessed work; 'which is the offspring of gratitude, 'and the expression of love; the elevation of the soul and 'the antepast of heaven; its own reward in this life, and 'an introduction to the felicities of the next.' (*Horne.*) The continued care of God over his chosen city, and in gathering his people Israel from their various captivities and dispersions, to dwell and worship at Jerusalem, were emblems of his care of his church, the city of the living God; of his gathering poor outcast sinners by his grace, to dwell there on earth; and of his bringing them all at length to his holy habitation in heaven. The contrast between the majesty and the mercy of our God should never be overlooked. Whilst "he telleth the number of the "stars," he condescendeth to hear the poor broken-hearted sinner, and to heal by his consolations his wounded spirit. His greatness, power, and wisdom are infinite; and he displays his justice in crushing to the earth the haughtiest and mightiest rebels: yet he lifteth up the meek from their dejection and abject misery, to the comfort of his favour here, and to the throne of glory hereafter. He provides for all creatures, by means worthy of himself: and whilst he feeds the young ravens who cry unto him, he gives a pledge that he will not leave destitute his praying people. He delighteth not in those things in which sinners confide and glory: but his delight is in them who conscientiously fear and serve him, hoping in his mercy alone for pardon and acceptance. These are the inhabitants of Zion, who praise his name: he is their Protector, and will bless them and their children, with spiritual peace and abundant supplies of every good thing; whilst they who trust in chariots and horses, or in their own agility, strength, wisdom, courage, or righteousness, will sink into penury, misery, and contempt.—When the Lord speaks, all nature prepares for prompt obedience. At his command the snow and the hoar-frost irresistibly cover the earth; nothing can withstand his piercing and congealing cold; the rivers are arrested in their course, and the works of men are suspended; nor can any human power remove the obstruction. But JEHOVAH again gives the word—the gentler breezes blow, the snow and ice melt, the waters flow, and all reverts to its former course. Let us then consider how unable we are to stand before the indignation of the Lord: let us be thankful, that he moderates the continuance of the winter, and renders it useful to the earth: let us bless him, if abundance of all things needful renders us free from the miseries which many suffer during that inclement season; and let us learn to contribute liberally to their relief. Let us also expect from his power things impracticable to all others. He can comfort and sanctify, when every human effort hath proved unsuccessful: he can soften and melt the most obdurate heart; and bring the rich and great into his church, though that be more difficult than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. Whilst therefore we remember with gratitude, that he hath showed his word unto us, and favoured us with his statutes and judgments, as he did Jacob of old: whilst we are watchful not to abuse these privileges to our deeper condemnation, and study to show forth his praises in our holy lives: let us also pity, hope, and pray for, those that are not so dealt with and have not known his judgments; for the Lord is able to remove every obstruction to their conversion, that all nations may join in his solemn worship, and praise him as the God of Israel.

NOTES.

PSALM CXLVIII. V. 1, 2. (*Notes*, ciii. 20—22. *Rev.* iv. 5.) 'From the heavens and those unutterable heights, 'where hosts of immortal spirits, admitted to the sight of 'their King, enjoy unfading pleasures, the song is to begin. 'And when the strain is thus set by the celestial part of 'the choir, it is to be taken up and echoed back, by the 'creatures of this lower world, animate and inanimate, 'which have all their several parts assigned them, in the 'great work of glorifying their Creator.' (*Horne.*)

V. 3. (*Notes, Ps.* xix. 1—6.) 'The material heavens, 'with the luminaries placed in them, &c. by their splendour and their influences, all regulated according to the 'ordinance of their Maker, do, in a very intelligible and 'striking manner, declare the glory of God: they call upon us to translate their actions into our language, and 'copy their obedience in our lives.'—(*Horne.*)

4 Praise him, [e] ye heavens of heavens, and [f] ye waters that *be* above the heavens.

5 Let them praise the name of the LORD: [g] for he commanded, and they were created.

6 He [h] hath also stablished them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass.

7 Praise the LORD [i] from the earth, [k] ye dragons, and all deeps:

8 [l] Fire, and hail; snow, and vapours; [m] stormy wind fulfilling his word:

9 [n] Mountains and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars:

10 [o] Beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and * flying fowl:

11 [p] Kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth:

12 Both [q] young men and maidens; old men and children:

13 Let them praise the name of the LORD: [r] for his name alone is † excellent; [s] his glory *is* above the earth and heaven.

14 He also [t] exalteth the horn of his people, [u] the praise of all his saints; *even* of the children of Israel, [x] a people near unto him. Praise ye the LORD.

e cxiii. 6. 1 Kings viii. 27. 2 Cor. xii. 2.
f civ. 3. Gen i. 7. vii 11
g xxxiii.6—9 xcv. 5. Gen. i 1, 2. 6. Jer. x 11—13. Am. ix. 6. Rev. iv. 11.
h lxxxix 37 xciii. 1. cxix. 90, 91. Job xxxviii. 10, 11. 33 Prov. viii. 27—29. Is liv. 9. Jer xxxi. 35, 36. xxxiii 25.
i 1.
k lxxiv. 13, 14. civ. 25, 26. Gen. i. 21 Job xli. 1, &c Is. xxvii 1. xliii 20 li. 9, 10. cxlvii 15—18. Gen. xix. 24.
l Ex. ix 23—25. Lev x 2 Num. xvi 35 Josh x. 11. Job xxxvii. 2-6. xxxviii. 22, &c Is. lxvi. 16. Joel ii. 30 Am. vii 4 Rev. xvi 8, 9. 21.——m cvii 25—29. Ex. x. 13. 19 xiv. 21. Am. iv. 13. Mat viii. 24—27.
n lxv 12, 13 xcvi. 11—13. xcviii. 4, 5. xcviii. 7—9 cxiv. 3—7. Is xlii. 11. xliv. 23 xlix. 13 lv. 12 13. lxiv 1. Ex. xxxvi. 1, &c ——o l. 10, 11. ciii. 22. cl. 6 Gen. i. 20—25
* Heb *birds of wing*. Gen. vii. 14. *Marg*. Ez. xvii. 23.

p ii. 10—12. xxii. 27—29. lxvi. 1—4 lxviii. 31, 32 lxxii. 10, 11. lxxxvi. 9. cii. 15. cxxxviii. 4, 5. Pro. viii. 15, 16 Is xlix 23. lx. 3. Rev. xxi. 24.
q viii.2. lxviii.25. Jer. xxxi. 13. Zech. ix. 17. Matt. xxi. 15, 16. Luke xix. 37. Tit. ii. 4—6.
r viii 1. 9. xcix. 3, 4. 9. Cant. v. 9. 16. Is. vi. 3. Zech. ix. 17. Phil. iii. 8.
† Heb. *exalted*. 1 Chr. xxix. 11. Is.xii. 4. xxxiii. 5. Matt. vi 13.
s lvii. 5. lxxii.19. cviii. 4 cxi i 4. Eph iv. 10. 1 Pet. iii. 22.
t lxxv.10 lxxxix. 17. xcii. 10. cxii 9. 1 Sam. ii 1. Luke i. 52.
u cxlv. 10. cxlix. 9 Luke ii. 32. Rev. v. 8—14.
x Ex. xix. 5, 6. Deut. iv. 7. Eph. ii. 13. 19. 1 Pet. ii. 9.

PSALM CXLIX.

Israel exhorted to praise God, and to rejoice in him; and to prepare for victory

V. 4. (*Note Gen.* i. 1. *latter part.*)

V. 6. (*Marg. Ref. Note, Gen.* viii. 20—22.)

V. 7. *From the Earth.* The preceding praises were to be rendered from the heavens above; the following from the earth beneath. *Dragons*, or *whales*, and other sea-monsters.

V. 13. 'Let them praise the incomparable wisdom, 'goodness, and power of the Lord: whose most excellent 'majesty infinitely surpasses all that the earth or the hea-'vens can tell us of him.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) It ought not to pass unnoticed, that this verse is future, "They shall "praise, &c.;" and may be considered as a prediction of that time, when "the earth shall be full of the glory of "the LORD, as the waters cover the sea."

V. 14. *The horn*, &c. Or, "He exalteth a Horn for "his people:" "He hath raised up for us a Horn of Sal-"vation, in the house of his servant David; as he spake "by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been "since the world began." 'He hath set over us a pow-'erful prince for the defence and safety of his people; 'whose fame he hath hereby raised to the highest pitch 'of honour.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) But David was only a shadow of Him, who is "a Light to lighten the Gentiles, and "the Glory of his people Israel."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Every effort of the zealous believer to praise the Lord, causes his boundless excellencies to unveil themselves more fully to his enraptured, admiring, thankful heart: and thus he becomes more and more conscious of his inability to praise his God in a suitable manner. He therefore rejoices to reflect, that there are innumerable hosts of angels before the throne, in the heights of heaven, who are able to praise him in more exalted strains: and though they need no incitement; yet his desire that God should be worthily glorified, will make him ready to call upon them to proceed in their lofty adorations: and he would wish, if it were possible, that the sound of their praises might be heard on earth and echoed back in responsive chorus by all its inhabitants. Indeed all the works of God, above and below, (fallen rational creatures excepted,) without our exhortation, do in their way proclaim the Creator's praise: and it is worthy our notice, that men, who do not praise the Lord and obey his command, are more ungovernable than the monsters of the deep, than the raging sea itself, than the stormy wind, or the devouring flame. But how desirable would it be, if kings of the earth, and all princes, nobles, and rulers, would count it their honour to lead the chorus of praise to the Lord, and use all their authority in promoting his glory! and if all people would unite in this service! How reasonable and becoming would it be, for young men and maidens to employ the fire and vigour of their active spirits, and to seek their pleasure and joy, in doing the will and celebrating the praises of the Lord: and for the aged to show that they are ripening for heaven, by teaching their infant-posterity to lisp thanksgivings unto him! Alas, how little do any of us feel or express of this fervent spirit of adoring love and gratitude! and how few of the human species praise him, in concert with the angels and saints in heaven! But we are taught to pray, "Hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom "come, thy will be done *on earth* as it is *in heaven*." Nor will our fervent prayers be always unanswered: "for all "kings shall yet fall down before God our Saviour, all "nations shall do him service." In the mean time, let us show that we are his saints, by praising his name continually. He is not only our Creator, but our Redeemer, who hath made us "a people near unto him," and will exalt us "above all our enemies. His name only is excellent; and "his glory is above the earth and heaven:" and in redemption those infinite excellencies and that unspeakable glory are displayed to our view, and form the source of all our hopes and joys. Whilst sinners are invited to draw near unto our reconciled God; his believing people are called to rejoice in him; and the language of joy is praise and thanksgiving. With such a subject and such obligations, what words can be sufficiently expressive, what affections sufficiently ardent! May the Lord pardon and accept our languid

and triumph over all their enemies, 1—9.

*PRAISE ye the LORD. [a] Sing unto the LORD a new song, *and* his praise [b] in the congregation of saints.

2 Let Israel [c] rejoice in him that made him: [d] let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.

3 Let them praise his name † in the [e] dance: let them sing praises unto him [f] with the timbrel and harp.

4 For the LORD [g] taketh pleasure in his people; he will [h] beautify the meek with salvation.

5 Let [i] the saints be joyful in glory; let them [k] sing aloud upon their beds.

6 *Let* [l] the high *praises* of God *be* in their ‡ mouth, [m] and a two-edged sword in their hand;

7 To [n] execute vengeance upon the heathen: *and* punishments upon the people;

8 To [o] bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron;

9 To [p] execute upon them the judgment written: [q] this honour have all his saints. Praise ye the LORD.

*Heb. *Hallelujah.* cxlviii. 1.
a xxxiii. 3. xcvi. 1. xcviii. 1. cxliv. 9. Is. xlii 10. Rev. v. 9.
b xxii. 22. 25 lxviii. 26. lxxxix. 5. cxi. 1. cxvi. 18. Heb. ii 12
c c. 1—3. cxxxv. 3, 4. Deut. vii. 6, 7 xii. 7. 1 Sam. xii 23 Job xxxv 10. Is. liv. 5.
d Is. lii. 7 lxii. 11, 12. Joel ii 23. Zech. ix. 9. Matt. xxi. 5. xxv. 34. Luke xix 27. 38 John xix. 15. 19—22. Phil. iii 3. Rev xix. 6.
† Or, *with the pipe.* cl. 4. *Marg.*
e Ex. xv. 20. Judg. xi. 34. 2 Sam. vi. 16 Jer. xxxi. 13. xxxiii 2. lxxxi. 2. cxxxvii. 2—4 cl. 3—5. 1 Chr. xv. 28, 29. xvi. 42. xxv. 6. 2 Chr. xxix. 25. Ezra iii. 10.——g xxii. 8. xxxv. 27. cxlvii. 11. Prov. xi 20. Is lxii 4, 5. Jer. xxxii. 41. Zeph iii. 17.——h xc. 17. cxxxii. 16. Is. lxi 1—3 10. Heb. xii 9, 10. 1 Pet. iii. 4. v. 5 Rev. vii. 14.

i xxiii. 1. cxvii 15. cxlv. 10 Rom v. 2. 1 Pet i. 8.
k xlii 8. lxiii. 5, 6. xcii. 2. Job xxxv 10.
l xcvi 4. Neh. ix 5. Dan. iv 37 Luke ii. 14 Rev. xix. 6
‡ Heb. *throat.* cxv 7 cxlv. 3—5.
m Heb. iv. 12 Rev i 16
n cxxxvii 8, 9. Num. xxxi 2, 3 Judg. v 23 1 Sam xv. 2, 3 13—23 Zech ix. 13—16 xiv. 17—19 Rev. xix 11-21.
o Josh. x 23, 24. xii. 7 Judg i. 6, 7
p cxxxvii. 8 Deut vii. 1, 2 xxxi. 42, 43. Is. xiv 22, 23. Rev. xvii. 14—16
q cxlviii. 14. 1 Cor. vi 2, 3. Rev. iii 21.

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praises; and teach our hearts to love him more, and praise him better; that we may emulate, and be preparing to join, the adorations of the heavenly world!

NOTES.

PSALM CXLIX. V. 1. Several conjectures have been formed, concerning the time and occasion of this triumphal song of praise: but it is probable that David composed it not long before his death; and that the Spirit of prophecy led him, (beyond the occasion, whatever that were,) to celebrate by anticipation the future triumphs of the church, over all enemies, at the millennium, and after the general resurrection.

V. 2. *Made.* Made them his people, as well as created them men. (*Notes*, c.)

V. 3. *Dance.* Let them leap for joy, as David did at the removal of the ark to mount Zion.

V. 4. *Beautify.* The beauties of holiness, and the special honours which God confers on his people, will render them most beautiful and glorious; especially, when compared with their previous low and mean condition, and their deep self-abasement on account of their sins.

V. 5. *Beds.* 'They sing aloud, in a state of perfect 'ease and security, resting from their labours, but not from 'their Hallelujahs.' (*Horne.*)

V. 6. 'In assured hope of victory, they shall go to 'war with psalms and hymns in their mouths, concerning 'the great acts of the Lord; which they shall courageously 'sing with a loud voice, when they shall fall on their ene-'mies, and prefer to the two-edged sword which they carry 'in their hand.' (2 *Chr.* xx. 21, 22.) (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 7—9. Many of the Lord's servants in ancient times, were commissioned to execute vengeance, according to his word, upon the heathen kings and nobles: and the marginal references will convince the impartial reader, that somewhat of a similar nature will take place, when Antichristian powers are to be destroyed, and more glorious times introduced. And doubtless they, who are expressly appointed "to execute the judgment written," may do it in entire consistency both with meekness and mercy. But the honour intended for all the saints of God, consists in their final triumph over the enemies of their salvation; and in being assessors with Christ in judgment, to concur in the sentence denounced upon wicked men and apostate angels, and perhaps by assisting in its execution.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

New mercies demand continually new songs of praise, to be sung in the congregation of the saints on earth, and in heaven. And the children of Zion have not only to bless the God who made them, but to rejoice in him as having "created them in Christ Jesus unto good works," and formed them saints as well as men: they should therefore express their gratitude in every way of which they are capable: and not only rejoice in his pardoning mercy, but likewise in his benign and equitable government. If the LORD takes pleasure in his people, surely they should rejoice in him as their Portion and eternal Recompense. When he hath made sinners humbly sensible of their indigence and unworthiness, and rendered them meekly willing to be taught, saved, and ruled by him: he will "beautify them with salvation:" he will clothe them with the robes of righteousness, adorn them with the graces of his Spirit, renew them to the beauty of holiness, and cause them to bear his image, reflect his glory, and rejoice in his felicity for ever. Let his saints then rejoice in the hope, and in the earnests, of his glory: let them employ their waking hours upon their beds in songs of praise; yea, let them be joyful upon the bed of death, and sing aloud with the last fragments of their strength, assured that they are going to their eternal rest and glory. Let the high praises of God be in their mouths, whilst they wield the two-edged sword of the word of God together with the shield of faith, in their warfare with the world, the flesh, and the devil. For to whatever work, conflict, or suffering they may be called upon earth, they shall all have the honour of being more than conquerors over every enemy of their souls, through "the blood of the "Lamb, and the word of his testimony." And when their salvation shall be completed, "the judgments written shall be executed on the haughtiest enemies of Christ and

all kind of musical instruments and the concurrence of all that breathe, 1—6.

* PRAISE ye the LORD. [a] Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him [b] in the firmament of his power.

2 Praise him [c] for his mighty acts: praise him [d] according to his excellent greatness.

3 Praise him [e] with the sound of the † trumpet: praise him with [f] the psaltery and harp.

4 Praise him [g] with the timbrel and ‡ dance: praise him with [h] stringed instruments and [i] organs.

5 Praise him upon [k] the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high sounding cymbals.

6 [l] Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.

* Heb *Ha'lelujah.* cxlix. 1.
[a] xxix. 9 lxvi. 13—16. cxvii 18, 19. cxviii 19, 20 cxxxxiv. 2.
[b] Gen. i. 6—8. Ez. i. 22—26. x. 1. Dan xii. 3
[c] xlv. 5, 6. Rev. xv 3, 4
[d] xcvi. 4 cxlv. 3. Deut iii. 24. Jer. xxxii 17—19
[e] lxxxi. 2, 3. xcviii. 5, 6 Num. x. 10. 1 Chr. xv 24. 28. xvi. 42
† Or, *cornet.*
[f] xxxiii. 2, xcii. 3. cviii. 2 cxlix. 3.
[g] Ex xv. 20.
‡ Or, *pipe* cxlix. 3. *Marg*
[h] xcii. 3. cxliv. 9. Is. xxxviii. 20. Hab iii. 19.
[i] Job xxx 31.
[k] 1 Chr. xv. 16. 19. 28. xvi. 5. xxv. 1. 6.
[l] civ. 22. cxlv. 10. cxlviii. 7—11. Rev v. 13.

his church, and his servants shall behold, rejoice, and praise the Lord.

NOTES.

PSALM CL. V. 1. It is most probable that this psalm was composed on purpose to close the book, perhaps by Ezra, when the whole number was collected: as the first psalm formed a most suitable introduction to it. The word translated *in his sanctuary*, may be rendered *for his holiness:* and "the firmament of his power," (while the expression leads the thoughts to the visible heavens, and the bright luminaries that adorn it,) was perhaps intended for the invisible heavens, and the glorious displays of the power of God, which excite the admiration and adoration of the blessed inhabitants of those happy regions.

V. 3—5. It would be vain to attempt an explanation of these various kinds of musical instruments, which have long since ceased to exist, or have been exchanged for others: but it is obvious to remark, that God required his ancient people to employ their whole skill, as well as their whole soul, in praising him.

V. 6. Can a more proper conclusion to this book be so much as imagined, than that contained in this striking verse?

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

They who praise the Lord in his sanctuary above, behold displays of his power and glory, of which we can have no conception: but the greatest of all his mighty acts is known in his earthly sanctuary, and forms the foundation of our hope, and the subject of our admiring gratitude. The glorious holiness, the excellent greatness, and the unfathomable love of our God, are more displayed in man's redemption, than in all his other works. Let us well study this subject as our preparation for the world of glory: and let us celebrate the praises of our God and Saviour for it, according to our present capacities. And surely those expressions of joy and love, which the enraptured Psalmist, as from the third heavens, hath so earnestly recommended, cannot be unsuitable to the sacred work, if properly used. Finally, if we begin by separating from the ungodly, and delighting in the sacred word, (*Psalm* i.) and proceed by lively faith and fervent prayer, to follow after holiness, resist temptation, and maintain communion with God; we may hope to close with exulting praise, and to end our lives, ardently exhorting all that have breath to praise the Lord.

THE BOOK

OF

PROVERBS.

IMMEDIATELY after the prophetical and devotional compositions of David, we enter on the writings of his son Solomon, whose character and actions have already been considered. In the sacred historian's account of Solomon's extraordinary wisdom and knowledge it is said, that "he spake three thou-"sand proverbs, and his songs were a thousand and five; and he spake of trees, from the cedar-tree that "is in Lebanon, even to the hyssop that springeth out of the wall; he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, "and of creeping things, and of fishes" (1 Kings iv. 32, 33.) *No more, however, has been preserved of his writings, than the books of Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes, and Canticles, or Solomon's song; (except a few Psalms which seem to have been composed by him:) these alone, it is probable, being calculated for the religious instruction of mankind, and sufficient for the purpose of attractive variety, in a revelation, the whole of which was intended, by the wisdom of God, to be distinguished by comprehensive brevity, and adapted to general usefulness In respect of the book before us, we may suppose, that the selection contained in it was made in part by Solomon himself, in his old age, from his other works; and the rest by the men of Hezekiah, namely, those Prophets whom that pious Prince consulted; and among these were Hosea and Micah, and especially Isaiah. We may therefore assuredly conclude, that it was conducted under the superintending inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Indeed the express quotations from this book, or most evident references to it, in the New-Testament, constitute the fullest proof that our Lord and his apostles considered it, not merely as the work of a very wise man, but as a part of the oracles of God. For satisfaction on this point, let the reader compare the following passages.* (iii. 11, 12. *with* Heb. xii. 5, 6.—iii. 34 *with* Jam iv. 6. *and* 1 Pet. v. 5.—x. 12. *with* Jam. v. 20.—*and* 1 Pet. iv. 8.—xxv. 6, 7. *with* Luke xiv. 9, 10.—xxv. 21, 22. *with* Rom. xii. 20.—*and* xxvii. 1. *with* Jam. iv. 13.) *Many more evident references might be shown, but these are sufficient for the purpose.—The original name of this book is* Meshalim, *which seems to signify* authoritative maxims, *or maxims of high estimation and authority: and a great part of it is made up of detached aphorisms, containing most important practical instruction.—'The proverbs generally consist of two sentences, joined in a kind of antithesis, the second being sometimes a reduplication, sometimes an explanation, and 'sometimes an opposition' (or contrast) 'to the sense of the first. This style of composition produces 'great beauty in many other parts of Scripture, where it is employed for poetical arrangement.'—'The 'wisdom of all ages, from the highest antiquity, has chosen to compress its lessons into compendious 'sentences, which were peculiarly adapted to the simplicity of earlier times, which are readily conceived 'and easily retained; and which circulate in society as useful principles, to be unfolded and applied 'as occasion may require.'—'Solomon's Proverbs are so justly founded on the principles of human na-'ture, and so adapted to the permanent interests of man, that they agree with the manners of every age, 'and may be assumed as the rules for the direction of our conduct, in every condition and rank of life.'* (Grey.)—*'It was usual for wise men of old, when their observation lighted upon any thing that 'might prove beneficial in common life, to reduce it immediately, and contract it into some short sen-'tence.' 'The great antiquity of this sententious way of speaking is apparent enough from the pas-'sage of David's, "As says the proverb of the ancients, wickedness proceedeth from the wicked." '* (1 Sam. xxiv. 13.)' (Bp. Patrick.)—*Indeed such short maxims comprehending much instruction in few words, and carrying their own evidence with them, are well suited to direct the conduct, without over-burdening the memory, or perplexing the mind with abstract reasonings; and there are in all countries old proverbs, or common sayings, which have great authority and influence on the opinions*

and actions of mankind. Such maxims, however, want their proper basis, namely, the sanction of a divine original; and being generally the mere result of worldly prudence, are too often calculated to impose on the judgment, and mislead those who are directed by them. But the Proverbs of this book are not only far more ancient than any others extant in the world; but they have also received a divine imprimatur, *and are infallible rules to direct our conduct in every circumstance of human life: and we shall perceive the meaning and utility of them, in proportion to our experience in true religion, our acquaintance with our own hearts and with human nature, and the extent and accuracy of our observation on the characters and affairs of men.—It has also been made evident by the learned, that several persons among the heathen, who acquired reputation by framing or collecting proverbs, enriched their works from the treasury before us, nay, drew from it their most valuable materials. It would be unreasonable to expect direct prophecies in a composition of this nature: and though we shall not lose sight of Christ, and his truths and precepts; we should by no means endeavour to find out the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel, in every part of the book. These must be learned from those portions of Scripture which treat more expressly on them: and having our hearts enlivened in communion with God, by meditation on those devotional exercises which we have just closed, we may here be instructed how "to walk in wisdom towards them that are without;" to live in this evil world without being entangled or polluted by it; and to pursue our eternal interests, and our present peace and holiness, in connexion with the honour of God, and the benefit of the church and of the world; so that it would be very useful for those, who can command their time, at some stated season every day, to read, and deliberately consider a few of these maxims, with reference to their own conduct in the various affairs in which they are concerned.—The book seems not to have been all written at any one period of Solomon's life, but from time to time as circumstances occurred. It is however, probable, that the first nine capters were framed, as an introduction to the whole, towards the close of his days. This is reckoned the first part of the book, or the preface to it. The second part extends from the beginning of the tenth chapter, to the seventeenth verse of the twenty-second; and more strictly speaking contains the Proverbs. In the third part, which reaches to the end of the twenty-fourth chapter, the sacred writer again addresses his son or scholar, as present, with more connected exhortations.—The fourth part consists of proverbs collected by the men of Hezekiah, and reaches to the end of the twenty-ninth chapter. And the last two chapters, which bear the names of Agur and Lemuel, are regarded as the fifth part, and will be considered more properly, in the exposition.—There can be no doubt, but the whole, or the greater part, of the book is a poetical composition: yet, the nature and rules of Hebrew poetry are at present so little understood, that every attempt to alter the original, or to interpret its meaning, by reasons deduced from the metre, must to the serious mind be entirely unsatisfactory.*

B. C. 977. B. C. 977.

CHAPTER I.

The title and subjects of the book, 1—6. *Exhortations to fear God, and obey parents,* 7—9. *Dissuasives from the company of the wicked,* 10—19. *Wisdom's address to sinners,* 20—23. *She complains of being despised, and denounces the doom of her despisers,* 24—32; *and shows the security of her disciples,* 33.

THE [a] proverbs of [b] Solomon, the son of David, king of Israel;
2 To [c] know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding;
3 To [d] receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and * equity.
4 To give [e] subtilty to the simple, [f] to the young man knowledge and † discretion.

a x. 1. xxv. 1. 1 Kings iv. 31, 32. Ec. xii. 9. John xvi. 25.
b 2 Sam. xii. 24, 25. 1 Kings ii. 12. 1 Chr. xxii. 9. xxviii. 5. xxix. 23.
c iv. 5—7. vii. 4. viii. 5. xvi. 16. xvii. 10. Deut. iv. 5, 6. 1 Kings iii. 9—12. 2 Tim. iii. 15—17.
d ii. 1—9. viii. 10, 11. Job xxii. 22.
* Heb. *equities*.
1 Kings iii. 28.——e 22, 23. viii. 5. ix. 4—6. Ps. xix. 7. cxix. 130. Is. xxxv. 8.
f vii. 7, &c. 24. viii. 17. 32. Ps. xxxiv. 11. cxix. 9. Ec. xi. 9, 10. xii. 1. 2 Tim. ii. 22. Tit. ii. 6.——† Or, *advisement*.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1—4. 'This book contains some notable 'and very useful sayings of that wise prince, king Solomon, the son of devout king David. The scope of 'them is to make a man know what it is to be truly wise, 'and to instruct him how to avoid those errors, which men

5 A [g] wise *man* will hear, and will increase learning; and [h] a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:

6 To understand [i] a proverb, and * the interpretation; [k] the words of the wise, and their [l] dark sayings.

7 ¶ The [m] fear of the LORD *is* the † beginning of knowledge: [n] *but* fools despise wisdom and instruction.

8 [o] My son, [p] hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

9 For [q] they *shall be* ‡ an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.

10 ¶ My son, [s] if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.

11 If they say, Come with us, [t] let us lay wait for blood, [u] let us lurk privily for the innocent without a cause:

12 Let us [x] swallow them up alive [y] as the grave; and [z] whole, as those that go down into the pit:

13 We [a] shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil:

14 Cast in thy lot among us; let us all have one purse.

g ix. 9. xii 1. Job xxxiv. 10. 16. 34. Ps. cxix 98—100 1. Cor. x 15.
h 1 Sam. xxv. 32, 33. 2 Chr. xxv. 16.
i Matt xiii. 10—17. 51, 52. Mark iv. 11 34. Acts viii. 30, 31.
* Or, *an eloquent speech.*
k Ec xii. 11.
l Ps. xlix 4. lxxviii. 2 Mat. xiii 34, 35 Heb. v. 14 2 Pet. iii. 16.
m ix 10 Job xxviii. 28. Ps cxi. 10 cxii. 1. Ec xii 13
† Or. *the principal part*
n 22 29, 30. v. 12, 13 xv. 5. xviii. 2. John iii. 18—21. Rom. i 28 ——— o 10. 15. ii. 1. iii. 1. vii. 1. Matt. ix. 2. 22. ——— p iv 1—4. v. 1, 2 vi. 20 xxx 17 xxxi 1. Lev. xix. 3 Deu xxi. 18—21. 1 Sam. ii. 25. 2 Tim i 5. ——— q iii. 22. iv 9 vi. 20, 21. 1 Tim. ii. 9, 10. 1 Pet. iii. 3, 4 ——— ‡ Heb *adding* ——— r Gen. xli 42. Cant. i 10. iv. 9. Is. iii. 19. Ez. xvi. 11. Dan. v. 7. 16 29
s vii. 21—23. xiii. 20 xx 19. Gen. xxxix 7—13. Judg. xvi. 16—21 Ps. i. 19. Rom. xvi 18. Eph v. 11.
t 16. xii. 6 xxx. 14. Ps. lvi. 6. lxiv. 5, 6 Jer. v. 26. Mic vii. 2. Acts xxiii. 15. xxv. 3.
u 18 Ps. x. 8—10. xvii. 12. xxxv. 7. Jer. xi. 19. xviii 18—20. Matt xxvi. 3, 4. John xv 25
x Ps xxxv 35. lvi 1, 2. lvii. 3. cxxiv. 3 Jer. li. 34 Lam. ii 5 16. Mic iii 2, 3.
y Ps. v. 9. Rom. iii 13
z Num. xvi. 30—33 xxvi. 10 Ps. xxviii 1. cxliii. 7. ——— a 19. Job xxiv. 2, 3. Is. x. 13, 14. Jer. xxii. 16, 17. Nah. ii. 12. Hab. ii. 9. Luke xii. 15. 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10. Rev. xviii. 9—16.

'are apt to fall into, or to correct them if he hath been 'misled;—and to make him understand when good advice 'is given him; nay, to be able to give it to others. For 'they will furnish him with the most excellent notions; 'and make him capable to understand things of the highest 'concernment; both as to be just and good *in all private* '*transactions;* and *in public trusts and offices* to judge and 'act according to right and equity. The most unskilful 'persons may here learn to be circumspect and wary; and 'they who are childish, to behave with prudence and 'discretion.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 5. The Septuagint translation of this book is allowed to be very faulty: yet this verse is rendered in it with great energy. 'Which,' (instructions,) 'a wise man 'hearing will be wiser; and the man of understanding 'shall possess *government;*' the *talent for governing*, or the authority of a governor.

V. 6. *Dark sayings.* (*Note, Ps.* lxxviii. 2.) The word signifies *riddles*, or *enigmas*, which of old were used, not for amusement, but to impress important instructions the more deeply on the minds of those who studied to unriddle them.

V. 7. (*Note, Ps.* cxi. 10.) 'There is not such a wise 'instruction to be found in all their books,' (those of the most admired pagan writers,) 'as the very first of all 'in Solomon's, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning "of wisdom;" 'without which men are but fools, and, 'having no regard to their Creator, will despise the wisest 'instructions.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 8. Perhaps Solomon meant to address himself to his son Rehoboam, exhorting him to regard the instructions and rules, which he had received in his education, as most ornamental to him. It is, however, a general exhortation to young persons to receive the instructions, and submit to the authority, of their parents, as the surest method, in subserviency to the fear of God, of obtaining the esteem and respect of all wise men. The appellation "My son," may also be considered as the language of that authority and affection, which should unite in a public teacher of religion. 'And not only hearken to thy father, when he 'teaches thee to fear God; but—let thy mother's com- 'mands be a law unto thee, especially when she bids thee 'observe the directions of thy public instructors.—'The second step to wisdom is, next to God, to bear 'great reverence to parents, both natural and spiritual; 'to God's ministers,—to whom if children be not bred to 'give a great regard, they seldom prove virtuous. It is 'very observable how much human laws differ from the 'divine: the former generally only providing that due 'regard be given by children to their *fathers*, but taking 'no notice of *mothers*. But God in his law takes care to 'preserve a just reverence both to father and mother 'equally.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 9. Young persons too generally seek notice and admiration by external decorations, and vain ostentation in divers ways: while they neglect both the fear of God and respectful obedience to their parents and superiors; which are vastly more becoming, and more valuable in the judgment of all wise men.

V. 10—14. This transition seems to imply an instruction to parents, as to the counsels and warnings which they should give their children. Combinations among individuals for carrying on a kind of private war, either within the community or against the adjacent territories, have been common in many ages and countries; and have not exposed men to that stigma which high-way robberies and murders do, in countries governed by a stricter police. The unreasonable and disproportionate reputation, acquired by military valour and conduct, has often caused such exploits to be considered as proofs of a man of spirit, and opportunities of acquiring, or displaying, a capacity for war and victory, as well as of making a fortune: and the blood shed in them to be considered as a thing of course. Just as the murder committed in duels, by men who call pride and revenge *the point of honour*, is not considered as so atrocious a crime as murder is in other circumstances; nay, sometimes it adds to a man's reputation in defiance indeed of common sense and Scripture. When therefore, a young man, destitute of the fear of God, and weary of subjection to prudent parents, was secretly persuaded to make an inroad on the neighbouring countries, or to lay wait for the companies of travellers or merchants, and, without cause or provocation to shed their blood, and enrich himself with their plunder, he would not in general be very scrupulous, but consider the attempt as a kind of military expedition. This might easily be shown to have

15 My son, [b] walk not thou in the way with them; [c] refrain thy foot from their path:

16 For [d] their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood.

17 (Surely [e] in vain the net is spread in the * sight of any bird.)

18 And they [f] lay wait for their *own* blood: they lurk privily for their *own* lives.

19 So *are* the ways of [g] every one that is greedy of gain; *which* [h] taketh away the life of the owners thereof.

20 ¶ † Wisdom [i] crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets;

21 She [k] crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words, *saying*,

22 [l] How long, [m] ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and [n] the scorners delight in their scorning, and [o] fools hate knowledge.

23 [p] Turn you at [q] my reproof: [r] behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.

b iv. 14 15. ix. 6 xiii 20. Ps. i. 1. xxvi 4, 5. 2 Cor vi. 17. c iv 27. v. 8. Ps. cxix. 101. Jer xiv 10. d iv. 16. vi. 18. Is. lix 7. Rom. iii. 15. e vii. 23. Job xxxv. 11. Is i. 3. Jer viii 7. * Heb *eyes of every thing that hath a wing.* f v. 22, 23 ix 17, 18. xxviii. 17 Esth. vii. 10. Ps. vii. 14—16. ix 16. lv. 23. Mat xxvii. 4, 5 g xxiii 3. 4 2 Sam xviii. 11—13. 2 Kings v. 20—27. Jer. xxii. 17—19. Mic. ii. 1—3. iii. 10—12 Acts viii. 19, 20 1 Tim. iii. 3 vi. 9, 10. Jam. v. 1—4. 2 Pet ii. 3. 14—16.———h Job xxxi. 39. Ec. v. 13.

† Heb. *Wisdoms*, that is *excellent wisdom* Matt. xiii. 34. Luke xi. 49. 1 Cor. i. 24. 30 Col. ii 3. i viii. 1—5 John vii. 37. k ix. 3 Matt x. 27. xiii. 2 John xviii. 20, 21. Acts v. 20. l vi 9. Ex x. 3. xvi. 28. Num. xiv 27 Matt. xvii 17 m vii. 7. ix. 4—6. 16—18 Ps xciv. 8. Matt. ix. 13. xi. 29, 30. xviii 37 Luke xix. 42. Rev. xxii. 17. n iii. 34 xiv. 6. xv. 12 xix 29. xxi. 11. Job xxxiv 7. Ps. i. 1. 2 Pet. ii. 3.——o 7 29. v 12 John iii. 20.——p Is. lv. 1—3. 6, 7. Jer iii 14. Ez. xviii. 27—30. xxxiii 11. Hos. xiv. 1 Acts iii. 19. xxvi 20. q 25 30. vi 23 x. 17 xii. 1 xxix. 1. Ps cxli. 5 Rev. iii 19.———r Is. xxxii. 15. xliv. 3. Joel ii. 28. Zech. xii. 10. Luke xi. 13 John vii. 36, 37. Acts ii 36—38 Rev. iii. 16—18.

been the case, by innumerable extracts from ancient history. And when any one considers with what eagerness men engage in privateering, as soon as they receive permission to plunder the merchants of a neighbouring country with impunity; and how small account they make of the blood shed on either side, in attempting to seize the property of those with whom they have no personal quarrel: he will readily perceive how little most men are governed by principles of equity and humanity; when motives of interest urge them on, and they may gratify their avarice without losing their reputation, or exposing themselves to the lash of the law. For in the court of conscience, of reason, and of Scripture, this common practice is not much more justifiable than that of these ancient associated freebooters: except a man can say, as in the presence of God, 'I do not seek private emolument, but the public good; and to weaken an unjust and unreasonable enemy, that an equitable and durable peace may be re-established.'

V. 17—19. The snare of Satan in exciting men to rapine and bloodshed is as manifest, as the net spread in the sight of the bird, who will in that case fly away. He aims to allure those that are greedy of gain, by the prospect of plunder and impunity, to shed the blood of their unoffending neighbours. And by this bait he intends to take their souls in his net. Such depredators commonly come to an untimely end, either by the sword of justice, or by that of war, or of private revenge; and they are all the while treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath and vengeance. For however human laws are framed and executed, and however they may be eluded or out-braved; yet the vengeance of God pursues every murderer to death and perdition, except deep repentance intervene. They therefore are as foolish, as if they lay in wait for their own lives and souls. The last clause may be rendered, "Which taketh away the lives of those who are under "the power of it." Gain, when greedily sought and by unjust means, proves the destruction of those who are thus led captive by the love of it.

V. 20. The word translated *wisdom* is plural, as well as feminine; and is generally understood to mean the highest and most eminent wisdom, and may either denote the instruction of God's word, personified, as Wisdom speaking to mankind, or Jesus Christ, as the Word and Wisdom of God, and the great Prophet of the church and Light of the world. Whether the sacred writer intended expressly to prophesy of the Messiah; or whether the Israelites would generally consider him as the speaker in these addresses, needs not to be determined. To us, who have the New Testament for our guide, this latter is by far the most simple manner of considering the subject, and it gives the exhortations of wisdom a peculiar majesty and emphasis: nor can any material objection be made to it; unless men would substitute *carnal wisdom*, in the stead of *that wisdom which is from above*. And the coincidence of the words of *wisdom* with the doctrine of Christ, renders it obvious to adopt this mode of exposition. 'He that is 'the eternal and uncreated Wisdom of the Father, uses 'all means to draw men unto God: both by his works, 'and by his word, he inviteth all men to the knowledge 'and love of the truth.' (*Bp. Hall.*) 'This wisdom is 'the eternal Word of God.' (*Marg. Ref.*) It is remarkable that the original is future, "Wisdom shall cry with-"out, &c."

V. 21—23. Christ, by his own personal ministry, and by that of his apostles and evangelists, and ever since by his faithful and zealous ministers, hath addressed himself to sinners, in the most earnest and public manner, and in every place where they are to be met with: of this he gave the example by preaching in houses and synagogues, the courts of the temple, the streets, fields, mountains, and plains, as occasion required. By "the simple "ones, who love simplicity," are meant the ignorant, unwary, and careless, who love to continue thoughtless and dissipated; having no desire to trouble their minds about any thing which interferes with their present pursuits of pleasure or worldly advantage. "The scorners "who delight in their scorning," are they who deride and revile the truths and precepts of the Gospel, and glory in their impiety, infidelity, and blasphemy, and in making proselytes to their principles. And "the fools, who "hate knowledge," may mean such persons, as have had some acquaintance with religion, and whose consciences have been distressed by it; but determining to gratify their lusts, they hold the truth in unrighteousness, sin in defiance of their convictions, and hate that knowledge which makes them dread the most fatal effects of their daring wickedness: (*John* iii. 19—21.) Persons, however, of all these characters are here expostulated with

24 Because, [s] I have called, and ye refused; [t] I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;

25 But [u] ye have set at nought all my counsel, and [x] would none of my reproof:

26 I also [y] will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh.

27 When [z] your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh [a] as a whirlwind; when [b] distress and anguish cometh upon you.

28 Then [c] shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; [d] they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:

s Is 1. 2. lxv. 12. lxvi. 4. Jer. vii. 13. Ez viii. 18. Zech. vii 11, 12. Matt xxii. 5, 6. xxiii 37, 38. Heb. xii 25, 26.
t xxxi 20. Acts iv. 30. Rom x. 21.
u 30. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 16. Ps cvii 11. Luke vii. 30.
x 30. v. 12. xii 1. Ps. lxxxi 11.
y Judg. x. 14. Ps. ii. 4. xxxvii. 13.
z lii. 25, 26. x. 24, 25 Ps. lxix. 22 – 28. Luke xxi. 26. 34, 35. 1 Thes v 3. Rev. vi. 15–17.
a Ps. lviii. 9. Is xvii 13. Nah. i. 3
b Luke xxi. 23—25. Rom. ii. 9.
c Job xxvii. 9. xxxv 12 Ps. xviii 41 Is. i. 15. Jer xi. 11 xiv. 12. Ez viii. 18. Mic. iii. 4 Zech. vii. 13. Matt. vii. 22, 23. xxv. 10—12. Luke xiii. 25—28. Jam. iv. 3 ——d Ps. lxxviii. 34—36. Hos. v. 15. vi. 1—4.

29 For [e] that they hated knowledge, and did [f] not choose the fear of the LORD:

30 They [g] would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof.

31 Therefore [h] shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.

32 For [i] the * turning away of the simple shall slay them, [k] and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.

33 But [l] whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, [m] and shall be quiet from fear of evil.

e 22. v. 12. Job xxi. 14, 15. Ps.l. 16, 17. Is. xxvii. 11. xxx 9—12. John iii 20. Acts. vii. 51—54.
f Luke x 42. Heb. xi. 25
g 25. Ps cxix. 111. 173. Jer. viii 8. Luke xiv. 18—20
h xiv 14. Job iv 8. Is. iii. 10, 11. Jer. vi. 19. Gal vi. 7, 8.
i viii 36. John iii. 36. Heb x. 38, 39. xii. 25
* Or, *case*. Jer. xlviii. 11, 12.
k Deut. xxxii. 15, &c. Ps. lxix. 22. xcii. 6, 7 Luke xii. 16—21. xvi. 19—25. Heb xii. 3 Jam v. 5.
l viii. 32—35. ix. 11. Ps xxv. 12, 13. lxxxi 13. Is. xlviii. 18. lv. 3 John x. 27—29. 1 Pet i 5 ——m iii. 21—26. xiv. 26. Ps. cxii 7. Is. xxvi. 3. Luke xxi 9. 19. Rom. viii. 35—39.

upon the madness of continuing longer in wickedness; they are commanded to repent, and turn to Christ, at his reproof; nay, the gift of the Holy Spirit, to be their Teacher and Sanctifier, is promised to such as attend to the gracious proposal. 'I offer unto you, both my word outwardly 'to your ears, and a plentiful measure of my Spirit inwardly to your hearts, to make that word effectual to 'you.' (*Bp. Hall.*)

V. 24—31. The nature and consequences of rejecting the invitations of heavenly wisdom, are here most affectingly displayed, and in terms entirely coincident with many passages in the New Testament. (*Marg. Ref.*) The gracious Saviour invites, exhorts, and warns; but sinners refuse to hearken: he stretches out his hands, to afford them help, or to confer blessings upon them, or as earnestly beseeching them to accept of his salvation; but they pay no regard to him: he gives them the best of counsel, mingled with salutary reproof; but they despise his counsel, and reject his reproof with scorn, preferring the flattering advice of Satan and his instruments; for indeed they "hate knowledge, and will not choose the fear of the "LORD." But in the event they will certainly be overtaken with dreadful calamities and terrors desolating them of every hope and comfort; with destruction bearing them away like an impetuous whirlwind, whilst distress and anguish seize upon them. Then indeed, they would fain be rescued from hell by the arm of the despised Saviour, and will hastily call to him to help them: but as they before scorned him and his reproof; so will he then neglect and disdain their cries, terrors, and distress; and thus "they "will eat of the fruit of their own ways, and be filled for "ever with their own devices." The change of persons, from a direct address to the despisers themselves, to such as are supposed to witness the awful scene, is peculiarly impressive. Let all, who have not been given up to judicial obduracy, hear and take warning: 'Let all notice the equity of this most severe infliction of vengeance on obstinate enemies and despisers.'

V. 32, 33. The sinner's "turning away" from the instructions of Christ, is the immediate cause of his destruction, and a most dreadful species of self murder: while the prosperity, or rather the *ease*, or *carnal security*, in which such hardened sinners live, ripens them apace for destruction. ("Ease," 'that is, the prosperity and 'sensuality in which they delight.') Whereas the holy confidence and *hope* in God, grounded on his word, of those who hearken to the voice of wisdom, and are preserved from the fear of evil, even in the greatest extremities, is a contrast to that sensual and careless security in prosperous circumstances, which is turned into terror and despair in the season of danger and alarm.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—19.

If God impart wisdom and intrust authority to the same person, a vast advantage is afforded him for the extensive communication of good instructions. But the inspiration of the Holy Spirit gives an authority to the Scriptures, far beyond what they could derive from the honourable descent, the dignity, wealth, wisdom, or renown of those employed in committing them to writing. It is the design of every part of revelation, to "cause us to know wisdom and in-"struction; to perceive the words of understanding," and to receive lessons of heavenly discretion; that we may pursue the noblest ends by the most effectual means, and may learn to walk with God, and among men, "in justice, "judgment, and equity." These divine instructions suffice to render the unlearned and those of slender abilities discerning and sagacious, and able to detect and elude the most crafty designs of wicked men, and of the devil; nay, even to cure the rashness of inexperienced youth, and to render them prudent and discreet. And as Solomon, as He who inspired Solomon, proposed such benefit to us by this book, we should enter upon the reading of it with fervent prayer to the Fountain and Giver of wisdom, to enable us to profit by it. Indeed a teachable disposition, arising from a due valuation of heavenly knowledge, united with a consciousness of our own ignorance and fallibility, form a proper test and standard of our present progress in wisdom. The wise man will always be a learner: he will therefore hear and add to his treasure from every maxim, in proportion as he attains to the true interpretation of it, and discovers the meaning of those words of the wise, that

CHAP. II.

Wisdom promises the blessings of true religion, to those who seek her from God with prayer and diligence, 1—9. *And to preserve them from the ruinous ways of bad men and women, by guiding them in the paths of righteousness,* 10—22.

MY son, [a] if thou wilt receive my words, and [b] hide my commandments with thee,

a i. 3. iv. 1. vii. 1. John xii. 47, 48. 1 Tim. i 15.
b iii 1. iv. 20—22. vi 21. Deut vi. 6—9. Job xxiii. 12 Ps cxix. 9—11. Matt xiii. 44. Luke ii. 19. 51. ix. 44.

to the careless, superficial, and conceited, appear *dark sayings*. All who are taught of God agree, that true knowledge and wisdom are practical; and begin with, and principally consist in, the fear of God, and a due regard to his authority. The most sagacious in worldly things, and the most learned in all human sciences, are miserably infatuated if they despise this wisdom and instruction; and do not make it their grand concern to do the will of God and seek his favour: yet, alas! how is the earth filled, and its eminent places occupied, by such profane and foolish despisers! Whilst young persons are exhorted and "charged to hear the instruction of their fathers, and at "no time to forsake the law of their mothers;" how forcibly are parents called upon to give their children such instructions, to set them such good examples, and so to exercise their authority, as may indeed conduce to their best advantage: and to what a wretched dilemma do many parents reduce their offspring, who must either renounce their instructions and injunctions, or disobey God, and ruin their own souls! In this case indeed the matter is decided; and they must obey God rather than man. But, alas! children are commonly least disposed to be duly observant of wise and pious parents, who would direct them in the way to durable honour and felicity. When youthful inexperience unites with self-sufficiency and impatience of controul, they form a proper prey for the artful and profligate. With flattering caresses, and encomiums, and large promises of pleasure, advantage, and impunity, they entice them to join their cabals and imitate their crimes: and when once they have consented, they are caught in a net whence few ever escape. Would young persons shun temporal or eternal ruin, let them turn a deaf ear to all such syren songs, and refuse to take one step in these destructive paths: for whilst they haste to obtain money to defray the expenses of their licentiousness, "their feet run to evil "and they make haste to shed blood;" thus they are caught in Satan's net, which is spread before their eyes; they are forming a conspiracy against their own lives; and employing their ingenuity and activity in rendering themselves execrable and miserable, in bringing themselves to an untimely end, and in ripening apace for eternal destruction. So are the ways of all, in every rank of society, who being greedy of gain, seize upon it, by oppressing, or taking away the lives of, their fellow-creatures.

V. 20—23.

Would men keep at a distance from the destructive temptations of Satan and his servants, they should hearken to the voice of Wisdom; they should attend to the Gospel, and the sacred word by which the Saviour addresses them with inconceivable affection and earnestness. After his example, and in the same fervent and sympathizing tenderness, his ministers should "preach the word, instant "in season, and out of season," whenever, or wherever they can get men to attend. And surely none should censure their brethren, who cry without in the streets, in the chief places of concourse, and in the opening of the gates, being greatly in earnest to snatch sinners as brands from the burning; when the Wisdom of God hath given them the example. Nay, if the same divine Saviour exhorts, warns, and invites even scorners and fools that hate knowledge, and simple ones who love simplicity; they certainly come the nearest to wisdom, who call upon sinners of every description, to repent, and believe, and be saved. The love and condescension of Christ, and the gracious promises that he mingles with his reproofs, whilst he declares his readiness to pour out his Spirit, and make known his words to those who turn to him, should surely attract the attention of the most careless and ungodly: and it may well be inquired of them, How long they mean to proceed in such a perilous path, when the uncertainty of life, and the tremendous consequences of dying without Christ are considered? But if sinners, bent upon the indulgence of their lusts, now refuse, disregard, despise, revile, and hate the counsels and proposals of the Son of God, they will hereafter curse their own madness and folly. Some few on earth anticipate their own doom, and are left to desperation for a warning to others: and many cry out in terror of conscience for deliverance from torment, without any desire after redemption from *iniquity*; and therefore they cry in vain; though none can at any period of life heartily pray for the whole salvation of the Gospel, and be rejected. But no words can express the horror, distress, and anguish of the wicked, when standing before the tribunal of their angry Judge: when all their pleas, and *extorted* cries for mercy, shall be disregarded and despised. "Then will He laugh at their calamity, "and mock when their fear cometh:" turning to others, he will show the reasons of his severity, without vouchsafing them a word or a look: and even the rocks and mountains will refuse to hide them from his wrath. Then will they receive the due reward of their crimes, and especially of their contempt of Christ and his salvation. "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we would "persuade" sinners to repent, and not turn away from the Saviour to their own destruction. And surely we should not fear the cross of his people, nor envy the prosperity of fools which destroys them! But we should hearken diligently and obediently to the Lord Jesus, that we may dwell safely under his protection, and enjoy peace of conscience and confidence in God, and be free from fear of evil, in life, in death, in judgment, and for ever.

2 So that [c] thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, *and* [d] apply thine heart to understanding;

3 Yea, [e] if thou criest after knowledge, *and* * liftest up thy voice for understanding;

4 If [f] thou seekest her as silver, and [g] searchest for her as *for* hid treasures;

5 Then [h] shalt thou understand [i] the fear of the LORD, and [k] find the knowledge of God.

6 For [l] the LORD giveth wisdom: [m] out of his mouth *cometh* knowledge and understanding.

7 He [n] layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: *he is* [o] a Buckler to them that walk uprightly.

8 He [p] keepeth the paths of judgment, [q] and preserveth the way of his saints.

9 Then [r] shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; *yea*, every good path.

10 ¶ When [s] wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul;

11 [t] Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee:

12 To [u] deliver thee from the way of the evil *man*, [x] from the man that speaketh froward things;

13 Who [y] leave the paths of uprightness, to [z] walk in the ways of darkness;

14 Who [a] rejoice to do evil, [b] *and* delight in the frowardness of the wicked;

15 Whose [c] ways *are* crooked, and *they* froward in their paths:

16 To [d] deliver thee from the strange woman, *even* from the stranger *which* [e] flattereth with her words;

c xviii. 1 Ps. cxix. 111. 112 Is. lv. 3 Matt. xiii. 9.
d xxv. 17—21. xxii. 12 Ps. xc. 12. Ec. vii. 25. viii. 9. 16 Acts xvii. 11
e iv. 6 viii. 17 1 Kings iii. 9—12 1 Chr. xxii. 12 Ps. xxv. 4, 5. cxix. 34. 73. 125. 169 Luke xi. 16 Eph. i. 17. 18 Jam. i. 5.
* Heb. *giveth thy voice*
f iii. 14, 15. viii. 18, 19 xvi. 16. xxiii. 23. Ps. xix. 10. cxix. 14. 72. 127 Matt. vi. 19—21 xiii. 44. xix. 21, 22. 29
g Job xxviii. 12—20. Ec. iv. 8. Luke xvi. 8.
h 2 Chr. i. 10—12 Hos. vi. 3 Matt. vii. 7, 8. Luke xi. 9—13
i ix. 10. Job xxviii. 28. Jer. xxxii. 40, 41
k Jer. ix. 24. xxiv. 7. xxxi. 34 Matt. xi. 27 Luke x. 22 John xvii. 3. 1 John v. 20 ——l Ex. xxxi. 3 1 Kings iii. 12. iv. 29. 1 Chr. xxii. 12. Job xxxii. 8. Is. liv. 13 Dan. i. 17. ii. 21. 23. Luke xxi. 15. John vi. 45. Eph. i. 17, 18. Jam. i. 5 17 ——m vi. 23. viii. 5—9 Ps. xix. 7. cxix. 98. 104. Is. viii. 20
n viii. 14. xiv. 8. Job xxviii. 28. 1 Cor. i. 19—24 30. ii. 6, 7. iii. 18, 19. Col. ii. 3. 2 Tim. iii. 15—17. Jam. iii. 15—17. ——o xxviii. 18. xxx. 5. Ps. lxxxiv. 11. cxliv. 2.
p viii. 20. Ps. i. 6. xxiii. 3, 4. cxxi. 5—8. Is. xxxv. 9 xlix. 9, 10. John x. 28, 29.
q iii. 21—24 Deut. xxxiii. 3 26—29. 1. Sam. ii. 9. Ps. xxxvii. 23, 24. 28. 31. lxvi. 9. cxlv. 20 Jer. xxxii. 40. 41. 1 Pet. i. 5.
r i. 2—6 Ps. xxv. 8, 9. xxxii. 8. cxix. 105. cxliii. 8—10. Is. xxxv. 8. xlviii. 17 Jer. vi. 16 Mat. vii. 13, 14 John xiv. 6
s xviii. 1, 2. xxiv. 14. Job xxiii. 12. Ps. xix. 10 civ. 34 cxix. 97 103. 111 142. Jer. xv. 16 Col. iii. 16.
t iv. 6 vi. 22—24. Ps. xxv. 21. cxix. 9—11. Ec. ix. 15—18. x. 10. Eph. v. 15.
u i. 10—19. iv. 14—17. ix. 6. xiii. 20 Ps. xvii. 4, 5. xxvi. 4, 5. cxli. 4. 2 Cor. vi. 17.
x iii. 32. viii. 13. xvi. 28—30. Ps. ci. 4. Is. lix. 3—5. Acts xx. 30. 1 Cor. xv. 33.
y xxi. 16. Ps. xiv. 8. xxxvi. 3. Ez. xviii. 26. xxxiii. 12, 13 Zeph. i. 6. Matt. xii. 43—45. 2 Tim. iv. 10. Heb. vi. 4—6. 2 Pet. ii. 20—22. 1 John ii. 19.
z iv. 19. Job xxiv. 13—16. John iii. 19, 20 Rom. i. 21. 1 Thes. v. 5—7. 1 John i. 6. ii. 9—11. ——a x. 23. Jer. xi. 15, &c. Hab. i. 15. Zeph. iii. 11. 1 Cor. xiii. 6 ——b Hos. vii. 3. Luke xxii. 4, 5. Rom. i. 32 ——c Deut. xxxii. 5. Ps. cxxv. 3. Is. xxx. 8—12 lix. 8. Phil. ii. 15. ——d v. 3—20 vi. 24. vii. 5, &c. xxii. 14. xxiii. 27. Gen. xxxix. 2—12. Neh. xiii. 26, 27. Ec. vii. 26. ——e vii. 21. xxix. 5.

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1. Wisdom having finally warned the careless and unteachable, who despised her instructions, and denounced their doom, here proceeds to teach and exhort her children, (*Matt.* xi. 19. *Luke* vii. 35:) for this seems to be the sacred writer's intention, which he pursues in most parts of these introductory chapters, under the figure of a father instructing his son: though it is the general opinion of commentators, that he had the best interests of his son Rehoboam peculiarly in view, while he was employed on these important subjects.

V. 2. 'If thou give thyself to the true knowledge of 'God without hypocrisy.'

V. 3, 4. 'If thou expressest such a desire of it, as men 'do of what they most need, and without which they are 'in danger to perish: praying those that are able to inform 'them; and beseeching God likewise, with ardent devotion, 'that he would bring thee acquainted with it.' 'If thou 'dost value this wisdom above the greatest treasures, and 'show thy esteem of it by studious seeking of it, as covetous 'men do for money——; not giving over thy labour pre-'sently, if thou findest not what thou desirest, but inquir-'ing still; and sparing no pains to know what the will of 'the LORD is.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 5. "The fear of the LORD," and "the knowledge "of God," are concise scriptural terms for the whole of that religion by which sinful men come to God, walk with him, enjoy his favour, and inherit eternal life. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 6. "The LORD will give wisdom," (the literal rendering;) that is, to those who thus seek and pray for it: and he will do this, by means of the words which he hath spoken by his holy prophets. The wisdom which he gives by his Spirit in answer to prayer, to those who diligently seek it, accords to the written word, and must be tried by it.

V. 7. *He*, &c. Some versions render this, "He pre-"serveth the state, &c." Or, "He hideth the salvation of "the righteous, &c." "Our life is hid with Christ in "God." But the literal meaning seems to be, "He re-"serveth *essential* good for the righteous:" all things pertaining to life and godliness; "that which *exists* independ-"ently of this changing world, and shall exist for ever. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 9. Some versions include the passage from the beginning of the third verse, in a parenthesis. "If thou "apply thine heart to understanding, then shalt thou un-"derstand," &c.: the intermediate verses being an explanation of the words "apply thy heart," &c.; and the grounds of the subsequent assurance.

V. 10, 11. The first steps towards heavenly wisdom may be attended with difficulty, and seem unpleasant: but, it is here intimated, that when wisdom hath entered into the heart, it will become pleasant to the soul; and by its pleasantness, as well as its instructions, preserve the possessor from the destructive allurements of sin.——'The 'word of God shall teach thee, and counsel thee how to 'govern thyself.'

V. 12. (*Note*, i. 10—14.) One ruinous effect of bad company was shown in the preceding chapter; but another, not less fatal, is pointed out in this: for the company of ungodly and profligate men is the common introduction of young persons into the society of abandoned women.

V. 13, 14. They leave 'the word of God, which is 'the only light, to follow their own fancies, which are dark-'ness.' Infidelity and impiety prepare the mind for debauchery, and prevent the disturbances of conscience, which would otherwise interrupt the quiet of those who rejoice in doing evil.

V. 15. *Crooked*, &c. (*Note*, *Psalm* cxxv. 5.)

f v. 17. Jer. iii. 4.
g Ez. xvi. 8. 59, 60. Mal. ii. 14—16.
h v. 5. 11. vi. 26—35. vii. 22—27. ix. 18. 1 Cor. vi. 9—11. Gal. v. 19. 21. Eph. v. 5. Rev. xxi. 8. xxii. 15.
i Ps. lxxxi. 12. Ec. vii. 26. Jer. xiii. 23. Hos. iv. 11. Mat. xix. 24—26.
k iv. 18. Heb. vi. 18.

17 Which forsaketh [f] the guide of her youth, and [g] forgetteth the covenant of her God.

18 For [h] her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead:

19 [i] None that go unto her return again, neither [k] take they hold of the paths of life.

20 That [l] thou mayest walk in the way of good *men*, and keep the paths of the righteous.

21 For [m] the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it.

22 But [n] the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be * rooted out of it.

l xiii. 20. Ps. cxix. 63. 115. Cant. i. 7. 8. Jer. vi. 16. Heb. vi. 12. 3 John 11.
m Job i. 1. xlii. 12. Ps. xxxvii. 3. 9. 11. 22. 29. lxxxiv. 11. cxii. 4—6.
n v. 22. Job xviii. 16—18. xxi. 30.
o Ps. xxxvii. 20. 22. 37, 38. lii. 5. civ. 35. cxlv. 20. Is. iii. 10, 11.
* Or, *plucked up*.

V. 16. *Strange woman*, &c. That is, the harlot or prostitute. These were either heathen women, who subsisted by prostitution in the land of Israel; or such Israelitish women, as were worthy to be treated as strangers, or Gentiles. Some indeed think, that the fascinations of idolatry, or false religion, and of worldly pleasures, are meant in these warnings, as well as the crimes immediately specified: but the literal meaning is of vast importance; and observation on the ways of men will convince a serious inquirer, that the strong expressions used by Solomon, concerning the fatal consequences of these vices, have a peculiar propriety.

V. 17. 'That is, her husband, which is her head and 'guide to govern her; from whom she ought not to depart, 'but remain in his subjection.' "The covenant of her "God," 'is the promise made in marriage.'

V. 11. *The dead.* The word is the same that is used for the giants who were destroyed by the deluge; and the state of future punishment seems to be intended. 'By 'what name was this place of the damned expressed, be-'fore the word *Gehenna* or *Gehinnom* came to be used? It 'seems to have been called *the house of the giants.* (xxi. 16.) '—They shall go and keep them company,' (namely, the giants, whose wickedness provoked God to drown the world;) 'that is, go to the accursed place and condition 'which they are in.' (*Mede.*)

V. 19. 'It is rarely seen, that any body, who is drawn 'into her embraces, ever gets out again; she holds them 'so fast by her enchantments, and they are so blinded and 'bewildered by her arts.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

They, who earnestly seek heavenly wisdom, will never have cause to complain that they have lost their labour: and the freeness of the gift doth not supersede the necessity of our diligence: (*John* vi. 27.) God alone bestows this blessing: he hath given his Son to be "made Wisdom unto "us," and in him are laid up all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge for our use. These he communicates through his holy word: and it especially teaches us to fear God and so to know him, as to trust in his mercy, and delight greatly in his commandments. This sound wisdom and substantial good is reserved for the righteous, and for them exclusively, that they may pass safely through this perilous world to heaven: "for [illegible] a Buckler to them that walk up-"rightly." Would we [illegible] tain this inestimable treasure, we must receive the [illegible] of Christ, and, by daily study and meditation, hide [illegible] dments in our hearts: we must habitually have our ear open to instruction, and our minds applied to understanding. Above all, we must with earnestness "cry after knowledge, and lift up our voice" in prayer for understanding. (*Jam.* i. 5.) For in no other way can we "understand the fear of the Lord, and find the "knowledge of God." Those persons, therefore, whose religious knowledge has been obtained without this application of mind and fervency of prayer, have an internal demonstration that it is not of the right sort: if it hath cost them only a little of this labour, it must at best be very scanty and superficial: and they who are more eager to grow rich or great; or more intent about their pleasures, or the curiosities of science, than about this divine wisdom; may be sure that as yet they know nothing as they ought to know; nor will they ever, unless they value the prize at another rate, and pursue it in another manner. But they who value wisdom above rubies; and seek for it with that unwearied diligence and perseverance, with which the miner delves in the earth for the silver ore, or the miser scrapes together his heap of money, "shall understand righteousness, "judgment and equity, yea, every good path." (1 *Cor.* ii. 13—15. *Col.* i. 9, 10.) For when divine truth thus gains admission into the heart, and the soul is taught to relish and delight in it, discretion shall preserve, and understanding shall keep, men from the dangers to which others are exposed: for it is in this manner that "The Lord keepeth and "guardeth in the paths of judgment, and preserveth the "way of his saints."

V. 10—22.

Besides all the temptations from their own hearts, from the things of the world, and from the stratagems and suggestions of Satan; the numerous bad examples and crafty seducers of both sexes, exceedingly endanger men's souls, especially in the giddy season of youth. But they who ask wisdom from God, and delight in his word, will shun those scenes and companies where these dangers most abound, and will avoid the company of the evil man. For such as "leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in "the ways of darkness: whose delight is in doing evil, and "in the frowardness of the wicked," are very zealous to corrupt the principles and morals of those who are apparently well-disposed; that they may strengthen their party and keep themselves in countenance: nay, being instigated by Satan, and as it were inspired, as his prophets, their mouths utter perverse things: and they are continually disseminating infidelity, impiety, and licentiousness among the rising generations. Thus thousands of simple ones are trained up in the school, are qualified to assume the chair, of the scorner: and the academies for teaching these sciences, are not likely to want experienced and laborious preceptors. Indeed the minds of our youth, before they arrive at manhood, are too generally prepared for scenes of debauchery, in concert with profaneness; and they fall an easy prey to those wicked women, who are too numerous to be thought

CHAP. III.

Wisdom exhorteth to obedience, as conducive to long life, peace, and reputation, 1—4; to simple dependence on God; with a promise of special direction, 5, 6; and, avoiding self-wisdom, to fear God, to honour, him, and profit by his fatherly correction, 7—12. The happiness and safety of him that findeth wisdom, 13—26. Exhortations to justice, charity, peace and contentment, 27—32. The miserable state of the wicked, 33—35.

MY son, [a] forget not my law; but [b] let thine heart keep my commandments:

2 For [c] length of days and * long life, [d] and peace, shall they add to thee.

3 Let not [e] mercy and truth forsake thee: [f] bind them about thy neck; [g] write them upon the table of thine heart:

4 So [h] shalt thou find favour, and † good understanding in the sight of God and man.

5 ¶ [i] Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; [k] and lean not unto thine own understanding.

6 [l] In all thy ways acknowledge him, [m] and he shall direct thy paths.

a i. 8. iv. 5. xxxi. 5. Deut. iv. 23 Ps cxix. 93. 153. 176. Hos. iv. 6.
b Deut. iv. 9. vi. 6—9. xxx. 16—20. Ps cxix. 11. 16. 34. 47. 48. Jer. xxxi. 33. John xiv. 21—24.
c 16. iv. 10. ix. 11 Job v. 26. Ps. xxxiv. 11—14. xci. 16. cxxviii. 6 Eph. vi. 1—3.
* Heb *years of life* Ps. xxi. 4.
d 17. Ps cxix. 165. Is. xxxii. 17. lvii. 19—21 Rom. v. 1 xiv. 17. xv 13.
e xvi. 6. xx. 28. 2 Sam. xv. 20. Ps. xxv 10 Hos. iv. 1. Mic. vii 18. Mal. ii 6. Matt xxiii. 23. Eph v. 1, 2 9.
f vi. 21. vii. 3 Ex xiii 9. Deut. xi. 18—21. Ps. cxix. 11.
g Jer. xvii. 1. 2 Cor. iii. 3. Heb. x. 16.
h Gen xxxix 2.—4. 21. 1 Sam. ii. 26. Dan. i 9. Luke ii. 52. Acts ii. 47 Rom. xiv. 18.
† Or, *good success*. Josh. i. 7, 8. *Marg.* Ps. cxi. 10.
i xxii. 19. Job xiii. 15. Ps. xxxvii. 3. 5. 7. lxii. 8. cxv. 9—11. cxxv. 1. cxlvi. 3—5 Is xii 2 xxvi 3, 4. Jer xvii. 7, 8. Eph i. 12.
k 7. xxiii 4. xxviii. 26 1 Cor. iii. 18—20. viii. 1, 2.
l xvi. 3. xxiii. 17. 1 Sam. xxiii. 4. 11, 12. xxx. 8. Ezra vii. 27 viii. 22, 23. Neh. i 11. ii. 4. 1 Cor. x. 31. 2 Cor. viii. 16 Phil iv. 6 Col. iii 17. 23.
m xvi. 9 Ps xxv. 8, 9. xxxii. 8. Is. xxx. 21. xlviii. 17. Jer. x. 23. Jam. i. 5.

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strangers in our streets. These are perhaps the victims of seduction by more hardened profligates: or a loose education and early habits of sloth and extravagancy lead them into such infamous courses; or they adulterously have broken the marriage-covenant, solemnly engaged to in the presence of God, and been unfaithful to them who ought to have been the guides of their youth. But, (however themselves initiated in the ways of vice,) they assault the young and inexperienced with their flatteries and insinuating blandishments; and aid them in getting over the remaining scruples of conscience, and the restraints of fear and shame; and so qualify them to go forth to seduce the daughters, and debauch the wives, of their friends and neighbours. These are prevailing evils which excite the sorrow of every serious and pious mind; and must cause the reflecting parent to look upon his children with tears, lest they should be caught in the fatal snare. For, however light the inconsiderate make of these things, it is plain in fact, that "the house "of the harlot inclineth to death, and her paths to the "dead;" numbers are thus first led to venture into those violent or fraudulent practices, (in order to gratify the exorbitant demands of an extravagant prostitute, or to support the expenses of their lusts,) which terminate in an ignominious execution, or in banishment from civilized society, to some remote and desolate region, where there are scarcely any to plunder. Thousands prematurely perish by loathsome diseases, perhaps more desolating in these latter ages than the sword of war: others, unreformed, are united with virtuous women, to whom they cause inexpressible misery, and train up children by their example and discourse, to live, like them, the nuisance of society. And the corrupt language of those few of them who live to old age, too plainly shows, that with worn-out bodies they possess hearts as debauched as in the vigour of youth.—The abounding grace of God indeed snatches a very few, as brands out of the burning; and perhaps sometimes an individual may be otherwise reformed: but these rare exceptions consist very well with its being a *general rule*, that none, who form connexions and habits of this kind, "re-"turn again, to take hold of the paths of life." How carefully then should parents watch over their children, to keep them at a distance from the fatal precipice! and they should never mention such subjects, as too many do, as the foibles or slips of youth; but with horror, as the most tremendous of all vicious habits. How carefully should every young man keep at a distance from the entrance upon this perilous way! shunning such seducers more than a person infected with the plague. How should they store their minds with heavenly wisdom, and learn to relish purer pleasures, and pray to be kept by the grace of God from the dangerous snare, "that they may walk in the way of good "men, and keep the paths of the righteous!" For the upright believer shall not only inherit heaven, but have the best portion on earth; living in the Lord's land, and enjoying peace and comfort, "when the wicked shall be cut off "from the earth, and transgressors rooted out of it." Finally, let us note, that *in general* it is expedient for young persons to enter into the married state, before they have contracted bad habits, in order to prevent these fatal consequences: and, having made a prudent and pious choice, to be faithful to the covenant of God, and an affectionate guide of the youth to one who is suited for a helper in the way to heaven. "For marriage is honourable amongst all men, "and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers, "God will judge."

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 2. Temperance, chastity, honesty, and industry, which are inseparable from a life of true piety, do in the ordinary course of things conduce to health, safety, and long life: and this is sufficient to warrant these general maxims of wisdom, without supposing them to be direct promises, which are invariably fulfilled.—Long life is the blessing of God, which he giveth to his, so far forth as it is expedient to them.'

V. 3, 4. 'The mercy and faithfulness which we ought to use towards our neighbour,'—after the example of the Lord's mercy and truth to us. 'Count these thy ornament and thy treasure: then shalt thou be so favoured and directed by the Lord, that thy affairs, being managed discreetly, shall generally be crowned with good success.' (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 5, 6. Entire dependence on the providence and promises of God, in every undertaking, is here contrasted

7 [n] Be not wise in thine own eyes; [o] fear the LORD, and depart from evil.

8 It [p] shall be * health to [q] thy navel, and † marrow to thy bones.

9 [r] Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase:

10 [s] So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.

11 [t] My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; [u] neither be weary of his correction:

12 For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even [x] as a father the son *in whom* he delighteth.

13 ¶ Happy *is* [y] the man *that* findeth wisdom, and the man *that* ‡ getteth understanding.

14 For [z] the merchandise of it *is* better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.

15 She *is* [a] more precious than rubies: and [b] all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her.

16 [c] Length of days *is* in her right hand; [d] *and* in her left hand riches and honour.

17 Her ways *are* [e] ways of pleasantness, and [f] all her paths *are* peace.

n 5. xxvi. 12. Is. v. 21. Rom. xi. 25. xii. 16.
o xiv. 27. xvi. 6. Neh. v. 15. Job i. 1. xxviii. 28. Ps. xxxiv. 11—14. Ec. xii. 13.
p iv. 22. xvi. 24. Ps. cxlvii. 3. Is. i. 6. Jer. xxx. 12, 13.
* Heb. *medicine*
q Ez. xvi. 4, 9
† Heb. *watering* or *moistening*. Job xxi. 24.
r xiv. 31. Gen. xiv. 18—21. xxviii. 22. Ex. xxii. 29. xxiii. 19. xxxiv. 26. xxxv. 20—29. Num. vii. 2, &c. xxxi. 50, &c. Deut. xxvi. 2, &c. Hag. i. 4—9. Mal. iii. 8, 9. Mark xiv. 7, 8. Luke xiv. 13, 14. 1 Cor. xvi. 2. 2 Cor. viii. 2, 3. 8, 9. Phil. iv. 17, 18. 1 John iii. 17, 18.——s xi. 24. 25. xix. 17. xxii. 9. Lev. xxvi. 3—5. Deut. xxviii. 8. Hag. ii. 19. Mal. iii. 10, 11. 2 Cor. ix. 6—11.——t Job v. 17. Ps. xciv. 12. 1 Cor. xi. 32. Heb. xii. 5, 6. Rev. iii. 19.——u xxiv. 10. Job iv. 5. Is. xl. 30, 31. 2 Cor. iv. 1. 16, 17. Heb. xii. 3. 7—12.

x xxix. 17. Deut. viii. 5. Ps. ciii. 13.
y iv. 5—9. viii. 32—35. 1 Kings x. 6—9. 23, 24. Ec. ix. 15—18.
‡ Heb. *draweth out*. ii. 4. xviii. 1.
z viii. 10. 19. xvi. 16. 2 Chr. i. 11, 12. Job xxviii. 15—19. Ps. xix. 10. cxix. 72. 111. 162. Matt. xvi. 26. Rev. iii. 18.
a viii. 11. xx. 15. xxxi. 10. Matt. xiii. 44—46.
b Ps. lviii. 3. lxxiii. 25, 26. Rom. viii. 18.
c 2. iv. 10. Ps. xxi. 4. lxxi. 9. 1 Tim. iv. 8.
d iv. 6—9. viii. 18—21. 1 Kings iii. 13. Mark x. 30. 1 Cor. iii. 21—23. 2 Cor. vi. 10.
e ii. 10. xxii. 18. Ps. xix. 10, 11. xxv. 10. xxxvii. xliii. 3—5. cxii. 1. cxix. 34. 47. 103. 174. Matt. xi. 28—30.——f Ps. 11. cxix. 165. Is. xxvi. 3. lvii. 19. Luke i. 79. Rom. v. 1. Phil. iv. 8, 9.

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with a man's "leaning to his own understanding." He who "trusts in the LORD with all his heart," is doubtless a true believer; and he expects the blessing from God on his lawful undertakings in the use of allowable means, and these alone: but he who "leans to his own understanding," engages in such pursuits as are agreeable to his own inclinations, and relies on his own capacity, policy, or management for success; and consequently he is under continual temptations to deviate from the path of duty, both as to the end proposed, and the means of accomplishing it. This is therefore the result of pride, unbelief, ungodliness, and a worldly heart; and leads to further transgressions; the other is the way of humility, faith, piety, peace, and safety. This is further recommended by the exhortations to *know*, and "acknowledge God in all our "ways." When a man undertakes nothing without consulting the word of God as to its lawfulness, and seeking his direction in prayer as to its expediency; when he seeks counsel, assistance, and a blessing from God in all his concerns; when he acknowledges his authority and providence, aiming to do his will and glorify his name; when he makes the Lord his Friend and Counsellor in every thing, neglecting no proper means for discovering his will and ensuring his blessing: then he "acknowledges him in all his "ways," and may confidently expect "that he will direct "his paths." And they who do this constantly, seldom fall into prejudicial mistakes: which almost universally arise from neglect of these rules, from men's fondness for their own schemes, and partiality towards such measures, as seem to promise external advantages or accession to their reputation or enjoyment.

V. 7, 8. 'Never be guilty of such folly, as to conceit thine own wit to be so great, that thou canst manage affairs thereby in thine own way, (neglecting the rules that God hath prescribed thee,) to thy satisfaction:—(*Marg. Ref.*) but have a religious regard to him, who can either disappoint or prosper thee as he pleases; and avoid most cautiously those practices which he hath forbidden. This is the way to preserve a good habit both of body and soul.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

Navel. Some suppose that this clause alludes to a custom of applying medical preparations to the navels of children for the prevention of diseases: and that it was a proverbial expression, denoting health and cheerfulness.

V. 9, 10. Several laws were given concerning the first-fruits of different kinds; most of which were offered at the sanctuary or given to the priests: but some were appointed to be spent in feasting before the Lord, with the Levite, the stranger, the widow, and the fatherless. (*Notes*, &c. *Deut.* xii. xxvi.) But the spirit of these laws is here inculcated, by a general exhortation to "Honour the LORD with "their substance, &c.;" by employing his bounty in works of piety and charity, as circumstances required; which instead of impoverishing, would secure the blessing of God on their fields and vineyards, and every work of their hands. 'For to the faithful distributer God giveth 'in greater abundance.'

V. 11, 12. (*Notes, Job* v. 17. *Heb.* xii. 5—11.) The apostle expressly quotes this passage, with a special reference to the address, "My son;" and in a manner which decisively proves, that he considered it as the exhortation of our heavenly Father to his afflicted children: Now this method of quoting it, both shows that the apostle considered the book as divinely inspired, and also who it is that speaks in the instructions given by Wisdom to her children. The conclusion, indeed, of the quotation, comes nearer to the Septuagint than to the original; but the former part entirely accords with the passage before us.—'Suppose it be his pleasure that any affliction should befal thee, my son, let not that dissatisfy thee; nor make 'thee either doubt of his gracious providence towards 'thee, or out of impatience take any unlawful course to remove it.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The extremes of insensibility and of despondency seem especially intended; and a proper submission and improvement of the paternal discipline are inculcated.

V. 16, 17. 'He that seeketh wisdom, that is, suffereth 'himself to be governed by the word of God, shall have 'all prosperity.' (*Note* 2.) That length of days, which Wisdom holds in her right hand, and offers to her votaries, as her chief good, no doubt includes the gift of God, which

18 She *is* [g] a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy *is every one* that retaineth her.

19 The [h] LORD by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he ‖ established the heavens.

20 By his knowledge [i] the depths are broken up, and [k] the clouds drop down the dew.

21 My son, [l] let not them depart from thine eyes; [m] keep sound wisdom and discretion:

22 So shall they be [n] life unto thy soul, and [o] grace to thy neck.

23 Then [p] shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble.

24 When [q] thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid: yea, thou shalt lie down, [r] and thy sleep shall be sweet.

25 [s] Be not afraid of sudden fear, [t] neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh.

26 For the [u] LORD shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken.

27 ¶ [x] Withhold not good from them * to whom it is due, when it is [y] in the power of thine hand to do *it*.

28 Say not unto thy neighbour, [z] Go, and come again, and to-morrow I will give; when thou hast it by thee.

29 † Devise [a] not evil against thy neighbour, seeing he dwelleth securely by thee.

30 [b] Strive not with a man without cause, if he have done thee no harm.

31 [c] Envy thou not the ‡ oppressor, and [d] choose none of his ways.

32 For [e] the froward *is* abomination to the LORD: but [f] his secret *is* with the righteous.

33 The [g] curse of the LORD *is* in the house of the wicked: but [h] he blesseth the habitation of the just.

34 Surely [i] he scorneth the scorners: but [k] he giveth grace unto the lowly.

g xi. 30. xiii. 12. Gen ii 9. iii 22. Rev. xxii. 2
h viii. 27—29. Ps. civ. 24. cxxxvi. 5. Jer x. 12. li 15. John i 3.
‖ Or. *prepared.*
i Gen i 9. Job xxxviii 8—11. Ps. civ. 8, 9.
k Gen xxvii. 28. 37—39. Job xxxviii. 26—28 Ps. lxv 9—12. Jer xiv. 22. Joel ii 23.
l 1—3. Deut. iv 9. vi. 6—9. Josh. i. 8. John viii 31. xv. 6, 7.
† Heb. ii. 1—3. 1 John ii 24 27.
m ii. 7. Deut. xxxii. 46, 47.
n iv. 22. Is. xxxviii 16. John xii. 49, 50
o i. 9
p ii. 8 iv 12 x. 9. Ps. xxxvii. 23, 24. 31. xci. 11, 12. cxxi. 3. 8. Zech x. 12.
q vi 22. Lev. xxvi. 6. Ps iii 5 iv. 8. cxxi. 4—7. Ez. xxxiv. 15.
r cxxvii. 2 Jer. xxxi 26. Acts xii. 6 1 Thes. iv. 13, 14.
s Job v. 21, 22. xi. 13—15. Ps. xxvii. 1, 2 xlvi. 1—3. xci. 5 cxii. 7. Is viii. 12, 13. xli. 10—14. Dan. iii. 17, 18 Matt. viii. 24—26 xxiv. 6 Mark iv. 40 Luke xxi. 9. John xiv. 1. 1 Pet. iii 13.——t i 27. Ps. lxxiii. 19. Matt. xxiv. 15. Luke xxi 18—28.
u xiv. 26. Ps. xci. 3. 9, 10. Hab. iii. 17, 18.

x Rom. xiii. 7. Gal. vi 10 Tit. iii 14. Jam ii. 15, 16 v 4
* Heb. *the owners thereof*
y Gen xxxii. 29. Mic ii 1.
z xxvii. 1. Lev. xix 13. Deut. xxiv. 12—15. Ec. ix. 10. xi 6. 2 Cor. viii. 11. ix. 3. 1 Tim. vi. 18.
† Or, *Practise no evil.*
a vi 14. 18 xvi. 29, 30. xxxv. 20 iv 20 lix. 3 Jer. xviii. 18—20. Mic ii. 1, 2.
b xvii 4. xviii. 6. xxv 8, 9. xxix. 22 Matt v. 39—41. Rom. xii. 18—21 1 Cor. vi 6—8. 2 Tim. ii. 24.
c xxiii 17. xxiv. 1. 19, 20. Ps. xxxvii 1. 7—9. lxxiii. 3. Gal. v. 21.
‡ Heb. *a man of violence* Ec. v 8.
d i 15—18. ii. 12—15 xiii. 12. xxii. 22—25.
e vi. 16—19. viii. 13 xi. 20 xvii. 15 Ps xviii. 26. Luke xvi. 15.
f xiv 10. Ps. xxv. 14. Matt. xi. 25. xiii. 11. John xiv 21—24. xv. 15. Rev ii. 17 ——g xxi. 12 Deut. vii 26. xxviii. 15, &c. xxix. 19, &c. Josh. vi. 18. vii. 13. Zech. v. 4. Mal. ii. 2 ——h Deut. xxviii. 2, &c. 2 Sam. vi. 11. Job viii. 6. Ps. i. 3. xci. 10.——i ix 7, 8. 12 xix. 29. xxi. 24. Ps. cxxxviii. 6.
k Is. lvii 15 Jam. iv. 6. 1 Pet. v 5.

is eternal life, through Jesus Christ; while the riches and honour in her left, comprise all desirable prosperity and comfort in this world. The ways also in which she requires her children to walk, "are pleasantness and peace." —Christ's "yoke is easy and his burden light." "The "kingdom of God is in righteousness, peace, and joy in "the Holy Ghost:" and all the unpleasantness connected with true religion, arises from the opposition of depraved nature and bad habits, with this evil world and Satan, while men are striving to enter her paths; and the devious steps which even Wisdom's children make, to their grief and wounding.

V. 18. "Tree of life," 'which bringeth forth such 'fruit that they that eat thereof have life: and he alludeth 'to the tree of life in Paradise.' (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 19, 20. The wisdom which God giveth to his people, is an emanation from his own infinite wisdom, by which he formed the plan of the whole creation, and of its several parts; and must on that account be unspeakably valuable. The whole, however, may be applied to Jesus Christ, the Wisdom of God, "by whom also he made "the worlds." (*Note*, viii. 22—32.) 'Hereby he show-'eth, that this wisdom, whereof he speaketh, is ever-'lasting, because it was before all creatures, and that all 'things, even the whole world, were made by it.' (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 23—25. The composure and serenity arising from faith in the promises and providence of God, and the testimony of a good conscience, are here described as the effects of hearkening to wisdom, in language which agrees with the general scope of the holy Scriptures in this respect. The twenty-fifth verse, like the others, is future; and the old translation is more literal. "Thou shalt not "fear for any sudden fear; neither for the destruction of "the wicked when it cometh." 'When the Lord de-'stroyeth the wicked, he will save his, as he did Lot in 'Sodom.'

V. 26. 'For JEHOVAH shall be present according to 'thy confidence, &c.'

V. 27, 28. This exhortation exposes the avaricious backwardness of numbers to discharge their debts, taxes, and dues, even when able, and their unwillingness to pay their labourers and servants; and especially their reluctancy to part with their money in acts of piety and charity. When they know not on what pretence to refuse, they procrastinate; being fondly tenacious of their golden idol; and hoping that they shall be forgotten, that the design will be dropped, or that somebody else will bear the expense. The Septuagint makes many interpolations in this book, and here adds, 'for thou knowest not what the 'following day shall bring forth.'

V. 29. *Seeing*. "And he dwelleth in confidence with "thee." 'That is, he putteth his trust in thee.' The baseness of those who take occasion from the confidence placed in them, to defraud and injure them, is most emphatically exposed.

V. 32. *Secret*. 'That is, his covenant and fatherly 'affection, which is hid and secret from the world.'

V. 34. The apostles, James and Peter, have quoted the Septuagint translation of these words, with no other alteration than that of *God* for *Lord*. "God resisteth the "proud: but giveth his grace unto the humble." (*Marg. Ref.*) "If with the scorners, he will scorn: but on the "lowly he will bestow grace."

l iv. 3. 1 Sam. ii. 30. Ps. lxxiii. 24. ——m xiii. 18. Ps. cxxxii. 18. Is. lxv. 13—15. Dan. xii. 2, 3.

35 The [l] wise shall inherit glory; [m] but shame * shall be the promotion of fools. * Heb. exalteth the fools.

V. 35. The *glory* which the wise inherit, is the same that believers inherit according to the New Testament: but everlasting shame and punishment will be the event of the towering and vain expectations with which the ungodly here please to deceive themselves.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

A cordial affection for God's commandments, and a conscientious obedience to them, form the best cure of a treacherous memory in the concerns of religion: and if ten thousand other things were forgotten to make room for the truths of the Scriptures, we should be great gainers. For in the way of believing obedience, health and outward peace may commonly be enjoyed; and, if our days be not long on earth, we shall live for ever in heaven. Whilst we rely on the mercy and truth of our God for salvation, we should sedulously copy them in our own conduct; cultivating a kind and forgiving disposition, and adhering to strict sincerity, veracity, and fidelity, in all our intercourse with mankind; counting these things our ornament, and seeking to have them engraven on the tables of our hearts. Thus we shall have confidence of our acceptance with God, and shall find favour with all good men, and with all others as far as it is conducive to our profit; and shall be evidenced to be men of understanding before God and man. But we can do none of these things, except we "trust in the LORD with "all our heart:" we must place our whole dependence on his mercy and grace, his teaching and assistance, his word and providence, for every thing relative to this world and the next. We must not depend on our own sagacity or penetration, our own strength or resolution: we must not idolize our own schemes, or judge of things by the unaided light of our own reason, but according to the word of God; we must submit our understanding to his teaching, and wait in his way for every promised blessing, regardless of intervening difficulties: and whilst we thus acknowledge God in all our ways, he will remove obstructions, prevent mistakes, and direct our paths; but when we prefer our own devices, and grow conceited of our own wisdom; we shall soon be left to prove our own folly. In the fear of the Lord, and in departing from evil, health and prosperity will be real blessings; and if we fail of them, we shall find inward support and consolation. But if the Lord confer on us worldly wealth, we must honour him in the use of it; or it will prove no advantage, but a fatal snare to us; and he cannot be honoured with our substance, be it more or less, if it be extravagantly spent on ourselves in vanity and luxury; or if it be tenaciously hoarded to feed our avarice. Not only justice and temperance must be observed, but piety and charity also: and the more liberally we communicate, in proportion to our ability, the more plentifully we shall reap. For niggardliness is mere narrow policy, like the husbandman being sparing of his seed-corn: but a bountiful and extensive benevolence: a heart as large as the human species, and a hand open to every call of humanity, and every opportunity to promote the cause of godliness, is true wisdom in those who have it in their power. This by no means tends to poverty, but to bring a blessing on a man's estate; "so shall his barns be filled with plenty, "and his presses shall burst out with new wine." This every one will know, in proportion as he gives credit to the Lord, and puts out his wealth on the security of his promises. But should he see good to visit us with adversity and sickness, let us not forget, that "the exhortation "speaketh unto us as to children:" these also are pledges of his love, and the appointments of his wisdom for our good; "for whom the LORD loveth he chasteneth, even as "a father the son in whom he delighteth." We should therefore neither despise his chastening, by disregarding his hand, or by hardening ourselves in sullen apathy and impenitence, as if we scorned to submit: nor should we yield to impatience and despondency, or be weary of his correction: but we ought to humble ourselves under his hand, confess our sins before him, thank him for his paternal discipline, pray that it may be sanctified to us, and look to him for comfort and deliverance. Thus patience will have its perfect work, and our afflictions will tend to make us "partakers of his holiness."

V. 13—35.

If we at any time or by any labour become acquainted with wisdom, we shall have great cause for gratitude; and may consider ourselves peculiarly happy. For the merchandise of it is far more lucrative to ourselves, and capable of far greater improvement for the good of others, than that which is carried on for the gain of silver and gold: nor are any precious jewels, or conceivable treasures, worthy to be compared unto it; whether the comfort and usefulness of this present time, or the felicity of a future life be considered. For this wisdom is no other than Jesus Christ and his salvation, sought and obtained by faith and prayer; by whose unsearchable riches the believer's debt and ransom are paid, his wants supplied, his soul enriched with knowledge and holiness, and his eternal inheritance purchased: in Christ he hath "wisdom, righteousness, sancti-"fication, and redemption." And his left hand, as it were, confers temporal riches and honour, if conducive to our good; for they are absolutely at his disposal. Observing his directions, we walk in the pleasant paths of communion with God, and holy obedience, with a peaceful conscience, a lively hope, and a joy unspeakable and full of glory; and were it not for our unbelief and inattention, we should find all our ways pleasantness and our paths peace: for his are so, but we too often step aside from them, to our own detriment and grief. The Lord Jesus is indeed the Tree of life, of which the believer lays hold and keeps hold by faith and love; for he, by whom the Father made the world, and who by himself purged our sins, can neither want power, nor knowledge, nor love, to guide and support our steps through life, to receive our souls at death, or to raise our bodies from the grave; and his eternal truth is pledged to do all this for his people. Let us then not suffer his words to depart from before our eyes: that so we may keep sound wisdom and discretion; such as will be life to our souls, and our durable honour and ornament. Then we shall walk in his

CHAP IV.

Solomon shows what good instruction he had received from his parents, concerning the advantages of wisdom, in order to induce obedience, 1—13. *He dissuades from the path of the wicked, and contrasts it with that of the righteous,* 14—19. *Further admonitions and counsels of Wisdom,* 20—27.

HEAR [a] ye children, the instruction of a father, and [b] attend to know understanding.

2 For I give you [c] good doctrine, [d] forsake ye not my law.

3 For [e] I was my father's son, tender and only *beloved* in the sight of my mother.

4 He [f] taught me also, and said unto me, [g] Let thine heart retain my words: [h] keep my commandments, and live.

5 [i] Get wisdom, get understanding: forget *it* not; [k] neither decline from the words of my mouth.

6 Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: [l] love her, and she shall keep thee.

7 [m] Wisdom *is* the principal thing; *therefore* get wisdom; and [n] with all thy getting [o] get understanding.

8 Exalt her, [p] and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her.

9 She shall [q] give to thine head an ornament of grace: * a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.

10 Hear, O my son, and [r] receive my sayings; [s] and the years of thy life shall be many.

11 I have [t] taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have [u] led thee in right paths.

a i. 8. vi. 20—23. Ps. xxxiv. 11. 1 Thes ii. 11, 12.
b ii. 1—5 v. 1. vii. 4. viii. 33—36. xix. 20. xxii. 17. Heb. ii. 1.
c viii 6—9. xxii. 20, 21. Deut. xxxii. 2. Job xxxiii. 3. Ps. xlix. 1—3. John vii. 16, 17 1 Tim. iv. 6. Tit. i. 9.
d 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. 2 Chr. vii. 19. Ps. lxxxix. 30—32.
e 2 Sam. xii 24, 25. 1 Kings i. 13, &c. 1 Chr. iii. 5. xxii. 5. xxix. 1.
f xxii. 6. Gen. xviii. 19. 1 Chr. xxii. 11—16. xxviii. 9. Eph. vi. 4. 2 Tim. i. 5. iii. 15.
g iii. 1 Deut. iv. 9. vi. 6. Ps. cxix. 11.
h vii. 2. Lev. xviii. 3—5. Is. lv. 3. John xii. 50. Heb. v. 9.
i i. 22, 23. ii. 2—4. iii. 13, &c. viii 5. xvii. 16. xviii. 1. xix. 8 xxiii. 23 Jam. i. 5.
k 2 Chr. xxiv. 2 Job xxiii. 11. Ps. xliv. 18. cxix. 51. 157.
l 21. 22. ii 10—12. Eph. iii. 17. 2 Thes ii. 10.
m Ec. vii. 12. ix 16. 18 Matt. xiii. 44 Luke x. 42. Phil. iii. 8.
n xvi. 16. xxi. 26. Ps. xlix. 16—20. Ec ii. 4—9, iv. 8. Mark viii 36, 37. Luke xii 20.
o Ps cxix. 104.
p iii. 35 xxii. 4. 1 Sam. ii. 30. 1 Kings v. 5—13 Dan. xii. 3.
q i. 9. iii. 22. 1 Tim. ii. 9, 10. 1 Pet iii 4.
* Or. *she shall compass thee with a crown of glory* xvi. 31. Is xxviii. 5. Heb. ii. 7—9. 1 Pet v 4. Rev. iii. 21.
r viii. 10 xix 20. Job xxii. 22. Jer. ix 20. John iii 32, 33. 1 Thes. ii. 13 1 Tim.
i. 15.——s iii. 2. 16. Deut. v. 16 vi. 2.——t 4. Deut. iv. 5 1 Sam. xii. 24. Ec. xii. 9.——u vii. 6. 9. 20. Ps. xxiii. 3. xxv. 4, 5. Acts xiii. 10.

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ways safely, and not stumble: we shall be composed in those times of consternation, when sudden fear and destruction overtake the wicked: and when we resign our breath, to be laid in the silent grave, we shall sweetly sleep in Jesus, till the resurrection, when we shall awake to judgment; and shall even then be free from fear; for the Lord through all these scenes "will be our Confidence, and keep our "feet from being taken." In the mean time let us carefully observe his precepts and copy his example: let us do justice, love mercy, beware of covetousness, and be ready for every good work; rendering to all their dues, and giving or lending, as we have opportunity and ability, without grudging, and with alacrity: devising no evil, being harmless and blameless, avoiding needless contention, and bearing every tolerable injury rather than seek even legal redress. Above all, we should be careful not to envy the prosperous oppressors, who grow rich by the sweat, and toil, and blood of men far better than themselves. Far be it from any disciple of Christ to choose any of their ways; for they are an abomination unto the Lord: but his secret consolations remain with the righteous, and his blessing resides in their lowly cottages; whilst his curse rests upon the lordly palaces of the wicked. These truths the covetous and luxurious will contemn, and the infidel will ridicule: but the Lord will scorn such scorners, and everlasting contempt shall be their final promotion: whilst his favour shall be shown, and his grace communicated, to the humble believer, who alone is truly wise, and who shall at length inherit everlasting glory.

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1. 'The dulness, sluggishness, and 'forgetfulness of mankind, in their principal concern-'ments, are so notorious, that we need not wonder that 'the wise man repeats the same things.'——'All his pains, 'he knew would be lost without serious consideration of what 'he had said: and *the very first step to wisdom is to have* '*a mind to be wise.*'—'Listen then, all ye that are desirous 'to learn, to the instructions which out of a paternal 'affection I bring from God unto you.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)—'He speaks this in the character of a preacher—which is 'as a father to his people.' Solomon had one son and two daughters, of whom we read; and perhaps he meant to address himself to them: but the Holy Spirit directed him to such instructions as would be generally useful; and doubtless many thousands have derived more benefit from them than his own son did.

V. 3. Solomon was beloved by the Lord, and appointed to the kingdom; no doubt he was also regarded by his father with peculiar affection, and probably received a more careful education than David's other sons had done, to which the misconduct of Amnon, Absalom, and Adonijah might conduce. Bathsheba had more children by David; but Solomon, being (as Isaac) a child of promise, was peculiarly dear to her likewise. (*Note,* 1 *Chr.* iii. 1—9.)

V. 4. 'To make his exhortations more acceptable, he 'acquaints the reader with the lessons which his own father 'and mother were wont to give him; and the great benefit 'he had received by them.' This shows, 'the care that 'parents ought to take, to instruct their children diligently; 'and the greater they are (suppose princes) the more 'accurate their education ought to be, as Solomon's was.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) From this verse to the end of the thirteenth, may be considered as David's exhortation to Solomon. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 7. 'He showeth, that we must first begin at God's 'word, if so be we will that other things should prosper 'with us; contrary to the judgment of the world, which 'make it their last study, or care not for it at all.'

V. 11. 'Solomon declareth what care his father had to

12 When [x] thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, [y] thou shalt not stumble.

13 [z] Take fast hold of instruction: [a] let *her* not go: keep her; for [b] she *is* thy life.

14 ¶ Enter [c] not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil *men*.

15 [d] Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.

16 For [e] they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause *some* to fall.

17 For [f] they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence.

18 But [g] the path of the just *is* as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

x vi. 22. 2 Sam xxii. 37 Job xviii. 7, 8. y 19 iii 23. Ps. xci. 11, 12. cxix. 165. Jer. xxxi. 9. John xi 9. 10. Rom. ix 32, 33. 1 Pet. ii. 8. 1 John ii 10, 11. z iii. 18. xxiii. 23. Acts ii. 42. xi 23. 1 Thes. v. 21. Heb iii. 1. Rev. ii 13 xii. 11. a Gen xxxii 26. Cant iii. 4. Luke xxiv. 27 - 29. John iv. 39 42 b iii. 22. Deut. xxxii. 47 Ec. vii. 12 John vi 68 c i. 10. 15. ii. 11, 12 ix 6 xiii 20 Ps. i. 1. xxvi 4, 5 1 Cor. xv. 33. d v. 8. vi. 5. Ex. xxiii 7 Job xi. 15. xxii 23. Is. xxxiii. 14 Eph v. 11. 1 Thes. v. 22. e i. 16 Ps xxxvi. 4 Is. lvii. 20. Mic. ii 1. Luke xxii 66. John xviii 28. 2 Pet. ii. 14. f ix. 17. xx. 17. Job xxiv. 5, 6. Ps xiv. 8. Jer v 26–28 Ez. xxii. 25–29. Am viii. 4–6. Mic. iii. 5. vi. 12. Zeph. iii. 3. Matt. xxiii. 14 Jam v 4, 5.——g 2 Sam xxiii 4 Job xi. 17. xxiii. 10. Hos vi 3. Zech xiv. 6, 7. Matt v. 14. 16 John viii. 12 2 Cor. iii. 18. Phil. ii. 15. 2 Pet. i. 19 iii. 18 Rev. xxi. 23 xxii. 5.

19 The [h] way of the wicked *is* as darkness: they know not at what they stumble.

20 My son, [i] attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings.

21 Let them not [k] depart from thine eyes; keep them [l] in the midst of thine heart.

22 For they *are* [m] life unto those that find them, and * health to all their flesh.

23 [n] Keep thy heart † with all diligence; [o] for out of it *are* the issues of life.

24 [p] Put away from thee ‡ a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee.

25 Let [q] thine eyes look right on, and let thine eye-lids look straight before thee.

26 [r] Ponder the path of thy feet, and § let all thy ways be established.

h 1 Sam. ii 9. Job v. 14. xii. 25. xviii. 5, 6. 18. Is. lix. 9, 10. Jer. xiii. 16. xxiii. 12. Matt. vii 23. xv. 14 John xii 35. 1 John ii. 11. i v. 1. vi. 20, 21. vii 1. Ps lxxviii. 1. xc. 12. Is. lv. 3. Matt. xvii. 5. k iii 3. 21 l Ps xl. 8 *Marg.* m 4. 10. * Heb. *medicine.* iii 8. *Marg.* xii. 18. Jer xxxiii. 6. n xxii. 5. xxiii. 19. xxviii 26 Deut. iv. 6. Ps. cxxxix. 23, 24. Jer xvii. 9. Mark xiv 38. Heb. xii. 15. † Heb. *above all keeping* 7 iii 3 Ec. v. 13 xii. 3. Ec. v. 13. o Matt xii 35 xv 19 Mark vii 21–23. Jam. i 14, 15 p Job xi. 14. Ez xviii 31. Eph. iv. 25–31. Col. iii 8 Jam i. 21 26. 1 Pet ii. 1. ‡ Heb. *froward-ness of mouth and perverseness of lips.* viii. 8. 13 xvii. 30 1 Tim. vi. 5. 33. Job xxxi. 1. Ps. cxix. 51 Matt. vi. 22.——r v. 6 Ps. cxix 59 Ez. xviii. 28. Hag i. 5 7 Eph. v 15. 17 ——§ Or, *all thy ways shall be ordered aright.* Ps. xxxvii 23. xl. 2. 1 Thes. iii. 13. 2 Thes. iii 3. 1 Pet. v. 10.

'bring him up in the true fear of God: for this was 'David's protestation.' (*Notes*, iii.)

V. 13. 'Take such fast hold of it, as never, for want of 'care and pains, to let it slip out of thy mind: keep it as 'a most precious treasure, for all thy happiness depends 'on it.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 14, 15. Solomon, or rather heavenly Wisdom by him, seems here to resume the discourse by most earnestly dissuading from every degree of intimacy with wicked men, and from whatever might prove a temptation to it.

V. 16, 17. 'To do evil is more natural to the wicked, 'than to sleep, eat, or drink.' Having formed their iniquitous plans, they are restless till they have accomplished them: they spend those hours in perpetrating crimes, which others give to repose: and they make their violence and deceit bear the expenses of their voluptuousness.

V. 18, 19. The Septuagint version, of the first of these verses, is very expressive. 'The ways of the righteous shine like the light: they go on and shine, until the day be perfected.' *The path of the just*, or righteous, is that way in which a believer walks, from the time when he begins to seek the Lord to the close of his days. A glimmering of knowledge at first pervades the darkness of his mind, as to spiritual things, and some feeble desires after God and holiness arise in his heart; thus the day dawns: but frequently these feeble beginnings cannot be distinguished from many specious appearances which afterwards vanish: when, however, they arise from divine life communicated to the soul, the glimmering light will increase. Advancing knowledge gradually dispels ignorance and error; peace and comfort are obtained, and established on a firm base; and holy affections and dispositions ripen into fruits and habits. Thus this light shines progressively, not wasting as that of a taper, or declining as that of the setting sun; but increasing as that of the morning, until perfected in the knowledge, holiness, and felicity of heaven. This light comes from Christ at the first, and is augmented, and will be perfected with the knowledge of him: and the way in which he directs the soul, and on which it shines continually, is that of humble faith and obedient love. But the way of the wicked, though they amuse themselves with following many glimmering meteors, is as thick darkness, a compound of ignorance, error, sin, and misery, which continually increases, until at length it terminates in "the blackness "of darkness for ever;" into which they stumble unawares, and they know not how.

V. 21. 'Read them over and over again, and keep them 'perpetually in mind.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 22. 'Under health of body all other blessings pro-'mised in the law are contained.'

V. 23. As the heart in the body seems the centre and fountain of life, because the blood thence circulates into every part, conveying with it health or disease: so are the affections to a man's whole conduct. If the heart, *in this sense*, be purified by faith and grace, and be properly kept, the tenour of the thoughts, words, and actions will be pure, for they flow from it: if it be the residence of pride, impiety, unbelief, avarice, malice, or lust, the whole conduct will be tainted with these vices: if they find admission, or prevail for a season, they will proportionably infect the temper, conduct, and discourse. Therefore this citadel should above all things be garrisoned that it may not be seized, this spring should be watched that it may not be poisoned: for as the heart is, so will the life be; if not openly, yet in the sight of God, before whom thoughts, desires, and dispositions decide a man's character. 'For as the heart is either 'pure or corrupt, so is the whole course of a man's life.'

V. 24, 25. Next to the heart, the tongue, that unruly member, must be bridled and kept most diligently: and a strong guard must be placed upon the eyes, which are the avenues to the heart: that they may be employed in looking well to the path of duty, and not in gazing at such objects as excite evil desires in thee.

V. 26. The apostle nearly quotes the Septuagint trans-

[s] Deu. v. 32. xii. 32. xxviii. 14. Josh. i. 7.

27 [s] Turn not to the right hand, nor to the left: [t] remove thy foot from evil. [t] xvi. 17. Is. i. 16. Rom. xii. 9.

lation of the first clause of this verse; "And make straight "paths to our feet." (*Heb.* xii. 13.) The marginal reading of the latter clause seems preferable. 'By a proper 'regard to the path of thy feet, all thy ways shall be or-'dered aright.'

V. 27. 'Do not suffer thyself to be drawn aside, either 'to superstition on the one hand, or to contempt and ne-'glect of religion on the other: let neither love of friends 'nor hatred of enemies; neither hope of pleasure nor gain, 'nor fear of pain and damage; neither prosperous nor cross 'events, ever move thee to turn into either extreme from 'the rule of virtue.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—13.

Good instructions, given with paternal authority and affection, have a peculiar claim to the obedient attention of young persons; and will be thus received by every one, who applies his mind to the practical knowledge of divine truth: so that they who refuse such instructions and injunctions will be left without excuse. How aggravated then is the guilt of those who reject the doctrine and forsake the law of the God of heaven, whilst he condescends to speak to them with the tender compassion of a Father! We ought to show our love to our children, by instructing them diligently in true wisdom: and that preference, which is shown to such as are most teachable, is no sinful partiality. A special honour is in Scripture given to the pious education of children, as the means by which the Lord giveth wisdom and grace: and men should requite their parents for this unspeakable obligation, by handing down their instructions, in their name and with respect to their memories, to their children also; for their intention was, that their remote posterity should thus derive the advantage. (*Psalm* lxxviii. 3—7.) Pious men, in every age of the world, and of every rank in society, agree, that true wisdom consists in obedience, and is inseparably connected with happiness: and the well-beloved Son of the Father says to us, "Let thy heart retain my words, keep my command-"ments and live:" (*Marg. Ref.*) He is the Wisdom of God: an interest in his salvation we should get, whatever we go without or lose for his sake; his words we should remember and not decline from them, whatever we forget or omit. This "wisdom is *the principal thing*," the "pearl "of great price," the sinner's "one thing needful:" and if we sell all to purchase it, forsake all to secure it, count all but loss for the excellency of it, and lay down our lives in adhering to it, our gain will be sure and infinite. For whilst we love and honour the Redeemer, he will preserve us from every danger, keep our souls unto eternal life, give us that honour that cometh from God, adorn us with the ornament and beauties of holiness, and deliver to us "a crown of glory that fadeth not away." But how poor, and contemptible, and wretched will they be, who, with all their getting of wealth, of learning, of reputation, of preferment, or dominion, die without getting understanding, "without Christ, without hope, and without "God!" Let us then receive the sayings of Him who "hath the words of eternal life;" and we shall daily perceive and experience, that "He hath taught us in the way "of wisdom, and led us in right paths." Thus shall we avoid the intricacies and perplexities in which crafty men are entangled: our path will be plain before us, and we shall proceed with alacrity, confidence, and safety; not straitened in our steps, nor stumbling over the obstructions which are laid in the paths of the heedless and inattentive; and which can only be avoided by "taking fast hold of "instruction," resolved "not to let her go, but to keep "her, as our life."

V. 14—27.

The counsels of heavenly wisdom continually warn us to keep at a distance from the society and the infectious example of wicked men; and to avoid their path, "passing by "it, turning from it, and passing away," being afraid of coming within the reach of their fascinations. There are many in every age who are restless in pursuit of the pleasures and advantages of sin, or in indulging their malice and revenge; who are miserable when they cannot be mischievous to their utmost wish; who riot in excess upon the gains of their fraud, rapine, and oppression, regardless of the groans and tears extorted by their violence, and to support their extravagance and magnificence. This is one way of the wicked, and it is as increasing darkness; and, if persisted in, will speedily and unexpectedly plunge them into final misery and despair. "But the path of the just is as "the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the "perfect day." Their comforts are continually increasing, their characters perfecting, their sorrows expiring: and the hour of death will only occasion a short interruption of their increasing light, which will suddenly break forth in perfect and eternal day. Let us then be observant of our great Teacher, and keep our eye continually upon his directions, and hide them in our inmost souls, "for they are life unto those that find them," and a medicine for all our maladies. But would we make progress in our heavenly path, we must keep our hearts with all diligence, and more sedulously than we do our money, our estates, our habitations, or even our characters; "exercising ourselves to have a conscience void "of offence towards God and man." With all vigilance and earnestness, and with unceasing prayer, we should labour, that no evil desire may prevail or abide in our hearts: avoiding every thing which poisons this fountain, by exciting pride, envy, malice, avarice, or sensual lusts; crushing the first emotions of such evils, as we would the brood of a scorpion; guarding the avenues of our senses, imagination, and memory; storing up pious instructions, and using every means to render our minds a treasure of holy thoughts and affections, and to increase in them hatred of sin, grateful love, reverential fear, and benevolence in all its delightful exercises; that from within these holy streams may issue forth, and fructify our whole conduct and conversation. Above all, we should seek from the Lord Jesus, that living Water, that sanctifying Spirit, which is in the hearts of believers "a well of water springing up into "everlasting life." Thus we shall be enabled to put away from us a froward mouth and perverse lips: our eyes will be turned away from beholding vanity, and fixed upon our path; looking straight before us, that we may see and shun

CHAP V.

Exhortations to study wisdom, 1, 2. *The seductions of harlots, and the complicated mischiefs of their society,* 3—14. *A figurative commendation of marriage, and of affection to a man's wife and children* 15—19. *A further dissuasive from whoredom; urging the Lord's continual presence, and the miserable end of wicked men,* 20—22.

MY son, [a] attend unto my wisdom, *and* [b] bow thine ear to my understanding:

2 That thou mayest regard discretion, and *that* [c] thy lips may keep knowledge.

3 For [d] the lips of a strange woman drop *as* an honey-comb, and her * mouth *is* [e] smoother than oil:

4 But [f] her end is bitter as wormwood, [g] sharp as a two-edged sword.

5 Her feet go [h] down to death; her steps take hold on hell.

6 Lest thou shouldest [k] ponder [k] the path of life, [l] her ways are moveable, *that* thou canst not know *them.*

7 [m] Hear me now, therefore, O ye children, [n] and depart not from the words of my mouth.

8 Remove [o] thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house:

9 Lest [p] thou give thine honour unto others, and thy years unto the cruel:

10 Lest [q] strangers be filled with thy † wealth; and thy labours *be* in the house of a stranger;

11 And [r] thou mourn at the last, [s] when thy flesh and thy body are consumed,

12 And say, [t] How have I hated instruction, [u] and my heart despised reproof!

13 And [x] have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me!

14 I was [y] almost in all evil, in the midst of the congregation and assembly.

a Ps. i. iv. 1 20. Matt. xiii. 9. Mark iv. 23. Rev. ii. 7 11. 17. 29. iii. 6 13. 22
b xxii. 17. Jam i. 19.
c x. 21. xv. 2 7. xvi. 23. xx. 15. Ps. xlv. 2. lxxi. 15. cxix. 13. Cant. iv. 11. Mal. ii. 6, 7.
d ii 16. vi. 24. vii. 21. Rev xvii. 2—6.
* Heb. *palate.*
e Ps. lv. 21
f vi. 25. &c. vii. 22, 23. ix. 18. xxiii. 27, 28 Ec. viii 26. Heb. xii. 15, 16.
g Judg. xvi 4—6. 15 21.
h ii. 18, 19. vii 27.
i iv. 26. Ps cxix. 59.
k xi. 19. Ps. xvi. 11.
l vi 12, 13 vii. 10—21. 2 Thes. ii 9, 10.
m iv 1. viii. 32—36. xxii. 17—21. Heb. xii. 25.
n iii. 21. iv. 21.
o iv. 15. vi. 27 28 Matt. vi. 13. Eph. v 11.
p vi. 29—35 Gen. xxxviii 23—26. Judg. xvi. 19—21 Neh. xii. 26. Hos iv 13, 14.
q vi 35. Hos. vii. 9. Luke xv. 30.
† Heb. *strength.* xxxi. 3.
r vii 23. Deut. xxxiii. 29 Jer. v. 31. Rom. vi. 21. Rev. xxi. 8. xxii 15.
s Num. v. 27. 1 Cor. v. 4, 5. vi. 18.
t i. 7. 22. 29, 30. xv. 5 Ps. l. 17 lxxiii. 22. John iii. 19, 20.
u i. 25. xii. 1. xiii. 18. Gen. xix. 9. Ex. ii. 13, 14. 2 Chr. xxiv. 20—22. xxv 16 xxxiii. 10, 11. xxxvi. 16, 17. Jer xliv. 4, 5. Zech. i. 4—6.
x Luke xvi 16. 1 Thes iv. 8. v. 12, 13. Heb. xiii. 7.
y xiii. 20 Num xxv. 1—6. Hos. iv. 11—14. 1 Cor. x. 6—8. 2 Pet. ii. 10—18. Jude 7—13.

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the snares and devious tracks into which others are beguiled: pondering the path of our feet, that we may take no false steps, but that all our ways may be established in consistency and propriety; turning neither to the right hand nor to the left; avoiding all extremes; keeping the middle path; removing our feet from every evil thing; walking by the rule of God's word, and observing the cautions, and treading in the steps, of our Lord and Master. In this view, what a beautiful, excellent, and happy thing is true Christianity! But, alas, how far do we come short in every particular! Lord, forgive the past, and enable us to follow thee more closely for the time to come!

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 3. 'By honey and oil, he meaneth 'flattering and crafty enticements.'

V. 4—6. 'The beginning of this love is not so sweet, 'as the conclusion is bitter; after a short pleasure follows long pain, with remorse of conscience and anguish of spirit: for like a sword that cuts on both sides, 'she wounds both soul and body.' 'She leads those that 'follow her, to an untimely, shameful, and miserable end; '—destruction, not only here but hereafter.' 'She hath 'more ways than thou canst ever know of, (winding and 'turning herself into a thousand shapes,) to keep thee 'from so much as deliberating a return to a virtuous course 'of life.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 8. 'Shun all familiarity with her; avoid her as 'thou wouldst the plague.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 9. *Cruel.* This may refer either to the harlot herself, who would readily concur in the plunder or murder of her paramour; or to some of those wicked men connected with her, who waited the opportunity of robbing or assassinating such as she took in her net: or to a husband, whom jealousy rendered merciless to the man who had thus injured him. 'She will have no pity on thee; as is read of 'Samson and the prodigal son.'

V. 13. 'I wanted no good instructions of my parents, 'tutors, friends, and God's ministers; who informed me 'of the danger, and taught me to escape it: but, alas! I 'was so sottish as not to obey them; so contumacious that 'I did not consider what they said unto me.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 14. *In the midst,* &c. This expression may either mean the assembly of wicked people, where every species of abomination is shamelessly perpetrated; or in the face of mankind in the most open manner; or, as some think, that even in the midst of the congregation assembled for the worship of God, the man's heart and imagination were employed about almost all kinds of wickedness. If men were, as many seem to think, almost *exclusively* the seducers, it is wonderful that Solomon should speak of women as the chief tempters to these vices, and bestow so much pains to put men upon their guard against their enticements, saying so very little on the counterpart of the subject. And we should remember, that this is not the wisdom of Solomon only, but the wisdom of God also. Doubtless external alterations in society may effect considerable changes; the seduction of females is now often attended with peculiar aggravations; and the abandoned of both sexes are reciprocally the tempters of the more virtuous: yet upon examination it must appear, that bad women multiply the seduction, (if that term may be used,) of heedless youths, far more rapidly than bad men seduce

z 18, 19. 1 Cor. vii 3—5. Heb. xiii. 4.

15 ¶ Drink [z] waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well.

a Deut. xxxiii. 28. Ps. lxviii. 26. Is xlviii. 1 b Gen. xxiv. 60. Judg. xii. 9. Ps cxxvii. 3. cxxviii. 3.

16 Let [a] thy fountains be [b] dispersed abroad, *and* rivers of waters in the streets.

17 Let them be only thine own, and not strangers with thee.

c Ec. ix 9. Mal. ii. 14, 15. d Cant ii 9 iv 5. vii. 3. viii 14. * Heb. *water thee.* 15. † Heb *err thou always in her love.* 2 Sam xii. 4.

18 Let thy fountain be blessed: and [c] rejoice with the wife of thy youth.

19 *Let her be* [d] *as* the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts * satisfy thee at all times; and † be thou ravished always with her love.

e ii. 16—19. vi. 24, &c. vii. 5, &c xxii. 14 xxiii. 27, 28 33 1 Kings xi. 1. f xv. 3. 2 Chr xvi 9. Job xxxi. 4. xxxiv 21. Ps xi. 4. xvii. 3. cxxxix. 1—12 Jer xvii 10. xxiii. 24. xxxii 19 Hos. vii. 2. Heb. iv. 13. Rev. iii. 18. 23 g i. 18. 31, 32 xi 3 5 Ps. vii. 15, 16. ix. 15, 16. Jer. ii 19. Hos iv. 11—14. Gal. vi. 7, 8. h Ec. vii. 26. i Heb *sin.* 1 Cor. v 9, 10 Gal. vi. 19—21. Eph v 5. 6. Heb. xiii. 4 ——— i x 21 xiv. 32. Job iv. 21. xxxvi. 12. k xiv. 14. Ps lxxxi. 12. 2 Pet. ii. 15—22.

2 And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished [e] with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger?

21 For [f] the ways of man *are* before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings.

22 [g] His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be [h] holden with the cords of his ‡ sins.

23 He [i] shall die without instruction; and [k] in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray

modest women. A few of them comparatively suffice to corrupt whole cities: and it might perhaps be ascertained by facts, that some insinuating prostitutes have initiated more young men into these destructive ways, in the course of a year or two, than the most abandoned rakes have debauched virgins during their whole lives. So that, though these latter should be treated with great severity: yet the grand effort of those in public stations, who would effectually promote reformation, should be directed to the restraining, or at least driving out of sight, those wretched females, who are the pestilence and nuisance of society, and equally the objects of compassion and of abhorrence.

V. 15—19. Some interpret these verses as an exhortation to honest industry, contentment, and liberality: but it seems vastly more natural to suppose the inspired instructor prosecuting his subject, and in this figurative language, recommending marriage to those young pupils, who were tempted to the crimes before mentioned. 'He showeth 'that God blesseth marriage, and curseth whoredom,'—'happy shall those every way be in such a wife, whom I 'advise thee to take in thy youth.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) Instead of drinking, as it were, the muddy and poisonous water from the common sewer; let every man have a well, or a cistern of his own, filled with pure and wholesome water: considering the offspring of his virtuous union, which he will confidently regard, and without shame acknowledge to be his own, as so many fountains and rivulets, by which other families, so to speak, may be watered and replenished, and his name and posterity honourably perpetuated; and not like the dubious, spurious, and disgraceful offspring of illicit intercourses. The inspired writer proceeds with his advice, by exhorting a man to rest contented with the wife he hath taken; to bless God for her, and count himself happy in her, and in an honourable offspring; and to pray for a blessing upon them; to be cheerful in the company of his wife, (who is like the loving hind, or the pleasant harmless roe, and does not at all resemble the crafty, rapacious, and licentious harlot;) cherishing her with endeared and increasing affection, and never giving the least liberty to his passions but in her company. It is observable that Solomon, though he had had so many wives, gives no intimation of polygamy, or encouragement to it: whence we may infer, that he wrote these cautions after he was made sensible of his own madness and folly. And knew that violating the original law of marriage tended to inflame, rather than to allay, the licentious passions.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—14.

If we bow our obedient ear to wisdom, we shall both regard discretion in our own conduct, and our lips will keep knowledge for the use of others: and we always need, but especially in youth, her salutary cautions; for innumerable snares and temptations beset our path. But there is no one which hath proved fatal to greater numbers, than the blandishments of strange women. Nay, this hath generally been Satan's method of drawing men off from the worship of God, into idolatry, or diverse forms of false religion, which are spiritual whoredom and adultery. The soothing language of these fascinating tempters, blended with flatteries, professions of love, and artful persuasions, are as pleasing to the carnal heart, as honey from the comb to the palate; and are smooth and insinuating as oil. But the consequences of yielding to their enticements prove bitter as wormwood, poisonous as hemlock, and sharp as a two-edged sword: nay, the harlot's "feet "go down to death, her steps take hold on hell." And should a man, who hath got entangled in this snare, seem disposed to consider his ways, to return to virtue, or to inquire after the path of life; his artful deceiver can employ a thousand wiles to withdraw him from his purpose. She can change her looks, her language, or demeanor, at pleasure, and into innumerable forms of falsehood: she can affect grief, despair, affection, resentment, jealousy, contempt, aversion, as may best suit the present purpose; and by reproaches, caresses, complaints, menaces, tears, and expostulations, she can wind herself into every form, discover every avenue to the heart, work upon every weakness and passion, and avail herself of every unguarded moment, to resume her influence and rivet her chains: so that there is no knowing all her moveable ways, and scarcely any escaping from the fatal snare. Safety can therefore only be found by keeping at a distance, removing our path far from her, and not coming nigh the door of her house: even shunning the streets and passages where such tempters wait for their prey. This must be decidedly the conduct of every one, who would not risk every thing dear and valuable: and they who palliate such intercourse as a small matter, are as little versant in the *private* history

CHAP. VI.

Cautions against surety-ship, and counsels to those who have rashly engaged in it, 1—5. *The slothful sent to the ant for instruction; and shown how sloth tends to penury,* 6—11. *The artful practices of wicked men exposed, and their ruin denounced,* 12—15. *Seven things which the Lord hateth,* 16—19. *Exhortations to obey parents, and to walk in God's commandments,* 20—23. *Dissuasives from fornication and adultery; and the fatal consequences of the latter,* 24—35.

of mankind, as in the words of divine wisdom. Multitudes in this way continually lose their reputation, sink into contempt, and are left to the necessity of subsisting by the most destructive pursuits: thousands have fallen victims to the jealousy, revenge, or rapacity of a base prostitute or her associates: and what can men expect from trusting themselves with women, of whom they scarcely know any thing, but that they are destitute of conscience and of shame? But should this peril be escaped, no better can be expected, but that by the expenses of such pursuits, a man's substance should be wasted among the basest strangers, and himself, with his family and friends, left to beggary and misery. At the same time the constitution is generally ruined beyond recovery; and those diseases are contracted, which consume the body in the most loathsome manner, and bring thousands to the grave, and which form a constant testimony of God's abhorrence of this iniquity. In this wretched situation many a miserable sufferer too late regrets his folly, and "mourns at the last, when the flesh "and body are consuming, and says, 'How have I hated "instruction, and my heart despised reproof! and have not "obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear "to them that instructed me! I was almost in all evil," in the midst of every congregation of evil-doers. Should such reflections be admitted in this life, and the evil of such a course of iniquity be duly perceived by a miracle of mercy, true repentance may at last prevent the most tremendous consequences, and the destruction of the flesh may prove the salvation of the soul. But they, who have most opportunity of witnessing such scenes, have but seldom the satisfaction of seeing good evidence of this true though late repentance: alas! far more die as insensible and profane as they have lived. And what language of man can express the case of the self-ruined sinner, in the eternal world, enduring the reproaches and keen remorse of his own conscience, "*his* worm, that never dieth!" whilst he recollects despised warnings and expostulations, and good instructions of parents, teachers, and ministers, all treated with hatred and disdain; yea, the convictions of his own conscience, and the strivings of the Holy Spirit, all stifled and extinguished, by rushing into every kind of evil, with a headlong disregard of consequences; till sudden destruction come upon him, without the possibility of escape.

V. 15—23.

But let us avert our eyes from the doleful scene before contemplated. Every man should study to keep himself, if possible, from the inclination to such destructive vices, which diffuse sin and misery more rapidly than any other: and the encouragement of lawful marriage is one means, which God hath appointed for these purposes. This was good for man in his state of innocency; and it is become much more needful, since the fall has given his passions such an accession of force, and his enfeebled powers have lost their authority over them. Every restraint upon marriage, or dissuasive from it, may operate as a temptation to vicious habits and connexions: and that which might have prevented, seldom avails to cure these evils. But this preservative used in the fear of God, and in dependence on him, will not prove ineffectual: and the comforts of the married state, when prudently and piously entered into, and when the duties of it are faithfully and affectionately performed, are so superior to all the base pleasures of illicit connexions, and produce such contrary effects to individuals and to society in every respect, that if men will not renounce their reason, they must prefer these running waters from their own fountain, to the pestiferous exhaltations of a stagnating putrid pond. Indeed, they who have once tasted the endearments of domestic life, with the rational conversation of a virtuous and affectionate companion; together with the satisfaction of seeing a family of hopeful children, growing up to be useful members of society, commonly lose all inclination for scenes of licentiousness, except where previous bad habits have debauched the mind: and multitudes, who seem not influenced by higher principles, live in this way respectable members of society. But there are so many dangers and hinderances, as to this desirable settlement in life, from the present state of human nature; that we can have no assurance of being properly yoked, except as we acknowledge God in respect of it: attending to the rules of his word, preferring prudence and piety, to wealth, wit, or beauty; and seeking his direction and blessing. When a man has entered into the married state, he should consider that he is bound to treat his wife with tenderness and affection, though she be not without faults and imperfections; not only because she is his own choice, but because she is the woman that the Lord hath allotted him. He should therefore continually seek the blessing of God on their union and family, by fervent prayer; and study to be cheerful and happy in her company; and not allow a thought or desire to wander after any other person. For why should a man desire forbidden fruit, when he may have all that is needful and good for him, honourably, with allowance and a blessing? Let us ever remember, that though secret deviations from our duty may escape the eye of our fellow-creatures; yet "a "man's ways are before the eyes of the LORD, and he pon-"dereth all his goings." If no other apprehend the adulterer or fornicator, to put him to shame, or testify against him, his own iniquities will entangle him as in a net, and his sins will bind him, as with cords, for the vengeance of his offended God: and they who despise these maxims of heavenly wisdom, shall die without instruction; and their doom shall prove the greatness of their folly, in going astray from God's commandments.

MY son, [a] if thou be surety for thy friend, *if* thou hast stricken thy hand with a stranger;

2 Thou art [q] snared with the words of thy mouth, thou art taken with the words of thy mouth.

3 Do this now, my son, and deliver thyself, [c] when thou art come into the hand of thy friend: [d] go, humble thyself, * and make sure thy friend.

4 [e] Give not sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eye-lids.

5 Deliver thyself as a roe from the hand *of the hunter*, and [f] as a bird from the hand of the fowler.

6 ¶ Go [g] to the ant, [h] thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise:

7 Which, having [i] no guide, overseer, or ruler,

8 Provideth [k] her meat in the summer, *and* gathereth her food in the harvest.

9 [l] How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? [m] when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?

10 *Yet* [n] a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:

11 So [o] shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.

12 ¶ A [p] naughty person, a wicked man, [q] walketh with a froward mouth.

13 He [r] winketh with his eyes, he speaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers;

14 [s] Frowardness *is* in his heart, [t] he deviseth mischief continually; [u] he † soweth discord.

a xi. 15. xvii. 18. xx 16 xxii 26. xxvii. 13. Gen. xliii. 9. xliv. 32, 33. Job xvii. 3. Philemon 18, 19. Heb. vii. 22.
b xii. 13 xviii 7.
c Gen. xxxix. 6. 2 Sam. xxiv. 14. 2 Chr. xii. 5. Ps xxxi. 8
d Ex. x 3. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 12. Jam. iv. 10.
* Or, *so shalt thou prevail with thy friend.*
e 10, 11. Ps. cxxxii. 4. Ec. ix. 10. Matt xxiv. 17, 18. Mark xiii. 35, 36.
f i. 17. Ps. xi. 1. cxxiv. 7.
g i. 17. Job xii. 7, 8. Is i 3 Matt. vi. 26
h 9. x. 26. xiii. 4. xv. 19. xviii. 9. xix. 15 24. xx 4 xxi 25. xxii. 13. xxiv. 30—34. xxvi 13—16. Matt. xxv. 26. Rom. xii. 11. Heb. vi. 12
i Job xxxviii. 39—41. xxxix 1—12. 26—30. xli. 4, &c.
k xxx. 25 1 Tim. vi. 19.
l i. 22. Jer iv. 14.
m Ps xciv. 8 Jon. i. 6 Rom. xiii. 11 Eph v 14. 1 Thes v 2—7.
n 6 xxiii. 33, 34.
o x. 4. xiii 4 xx. 4.
p xi. 6 xvii. 4. 1 Sam xvii. 28. Jer. xxiv. 2. 8—10 Jam. i. 21.
q 14 ii 12. iv. 24. viii 13. Ps. x. 3 7. xxxvi 3. lii. 2—4. lix. 7. lxxiii. 8, 9 Mat. xii. 34 Acts xx. 30. 1 Tim. v. 13. Tit i. 10, 11. Jam iii. 6.
r v. 6. x. 10. Job xv. 12. Ps. xxxv. 19.
s ii 14. xvi. 28—30 xxi. 8.
t 18. Ps. xxxvi. 4. Is xxxii 7. Ez. xi 2. Mic. ii. 1.
u 19. xvi. 28. xxii. 8. Hos viii 7. Gal. vi 7, 8.
† Heb. *casteth forth.* xxvi. 17—22.

NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1—5. A partial regard to insinuating companions, or near relations, whose circumstances, prudence, or honesty are not fully ascertained, induces incautious persons, especially the young and unsuspecting, to be bound with them for sums of money above what they can afford to lose: and often to enable a man, who is discontented in his station and in haste to be rich, to prosecute some favourite scheme; or to extricate himself from difficulties into which his rashness or extravagance have plunged him; or to support a delusive show of affluence and treacherous credit. Thus men risk the ruin of their own circumstances, the forfeiture of reputation and liberty, the injuring of their families, or even the defrauding of their creditors: when perhaps their consent was obtained at some convivial meeting, or when heated with liquor! Such contracts seem in Solomon's days to have been finished by verbal promises, and striking of hands before witnesses. If then any one had been drawn into such a snare, and was taken with the words of his mouth: ('for a man's own lips are a strong snare to him.' *Sept.*) it was his duty and interest, to extricate himself, if possible, by the most humiliating concessions and equitable proposals, that he might either induce the creditor to discharge the security, or his friend to pay the money: and this without the least delay; as the deer would escape from the hunter, or the bird from the fatal snare of the fowler. —It cannot be supposed that surety-ship in every case is unlawful, or even inconsistent with prudence. Such engagements *may*, nay *must*, frequently be entered into by many persons; and it would often be inconsistent with friendship, benevolence, and even justice, to refuse them. But the dangerous extremes to which this matter is carried, the fatal effects of men rashly engaging for large sums, and the cruel advantage frequently taken of their indiscretion, render it a general truth, that "He who "hateth surety-ship is sure;" and some exceptions may well agree with a good general rule. Nor can it consist with *honesty*, in any ordinary case, for a man to be bound for more money than he is able to pay, along with his own debts, and a fair prospect of maintaining his family.

V. 6—11. Diligence is every man's wisdom and duty; that he may not be a burden to society, that he may be out of the way of various temptations, and have it in his power to relieve the distressed. The sluggard is therefore sent to school to the insignificant but provident ant; who, destitute of reason and without any instructor or ruler, takes more proper care for the future, than the slothful do with all their advantages. Habits of indolence grow upon people: they cannot resolve to leave their beds, and go to work, to encounter difficulties, or bear hardships; they make abundance of excuses, and if none prove satisfactory, they only desire a short respite, a little, and a little more, indulgence in sloth.—Thus the day is spent in sleep or inactivity; life runs to waste: and poverty, seen at a distance but not regarded, draws near with sure and gradual progress, like *a traveller;* and when he arrives, he proves an armed man; all resistance is in vain, and pinching want becomes the inevitable consequence. This slothfulness is frequently the effect of being brought up with the expectations of a large fortune, and then coming *untutored* into possession of it; while habits of industry are generally contracted by young men who have not such expectations: and thus some grow rich and others poor, in unremitted succession, one generation after another; which shows, that even in respect of this world, the anxiety of men to heap up wealth for their children is vanity and folly. The Septuagint exhorts the sluggard to consider the *bee* likewise. 'Or, go to the bee, and learn how skilfully she 'labours, and how completely she finishes her work. 'Whose labours kings and private persons carry away for 'their health: for she is desirable and honourable among 'all; because being weak as to strength, she hath added 'wisdom to acquire reputation.'

15 Therefore [x] shall his calamity come suddenly; suddenly shall [y] he be broken without remedy.

16 ¶ These [z] six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* [a] an abomination * unto him:

17 † A proud look; [b] a lying tongue, [c] and hands that shed innocent blood,

18 An [d] heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, [e] feet that be swift in running to mischief,

19 [f] A false witness *that* speaketh lies, and him [g] that soweth discord among brethren.

20 ¶ My son, [h] keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

21 [i] Bind them continually upon thine heart, *and* tie them about thy neck.

22 When [k] thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and *when* thou awakest, it shall talk with thee.

23 For [l] the commandment *is* a ‡ lamp; and the law *is* light; [m] and reproofs of instruction *are* [n] the way of life:

24 To [o] keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery § of the tongue of a strange woman.

25 [p] Lust not after her beauty in thine heart: neither let her [q] take thee with her eye-lids.

26 For [r] by means of a whorish woman *a man is brought* to [s] a piece of bread: and ‖ the adulteress will [t] hunt for the precious life.

27 Can a man [u] take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned?

28 Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned?

29 So [x] he that goeth in to his neighbour's wife; whosoever [y] toucheth her shall not be innocent.

30 *Men* do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry;

31 But [z] *if* he be found, he shall restore seven-fold; [a] he shall give all the substance of his house.

x i. 27. xxix. 1. Ps. lxxiii. 18—20. Is. xxx. 13. 1 Thes. v. 3.
y 2 Chr. xxxvi. 16. Ps. l. 22. Jer. xix. 11.
z viii. 13. xxx. 18. 21. 24. 29. Am. i. 3. 6. 9. 11. ii. 1. 4. 6.
a iii. 32. xi. 1. 20. xv. 8, 9. xvii. 15. xx. 10. 23. Deut. xviii. 10—12. xxiii. 18. xxiv. 4. xxv. 16. Rev. xxi. 27.
* Heb. *of his soul.* Ps. xi. 5.
† Heb. *Haughty eyes.* xxx. 13. Ps. x. 4. xviii. 27. lxxiii. 6—8. ci. 5. cxxxi. 1. Is. ii. 11. iii. 9. 16. 1 Pet. v. 5.
b xii. 22. xiv. 5. xxvi. 28. Ps. v. 6. cxx. 2, 3. Hos. iv. 1, 2. John viii. 44. Rev. xxii. 15.
c i. 11. Deut. xxvii. 25. 2 Kings xxiv. 4. Is. i. 15. lix. 3—6.
d xxiv. 8. Gen. vi. 5. Ps. xxxvi. 4. Jer. iv. 14. Mic. ii. 1. Zech. viii. 17.
e i. 16. Is. lix. 7. Rom. iii. 15.
f xii. 17. xix. 5. 9. xxi. 28. xxv. 18. Ex. xx. 16. xxiii. 1. Deut. xix. 16—20. 1 Kings xxi. 10—15. Ps. xxvii. 12. xxxv. 11. Matt. xv. 19. xxvi. 59. Acts vi. 13.
g 14. xvi. 28. xxii. 10. xxvi. 20. 2 Tim. ii. 23. Jam. iii. 14—16, 17.
h i. 8, 9. vii. 1—4. xxiii. 22. xxx. 11. Deut. xxi. 18. xxvii. 16. Eph. vi. 1.
i iii. 3. iv. 6. 21. vii. 3, 4. Ex. xiii. 16. Deut. vi. 8. 2 Cor. iii. 3.
k ii. 11. iii. 23, 24. Ps. xvii. 4. xliii. 3. cxix. 9. 11. 24. 54. 97. 148.

l Ps. xix. 8. cxix. 98—100. 105. Is. viii. 20. 2 Pet. i. 19.
‡ Or, *candle.* Rev. ii. 5.
m v. 12. xv. 31, 32. xxix. 15. Lev. xix. 17. Ps. cxli. 5.
n iii. 18. iv. 4. 13. xv. 24. Jer. xxi. 8.
o ii. 16. v. 3. vii. 5. Ec. vii. 26.
§ Or, *of the strange tongue.*
p 2 Sam. xi. 2—5. Matt. v. 28. Jam. i. 14, 15.
q 2 Kings ix. 30. *Marg.* Cant. iv. 9. Is. iii. 16.
r v. 10. xxix. 3. Luke xv. 13—15. 30.
s 1 Sam. ii. 36.
‖ Heb. *the woman of a man,* or, *a man's wife.*
t Gen. xxxix. 14. Ez. xiii. 18.
u Job xxxi. 9—12. Hos. vii. 4—7. Jam. iii. 5.
x Gen. xii. 18, 19. Lev. xx. 10. 2 Sam. xi. 3, 4. xii. 9, 10. xvi. 21. Jer. v. 8, 9. Ez. xxii. 11. Mal. iii. 5.
y Gen. xx. 4—7. xxvi. 10, 11. 1 Cor. vii. 1.
z Ex. xxii. 1, 3, 4. 2 Sam. xii. 6. Job xx. 18. Luke xix. 8.
a Matt. xviii. 25.

V. 12—15. Solomon here contrasts the sloth of those, who might be profitably employed, with the unwearied application and wily sagacity of the sons of Belial, the determined and desperately wicked: or, he shows how indolence and extravagance make way for a man being gradually led on in sin, through urgent temptations; till he becomes the most abandoned and mischievous of the human species. They who have totally cast off the fear of God, with all regard to justice and honour, form schemes of iniquity, and pursue their object without intermission, by lies, flatteries, slanders, or perjuries. Thus they "walk "with a froward mouth." They form themselves into cabals, and have their secret signs understood by each other. "So that they wink with their eyes, and speak "with their feet, and teach with their fingers."—The artifices of gamesters and covetous usurers, to draw in young spendthrifts, may be intended. Or the conduct of hypocrites, who with the language, the attitudes, the affected demure looks, and every action of extraordinary piety, carry on their trade of devouring widows' houses. Their mouths, and hands, and eyes, and feet, are all employed: and even in their closet, at the church, and at the Lord's table, they are pursuing their *one object*, with lifted eyes, and bended knees, and hands spread forth.—Or in general, it may mean, that all the powers, faculties, senses, and members of wicked men, are instruments of unrighteousness; and according to their different propensities they pursue their object uniformly: for frowardness is in their heart, and they are continually devising mischief, and sowing discord, in neighbourhoods and nations, that they may fish in troubled waters; or because, as the children of the devil, they love mischief for mischief's sake: but by all this they only ensure their own destruction.

V. 16—19. These seven abominations seem to have been mentioned by Solomon, as found in the practice of the children of Belial whom he had been describing: they were sure therefore to destroy such as persisted in them, because peculiarly hateful to God the Judge of all.

V. 20, 21. These commandments as given by parents are supposed to coincide with the precepts of God: and this tacitly instructed parents what injunctions to lay upon their children, and how to exercise their authority.

V. 22. (*Note, Deut.* vi. 7—9.) 'When thou walkest 'lead her forth, that she may be with thee; thus when 'thou sleepest let her keep thee, that when thou awakest 'she may talk with thee.' (*Sept.*)

V. 23. 'Every particular command of God is like a 'candle; and the whole law is like the light of the sun; 'to show thee thy way and exhilarate thy spirits: nay, 'the severest reproofs which correct thy errors, and reduce 'thee to obedience, are the way to the greatest happiness.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The words *law* and *commandment* are in such passages put for revelation in general; and not for any one part of it as distinguished from others.

V. 25. *Eye-lids.* Either the decorations of painting and attire, or the wanton glances of a licentious woman; which *wound* and *kill*, in a far different sense than deluded lovers suppose when they use such expressions.

V. 26. *A piece*, &c. That is, a fragment or crust of bread, the meanest morsel by which life can be supported. This expression describes that extreme poverty, to which fornication often reduces those who have before lived in affluence; as the latter clause of the verse does the fatal effects of adultery.

32 *But* whoso committeth adultery with a woman [b] lacketh * understanding: he *that* doeth it [c] destroyeth his own soul:

33 [d] A wound and dishonour shall he get; [e] and his reproach shall not be wiped away.

34 For [f] jealousy *is* the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance.

35 He will not † regard any ransom; neither will he rest content, though thou givest many gifts.

b vii 7. Geh. xxxix. 9, 10. xii 39 Ec. vii. 26, 26. Jer. v. 8. 21 Rom. i 22 24
* Heb. *heart.* Hos. iv. 11, 12.
c vii 18, 19 v 22, 23. vii. 22, 23 viii. 36 ix. 16—18 Ez xviii.31
f Hos xiii. 9.——d v 9—11. Judg. xvi 19—21. Ps xxxviii. 1—8. li. 8.——e Gen. xlix. 4. 1 Kings xv. 5 Neh. xiii 26. Ps li. *title* Matt. i. 6.

f xxvii. 4. *Marg.* Num. v. 14. xxv. 11. Judg xix. 29, 30. Cant viii 6. 1 Cor x. 22
† Heb. *accept the face of.*

V. 27—35. Solomon had before intimated, that some of these strange women had "forsaken the guides of their "youth, and forgotten the covenant of their God:" but he here particularly considers the consequences of adultery with a woman that yet lived with her husband. It would be as vain to commit this crime in expectation of escaping detection and punishment, as to take fire into the bosom, and not burn so much as the raiment; or to walk on burning coals and the feet not be burnt. (*Notes*, &c. *Num.* v. 11—31.) And indeed no man could be at all familiar with a married woman, without guilt and a powerful temptation to more atrocious criminality. A thief who stole from mere hunger, might escape contempt, through compassion for his distress: yet he that was caught stealing, was condemned to restore seven-fold, or abundantly, though it might reduce him to poverty or even slavery. But adultery, being a far more intolerable injury, was by the judicial law of God punishable with the death of both parties: it was a proof of a more desperate state of the heart, and could admit of no plea; and it was a more egregious folly, as if a man should at once wilfully murder both his body and soul. In the judgment of all wise and pious men, the adulterer would contract an indelible disgrace: and would involve himself in quarrels that might terminate in bloodshed. For jealousy, when a man knew or suspected himself supplanted in the affections of his wife, and dishonoured by her unfaithfulness to his bed, commonly excited the most implacable rage and resentment. In prosecuting the criminal, the injured husband would demand the rigorous execution of the law, and not regard any ransom, presents, or submissions: and if he failed of obtaining redress from the magistrates, he would be ready to execute vengeance with his own hand upon the injurer. So that he that committed adultery, did it as one about to destroy his own soul.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—15.

The Scriptures instruct us in discretion, even as to our temporal concerns, for the peace of our own minds, the comfort of domestic life, the welfare of society, and the honour of the Gospel: and a life regulated according to the oracles of God exceedingly conduces to our true interest, even in this present world. We are stewards of our worldly substance, and ought not to dispose of any part of it, but by the allowance of our Lord: we hold it *in trust*, for our families, for the poor, and for the church; with a license to take a portion for our own use, according to our station: but to waste his goods extravagantly, or in rash schemes and speculations, is a very criminal breach of trust. Justice, piety, and charity, unitedly call on us to be upon our guard against such engagements, as may entangle us in difficulties and temptations, be injurious to others, or deprive us of the means of being useful. And if any have been thus drawn in, it behooves them to lose no time, spare no pains, and shrink from no difficulties, by which the ruinous effects may be prevented, or mitigated, if possible. But such obligations are sooner entered into than got rid of: and a promise, a letter of credit, or a bond hastily given, may so involve a man, that he can by no means avoid bankruptcy. Hence we learn how much easier it is to ruin than to save ourselves; that our heedless conduct may be long after remembered against us; and that every rash and wicked, yea, every idle, word must be accounted for at the day of judgment. But how base are they who take advantage of a man's indiscreet partiality to draw him in to his ruin! or, who will not submit to every hardship, to extricate the man whom they have thus involved! In these matters our supposed friends often prove *strangers* to us, and show that we were *strangers* to them; and by acting with the cruelty of enemies, painfully teach us to place no confidence in man. If, however, we ought in prudence to stoop, strive, and employ every means, to escape from impending temporal calamities: how should we be in earnest and make all haste to flee from the wrath to come, and to "recover ourselves from the snare of the "devil, who hath taken us captive at his will!" Nor should we forget Him, who willingly became our Surety, when we were strangers and enemies, though he well knew how dear it would cost him to pay our debt, and ransom our souls, and how ungrateful we should often prove.—It may abate our wonder that sinners should be so negligent in seeking an interest in his great salvation; when we observe how improvident numbers are about the present world. Though we are formed wiser than the animal tribes, yet multitudes voluntarily become more foolish than they, and might learn wisdom from the most despicable of them, if they were not utterly unteachable. Whilst many incessantly weary themselves to gratify an insatiable avarice, numbers can by no means be induced to a proper degree of attention and diligence; though they see abject poverty marching to meet them as an armed man! We may expostulate with such sluggards, and demand of them, How long they mean to waste their hours in sleep, and their days in inactivity? But they will still crave respite, and require "a little sleep, a little slumber, "a little folding of the hands to sleep:" and few are recovered from these habits, who have once contracted them. How carefully then should we guard against beginnings, and learn to redeem precious time; to rise early when health permits; and to inure ourselves to diligence and hardiness, in our respective callings! And how carefully should parents and teachers watch over young persons, and prevent their becoming *habitually* slothful and self-indulgent! But, it is still more important, that men should

CHAP. VII.

Repeated invitations to a familiar acquaintance with wisdom, as the preservative from strange women, 1—5. *A fact related, to illustrate the artful way by which they draw in the unwary to their destruction,* 6—23. *Another warning against all approaches to this vice, from its fatal effects on many eminent persons,* 24—27.

avoid indolence in the concerns of their immortal souls; and that, in the present transient and precarious summer of life and health, they should prepare for the approaching winter of sickness, death, judgment, and eternity. To numbers it may well be said, "Go to the ant, thou slug-" gard, consider her ways, and be wise." "How long " wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? When wilt thou arise out " of thy sleep?" "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise " from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." But, alas! they love their sleep of sin, and their soothing dreams of worldly felicity; and crave a little sleep, and to be excused, as yet, from repentance, prayer, self-denial, and diligence: they mean to set about this irksome work some time, but not now: and so they compose themselves again; yet not without imbibing a deep resentment against those officious intruders who attempted to awake them. But their destruction slumbereth not; it approaches every moment, and will ere long come on them with irresistible violence; and when they "lift up their eyes in hell," they will have full leisure to rue bitterly their folly. Lord, awaken them to see their danger, whilst yet there is a way of escape! and awake all of us, (for we are yet half asleep, and ready again to close our eyes,) that we may give diligence to ensure our own salvation. and to seize every opportunity of glorifying God, and of doing good to the church, and to the world! For the children of the wicked one are vigilant, diligent, sagacious, and persevering in their schemes of mischief: their heart continually deviseth, their lips utter, and their fingers work, wickedness: their eyes look abroad for their prey, or wink whilst they seize upon it; and they are wholly intent upon their pernicious projects: yet by all this they only serve the cause of Satan, and ensure their own destruction. And shall Christians, who have such prospects, obligations, motives, and examples, be inactive, inconstant, and lukewarm? Shall we neglect those things which the Lord loveth, by which he is honoured, and which he will graciously reward? God forbid! No, let us be "steadfast, unmoveable, " always abounding in his work, knowing that our labour " is not in vain in the Lord."

V. 16—35.

We ought to judge of every thing by the rule of the sacred word, and not according to man's judgment. The pride of heart, which appears in a haughty and self-important countenance, may be termed dignity or a noble spirit; but God abhors it, and will resist it, and abase it into the dust. A lying tongue, whether employed in slander, flattery, or polite *simulation* or *dissimulation*, is an abomination to him. He hateth "hands, that shed " innocent blood," though it be done *honourably*, or in ambitious wars, or in order to conduct a lucrative commerce. Whatever decorum appear in the life, the Lord "hateth " the heart that deviseth wicked imaginations," as well as "the feet that be swift in running to mischief." Not only the false witness who speaketh lies in a court of justice, but the tale-bearer, "that soweth discord amongst " brethren," is an abomination unto him. Let us then shun these things, and watch and pray against every propensity to them: and let us avoid with marked disapprobation all who are guilty of them, whatever may be their rank in society. The word of God will likewise instruct young persons to honour and obey their parents, in all things lawful and proper; which will greatly conduce to their honour and comfort; indeed it will guide us all in the path of peace; inspire us with confidence in God by day and by night, in life and in death; be our counsellor and companion, with whom we may pleasantly and usefully commune at all times; and the more we allow heavenly wisdom to speak to us, and the more we relish her discourse, the clearer light will shine upon our path, through this dark and uncomfortable world. Nay, the severest reproofs of instruction tend to keep us in the way of life: especially in warning men from the company of bad women, and guarding against their inveigling flattery. Whilst with apparent rigour, the Lord declares, that "He who looketh upon a woman to lust after her, " hath committed adultery with her already in his heart;" he mercifully deters all that regard his word, from the allurements of her beauty, or of the magnetic attraction of her wanton glances; and so keeps them from the paths which lead to disgrace and poverty, as well as to everlasting misery. But there is a malignity in adultery, and danger from it, distinct from other species of this vice: and the adulteress especially is Satan's agent, to hunt precious souls into his net. Indeed we in this land have no penal statutes, by which adulterers are punishable with death, or waters of jealousy to detect the secret offender: so that men may think of escaping detection or punishment. Nay, the frequency of the crime, and the numbers involved in the guilt of it, have almost obliterated its infamy; and a pecuniary mulct is now commonly considered as a compensation for the crime; not out of Christian forgiveness and gentleness, but from a base and mean spirit, a want of abhorrence of vice, and a proper sense of the inestimable value of female chastity and conjugal fidelity. And so the matter is sometimes compromised, with almost as much disgrace to the injured, as to the injurer: whilst the poor thief, who steals perhaps for want, is imprisoned, condemned, and executed, with contempt and ignominy, and almost without pity; nay, perhaps is found guilty, by a jury, some of whom are living in this more atrocious crime, (even if the judge himself be blameless,) and injuring individuals and families in such a manner that all the wealth of the Indies could not countervail the damage! We cannot but observe, that this by no means accords with the scriptural view of these interesting subjects.

a i. 8. iii. 1.
b Luke viii. 15. xi. 28. John xiv. 23. xv. 20. Rev. i. 3. xxii. 9.
c ii. 1. x. 14. Deut. xi. 18. Job xxii. 22.
d iv. 4. 13. Lev. xviii. 5. Is. lv. 3. John xii. 49, 50. xiv. 21. xv. 14. 1 John ii. 3, 4. v. 1—3. Rev. xxii. 14.
e Deut. xxxii. 10. Ps. xvii. 8, 9. Zech. ii. 8.
f iii. 3. vi. 21. Deut. vi. 8, 9. xi. 18—20. Is. xxx. 8. Jer. xvii. 1. xxxi. 33. 2 Cor. iii. 3.
g ii. 2—4. iv. 6—8.
h Job xvii. 14. Cant. viii. 1. Matt. xii. 49, 50. Luke xi. 27, 28.
i ii. 16. v. 3. vi. 24.
k Gen. xxvi. 8. 2 Sam. vi. 16.
l i. 4. 22. 32. viii. 5. xiv. 15. 18. xix. 25. xxii. 3. xxvii. 12. Ps. xix. 7. cxix. 130. Rom. xvi. 18, 19.
* Heb. *the sons.*
m vi. 32. ix. 4. 16. x. 13. xii. 11. xix. 2. xxiv. 30. Jer. iv. 22. Matt. xv. 16.
n iv. 14, 15. v. 8. Judg. xvi. 1. 2 Sam. xi. 2, 3. 1 Cor. vi. 18. 2 Tim. ii. 22. Jude 23.
o Gen. xxxix. 11. Job xxiv. 13—15. Rom. xiii. 12—14. Eph. v. 11, 12.
† Heb. *evening of the day.* Ez. xii. 6 *Marg.*
p Gen. xxxviii 14, 15. 2 Kings ix. 22. 30. Is. iii. 16—24. xxiii. 16. Jer. iv. 30. 1 Tim. ii. 9. Rev. xvii. 3—5.——q Gen. iii. 1. 2 Cor. xi. 2, 3.——r ix. 13. xxv. 24. xxvii. 14, 15. xxxi. 10—31.——s Gen. xviii. 9. 1 Tim. v. 13. 14. Tit. ii. 5.——t ix. 14, 15. xxiii. 28. Jer. ii. 20, 33. 36. iii. 2. Ez. xvi. 24, 25. 31. Rev. xviii. 3. 23

a MY son, b keep my words, and c lay up my commandments with thee.

2 d Keep my commandments and live; and my law e as the apple of thine eye.

3 f Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart.

4 g Say unto wisdom, h Thou *art* my sister; and call understanding *thy* kinswoman:

5 That i they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger *which* flattereth with her words.

6 ¶ For k at the window of my house I looked through my casement,

7 And beheld among l the simple ones, I discerned among * the youths a young man m void of understanding,

8 Passing through the street n near her corner: and he went the way to her house;

9 In o the twilight, in the † evening, in the black and dark night:

10 And, behold, there met him a woman *with* p the attire of an harlot, and q subtil of heart.

11 (She *is* r loud and stubborn; s her feet abide not in her house:

12 Now *is she* t without, now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner.)

13 So u she caught him, and kissed him, *and* ‡ with an impudent face said unto him,

14 § *I have* x peace-offerings with me; y this day have I paid my vows:

15 Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face; and I have found thee.

16 I have z decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved *works,* with a fine linen of Egypt.

17 I have b perfumed my bed c with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.

18 Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning: let us solace ourselves with loves.

19 For d the good-man *is* not at home, e he is gone a long journey:

20 He hath taken a bag of money ‖ with him, *and* will come home at * the day appointed.

21 f With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she g forced him.

22 He goeth after her † straightway, h as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to i the correction of the stocks;

23 Till k a dart strike through his liver; l as a bird hasteth to the snare, and m knoweth not that it *is* for his life.

u Gen. xxxix. 7. 12. Num. xxv. 1. 6—8. xxxi. 16. Ez. xvi. 33. Rev. ii. 20.
‡ Heb. *she strengthened her face and said.* Is. i. 7. Ez. ii. 4. 6. iii. 7—9.
§ Heb. *Peace-offerings are upon me.*
x xv. 8. xvii. 1. xxi. 27. Lev. vii. 15. Deut. xii. 6, 7.
y 2 Sam. xv. 7—9. 1 Kings xxi. 9, 10. John xviii. 28.
z Can. i. 16. iii. 7—10. Rev. ii. 22.
a 1 Kings x. 28. Is. xix. 9. Ez. xxvii. 7.
b Can. iii. 6. Is. lvii. 7—9.
c Ps. xlv. 8. Cant. iv. 13, 14.
d Matt. xx. 11. xxiv. 43. Luke xii. 39.
e Matt. xxiv. 48. Mark xiii. 34—36. Luke xii. 45, 46.
‖ Heb. *in his hand.*
* Or, *the new moon.*
f 5. v. 3. Judg. xvi. 15—17. Ps. xii. 2.
g 1 Sam. xxviii. 23. 2 Kings iv. 8. Luke xiv. 23. xxiv. 29. Acts xvi. 15. 2 Cor. v. 14.
† Heb. *suddenly.*
h Acts xiv. 13.
i Job xiii. 27. Jer. xx. 2. Acts xvi. 24.
k Num. xxv. 8, 9.
l i. 17. Ec. ix. 12.
m ix. 18.

We should, however, considering the state of this evil world, be thankful for the benefits, which we enjoy under civil government and our present rulers; though we consider many things far removed from perfection. Yet let no adulterer expect impunity: sooner shall fire cease to burn, than God's displeasure shall cease to wax hot against such workers of iniquity. An hour will soon arrive, when the transgressor's wound, (if not previously healed by the good Physician,) will be incurable. Whether the jealousy of an enraged husband can be bribed, or not; an angry God will "not spare him in the day of his vengeance: he will "not regard any ransom, neither will he rest content with "any gifts." But Christians should avoid all approach to, or appearance of, this horrid crime: he that "toucheth "his neighbour's wife shall not be innocent;" every suspicious familiarity will prove a wound and a reproach to a man's character, which will not easily be wiped away: and he that ventures within the influence of temptation, in so perilous a case, as much lacketh understanding, as if he took fire into his bosom, expecting that it would not burn him. May we then not only pray, not "to be led "into temptation," but keep at the greatest distance from it: and may we close our eyes and ears, and every sense and avenue, by which such insinuating poison can enter into our imaginations or affections!

NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 2. *Apple.* The same word is afterwards rendered *black* (9). 'From the *black* pupil of 'the eye, *light, or the capacity of seeing*, is thought to be 'produced, by the great goodness and admirable wisdom 'of the Creator.'

V. 3. 'Do not merely read what I write, but be so well 'acquainted with them, as to have them, (as we speak) at 'thy fingers' ends.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 4. 'Cultivate her most intimate acquaintance, as 'that of the nearest and most beloved relation.'

V. 6—23. This seems to have been an incident which Solomon had witnessed, and investigated, and which he recorded as an illustration of his former observations, (*Note*, v. 14.) From his window he noticed a raw youth, whose appearance and behaviour showed him to be void of understanding. As he sauntered through the street, perhaps in quest of adventure or amusement, in the dusk of evening, before it was quite dark, he came near the house of a bad woman. It is not said that he intended to visit her, or even that he knew she lived there: but he was loitering about, in a place where he had no business, and at an unseasonable hour. Accordingly a woman came forth to meet him, who was married, and consequently the more criminal and

n iv. 1. v. 7 viii. 32, 33 1 Cor. xv 14, 15 Gal iv 19. 1 John ii. 1
o iv. 14, 15. v. 8.
p vi 25 xxiii 31, 32. Matt v 28
q v. 23 Ps. cxix. 176. Is. liii. 6

24 ¶ Hearken unto me now therefore, [n] O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth:

25 Let not [o] thine heart decline to her ways, [p] go not astray in her paths.

26 For she [q] hath cast down many wounded: yea, many strong *men* have been slain by her.

27 [r] Her house *is* the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.

q vi 33 Judg xvi. 21. 2 Sam iii. 6—8. 27 xii 9—11. 1 Kings xi. 1, 2 1 Cor. x. 8. 2 Cor xii. 21. 1 Pet ii. 11.
r ii 18, 19. v. 5. ix 18. Ec. vii. 26.

dangerous: for her attire was that of a harlot, and her artfulness was equal to her profligacy. Indeed her whole character was of the same stamp; loquacious and vociferous, stubborn and untractable, she hated confinement and employment, and was perpetually gadding abroad in every place, where she had no business except to work iniquity. Observing, it seems, the youth to be bashful, she threw aside all regard to decency, and behaved and conversed with him in the most shameless manner. To represent her prosperity, and the plentiful entertainment she could give him, she stated that she had been offering a peace-offering in the performance of a vow, and was about to feast upon the sacrifice. Nor will it appear wonderful, that these sacred ordinances should give occasion to carnal feasts, attended with every vice; when we reflect how all kinds of sensuality is indulged in, under pretence of commemorating the nativity of Christ, who was "manifested to destroy the "works of the Devil!" This wicked woman pretended, that she came forth on purpose to meet the youth from a peculiar affection: and that her husband, whom she seems to speak of with contempt, was gone a long journey with a bag of money, perhaps intimating that he neglected her, and went abroad to indulge himself; so that there was no danger of interruption or detection. By such enticements she overcame his reluctance and timidity, and *compelled* him with her flattering words to accompany her. Thus he was suddenly induced to commit a crime, punishable with death by the magistrate, and exposing him to the wrath of God: and if he escaped death at that time, it would serve as an introduction to further crimes, and would probably end in his ruin. So that, (however light licentious poets, actors, and artists, and those who delight in their works and exhibitions, may make of such incidents,) the Wisdom of God declares, that the youth went "as an ox to the "slaughter, or as a fool," (or drunkard who knows not what is going forward,) to be set in the stocks and scourged. Nor would he be aware of his danger, "till a dart "should strike through his liver:" and he was as a bird that "hasteth to a snare," for the sake of the bait, "and "knoweth not that it is for his life."

V. 26. *Wounded.* Samson, David, and even Solomon himself, were grievously wounded, and numbers of eminent men have been totally ruined, through such tempters. This seems to intimate that these chapters were written towards the close of Solomon's life. His own example, in taking so many wives, probably, had a bad effect on his people; and their abundant prosperity would tend to inflame the disease. His repeated and pathetic admonitions on this subject must have been very painful to him; and they form no inconsiderable proof of his deep humiliation for his own transgressions.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The instruction of those who speak according to the oracles of God, equally demand our attention with that sacred source from whence they are derived. We should, according to the plainest dictates of common sense, be more careful to keep the law of God in our memory, affections, and conduct; than to preserve our limbs, our senses, or even our lives: and if the Lord guard his people as the pupil of the eye, surely we should pay a similar regard to his precepts; "binding them upon our fingers," ready for use, "and writing them upon the table of our hearts." We are indeed most graciously invited to seek the benefits and honour of relationship unto Christ, by an obedient attention to his word: and thus we may indeed "say to "wisdom, Thou art my sister, and call understanding our "kinswoman." In this way we shall be preserved from the fatal effects of our own passions, and the snares of Satan and his emissaries. And when we can with pleasure employ our leisure hours in searching the Scriptures, in meditation, pious conversation, and devotion; our time will not hang heavy on our hands, and we shall have no occasion to go in quest of amusement and dissipation, to get rid of it. Wise observers of mankind have always noted, that ignorance and inexperience, joined with indolence, and a fondness for roving about and wasting time in vain company, and keeping unseasonable hours, have been inlets to every kind of vice; and they, who thus run themselves into the way of temptation, seldom keep their resolutions of resisting it. For Satan always hath his factors at work; and they who go upon his ground, or near it, will be sure to meet with them. When women forget the origin and use of raiment, and are fond of decking themselves out in a light manner, to attract the notice and excite the passions of beholders; they are far from being innocent, and they give encouragement to licentious men to accost them with sanguine expectations of success. Indeed a *mere speculator* would not think it possible, that any virtuous woman would choose to copy fashions, or to be seen in attire, resembling those of a harlot! This unaccountable indecorum, joined with a gadding and dissipated mind, a dislike to domestic employments, and a forward, loquacious, noisy, untractable disposition, commonly lead to further enormities: and if a man be so unhappy, as to be yoked to a female of this description, he must expect trials and sorrow. Such wives often make home uncomfortable to their husbands, and drive them to seek satisfaction elsewhere: and then take that opportunity of more deeply injuring them; using every artifice to inveigle others, and to escape detection. In this view, we should recollect that "a prudent wife is from the LORD:" from him that blessing should be sought, and when granted it demands peculiar gratitude. If once female modesty is surmounted, women commonly become more shamelessly impudent than men; in order to inflame the passions, and overcome the scruples, of those whom they address. And when religious ordinances have been perverted from their sacred use; they are often made a cloak of, or occasion for, the most enormous crimes:

CHAP. VIII.

Wisdom calls to the sons of men to hear her invaluable instructions, 1—11. *She recommends herself as the giver of numberless blessings,* 12—21. *She declares her eternity; and that she was present at the creation, as the foundation of Jehovah's counsels and the object of his delight, and as rejoicing in the sons of men,* 22—31. *She renews her exhortations to hear her words, as the only way to obtain life and the favour of the Lord, and to avoid the wilful ruin of men's own souls,* 32—36.

a i. 20, 21. ix. 1—3. Is. xlix. 1, &c. lv. 1—3. Matt. iii 3. iv. 17. xxviii. 19, 20. Mark xiii 10. xvi.15, 16 Luke xxiv. 47. John vii. 37. Acts i. 8. xxii. 21. Rom. xv. 18—21

b Matt xxii. 9 Luke xiv 21—23. John xviii. 20 Acts v 20

c Ps. xlix. 1—3. l. 1. Matt. xi. 15. John iii. 16 2 Cor. v. 19, 20. Col. i. 23. 28. 1 Tim. ii. 4—6. Tit. ii. 11, 12. Rev. xxii. 17.

1 a DOTH not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice?

2 She standeth in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths.

3 She b crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors.

4 Unto c you, O men, I call; and my voice *is* to the sons of men.

5 d O ye simple, understand wisdom: and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart.

6 Hear; e for I will speak of excellent things; and f the opening of my lips *shall be* right things.

7 For g my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness *is* * an abomination to my lips

8 h All the words of my mouth *are* in righteousness: i *there is* nothing † froward or perverse in them.

9 They *are* k all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge.

10 ¶ Receive l my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold

11 For m wisdom *is* better than rubies; n and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

12 o I, Wisdom, dwell with prudence, and find out p knowledge of witty inventions.

d i. 22. ix. 4. Ps. xciv. 8 Is. xiii. 18. Acts xxvi. 18 Rev iii. 17, 18.

e ii. 6, 7. iv. 2. 20—22 xxii. 20, 21 Ps. xlix. 3. 1 Cor. ii 6, 7. Col i. 26.

f Job xxxiii. 1—3. Matt. v. 2, &c. vii. 28, 29. xiii 35.

g Job xxxvi. 4. John viii. 14. 45, 46 xiv 6. xviii. 37. Rev. iii, 14.

* Heb. *the abomination of.* xii. 22 xvi 12. xxix. 27

h Is. xlv.23. lxiii. 1.

i 13. John vii. 46.

† Heb. *wreathed.*

k xiv. 6. xv. 14. 24. xvii 24. xviii. 1 12 15. Ps. xix. 7, 8. xxv. 12—14. cxix 98—100. Is. xxxv 8. Mic. ii 7. Matt xiii. 11, 12. John vi. 45. vii. 17. 1 Cor. ii. 15. Jam. i. 5.

l ii. 4, 5. iii 13, 14. x. 20. xvi. 16 Ps cxix. 72. 127 162. Ec. vii. 11, 12 Acts iii. 6

m iv 5—7. xx.15. Job xxviii. 15—18. Ps. xix. 10. Matt xvi. 26.

n iii 15. ——o Ps. civ. 24. Is. lv. 8, 9. Rom. xi. 33. Eph. i. 8. 11. iii 10 Col ii. 3. Or. *subtlety.* ——p Ex xxxi. 3—6. xxxv 30—35. xxxvi. 1—4. 1 Kings vii. 14. 1 Chr. xxviii. 12. 19. 2 Chr. ii. 13, 14. Is. xxviii. 26.

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nay, men attend on them, as it were, so purchase licence to commit sin with impunity. He who will stay to hear the flatteries, and to admit the caresses, of an artful woman, will scarcely ever be able to resist her allurements, for victory over this temptation can in general by no means be obtained but by flight. (*Notes, Gen.* xxxix.) And a man may in an unguarded hour be suddenly persuaded, and as it were *forced*, by fair speeches, to commit those crimes, that will cover his character with infamy, load his conscience with guilt, fill his heart with horror, plunge him into inextricable difficulties, and do immense mischief; even if they do not terminate in his final and eternal ruin. A consciousness of our own weakness, and an habitual recollection of the consequences of such sins, form our best security against them; in subserviency to watchfulness, prayer, and dependence upon the Lord. Let us then hear the salutary words of Wisdom, and keep our hearts diligently, that they do not decline to the ways or wander in the paths of these seducing destroyers: "whose house is in the way "to hell, going down to the chambers of death." And, as many strong, and, in other respects, wise, men have been wounded and slain in this conflict: we must indeed be void of understanding, if we will rashly venture upon it.

NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1—3. (*Notes*, i. 20—33.)

V. 4. This address being made, not to the seed of Abraham, or Israel, but to "the sons of men," "the children "of Adam," seems an intimation of that more enlarged publication of Wisdom's instructions, which hath taken place under the Gospel. Men of the highest and of the lowest ranks are also included.—Nothing short of the most public and clear instructions, in the great truths and maxims of revealed religion, can answer the language here employed: and to explain it as the voice of reason and conscience, or as the moral instructions of men unacquainted with the Scriptures, is, in fact, to make heavenly Wisdom declare, that revelation is not absolutely necessary to teach men the way of life and salvation.

V. 6—8. None, but the *Truth* himself, and those inspired men by whom he spake, ever could unreservedly adopt these words without high presumption: especially they cannot suit those philosophers, who indeed taught some useful lessons, but mixed up so much error with them, that the apostle says concerning them, "professing them-"selves wise, they became fools."

V. 9. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'The word of God is easy to all 'that have a desire unto it, and are not blinded by the 'god of this world.'

V. 11. (*Notes*, iii. 16—18.)

V. 12. 'What is comparable to a prudent mind, 'which is not crafty to deceive, but so cautious as not to 'be deceived?' (*Bp. Patrick.*)—'Except a man have wis-'dom, which is the true knowledge of God, he can nei-'ther be a prudent nor a good counsellor.'—It is most obvious to interpret the rest of this chapter, as the words of the Messiah, speaking in the name of Wisdom. Thus most of the ancient fathers explained it: and though their too curious speculations led them into some difficulties, which have induced others to adopt another mode of inter-

13 [q] The fear of the LORD *is* to hate evil: [r] pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and [s] the froward mouth do I hate.

14 [t] Counsel *is* mine, and [u] sound wisdom: I *am* understanding: [x] I have strength.

15 [y] By me kings reign, and princes [z] decree justice.

16 By me princes rule, and nobles, *even* all the judges of the earth.

17 I [a] love them that love me; and [b] those that seek me early shall find me.

18 [c] Riches and honour *are* with me; *yea*, [d] durable riches [e] and righteousness.

19 My [f] fruit *is* better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver.

20 [g] I * lead in the way of righteousness, [h] in the midst of the paths of judgment.

21 That I may cause those that love me [i] to inherit substance; and I will [k] fill their treasures.

22 ¶ The LORD [l] possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.

23 I was [m] set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

24 When *there were* no depths [n] I was brought forth; when *there were* no fountains abounding with water.

25 Before [o] the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth:

q xvi. 6. Ps xcvii. 10. ci. 3. cxix. 104. 128. Am. v. 15. Rom xii 9
r vi 16—19. 1 Sam. ii. 3. Ps. v. 4, 5. cxxxviii. 6. Zech. viii. 17. 1 Pet. v. 5.
s iv. 24. vi 12. x. 1.
t Is. ix 6. xl 14. John i 9. Rom xi. 33, 34. 1 Cor i. 24 30. Col ii. 3.
u ii. 6, 7. Rom. i. 22.
x xxiv. 5. Ec vii. 19. ix 16—18.
y 1 Sam ix 17. xvi 1. 1 Chr. xxviii. 5. Jer. xxviii. 5—7. Dan. ii 21. iv. 25. 32. v. 18. Ec. vii 13, 14. Matt xxviii 18. Rom xiii 1. Rev. xix. 16.
z 1 Kings iii. 9. 28. v 7, 8, 9. Ps lxxii. 1—4. xcix. 4. Is i 26. xxxii 1, 2. Jer. xxxiii 15. Rev xix 11.——a 1 Sam ii 30. Ps xci 14. John xiv 21. 23. xvi 27. 1 John iv. 19.——b Ec xii. 1. Is. iv. 6. Mat. vi 33. vii. 7, 8. Mar. x 14. Jam. i 5.——c iii 16. iv. 7—9. Jam ii 5.——d Ps xxxix 6. Ec v 14. 16. Matt vi. 19, 20. Luke x 42. xii 20, 21. 33. xvi 11, 12. 2 Cor vi 10. Eph iii 8. Phil iv 19. 1 Tim vi. 17—19. Jam v. 1—3. Rev. iii 18.——e xi. 4. Matt vi. 33. Phil. iii. 8, 9.
f 10. iii. 14, 15. Ec. vii. 12.
g iii. 5. iv. 11, 12. vi 22. Ps. xxiii. 3. xxv. 4, 5. xxxii. 8. Is. ii. 3. xlix. 10. lv. 4. John x 3. 27, 28. Rev. vii 17.
* Or, *walk*.
h iv. 25—27. Deu. v. 32.
i 18. i. 13. vi. 31. Gen. xv 14. 1 Sam ii. 8. Matt. xxv. 46. Rom. viii 17. Heb. x 34. 1 Pet. i. 4.
k Ps xvi. 11. Eph iii. 19. 20. Rev. xxi 7.
l iii 19. John i. 1, 2. Col. i. 17.
m Gen. i. 26. Ps. ii. 6. Mic. v. 2. John xvii. 24. Eph. i. 10, 11. 1 John i 1, 2.
n Ps. ii 7. John i. 14. iii. 16. v. 20. Heb i 5, 6. 1 John iv. 9.
o Job xv. 7, 8. xxxviii. 4—11. Ps. xc 2. cii. 25—28. Heb. i. 10.

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pretation, yet I can see no well-grounded objection to a sober and cautious explanation of it, on this supposition, nor can any other give full satisfaction: for the things spoken are exclusively applicable to Christ, and must be in great measure explained away, before they can suit any other view of the subject. Indeed as he communicates divine truth by the sacred Scriptures, many things must accord either with the Speaker or the word spoken: but some parts of this chapter cannot be explained, with propriety, of the sacred oracles. The ingenuity and sagacity, for instance, by which men find out curious and useful inventions, are the gift of God, but not by means of the holy Scriptures: (*Marg. Ref.*) And if wisdom, as a divine attribute, be intended, why should the personal Wisdom and Word of God be lost sight of in the exposition, when by him all wisdom is communicated to the sons of men?

V. 13. (*Note, Job* xxviii. 28.) Though natural knowledge and wisdom be from the same source with divine truth, yet their value is comparatively small, and men often take occasion from them to indulge that pride, arrogance, and perverseness, which God abhors. But "the fear of the "LORD" is the principal part, and the sum total, as it were, of true wisdom; and it teaches men to hate all those things which he hateth. (*Heb.* i. 8, 9.) 'So he that hateth not 'evil doth not fear God.'

V. 15, 16. Christ is called "The WORD OF GOD," and is just after said to have "on his vesture a name written, "King of kings, and Lord of lords:" (*Rev.* xix. 13. 16.) Accordingly he here reveals himself, as the source of power and authority, as well as of counsel and wisdom. All kings and judges are his deputies, dependent on him and accountable to him. Magistracy is his appointment, and the benefits of it to fallen man are fruits of his mediation. As far as kings and rulers govern in wisdom and equity, they have their qualifications from him, and do his commandment: when they abuse their authority, they undesignedly scourge the inhabitants of the world for their sins; but will at length be punished themselves by the Supreme Judge. These verses in the original, are future, and seem to agree with the predictions, in other parts of Scripture, that in the times of the Messiah the world should be blessed with many eminent, pious, and righteous kings and rulers. These predictions, however, have not yet received their grand accomplishment.

V. 18. 'They that love me are beloved of me; and as 'they will not fail to seek what they love; so they will 'certainly find what they studiously seek.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The word rendered *early*, means *the dawn of the day*: but doubtless it also refers to the early part of life.

V. 13. *Durable*, not *uncertain* riches; 'signifying that 'he chiefly meaneth the spiritual treasures and heavenly 'riches.' Some interpret the passage of wealth obtained by prudent and equitable means, which spends better, and lasts longer than ungodly gain. Yet even these are uncertain riches; and not comparable to "the unsearchable "riches of Christ."

V. 20. *Midst*. At a distance from the extremes, into which the different schemes of false religion, and their vehement zealots, urge their deluded followers.

V. 22. "In the beginning of his way, before his works "of old," must mean 'the eternal counsels and purposes 'of God.' 'He declareth hereby the divinity and eter-'nity of this Wisdom, which he magnifieth and praiseth 'through this book; meaning thereby the eternal Son of 'God, Jesus Christ our Saviour, whom St. John calleth "the Word that was in the beginning." The whole plan of creation and providence was evidently formed, in relation to him, through whom all the perfections of the Godhead were to be displayed and glorified for ever.

V. 23. The word rendered *set up*, is by some translated *anointed*, and by others *obtained* the dominion. It is used in the second psalm concerning the Messiah, "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion;" and in the margin is rendered *anointed*. In the purpose and counsel of God, the divine Redeemer was from everlasting appointed to the mediatorial throne.

V. 24, 25. The word repeatedly rendered *brought forth*, is translated in the old version *begotten*, (which in this agrees with the Septuagint, and the language accords to several expressions in the New Testament. (*Marg. Ref.*)

p Gen. i. 1, &c.

26 While [p] as yet he had not made the earth, nor the * fields, nor the † highest part of the dust of the world.

* Or, *open places.*
† Or, *chief part*

q Ps. xxxiii 6. ciii. 19. cxxxvi. 5. Jer. x. 12 Col. i 16. Heb. i. 2.

27 When [q] he prepared the heavens, I *was* there: when he set a ‡ compass upon the face of the depth:

‡ Or, *circle.* Is. xl. 11, 12. 24.

28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:

r Gen. i. 9, 10. Job xxxviii. 8—11. Ps. xxxiii. 7. civ. 9. Jer. v. 22.

29 When [r] he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: [s] when he appointed the foundations of the earth:

s Job xxxviii. 4—7.

t John i. 1—3. 18. xvi 28, 29.

30 Then I was by him *as* [t] one brought up *with him:* and [u] I was daily *his* delight, rejoicing always before him;

u Is xlii. 1. Matt. iii. 17. xvii 5. John xii. 28. Col. i. 13.

31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; [x] and my delights *were* with the sons of men.

x Ps. xvi. 3. xl. 6—8. John iv. 34. xiii. 1. 2 Cor. viii. 9.

32 Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children; [y] for blessed *are they that* keep my ways.

y Ps. i. 1—4. cxix 1, 2. cxxviii. 1, 2 Luke xi. 28.

33 [z] Hear instruction, and be wise, and [a] refuse it not.

z i 2, 3. 8 iv. 1. v. 1. Is. lv. 1—3. Rom. x. 16, 17.

a i. 21 Ps lxxxi. 11, 12. Acts vii. 35—37. Heb. xii. 25.

34 Blessed *is* the man that heareth me, [b] watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.

b i. 21. ii. 3, 4. Ps. xxvii. 4. lxxxiv. 10. xcii. 13. Luke i 6. x. 39. John viii. 31, 32 Acts ii. 42. xvii. 11, 12. Jam. i. 22—25.

But whatever term is employed, it must always be remembered, that no human language can convey to us adequate ideas of the incomprehensible mysteries of God. Such a declaration as these verses contain, cannot be made concerning the written word of God; and it is not capable of a very easy and natural application to wisdom as a divine attribute: but it has a peculiar energy and propriety, when applied to the person and work of Christ, as the grand Centre or Scope of all the works of God.

V. 26. 'Before he had put it into this form of lofty 'mountains and spacious plains: no, there was not the first 'atom of this globe on which you tread.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) By the highest or chief part we may understand the formation of man. He was, as to his body, only dust, though the chief and noblest of the dust of the world.

V. 30. 'Then was I present by him, as one that was 'co-eternal with him; and we did mutually and infinitely 'solace each other, from everlasting.' (*Bp. Hall.*) The word, rendered *brought up with him*, is by some translated, *cherished as in his bosom.* 'Wisdom had said that she was 'begotten; now she adds, that she was in the bosom of 'the Father.' Thus the apostle, (*John*, i. 18.) "The "only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father;" 'who never was separated from the Father, always saw the 'Father; who "seeth what the father doeth, that he "may do the like," (with the same will and power;) in 'whom the Father places his pleasure and delight; willing 'that by the Son we should approach to him, in the Son 'we should honour and adore him, and honour the Son as 'himself.' Some, however, render the word actively *a nourisher*, or *a chief worker;* 'signifying that this wisdom 'even Jesus Christ, was equal with God the Father; and 'createth, preserveth, and still worketh with him.' (*Notes, John* v. 17—30. *Marg. Ref.*) It is observable, that some of those learned men, who seem inclined to exclude this interpretation, pass over these remarkable expressions without much notice; and indeed deal in general language, to which the reader finds it difficult to annex any precise meaning; except that he will perceive that the divine attribute of wisdom is supposed to be the speaker; but it is not determined in what way her instructions are communicated.

V. 31. 'For man's sake the divine Wisdom took man's 'nature, and dwelt among us, and filled us with unspeakable 'treasures; and this is that solace, (or delight,) which is 'here spoken of.' Wisdom not only rejoiced in the creation of the world, and man formed in the image of God; but "in the habitable parts of the earth," and "in the sons "of Adam:" but the earth was not inhabited, nor had Adam any sons, till after the fall; and it is with respect to redemption, that the wisdom of God, in any sense of the term, can be said to take "its delights" among the fallen race of Adam. The Redeemer, therefore, here evidently speaks of "the joy set before him," in the glorious event of his sufferings, to the honour of God, and the salvation of the souls of men; and on that account he immediately uses it, as an argument why they should attend to him.

'With joy I saw the mansion where
'The sons of men should dwell.
'My busy thoughts at first—
'On their salvation ran,
'Ere sin was born, or Adam's dust,
'Was fashioned to a man.
'Then come, receive my grace,
'Ye children, and be wise.
'Happy the man that keeps my ways,
'The man that shuns them dies.'—*Watts.*

V. 34. *Daily.* The word of God, and the places where the gospel is faithfully preached, without doubt, are "the gates" "and the posts of the doors" of wisdom, at which Christ would have his disciples to wait *daily.* Many in this lukewarm age, question the propriety of hearing sermons on a week day, and not only absent themselves, but censure those who attend. A few questions may be proposed on this subject. Do such persons generally employ their time better? If other duties demand their attention they certainly do. But may not Christians, consistently with other duties, redeem time for waiting at Wisdom's gate, as well as the children of this world find time for their vain amusements and feastings, who yet do not neglect *their* one thing needful? Is not the time, spared from attending on a sermon on a week-day, often spent in unprofitable visits or vain discourse? nay, does it not frequently hang heavy on men's hands, and prove a temptation to various scenes of dissipation? And is this more for the honour of God, the good of men's own souls, or the edification of their brethren? Did Christ ever find fault with his hearers for attending him too closely? Were Christians *less judicious* or *more zealous*, after the day of Pentecost, than at present? (*Acts* ii. 42. 46, 47.) Doth it not show a degree of contempt of Wisdom's instructions, and form a

c i 33. iii. 13—18. John iii 16 36. xiv 6 Phil. iii 8, 9. Col. iii. 3. 1 John v. 11, 12
* Heb. *bring forth*
d xii 2 Eph i. 6.

35 For [c] whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall * obtain [d] favour of the LORD.

36 But [e] he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: [f] all they that hate me love death.

e i. 31. John iii. 19, 20 Acts xiii. 46 Heb ii 3. x. 26.
f v 11, 12 22, 23. Ez. xviii 31. xxxiii. 11. John xv 23, 24. 1 Cor. xvi. 22.

bad example, when people professing godliness seem glad of an excuse for neglecting the means of grace? And finally, ought ministers to be "instant in season, and out of season," in preaching the word: and ought not the people to be glad of an opportunity of hearing it?

V. 36. *Wrongeth.* Or, *Doeth violence to*, &c. He is the murderer of his own soul.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—21.

When we observe how readily men listen to the seductions of vice, and run in the ways of folly and misery; we are apt to suppose, that the instructions of wisdom are withheld from them, and that they would act otherwise if not left to unavoidable ignorance. Indeed the supporters of superstition and error have devised many ways to keep men in the dark, or to furnish them with excuses for impenitency and unbelief; and many have pretended that there is vast uncertainty respecting the knowledge of the truth and will of God, or difficulty in acquiring it. But the chief difficulty, and indeed almost the only one, is to induce men to attend on instruction. "For doth not wisdom cry? and "understanding put forth her voice?" It was the manner of Christ and his apostles, and it is that of all his faithful ministers, according to their measure of ability, to publish his truths in the most earnest and open manner; to spread divine instructions, by every means and in every place where they can; and to warn, exhort, and call upon men to hearken to them. For without restriction Wisdom calls upon all the sons of Adam, who come within the reach of her voice. She commands "the simple to understand "wisdom, and the fools to be of an understanding heart:" and an obedient attention to the words of Christ will guide the most ignorant into the saving knowledge of the truth. But, alas! men are far more desirous of *diversion* than of *instruction*: and places, where folly keeps her school, and demands a high price for admission, are thronged; whilst the Gospel of Christ freely but faithfully preached, without the trappings of human oratory, will comparatively be thinly attended. Yet the condescension of the holy Saviour, in addressing his words, not to angels, but to the fallen sons of men, and to the vilest and meanest of them, demands our strictest regard: and the excellent things that he speaks are worthy to be received by all rational creatures; but especially by sinners, to whom he points out the only way of life and salvation. Every word he utters is right; His lips abominate all guile and wickedness; there is nothing froward or perverse in his instructions; they give no *needless* pain, impose no useless restraints, demand no unreasonable services, and engage us in no abstruse speculations. There is no insincerity in his invitations, or unfaithfulness in his promises, or unkindness in his precepts. And if his words be unintelligible to any, it is, because they do not fear the Lord; (*Ps.* xxv. 14;) they are not willing to be the disciples of Christ, or to do the will of God; (*Matt.* xiii. 11. *John* vii. 17. 2 *Cor.* iv. 3, 4:) or they do not put a proper value on the knowledge of the truth, and bestow due pains to acquire it. For when there is an understanding heart and a disposition to receive the truth in love, it is all plain and obvious, and every preceding lesson prepares the mind for those which are to follow. Such persons value wisdom above silver and gold: they count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ: for him they forsake the world, and renounce the most lucrative employments at his command: for they deem "wisdom "better than rubies, and all things that may be desired, as "not to be compared to it." Indeed they know that all prudence and ingenuity are from their Lord; and that, if he saw it good for them, he could discover to them such curious inventions, as would render them eminent among men: but they most admire that wisdom by which he hath made way for the salvation of sinners, consistently with the honour of the divine law and justice. For through the redemption of his precious blood "the riches of his grace "have abounded in all wisdom and prudence." (*Eph.* i. 8.) Counsel and sound wisdom are with and from him; but the pride and arrogancy, the evil ways and the froward conversation, which he hates, render men unwilling to be his pupils, and close their minds against his humbling, awakening, and holy instructions. He has strength also, as well as understanding; and being the fountain of authority, he can advance his friends, and crush his foes at pleasure: and as by him kings reign, it behooves them not only to decree justice, and to exercise their authority according to his precepts, but to come and trust in him for the salvation of their souls, (*Notes, Ps.* ii.) Our love to Christ, as expressed by obedience to his commandments and delight in his instructions, is the sure evidence of his love of us: and all, that seek him without delay, shall find him as their Teacher and Saviour. They are peculiarly happy who begin early in life to seek him: for true riches and honours are with him, yea, durable riches and righteousness: whereas the vanishing possessions of this world are often acquired by injustice, and prove dangerous temptations. The fruit of this Tree of life is far better than gold; and even the present comforts of his people surpass all that wealth can purchase. He leads those whom he loves in the paths of righteousness, at a distance from perilous extremes, even in the midst of the paths of judgment; that he may cause them to inherit, not vain shadows, but *substantial good*, sufficient to satisfy all the capacities and desires of their souls.

V. 22—36.

The consideration of the essential and eternal dignity of the condescending Saviour should greatly endear his instructions to us. From eternity being one with the Father, the Creator and Lord of all; by whom and for whom all things were made and disposed of, with a view to the glory of God in the work of man's redemption: having displayed his wisdom, power, and goodness, in the formation of the heavens and the earth, and all things therein; he was yet willing to stoop and to assume the form of a servant for

CHAP. IX.

The feast and invitations of Wisdom, 1—6. *The different reception given them; instructions to those who publish them; and the contrary end of the wise and scornful,* 7—12. *The foolish woman's feast and invitations, and the doom of her guests,* 13—18.

WISDOM hath [a] builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven [b] pillars:

2 She hath [c] killed her * beasts; she hath [d] mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table.

3 She hath [e] sent forth her maidens: [f] she crieth upon the highest places of the city,

4 Whoso *is* [g] simple, let him turn in hither: *as for* him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him,

5 Come, [h] eat of my bread, and drink of the wine *which* I have mingled.

6 [i] Forsake the foolish, and live; and go [k] in the way of understanding.

7 ¶ He that [l] reproveth a scorner getteth to himself shame; and he that rebuketh a wicked *man getteth* himself a blot.

8 [m] Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee: [n] rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee.

9 [o] Give *instruction* to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.

a Matt. xvi. 18. 1 Cor. iii. 9—15. Eph. ii. 21, 22. 1 Tim. iii. 15. Heb. iii. 3—6. 1 Pet. ii. 5, 6. b 1 Kings vii. 2, 3, 6, 21. Gal. ii. 9. Rev. iii. 12. c Is. xxv. 6. Mat. xxii. 4. 1 Cor. v. 7, 8. * Heb. *killing.* Gen. xliii. 16. *Marg.* d 5. Luke xiv. 17. e Mat. xxii. 3, 4. 9. Luke xi. 49. xiv. 17. 21—23. Rom. x. 15. 2 Cor. v. 20, 21. f 14. i. 20—23. viii. 1, 2. John vii. 37. xviii. 20. g 16. i. 22. viii. 5. Ps. xix. 7. cxix. 130. Matt. xi. 25. Rev. iii. 17, 18. xxii. 17. h 2. 17. Ps. xxii. 26, 29. Cant. v. 1. Is. lv. 1—3. Jer. xxxi. 12—14. Matt. xxvi. 26—28. John vi. 27, 49—58. i iv. 14, 15. xii. 20. Ps. xxvi. 4—6. xlv. 10. cxix. 115. Acts ii. 40. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Rev. xviii. 4. k iv. 11. x. 17. Matt. vii. 13, 14. Luke xiii. 24. l xv. 12. Gen. xix. 8, 9. 1 Kings xviii. 17. xxi. 20. xxii. 24, 27. 2 Chr. xxiv. 20—22. xxv. 15, 16. xxxvi. 16. m xxiii. 9. xxix. 1. Num. xiv. 8—10. 1 Kings xxii. 8. Mat. vii. 6. xv. 14. Heb. vi. 4—8. n xiii. 18. xxviii. 23. Lev. xix. 17. 2 Sam. xii. 7—14. 1 Kings i. 23, 32. Ps. cxli. 5. Gal. ii. 11—14. 2 Pet. iii. 15, 16. o i. 5. xxv. 12. Matt. xiii. 11, 12. 2 Pet. iii. 18. 1 John ii. 20, 21. v. 13.

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us men and for our salvation. In the prospect of man's lost estate, he was set up from everlasting in the divine counsels, to be our Deliverer and King: and though well aware of the vast expense of this gracious work, he rejoiced in anticipating the glory that should follow his agonies, and in the delight he should for ever take in his redeemed people, the trophies of his victories, and the monuments of his love. Did he then, and doth he still delight in the thoughts of thus saving us wretched sinners? Did the Father, on this account especially, delight in his beloved Son? And shall not we delight in him and his salvation? Surely with the docility of children we should hearken to his voice: yea, the youngest, that can read, hear, and understand, should receive his counsels, with thankful, joyful, and obedient hearts. Let us all then hear instruction, and be wise, and not refuse such surprising mercy. For blessed are they who hear the Saviour's voice; patiently watching and waiting at his gates: and by daily reading, meditation, and prayer, by constantly attending on his ordinances and observing his directions, seek increasing acquaintance with him and experience of his grace. The more diligent we are, the happier we shall be: for "Whoso findeth him "findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD." Let us then not be wearied or discouraged in watching at his gates: let us be careful that we be not allured away by worldly pleasures, frighted away by the reproach or terror of the wicked, or tempted to think that we shall wait in vain; for this no upright soul shall do: but they that neglect such great salvation, and hate the instructions of Christ, are murderers of their own souls, and act as if they were in love with death and damnation.

NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 1—6. Perhaps Solomon here referred to his magnificent temple, to which men were invited to resort for the worship of God, instead of frequenting scenes of vice and dissipation: but even this was typical of Christ and his Gospel. He, the true Wisdom, hath prepared his church and ordinances, as a commodious and stately palace, for the entertainment of believing sinners. The sacrifice of his death, which was prefigured by the oblations of bulls and goats, supplies the provisions of a rich and plentiful feast for them. The wine also is mingled, to render it more exquisite; and the table is furnished at a vast expense to him, though none to them. The ministers of the Gospel, (called the handmaids of Wisdom, to preserve the propriety of the parable,) are sent forth into all the places of public resort to invite the guests: and the simple, those who want understanding (or *a heart*, as the words literally signify) are particularly invited to enter in and partake of the feast. But they must be exhorted and commanded to forsake their foolish comrades and sinful pursuits, that they may live and *be happy*, by going in the way of understanding. The coincidence of this interpretation with two of our Lord's parables, sufficiently warrants it: (*Notes, Matt.* xxii. 2—14. *Luke* xiv. 16—24;) and indeed the exposition given of the preceding chapters. —'The Son of God, who is the eternal Wisdom of the 'Father, hath built his house, the church of God; he 'hath laid sure foundations of it, and hath hewn out all 'the pillars thereof. He hath instituted all his holy ordi-'nances, whereby he may feed up the souls of men to 'everlasting life. He hath sent forth his holy and zealous 'messengers to invite men to these sacred mysteries.' (*Bp. Hall.*)

V. 7—9. These verses seem to imply directions to the ministers of Christ, whilst they invite sinners in general how to conduct themselves towards men according to the way in which they treat their warnings and invitations. They must be contented with declaring the truth before them, as they have opportunity, and with general warnings and exhortations; but must not persist in personal rebukes of those who show profane contempt, or are notorious for their wickedness; as that will only render them more outrageous and scurrilous, perhaps excite them

p i. 7. Job xxviii. 28. Ps. cxi. 10. Ec xii. 13
q ii. 5 xxx. 3. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. Matt xi 27. John xvii. 3. 1 John v 20.
r iii. 2. 16. x 27. Deut vi 2.

10 [p] The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom; and [q] the knowledge of the Holy *is* understanding.

11 For [r] by me thy days shall be multiplied, and the years of thy life shall be increased.

s xvi. 26 Job xxii. 2, 3. 21. xxxv. 6, 7. Is. xxviii. 22. 2 Pet. iii. 3, 4. 16.

12 [s] If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself: but *if* thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear *it*.

t vii. 11. xxi. 9. 19. 1 Tim vi. 4. *Marg.*

13 ¶ A foolish woman *is* [t] clamorous; *she is* simple, and knoweth nothing.

vii. 10—12.

14 For [u] she sitteth at the door of her house, on a seat [x] in the high places of the city,

x 3.

15 To [y] call passengers who go right on their way:

y vii. 12—15 25—27. xxiii. 27, 28.

16 [z] Whoso *is* simple, let him turn in hither: and *as for* him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him,

z 4.

17 [a] Stolen waters are sweet, and bread * *eaten* in secret is pleasant.

a xx. 17. xxiii. 31, 32. Gen iii. 6. Rom. vii. 8. Jam. i 14. 15.
* Heb. *of secrecies.*

18 But [b] he knoweth not that [c] the dead *are* there: *and that* her guests *are* in the depths of hell.

vii. 18—20. xxx. 20. 2 Kings v. 31—27. Eph. v. 12.
b i 7 Ps. lxxxii. 5. 2 Pet iii. 5.
c ii. 18, 19. v. 5. vi. 26. vii. 27.

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to circulate slanders out of revenge; and induce such altercations, as may even exasperate the reprover to say or do things that will give them a handle against him: so that nothing can be generally expected from reproving a scorner, but reproach, contempt, and hatred. Whereas there is the greatest encouragement to reprove a wise man when he acts improperly; for he will love the friendly reprover, and grow wiser by every instruction. And as teachableness, and a conscientious regard to the authority of God, are proofs of wisdom; so the attention of instructors should be peculiarly directed to those who seem disposed to profit by particular addresses. But where obstinacy and contempt of the truth are manifest, Christ says to us, "Let them "alone;" 'you can do them no good at present, but will 'get harm by them.' 'If a man cannot endure to be told 'of his faults, it is a shrewd sign he is in the way to be 'undone; and hath not so much as approached the gates 'of Wisdom.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 10. *Holy.* Or, *Holies*, Holy things, or holy persons, or perhaps of the Holy God, and of his truth and will. (*Is.* vi. 3.)

V. 13—18. The foolish woman seems here to be an emblem, either of sensual pleasures, and the cares, interests, and pursuits of the world; or, of those idolatrous and erroneous religions, which, making large allowances to men's depraved inclinations, allure them from "the truth "as it is in Jesus." In this foolish woman clamorousness and ignorance unite with high pretensions and noisy declamations and boastings that mean nothing. She is represented as continually seated in the high places of the city, to draw aside those who were before going on their way: as the harlot entices men who were following their business without previous bad intentions. Some think that she represents the conscientious scruples of those whom she addresses, as *simplicity and want of understanding*, in the manner that the bashful virtuous youth is often made the fool in a comedy: or it is shown, that she singles out and prevails against such as are destitute of wisdom and grace, alluring them into the ways of sin, with an enchanting delineation of the pleasure to be found in prohibited indulgences; as if the forbidden fruit were to be desired above any in the garden of God. Thus men are drawn from Christ, and are not aware that it is to their destruction; not knowing, that all who hearken to the seductions of vice or error are dead in sins, and that the guests are rushing into the depths of hell. (*Note*, ii. 18.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

As the divine majesty of Christ, and the excellency of his instructions, demand our obedient attention: so the provisions of his grace to supply our perishing wants should endear his invitations. The new covenant which he hath mediated, the spiritual house he hath builded, the atoning sacrifice he hath offered, the inexhaustible treasures reposited in him; the righteousness, grace, peace, and consolations, which he bestows; the eternal inheritance that he hath prepared; and the meetness for it which his grace effects, are freely proposed to sinners, and conferred on every believer. Whatever carnal men imagine, Christ hath provided *a feast* for his people; nothing is wanting but a willing mind and a spiritual relish, in order to partake of it: and the invitations given by his faithful ministers to the simple and sinful, imply a direction to them to call on the Lord for these preparatory blessings. Would we partake of Wisdom's feast, we must renounce the society and the foolish pleasures of the ungodly; or we never can enjoy the pleasures of a holy life, or go in the way of understanding: and it is vain for us to continue an acquaintance with wicked men, in order to do them good; as we are far more likely to be corrupted by them; and our best service to them, is to protest against their evil courses by separating from their company. This is *in general* the only rebuke that it is adviseable to give to infidels, scorners, and hardened profligates. It is indeed grievous for a minister by silence and distance to testify against those who despise his message: but seldom any thing, save contempt and reviling, and increased enmity, is got by neglecting this counsel of wisdom: whereas the same labour and freedom taken with those who are wise enough to value instructions, would procure love, and do important good. For none are so wise or righteous, as not in many things to need instruction, and even reproof; and the wiser men are, the better will they take, and the more will they profit by them, if properly given, and by those whose place it is to "reprove and rebuke with all authority." (*Ps.* cxli. 5.) We are repeatedly reminded that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; we should therefore discover, as well as we can, where this fear is planted in men's hearts; that we may lead them forward in the knowledge of God, and into an acquaintance with the holy Jesus; in which all true wisdom and understanding consist, and by which all the blessings of time and eternity are communicated. All,

CHAP. X.

Miscellaneous maxims, chiefly recommending righteousness, piety, industry, and the government of the tongue and improvement of the gift of speech, 1—32.

a i. 1. xxv. 1. 1 Kings iv. 32. Ec. xii. 9.
b xv. 20. xvii. 21. 25. xix. 13. xxiii. 15, 16 24, 25. xxix. 3. 15. Ec. ii. 19.
c xi. 4. Ps. xlix. 6—10. Is x 2, 3. Zeph. i. 18. Luke xii. 15—21. xvi. 22, 23. Rom. ii. 5. Jam v. 1—3.
d xii. 28 Dan iv. 27. Rom v 21

1 THE [a] Proverbs of Solomon. [b] A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son *is* the heaviness of his mother.

2 [c] Treasures of wickedness profit nothing: [d] but righteousness delivereth from death.

e Job v 20. Ps. x. 14 xxxiii 19. xxxiv 9, 10. xxxvii 3 19. 25 Is xxxiii 16. Matt vi. 30—33. Luke xii. 22—24. Heb xiii. 5. 6.
f Job xx. 5—8. 15. 20—22. 28 Hab. ii 6—8 Zeph. i. 18.
* Or, *the wicked for* their *wickedness.* xiv. 32.
g xii. 24. xix 15. 24 xx 4 13. xxiv. 30—34. Ec x. 18. John vi. 27. Heb vi. 11, 12 2 Pet i. 5—10.
h xiii. 4. xxi. 5. 1 Cor. xv. 58.

3 The LORD [e] will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish: [f] but he casteth away * the substance of the wicked.

4 He [g] becometh poor that dealeth *with* a slack hand: [h] but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.

5 He that [i] gathereth in summer *is* a wise son; *but* he that sleepeth in harvest *is* [k] a son that causeth shame.

6 [l] Blessings *are* upon the head of the just: but [m] violence covereth the mouth of the wicked.

i vi. 8. xxx. 25. Is lv. 6, 7.——k xii 4 xvii 2. xix 26——l xi 26 xxiv. 25 xxviii. 20 Deut xxviii. 2. Job xxix. 13 2 Tim. i. 16—18.——m 11. Esth. vii 8. Ps cvii. 42. Rom. iii. 19.

who hear the Gospel, should consider, that life and death are set before them, and that *they* are most deeply interested in the choice. If they are wise to choose the one thing needful, ministers and Christian friends, yea, angels, will rejoice, and God himself will rejoice over them to do them good; and their wisdom will prove their own eternal advantage: but if men persist in their scorning, they may grieve the hearts of their ministers and friends; yet they alone must bear the consequence in everlasting contempt and misery. We ought then most earnestly to seek and pray for true wisdom: for Satan hath emissaries of various kinds to withdraw our souls from Christ, with great swelling words of vanity, the result of presumption and ignorance; (2 *Pet.* ii. 10—22. *Jude* 13.) Not only do worldly lusts and abandoned seducers, prove fatal rivals to Christ for the souls of men: but false teachers, with damnable doctrines, which flatter the pride and give liberty to the lusts of men, compass the destruction of multitudes. These especially draw off such as have received serious impressions, and are disposed to do many things, and to attend on the word of God; but are not experimentally acquainted with the truth, in the love and power of it: such unstable souls are soon seduced into superstition, enthusiasm, or antinomian licentiousness, or any other plausible corruption of Christianity, according to the fashion of the age: they are persuaded by fair words, that so much diligence and self-denial are unnecessary, and that they may obtain heaven on easier terms: they are allured with the hopes of gratifying their darling passion with impunity; and their natural propensity to covet forbidden objects is readily wrought upon. Thus they are prejudiced against the humbling truths and holy precepts of God's word: and are drawn aside into the ways of error: "not knowing that the dead "are there, and that her guests are in the depths of hell;" for "the last state of such men is worse than the first."—'From all the deceits of the world, the flesh, and the 'devil; from all false doctrine and hardness of heart; and 'from all contempt of thy word and commandment, good 'Lord, deliver us.' Amen.

NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1. Here the Proverbs, properly so called, begin; which are short maxims of wisdom relating to our conduct in life, in subserviency to our own best interests, to the benefit of mankind, and above all to the glory of God.—The comfort of parents greatly depends on the conduct of their children, and this suggests to both parents and children powerful motives for attending to their several duties. The *heaviness* of the mother may be mentioned, because mothers have previously had a more abundant share of pain and sorrow about their children: and it is therefore the more cruel in them, when grown up, to occasion further distress by their subsequent misconduct, to such kind friends, whom they ought by all means to requite; and to whom they should aim in every thing to be a comfort.

V. 2, 3. Great riches, gotten by fraud or oppression, or spent in wickedness, do no real good to the possessor: for the Lord will soon tear them from him, or him from them; and he will cast them away as worthless and contemptible, as utterly insufficient to ransom the life or soul. Yet such riches are the most valued *substance* of ungodly men! But on the other hand, *righteousness*, (the nature of which must be learned from other parts of Scripture,) secures a man from the sting and fatal effects of death: and though the righteous should be poor in this world, the Lord, who provides for his soul, will not famish him as to his temporal life. These verses may be connected with the preceding verse: 'Let the Father's care in educating his 'children—be equal to the joy he will have in their well-'doing: and let the mother beware that her indulgence 'does not spoil them: for she will have the greatest share 'of the heaviness which their untowardness will give.—'This is more necessary than the care of heaping up riches 'for them; which many times tempt men to fraud and op-'pression, &c.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 4. The words rendered "with a slack hand," may signify *the hand of deceit*—without diligence, honesty can scarcely be expected. 'Next unto virtue, let children be 'trained up to industry—for both poverty and fraud are 'commonly the effect of sloth.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)—The Septuagint here adds, 'A well educated son shall be a 'wise man, and shall use the foolish man as a servant.'

V. 5. Activity and sobriety in youth will enable a man to requite his parents, and render him a credit and comfort to them: as well as establish his credit for prudence. But the sluggard will be a scandal and grief to those by whom he hath been educated.

V. 6. *Violence.* The consciousness or detection of their violent dealing, in oppressing the poor, will stop the mouths

7 The [a] memory of the just *is* blessed: but [o] the name of the wicked shall rot.

8 The [p] wise in heart will receive commandments: [q] but * a prating fool shall † fall.

9 He [r] that walketh uprightly walketh surely: [s] but he that perverteth his ways shall be known.

10 He [t] that winketh with the eye causeth sorrow: [u] but a prating fool shall ‡ fall.

11 The [x] mouth of a righteous *man is* a well of life: [y] but violence covereth the mouth of the wicked.

12 [z] Hatred stirreth up strifes: but [a] love covereth all sins.

13 In [b] the lips of him that hath understanding wisdom is found: but [c] a rod *is* for the back of him that is void of § understanding.

14 Wise men [d] lay up knowledge: but [e] the mouth of the foolish *is* near destruction.

15 The [f] rich man's wealth *is* his strong city: [g] the destruction of the poor *is* their poverty.

a 1 Kings xi. 36. 2 Kings xix. 34. 2 Chr. xxiv. 16. Ps. cxii. 6. Mark xiv. 9. Luke i. 48.
o Job xviii. 17. xxvii. 23. Ps. ix. 5, 6. cix. 13, 15. Ec. viii. 10. Jer. xvii. 13.
p i. 5. ix. 9. xii. 1. xiv. 8. Ps. cxix. 34. Jam. iii. 13.
q 10. xii. 13. xiii. 3. xiv. 23.
* Heb. *a fool of lips*. Ec. x. 12.
† Heb. *be beaten*. xviii. 6, 7.
r xxviii. 18. Ps. xxv. 21. xxvi. 11, 12. lxxxiv. 11. Is. xxxiii. 15, 16. Gal. ii. 13, 14.
s xvii. 20. Luke xii. 1, 2. 1 Cor. iv. 5.——t vi. 13. Job xv. 12. Ps. xxxv. 19.——u 8. xviii. 6, 7. 21.——‡ Heb. *be beaten*. 3 John 10.——x 21. 32. xiii. 14. xv. 7. xvi. 22—24. xviii. 4. xx. 15. Ps. xxxvii. 30, 31. Eph. iv. 29.
y 6. Ec. x. 12—14. Matt. xii. 34—37. Jam. iii. 5—8.
z xv. 18. xvi. 27. xxviii. 25. xxix. 22. Jam. iv. 1.
a xvii. 9. 1 Cor. xiii. 4. Jam. v. 20. 1 Pet. iv. 8.
b 11. 21. xv. 7, 23. xx. 15. Ec. x. 12. Is. i. 4. Luke iv. 22.
c 10. vii. 22. xvii. 10. xxvi. 3. xxvii. 22. Ps. xxxii. 9.
§ Heb. *heart*. vi. 22. *Marg.*
d i. 5. ix. 9. xviii. 1. 15. xix. 8. Matt. xiii. 44. 52. 2 Cor. iv. 6, 7.
e 8. 10. xiii. 3. xv. 28. 7. xxi. 22.
f xviii. 11. Job xxxi. 24, 25. Ps. lii. 7. Ec. vii. 12.
Jer. ix. 23. Luke xii. 10. 1 Tim. vi. 17.——g xiv. 20. xix. 7. xxii. 22, 23. Mic. ii. 1, 2.

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of the wicked; and render them like men whose faces are *covered* when led to execution. 'When their wicked-'ness shall be discovered, they shall be dumb, and not 'know what to say.'—The clause, however, may be rendered, "The mouth of the wicked covereth violence." They use a variety of pleas, and employ all their eloquence to conceal, or excuse and justify, their cruelty and oppressions. For example, who can help thinking of the ingenious, but interested, advocates for the cruel and oppressive slave-trade?

V. 7. The memory of righteous and merciful men shall be celebrated with just commendations, after their deaths; however clouded by envy and calumny at present: but all the endeavours of the wicked and their panegyrists to establish their characters, shall not preserve their memory from merited infamy.

V. 8. True wisdom disposes men to regard and obey the commandments of God, and those of their superiors, in all things lawful: but that knowledge which merely serves to furnish men with topics of disputation and loquacity, and their various methods of abusing the gift of speech, will rebound to their own disgrace and misery. 'The foolish in talk shall be beaten.'

V. 9. (*Notes, Ps.* cxxv. 5.) The upright believer goes strait forward in the plain path of sincerity, honesty, and piety; thus he is both safe and free from perplexing fears, as there is no secret ill design or practice which dreads detection: but the dissembler, after all his shuffling and subtlety, will certainly be exposed, either here or hereafter; and he lives in continual apprehensions of being put to shame.

V. 10. (*Notes*, vi. 12—19.) 'The dissembling person 'causeth much sorrow at last, both to himself and those 'that have been deceived by him: but a prating fool that 'utters all his heart, procures stripes to himself, without 'further danger to others.' (*Bp. Hall.*)

V. 11. The good treasure of a righteous man's heart continually furnishes wise, pious, and edifying observations. So that they, who converse with him, may draw from him instructions for the prudent conduct of life, as occasion requires. But the mouth of the wicked is employed in disguising or palliating his violent dealings; (*Note* 6.)

V. 12. Where hatred reigns, every trifle excites contentions: the least slip is resented and aggravated; the best meant words or actions are misrepresented or misunderstood, and nothing is passed over. But where love prevails, mistakes and offences will be either overlooked, or speedily forgiven: so that, notwithstanding the imperfections of those who live together, they bear with, and make the best of each other, and peace and harmony are preserved. The evident meaning of this latter clause should be kept in mind, by all who would interpret the apostle's quotation of it. The Septuagint, not having clearly expressed the genuine meaning of the passage, St. Peter does not quote from it; but he gives us the plain meaning of the original; and St. James, in an evident reference to the passage, uses almost the same words. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 13. The translation of this verse in the Septuagint is remarkable. 'He, who bringeth forth wisdom from his 'lips, smites the foolish man with a rod.' Obstinate sinners should be treated with severity: for such discipline is most calculated to do them good; and indeed they are wilfully preparing misery for themselves in this world and in the next. 'He that would be wise must seek the ac-'quaintance of some intelligent person; but he that is 'void of consideration will never learn, unless perhaps by 'some great affliction.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 14. Wise men are always learning: they value useful knowledge as misers do gold, and are continually studying to increase their treasures; which they carefully preserve, till opportunities are afforded of communicating them for the instruction of others. But fools soon speak out all they think, and spend their scanty stock, without regarding consequences; by which they do immense mischief, and ruin themselves. The word rendered *destruction*, properly means *consternation*, or *anguish of mind*.

V. 15. Riches indeed often preserve men from many hardships and injuries; and poverty exposes men to much oppression and injustice. But the rich confide far too much in this security, which cannot ward off pain, death, or damnation: and the poor are too much cast down by their difficulties, which cannot prevent their comfort in the favour of God, or the salvation of their souls. (xviii. 11.) The same word is used as in the foregoing verse; and the clause may be rendered, "The consternation of the poor "is their poverty;" they are often more afraid of it, than of sin.

16 The [h] labour of the righteous *tendeth* to life: [i] the fruit of the wicked to sin.

17 He *is in* [k] the way of life that keepeth instruction; but [l] he that refuseth reproof * erreth.

18 He [m] that hideth hatred *with* lying lips, and he [n] that uttereth a slander, *is* a fool.

19 In [o] the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: [p] but he that refraineth his lips *is* wise.

20 The [q] tongue of the just *is as* choice silver; [r] the heart of the wicked *is* little worth.

21 The lips of the righteous [s] feed many: but [t] fools die for want of † wisdom.

22 The blessing of the LORD, [u] it maketh rich, and [x] he addeth no sorrow with it.

23 *It is* [y] as sport to a fool to do mischief: but a man of understanding hath wisdom.

24 The [z] fear of the wicked, it shall come upon him: but [a] the desire of the righteous shall be granted.

25 As [b] the whirlwind passeth, so *is* the wicked no *more*: but the righteous *is* [c] an everlasting foundation.

26 As [d] vinegar to the teeth, and [e] as smoke to the eyes, [f] so *is* the sluggard to them that send him.

h xi. 30. Is. iii. 10, 11. John vi. 27. 1 Cor. xv. 58 Gal. vi 7—9 Heb. vi. 10. i Matt. vii. 17, 18. xii. 33, 34. xv. 19 Rom. vi. 23 2 Tim. ii. 17, 18 iii. 13. k iii 1 2. 18 iv 4 13. xii 1 xxii. 17—19. Matt. vii 24—27. Luke xi. 28. Heb ii. 1. l i. 25, 26. 30. v 12 xv. 10. xxix 1. 2 Chr. xxv. 16. Heb xii 25 * Or, *causeth to err.* Ec. v 6. m xxvi. 24—26 1 Sam. xviii. 21, 22. 29. 2 Sam. iii. 27 xi 6—15. xiii. 23—29 xx 9, 10 Ps v 9 xii 2. iv. 21 Luke xx 20. 21 n Ps xv. 3 1. 20. ci. 5 o Ec. v. 3. x 13, 14. Jam iii 2——p xvii. 27, 28 Ps. xxxix 1. Jam. i. 19.——q xii 18. xv. 4. xvi. 13. xxv 11, 12. Matt xii 35.——r xxiii 7 Gen vi. 5. viii. 21 Jer xvii. 9. Matt. xii. 33.——s xiii. 18. xv. 4. 14 Job iv. 3, 4 xxiii. 12. xxix 21, 22. Ps. xxxvii. 30. Ec. xii. 9, 10 Jer. iii. 15 xv. 16. John xxi 15—17. 1 Pet. v 2.

t i. 29 31. v. 12. 23. Hos. iv. 6. Matt. xiii. 19. John iii. 19, 20. Rom. i. 28. † Heb. *heart* xvii. 16 u Gen xii 2 xiii. 2 xiv. 23. xxiv. 35. xxvi. 12. Deut. viii. 17, 18. 1 Sam. ii. 7, 8. Ps. cvii. 38. cxiii. 7, 8. x xx. 21. xxviii. 22. Josh. vi. 19. vii. 1, &c. 1 Kings xix. 21. 2 Kings v 26, 27. Job xxvii. 8, &c. Hab. ii. 6—12 Zech. v. 4. Jam v 1—5. y xiv. 9. xv 21. xxvi 18. 19. Ec. xi. 9 z Job iii. 25. xv 21. Heb. x. 27 a Ps xxi. 2 xxxvii 4. cxlv. 19 Matt v. 6. John xiv. 13. xvi. 24. 1 John v. 14, 15 b i. 27 Job xxvii. 19—21. Ps. xxxvii. 9, 10 lviii 9. lxxiii. 18—20 Is. xl. 24——c 30. Ps xv 5. Matt. vii. 24, 25. xvi 18. Eph. ii. 20. 1 Tim. vi. 19. 2 Tim. ii. 19.——d xxv. 13. 20.——e Is. lxv. 5.——f Matt. xxv. 26. Rom. xii 11. Heb. vi. 12

V. 16. The labour of the righteous, being a part of their duty, not only supplies their present wants, but tends to their salvation. While the most valuable inheritances, the extraordinary successes, and very unexpected accession of wealth and preferment, with which a wicked man is favoured, serve only to inflame his passions, and supply him with materials of sinful indulgence; and thus eventually they add to his guilt and condemnation. The verse may be rendered: "That which a righteous man obtain-"eth by his labour, is unto life: but the *income*," (or *revenue*,) "of the wicked unto sin."

V. 17. *Erreth.* The traveller, who has missed his way, and is too proud to hearken to directions, is likely to wander still further from his road: and the sinner, who disdains to be reproved, will scarcely be convinced of his mistake, till he opens his eyes in the pit of destruction. Some understand the clause actively, 'He that leaveth off 'to give reproofs encourages men in their errors,' (or causeth them to err.) (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 18. The man who flatters those whom he hates, and covers malicious devices with professions of friendship; and then propagates slanders to the ruin of their reputation, is evidently destitute both of wisdom and grace.

V. 19. 'Much speaking is rarely innocent: therefore 'he that is sparing of his words, and considers well both 'when, and where, and what he speaks, is a truly prudent 'person.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 20, 21. Yet the gift of speech is too valuable a talent to be buried: like the precious metals it should not be squandered; but on proper occasions it should be liberally used. And indeed the righteous, though poor, will by their pious conversation do as much good as the rich man by his bounty: so that their lips *feed*, that is, instruct, counsel, and comfort, many. But the wicked man, being destitute of good principles, intentions, and dispositions; nay, his heart being worthless and full of iniquity, cannot be expected to do good, either by his example or conversation: and at last he will perish as a fool, for want of true wisdom, whatever proficiency he has made in science, and whatever reputation for sagacity he has acquired.

V. 22. In a chapter peculiarly recommending industry, the wise man, or rather the Spirit of God by him, has given a most important admonition in this verse. 'The heathens were prone to imagine all things requisite 'to happiness to be placed in themselves. But the Scrip-'ture every where inculcates, that it is God who giveth 'wisdom to the wise, and victory to the valiant, and riches 'to the diligent, and good success to the prudent and 'potent.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) In fact, a large majority of nominal Christians, especially the active, sagacious, and managing, in worldly business, are heathens, at least practically, in this respect. Perhaps they acquire their wealth by using many sinister methods; and with it they ensure vanity and vexation. But when riches are given, by the blessing of God, upon the honest industry of one who depends on him and uses them to his glory; they are possessed without perplexing care, or a guilty conscience, or dread of consequences.

V. 23. Foolish and wicked men divert themselves with injuring and disquieting others, or with tempting them to sin: and the greatest impieties or iniquities, which they can commit with present impunity, are to them a laughing matter. But a man of understanding is too wise to act so ridiculously: nay, he takes far more delight in wisdom than they do in mischief.

V. 24. The most overwhelming dread which a wicked man feels of punishment, will certainly come upon him: and the largest desires that the righteous can form of spiritual and eternal blessings, will assuredly be granted. "He," even God, "will grant them." The one can fear nothing so bad, and the other can desire nothing so good, as are really intended for them.

V. 25. The triumphs and boastings of prosperous sinners resemble the short-lived mischievous fury of a whirlwind, which soon spends itself and is gone. But the righteous *has* an everlasting foundation, trusting in the mercy of God through Christ unto eternal life.

V. 26. As vinegar, or the sour grape, sets the teeth on edge, and as smoke causes the eyes to smart; so the sluggard is a continual vexation to those who employ him.

27 The [g] fear of the LORD * prolongeth days: but [h] the years of the wicked shall be shortened.

28 The [i] hope of the righteous *shall be* gladness: [k] but the expectation of the wicked shall perish.

29 The [l] way of the LORD *is* strength to the upright: [m] but destruction *shall be* to the workers of iniquity.

30 The righteous shall [n] never be removed: but [o] the wicked shall not inhabit the earth.

31 The [q] mouth of the just bringeth forth wisdom: but [q] the froward tongue shall be cut out.

32 The lips of the righteous [r] know what is acceptable: [s] but the mouth of the wicked *speaketh* † frowardness.

g iii 2 16 ix 11. Ps xxi 4 xxxiv. 11—13 xci. 16 * Heb. *adideth* h Job xv. 32, 33. xxii. 15. 16 Ps. lv 23 Ec vii. 17. Jer. xvii. 11. Luke xii. 20. i Ps xvi. 9. lxxiii 24—26. Rom. v. 2. xii. 12 xv 13. 2 Thes ii. 16 k xi. 7 xiv. 32. Job viii. 13. xi. 20. Ps cxii. 10. Luke xvi 23—26. l Ps. lxxxiv 7 Is. xl. 31. Zech. x 12 Phil iv. 13.——m xx. 15. Job xxxi 3. Ps. i. 6. xxxvi. 12 xxxvii. 20. xcii. 7. Matt vii 22, 23. Luke xiii. 26, 27. Rom. ii. 8, 9.

n 25. Ps. xvi. 8. xxxvii 28, 29. cxii. 6. cxxv 1. Rom viii. 35—39 2 Pet i 10, 11. o Ps. xxxvii. 9, 10. 22. lii. 5. Ez. xxxiii 24—26. Mic ii 9, 10. Matt. xxi 41. p ii. 13 20 21. Ps xxxvii. 30. q Ps. xxxi 18. lxiii. 11. cxx. 3, 4. r Ec xii. 10. Dan. iv. 27 s xi. 11 xii. 6. 18. xv. 2 28. xviii. 6—8.——† Heb. *frowardness.*

V. 27. (*Note*, iii. 2.)

V. 28. 'The hope of the former,' (the righteous,) 'concludes in the joyful possession of what he waits for: 'but the other failing of his expectation, ends his days 'in sadness.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) It should also be added, that a well-grounded hope is in itself a source of present gladness: "Rejoicing in hope."

V. 29. By uprightly walking in the way of the Lord, habits of obedience acquire strength: and thus the believer, instead of fainting and wearying, through difficulties or temptations, grows stronger in faith and grace, and goes forward with increasing vigour and delight. Some understand the word to mean *courage* rather than *strength.*—'The upright man has great courage and undaunted reso-'lution, when any evil threatens him: but the workers of 'iniquity are broken with the fear of that destruction 'which is coming on them.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 30. *Inhabit.* The wicked would be glad to have this earth for their perpetual home and inheritance: but it cannot be so, they must die and leave their idols behind them; and they have no title to that inheritance which Canaan typified.

V. 31. "The mouth of the just shall be fruitful in "wisdom." (*Old translation.*) As the preverseness, lies, malice, slanders, perjuries, and impieties, of a wicked man, might be justly punished by cutting out his tongue: so the froward tongue of the ungodly man shall be silenced, and punished in the flames of hell.

V. 32. The righteous know how to speak what is pleasing to God, in that way which is also most acceptable to men. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—16.

If parents would not experience heaviness from their children, but gladness, they should be very attentive to their education; both giving them good instructions and setting them good examples: they should far more desire that their children may be wise and pious, than rich or renowned: and they ought to pray for them without ceasing to the Giver of every good and perfect gift. It is likewise important, in the greatest degree, that they should consult the permanent advantage of their children, rather than their inclinations; and early habituate them to self-denial and industry. For without diligence there can be no wisdom, or even justice: and a sluggard is always a reproach to those who had the care of his education, a vexation to those who employ him, a dead weight on society, and a burden to himself. Young persons also ought to recollect the labour and sorrow which they have already cost their parents; and consider that they may, nay must, if they behave ill, give them still deeper disquietude and anguish. On the other hand, they should endeavour so to behave, as to prove both a comfort and a credit to them. They should apply to business, with redoubled alacrity, from this motive especially, that, if needful, they may be able to support their parents during their declining years. Opportunities once lost can seldom be recalled. In temporal concerns, "he who dealeth with a slack hand becomes poor," though he had fair prospects and considerable property: so many, highly favoured with religious advantages, will sink into final misery through sloth and procrastination. Indeed partial negligence will impoverish the soul, and prevent the Christian from enjoying that confidence and consolation, and being honoured with that usefulness, with which his more diligent brother is favoured. Nay, sloth and self-indulgence are here far more culpable and pernicious, and diligence far more valuable, than in the trifles of this world: for riches are not to be compared with righteousness, or temporal things with eternal. Riches, how vast soever, when connected, (as the case is too generally,) with wickedness, cannot eventually profit any man: nor can the righteous, in any wise, want what is good for him, either here or hereafter. The confidence that the wealthy generally place in affluence, will certainly disappoint them: for the Lord will cast their idolized treasure away with disdain, 'in the hour of death and in the day of judgment:' and how worthless are all advantages which must forsake us when we most need their help! But then, the righteousness of the despised servants of God will appear in its inestimable value: and all will either envy or congratulate them. In the mean time, should they be called to hard labour and mean fare, even this shall conduce to their good. It is not easy to estimate the blessings which the righteous enjoy, in answer to the prayers of their brethren, while the confusion and frivolous pleas of the wicked, when attempting to palliate their crimes, form an awful anticipation of their unspeakable anguish, when they shall stand speechless before the judge, and be sent away into everlasting punishment. Indeed, it is of no consequence to any man, either in heaven or hell, what his fellow-creatures say or think of him: but it is our duty to honour the memory of the righteous, and in general they are honoured after their decease, competition, and envy, and enmity, dying with them; and this honour is a token of their felicity in a better world: while infamy commonly is, and always ought to be, the lot of the wicked, and it will certainly be their doom in the eternal state. It is of vast moment, exactly to discriminate the characters of the

CHAP. XI.

Maxims of wisdom, chiefly contrasting honesty, humility, faithfulness, and liberality, with the opposite vices, 1—31.

[a] A *FALSE balance *is* abomination to the LORD: but † a just weight *is* his delight.

2 *When* [b] pride cometh, then cometh shame: [c] but with the lowly *is* wisdom.

a xx. 10 23. Lev xix. 35, 36 Deut xxv 13—16. Hos. xii. 7. Am. viii. 5, 6. Mic. vi 10, 11. * Heb *balances of deceit.* † Heb. *a perfect stone* xvi. 11. Ez. xlv. 10—12.——b iii 34, 35. xvi. 18, 19 xviii 12. Dan. iv. 30—32. Luke xiv. —11 1. xviii. 14.——c xv. 33. 1 Cor viii. 1, 2.

righteous and the wicked: and we can hardly touch on any subject which does not direct us in so doing. The wise in heart, that is the righteous, first practises what he has learned, and then speaks to the edification of his neighbours: but the wicked is loquacious and vain-glorious; and he talks, sometimes fluently and plausibly, on the deepest mysteries, while he neglects the plainest and most important duties. Indeed there is no small number of these "prating fools," even among those that profess, nay, preach, the Gospel. Yet are they all, every moment, liable to fall into destruction. Again, the righteous treasures up useful knowledge; and bestows pains to render all he knows useful; and if he has any genius or eloquence, he employs it in recommending truth and enforcing holiness. But the wicked, according to the particular kind of vice to which he is addicted, perversely uses his talents to varnish over crimes, and palliate enormities. The righteous man simply and honestly walks in the ways of God: but the hypocrite has always something in his conduct, which requires concealment and dreads detection. The righteous man is long-suffering, forgiving, and kind; tender to the faults of others, and only severe on his own. He follows peace, and the love of his brother is a mantle to "cover all sins:" but the wicked is clement to himself, and severe on others. Self-love is his mantle to cover his own sins; envy or hatred prompts him to expose the faults of others, and to stir up strife and contention. And if he be rich, this increases his vain confidence and carnal security, while he despises the poor, though pious, instead of relieving their distresses, and giving them encouragement and protection. And finally, while the righteous employ the fruit of their labours in doing good: the wicked spend their estates, or large incomes, "in making provision for the flesh to fulfil the "lusts thereof."

V. 17—32.

Whatever may have been the character and conduct of a man hitherto; if indeed he begins seriously to receive the instruction of the sacred oracles, and to obey them, he is in the way of life, or shall soon find admission at the strait gate: but, alas! multitudes, having gone wrong, are determined to proceed, however palpable and egregious their errors. Thus they refuse reproof and hate the reprover; and this so discourages numbers, that they leave men to the most fatal mistakes, for fear of offending them. So that the world is little stored with such as can and will give, and such as meekly and humbly receive, the reproof of life. Alas! flattery and slander are far more common: and they who hide hatred with lying lips, generally spread slanders also, and often concerning the very persons whom they most flatter. But the word of inspiration has called such men *fools;* and the day of judgment will show how justly. How different the character of the truly wise and righteous man! He learns to bridle and govern his tongue; and to avoid all corrupt, false, ill-tempered, and useless conversation: yet he will not, in refraining his lips, from a conviction that "in the multitude of words there wanteth "not sin;" neglect to improve the talent intrusted to him. Wisdom is found in his lips; his words are as choice silver, enriching, and as wholesome provisions feeding, many. His wise counsels and cautions, his reproofs, instructions and encouragements, will be acceptable and useful: and while his grand object is to glorify God, he aims also to "please all men for their edification," and to propose truth in the most winning and attractive manner.—This is his joy and delight: thus his lips are fruitful in wisdom, and many will remember his words, for their good, when his tongue is silent in the grave. But what a contrast to this character is that of the fool, whose joy and sport is sin and mischief! Who pours forth frowardness, malice, lies, reproaches, and profaneness, without fear or concern; and the effect of whose daily conversation, in exciting contentions, and propagating delusions and impiety, exceeds all calculation! Indeed it is the character of the fool, to use his scantling of capacity in doing mischief. Here alone he manifests any sagacity or ingenuity: and here indeed a little ingenuity will go far; "for behold how "great a matter a little fire kindleth." Men that are slow to hear, swift to speak, swift to wrath; implacable in resentments, and delighting in contentions, may for a while be very successful in mischief: but it will all soon fall on their own heads; and unless they be brought to deep repentance, they will be driven away as by a whirlwind, and their worst fears coming upon them, will sink them into final destruction and misery. But the hope of the righteous is gladness. If the Lord see good he can give them wealth, and exempt them from the sorrow and vexation attending ungodly prosperity. He can prolong their days, while vice shortens the lives of wretched multitudes. He will make their diligence acceptable and useful, while disgrace attaches to the slothful. He will give them strength and courage in his ways: and they shall not be moved for ever, being built on an immoveable foundation. "This "is the heritage of the servants of the LORD; and their "righteousness is of me, saith the LORD."

NOTES.

CHAP. XI. V. 1. (*Note, Deut.* xxv. 13—16.) 'Under this word,' (balances,) 'he condemneth all false 'weights, measures, and deceits.' The strong language of Scripture, in many places, on this subject, demands the most serious consideration of all persons engaged in buying and selling. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 2. A proud conceit of a man's own ability or excellency, accompanied with boastings and arrogant contempt of others, commonly makes way for his being put to shame, by having his ignorance and insufficiency detected and exposed. 'When a man forgetteth himself, and thinketh to 'be exalted above his vocation, then God bringeth him to 'confusion.' Indeed pride is always incompatible with

3 [d] The integrity of the upright shall guide them: but [e] the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them.

4 [f] Riches profit not in the day of wrath: [g] but righteousness delivereth from death.

5 The righteousness of the perfect shall * direct his way: [h] but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness.

6 The [i] righteousness of the upright shall deliver them: but [k] transgressors shall be taken in *their own* naughtiness.

7 When a wicked man dieth, [l] *his* expectation shall perish: and the hope of unjust *men* perisheth.

8 The [m] righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead.

9 An [n] hypocrite with *his* mouth destroyeth his neighbour: but [o] through knowledge shall the just be delivered.

10 When [p] it goeth well with the righteous, the city rejoiceth: and [q] when the wicked perish, *there is* shouting.

11 By [r] the blessing of the upright the city is exalted: but [s] it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.

12 He [t] that is † void of wisdom despiseth his neighbour: but [u] a man of understanding holdeth his peace.

d 5 xiii. 6. Ps. xxv. 21. xxvi. 1. John vii. 17.
e xxi. 7. xxviii. 18. Ec. vii. 17. Is. i. 28.
f x. 2. Job xxxvi. 18, 19. Ps xlix. 6—8. Ez. vii. 19. Zeph. i. 18. Matt. xvi. 26. Luke xii 20.
g xii. 28. Rom. v. 17 1 Tim. iv. 8.
* Heb. *rectify.*
h 3. i. 31, 32. v. 22. 2 Sam. xvii. 23. Esth. vii 3—10. Ps. ix. 15, 16. Matt. xxvii. 4, 5.
i Gen. xxx. 33. xxxi. 37. 1 Sam. xii, 3, 4.
k 1 Kings ii. 32, 33. 44. Ps. vii. 16. Ec. x. 8.
l x. 28. xiv 32. Ex. xv. 9, 10. Job viii. 13, 14. xi. 20. Ps. cxlvi. 4. Ez. xxviii 9. Luke xii 19, 20.
m xxi. 18 Esth. vii. 19, 20. Is. xliii. 3, 4. Dan. vi. 23, 24.

n 1 Kings xiii. 18—22. xxii. 6. 20—24. Job xxxiv. 30. Ps iv. 12. 20, 21. Mat. vii 15. xv. 5—14. Acts xx 30 2 Cor. xi. 13—15. 2 Thes ii 8—10 1 Tim. iv 1—3. 2 Pet. ii. 1—3.
o ii 10—16. iv. 5. 6. vi. 23, 24. Mark xiii 14. 22, 23. Eph. iv. 13, 14 2 Pet. iii 16—18. 1 John ii. 21. 27
p xxviii. 12. 22. Esth. viii. 15, 16.
q Ex xv. 21. Judg. v. 31 Job xxvii. 23. Ps. lviii. 10, 11 Rev. xix 1—7.
r xxix 8 Gen. xli. 38—42 xlv. 8.
s 2 Sam. xx. 1. Esth iii. 8—15. ix. 1, &c Jam. iii. 6 ——t Judg. ix. 27—29. 38 Neh. iv. 2—4. Ps. cxxiii. 3, 4. Luke xvi. 14. xviii. 9. John vii 48—52. ——† Heb. *destitute of heart.* ——u x. 19. 1 Sam. x 27. 2 Kings xviii. 36. 1 Pet ii. 23.

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true religion, and will surely end in everlasting shame and contempt. But true wisdom is attended with humility, which prepares the heart for the exercise of every Christian temper, the practice of every duty, and the honourable performance of every useful undertaking.

V. 3. Strict integrity is commonly the best casuist. The upright Christian simply desires to know his duty, that he may do it. He is not bewildered by corrupt motives, or blinded by domineering passions. He has spiritual discernment, and a tender conscience. So that in ordinary cases his path is plain and obvious: and when he is at a loss, he depends on God, and looks to him for direction, and thus is preserved from fatal or distressing mistakes: but the crooked winding policy of ungodly men involves them in increasing wickedness, and terminates in their ruin. (*Note*, iii. 5, 6.)

V. 4. (*Note*, x. 2, 3.) The word rendered *wrath*, denotes the *most vehement indignation*. Seasons of temporal calamities are days of wrath; but the final judgment is emphatically "the day of wrath." (*Rom.* ii. 5.)

V. 5, 6. The single aim and dependence of believers delivers them from those snares in which the wicked are taken; for the corrupt intentions and inordinate desires of bad men, dispose them to catch at the baits, and thus to be caught in the traps which Satan lays for them. 'Remember it, I say; (for it cannot be too often inculcated;) 'that the virtue of unfeignedly upright men shall be their 'preservative. But the wicked shall be entangled and inevitably perish in their own naughty contrivances; their 'lies, breaches of promise, perjuries, and oppression.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 7. Solomon would not have made this observation, had not the belief of a future state been fixed in his mind and prevalent among his people: for as to this world's prosperity, the hopes of the righteous perish equally with those of the wicked. The last clause may be rendered, "yea, their strongest hope perisheth:" but the strongest hope of the righteous doth not then perish. (xiv. 32.)

V. 8. The righteous are often wonderfully prevented from going into perilous situations, and ungodly men go in their stead: this seems to be chance, but is in effect the secret disposal of God's providence. Indeed he frequently removes the righteous by death, before overwhelming judgments come upon wicked nations; and others succeed and bear the calamity.

V. 9. 'Wisdom instructs many how to evade those 'snares which the profane hypocrite, with counterfeit 'professions of friendship, lays to destroy his neighbours.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) It should, however, be further recollected, that hypocrites draw numbers aside from the religion of the Bible, and delude them into heresy and sin, to their destruction, by plausible professions and insinuations; by misrepresenting the nature of godliness, and slandering faithful teachers; by prejudicing men's minds against the humiliating truths and holy precepts of God's word, and persuading them that they may be saved in some easier and more pleasing way; or by giving them false impressions in these important concerns, from their conduct and conversation compared together. But the true Christian, by the knowledge of the sacred oracles, and his experience of their truth and excellency, is preserved from such fatal snares. (*Marg Ref.*)

V. 10, 11. 'Men of unbiassed virtue make a city flourish, by the blessing they procure it from heaven, by their 'prayers, by their prudent advice, their pious admonitions, 'and their constant study of the public good. But the 'wicked, by their blasphemies, their evil counsels, their 'pestilent maxims, their impious doctrines, whereby they 'corrupt men's manners, utterly subvert the good estate 'thereof.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) Men therefore should rejoice when the righteous are exalted to places of trust and power, and frequently great multitudes do: and they commonly triumph and exult, when notoriously unjust and oppressive counsellors or magistrates are cast down and punished for their crimes. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 12. A self-conceited man, being destitute of knowledge and experience, is disposed to express his contempt of others, and expose them to ridicule, when they make mistakes or fall into trouble; and thus he exposes his own folly. But a man of understanding knows how to make proper allowances: he is aware of the instability of human affairs; he does not judge of men's ability or integrity by their success; and if he sees any thing reprehensible, he is

13 * A tale-bearer [x] revealeth secrets: but [y] he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter.

14 Where [z] no counsel *is* the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors *there is* safety.

15 He [a] that is surety for a stranger shall † smart *for it:* and he that hateth ‡ suretyship is sure.

16 A [b] gracious woman retaineth honour: [c] and strong *men* retain riches.

17 The [d] merciful man doeth good to his own soul: [e] but *he that is* cruel troubleth his own flesh.

18 The [f] wicked worketh a deceitful work: [g] but to him that soweth righteousness *shall be* a sure reward.

19 As [h] righteousness *tendeth* to life: so [i] he that pursueth evil *pursueth* it to his own death.

20 They that are [k] of a froward heart *are* abomination to the LORD: but *such as are* [l] upright in *their* way *are* his delight.

21 *Though* [m] hand *join* in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished: but [n] the seed of the righteous shall be delivered.

22 *As* [o] a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, *so is* a fair woman, which ‖ is without discretion.

23 The [p] desire of the righteous *is* only good: *but* [q] the expectation of the wicked *is* wrath.

24 There is [r] that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and *there is* that withholdeth more than is meet, [s] but *it tendeth* to poverty.

* Heb. *He that walketh* being *a tale-bearer.* xx. 19. Lev. xix. 16. x xxv. 9. xxvi. 20—22. Neb. vi. 17—19.
y xiv. 5. Josh. ii. 14. 20. Jer. xxxviii. 27.
z xvi. 22. xxiv. 6. 1 Kings xii. 6—19. Is. xix. 11—14. Acts xv. 6, &c.
a vi. 1—5. xvii. 18. xx. 16. xxii. 26, 27.
† Heb. *be sore broken.*
‡ Heb. *those that strike* hands.
b xxxi. 30, 31. 1 Sam. xxv. 32, 33. 2 Sam. xx. 16—22. Esth ix. 25. Matt. xxvi. 13. Luke viii. 3. x. 42. xxi. 2—4. Acts ix. 39. xvi. 14, 15. Rom. xvi. 2—4. 6. 2 John 1.
c Luke xi. 21, 22.
d Ps. xli. 1—4. cxii. 4—9. Is. xxxii. 7, 8. lvii. 1. lviii. 7—12. Dan. iv. 27. Matt. v. 7. vi. 14, 15. xxv. 34—40. Luke vi. 38. 2 Cor. ix. 6—14. Phil. iv. 17.——e xv. 27. Job xx. 19—23. Ec. iv. 8. Jam ii. 13. v. 1—5
f i. 18. v. 22. Job xxvii. 13—23. Ec. x. 8. Is. lix 5—8. Eph. iv. 22——g xxii 8. Ps. cxxvi. 5, 6. Hos. x. 12, 13. Gal. vi. 8, 9. Jam iii. 18.——h 4. x. 16. xii. 28. xix. 23. Acts x. 35. 1 John iii. 7. 10.
i ii. 16—19 vii. 22. 23 viii 36. Rom ii. 8, 9.
k vi. 14. 16—19 viii 13. Ps. xviii 25, 26.
l ii 7. xv. 8. xvi 17. xxi. 29. Ps xi. 7. li 6. cxl. 13
m xvi 5. Ex xxiii 2
n xiii 22. Gen xvii 7 8. Ps xxxvii. 26. cxii 1, 2 Jer. xxxii. 39 Acts ii. 39.
o xxxi. 30 Ez xvi 15, &c Nah. iii 4—6 1 Pet iii 3, 4. 2 Pet ii 22.
‖ Heb. *departeth from.* vii. 10. ix. 13.
p Ps. x. 17 xxvii. 4. xxxvii. 4. xxxix 7, 8 cxii 5 10 Is. xxvi. 9. Jer. xvii. 16. Matt. v 6.
q 7. x. 28. Rom. ii. 8, 9. Heb. x. 27.
r 18 xix. 17 xxviii. 8. Deut. xv. 10. Ps cxii. 9. Ec. xi 1, 2. 6 Luke vi. 33. Acts. xi. 29, 30. 2 Cor. ix. 6—11.
s Hag. i 6 2—11 ii 16—19

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reluctant to speak of it, or mentions it with caution and candour.

V. 13. *A tale-bearer.* The word signifies *a trafficker in 'his neighbour's fame and honour.* As a merchant carries 'about his goods for the sake of gain, so he carries about 'words, or rumours; if perhaps he get advantage by them; 'but often from a certain levity and curiosity:' it may be added, and proud malevolence.—Scandalous intelligence, true or false, is the article in which the tale-bearer deals: he is a travelling pedlar, vending such wares: whatever therefore he discovers *of this kind,* he publishes, let who will be ruined or disgraced. But a man of fidelity conceals those secrets with which he is intrusted: and will not disclose what he knows, by any means, when it may injure another's peace or credit; except the honour of God, and the good of society require it.

V. 14. When affairs, either public or private, are conducted with rashness, and directed by resentment or other corrupt passions, nothing but ruin can be expected. But when many wise and experienced men are consulted, and their counsel is deliberately and impartially considered, before a determination is taken, there is a reasonable prospect of safety and success.—'They who have no government fall as leaves; but safety is found in much counsel.' (*Septuagint.*)—A ship without a pilot is the figure employed; and the *abundance of good counsel,* rather than the *number consulted,* is stated as the ground of safety.

V. 15. (*Note,* vi. 1—5.) *A Stranger,* 'whose conversa-'tion he knoweth not.' 'He doth not, without judgment 'and consideration of the circumstances, put himself in 'danger.'

V. 16. A pious and discreet woman is as careful of her chastity and reputation, as men are of their riches: and she will acquire and preserve the esteem and affection of her husband, and the respect of all around her, when old age has effaced her beauty; even as strong men keep possession of the wealth which they have once obtained.

V. 17. The compassionate, forgiving, and friendly man, in every sense best ensures his own comfort and happiness: whereas cruelty to others, in its very nature, as well as consequences, renders a man miserable; a torment to himself, as well as to his family and neighbours.

V. 18. They who attempt to deceive others deceive themselves; and are ruined by the very measures from which they expected the greatest advantage: but "patient "continuance in well-doing" has a happy event, far more uniformly than good husbandry and good seed secure a good crop of corn; for the *faithfulness* of God to his promises ensures the gracious reward.

V. 19. "*Thus* righteousness to life: and he that pur-"sueth evil to death." The connexion with the preceding verse seems to be preserved. It can hardly be supposed, that in all these contrasts between *life* and *death,* temporal prosperity or adversity is exclusively meant; when the words, in other parts of the Scripture, denote eternal happiness or misery.

V. 20. (*Notes,* vi. 12—19. *Marg. Ref.*)

V. 21. 'Though wicked men conspire, and join all their 'forces together; yet all their combination and power shall 'not free them from just punishment.' (*Bp. Hall.*) On the contrary, God is pleased to protect and bless the posterity of his faithful servants, in order to put honour on those who have honoured him.

V. 22. A costly ornament of gold in the snout of a swine, would be continually employed in raking in the filth and mire: thus beauty, in a woman void of prudence and virtue, is disgraced by subserving the basest and most ruinous crimes.

V. 23. The righteous only desire what is good in itself and beneficial to others; and this they may confidently hope to obtain: but the wicked, conscious of their selfish and vile motives and objects, can only expect the heavy wrath of God, and indeed are often "consumed with ter-"rors."

t xxviii. 27. Job xxix 13—18. xxxi 16—20. Is. xxxii 8. lvii. 7—11. Matt. v. 7. xxv. 34, 35.
* Heb. *soul of blessing.*
u Am. viii. 4—6.
x Job xxix. 13.

25 t The * liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.

26 He u that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him: but x blessing *shall be* upon the head of him that selleth *it.*

y xvii 11. Esth. vii. 10. Ps. vii. 15, 16. ix 15, 16. x 2. lvii. 6.
z v. 15 Deut. viii. 13—14 Job xxxi. 24, 25. Ps. lii. 7 lxii. 10. Mark x. 24. Luke xii 20. 1 Tim. vi. 17.

27 He that diligently seeketh good, procureth favour: but y he that seeketh mischief, it shall come unto him.

28 He z that trusteth in his riches shall fall: a but the righteous shall flourish as a branch.

a Ps. i. 3. lii. 8. xcii. 12—14. Is. lx. 21. Jer. xvii. 8.

29 He b that troubleth his own house shall c inherit the wind: and the fool *shall be* servant to the wise of heart.

b Gen. xxxiv. 30. Josh. vii. 24, 25. 1 Sam. xxv. 3. 17. 36. Hab. ii. 9, 10.
c Ec. v. 16. Hos. viii. 7.

30 The d fruit of the righteous *is* a tree of life; e and he that † winneth souls *is* wise.

d iii. 18. xv. 4.
e Dan. xii. 3. John iv. 36. 1 Cor. ix. 19—23. 1 Thes ii. 19. Jam. v. 20.
† Heb. *taketh.* Luke v. 9, 10.

31 Behold, f the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth: much more the wicked and the sinner.

f 2 Sam. vii. 14, 15. xii. 9—12. 1 Kings xiii. 24. Jer. xxv. 29. 1 Cor. xi. 30—32. 1 Pet. iv 17, 18.

V. 24, 25. "There are those, who, sowing their own, "make it more; and those who gather, and are impoverish-"ed." (*Sept.*) Liberality, exercised from right motives, is sowing seed, and God gives the increase generally even in temporal things: but he that withholds, when a just and right occasion offers, 'that is, the niggard,' seldom prospers much even in this world. For God metes to men in their own measure: and bad crops, bad debts, expensive sickness, and a variety of similar deductions, soon amount to more than liberal alms would have done; while if God see it best, large increase, flourishing trade, kind friends, and various other supplies or savings, soon reimburse the expenses of genuine charity.

V. 26. 'He that hoardeth corn in a time of scarcity, on 'purpose to raise the price, shall fall into the popular 'hatred, and have many a curse.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) In such distressing seasons, there are individuals who refuse to sell, nay, who hoard up provisions, in a cruel hope of enhancing the price still more: but they not only incur the public odium, (in which great multitudes of innocent characters are commonly involved;) but are very generally losers by their avarice, as well as exposed to the wrath of God. Whereas he, who sells at a moderate price, is commended by those who are relieved, and best consults his own benefit as well as the public good. The original word, however, at least equally includes those that give, or *break* their bread to the hungry; who certainly are more generally blessed and prayed for.

V. 27. The word rendered *diligently*, signifies *the morning.* He that from the time he rises, studies nothing but 'how to do good, shall obtain favour both of God and man: 'but he whose business is to do mischief, shall draw upon 'himself the evil he designs against others.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 28. 'He whose confidence in riches makes him 'unjust, and unmerciful, shall fall into decay: but they 'whose pious dependence on God makes them just and 'charitable, like a flourishing tree, shall thrive and pros-'per.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 29. Many, by their furious passions and contentiousness, or by their pride and prodigality, avarice and other vices, become a plague and vexation to their families: but they can expect nothing save disappointment and trouble for their own portion: and, in general, they who are destitute of prudence or industry, will soon become servants to those who are more diligent and discreet.

V. 30. The good example, pious discourse, wise instructions, fervent prayers, and zealous good works, of the righteous, become exceedingly beneficial to those around them: they are as fruit from the Tree of life; they promote the salvation of sinful men. And as immortal souls are valuable beyond all estimation, he who thus wins souls and allures them into the way of eternal life, is emphatically the *wise man:* he proposes to himself the noblest end, he uses the only proper means, he perseveres and is prospered by God himself.

V. 31. Even the righteous, when they offend, shall be recompensed on earth with sharp corrections: much more then will the wicked, who dare the vengeance of heaven, meet at length with the due reward of their impiety and iniquity.—It is remarkable that St. Peter has quoted the Septuagint translation of this verse. "If the righteous "scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner "appear?"

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—14.

The righteous God, who weigheth all our actions in an impartial balance, will never allow his subjects to defraud each other with impunity. It is, alas! very common for men to give short weight and measure, and in various ways to cheat and rob their neighbours; and numberless crimes of this kind here escape detection and punishment; but let it not be overlooked, that they "are an abomination to the "LORD;" and that they will be produced at the day of judgment, as decisive proofs of the hypocrisy of multitudes, who have been zealous, in their way, for evangelical doctrines. This is so far from a light matter, that it is a most grievous oppression; and thousands of the poor are sometimes deprived almost of necessary food to enrich a few fraudulent dealers. But let it be remembered, that "he "shall have judgment without mercy, who hath showed no "mercy:" on the other hand, he that is kept from growing rich, by conscientiously avoiding all exaction, and acting with strict honesty, may recollect that "a just weight is "the LORD's delight." Indeed, "the integrity of the "upright guides them" far from such fraudulent practices: while the perverseness of transgressors destroys them, for "the wicked shall fall by their own wickedness," and be ensnared by Satan, through their own covetousness and selfishness. But what are those wonderful advantages derived from riches, that men are universally so prone to seize the golden bait? In times of public calamities, they generally expose the possessor to peculiar danger; they will not profit in the day of wrath; and he who trusteth in them, will certainly be left without resource in the

CHAP. XII.

Maxims of wisdom distinguishing the righteous from the wicked, by their thoughts, words, and works; noting the different events of their conduct; and teaching discretion, both in temporal and spiritual things, 1—28.

hour of death and the day of judgment. How much more valuable then is that "righteousness which delivereth from "death!" How reasonable to "seek *first* the kingdom of "God and his righteousness!" Every one's conscience testifies, that "when a wicked man dieth, his expectation "perisheth," and all his hopes expire in eternal despair: and even the irreligious are constrained, when an eminently pious person is removed, to allow that he is delivered from trouble, and gone to a happier world. These salutary convictions might be more generally productive of abiding good; did not "the hypocrite with his mouth destroy his "neighbour;" persuading the unstable to rest satisfied with a name, a notion, a form of godliness, an easy worldly religion. May God grant to every reader that "knowledge, by which the just is delivered."—Indeed, the same conduct which best secures our own happiness, is most conducive to the good of others: and if a truly wise and pious man be advanced to authority, many will eventually have great cause for rejoicing: whereas the prosperity of the wicked is a public calamity, and their downfal a most desirable event. Even in private, nay, in obscure, situations, the righteous are both blessed and blessings: by their example and prayers, public calamities are often prevented or retarded; they are the light and the salt of the earth; the fatal tendency of wicked counsellors, and impious opinions industriously circulated, are counteracted by their means. And who can say, to what extent such mischiefs would proceed, were all the righteous expelled from any country? They who are void of understanding despise their neighbours; and go about as tale-bearers, slanderers, and betrayers of secrets, to the unspeakable mischief of society: but the wise and righteous hold their peace, if they cannot speak to good purpose: they scorn to betray such as confide in them, or even to injure them whose infirmities they witness, and they *pity* such as are not entitled to their esteem. True religion, however, should be carefully distinguished from self-righteousness, for "when "pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is "wisdom:" and also from all kinds of antinomian licentiousness. But, as in kingdoms "where no counsel is, "the people perish:" so it is in this respect: unless able and faithful ministers are raised up to instruct mankind, almost all run into one or the other of these fatal extremes. What need then is there for us to pray "the Lord of the "harvest to send forth labourers into his harvest!" for "in "the multitude of these counsellors is safety:" and what pains should all ministers take, that they may be wise and faithful counsellors in these important concerns. And how should all consult such as are approved for integrity and knowledge, especially in difficult cases, where their present comfort, and usefulness, and eternal salvation, are deeply concerned!

V. 15—31.

True religion is true wisdom: and while it prompts to all justice and mercy, it teaches men to avoid whatever is rash and pernicious. The wise and pious Christian will be very careful not to commit himself, by "becoming "surety for a stranger;" not only lest he should smart for it, but lest his family and friends should be involved with him, and his ability to relieve the poor should be diminished. Unless, therefore, the case be peculiar, he will stand aloof, knowing that "he who hateth suretyship "is sure." At the same time, he will endeavour in this world of sin and misery to do what he can towards the relief of distress and the communication of happiness. Indeed this is one of the most pleasant of human enjoyments. While the selfish and sordid, the envious and malicious, the sensual, profligate, and dissipated, are tortured, in various ways, by their own passions, and by the effects of them, and trouble their families by their misconduct, "the merciful man doeth good to his own soul." He doubles his own enjoyments, secures a blessing on his undertakings and possessions, has inward peace and confidence, and the satisfaction of knowing, that many are blessing him and praying for him. By diligently seeking the good of others, he procures favour from man, and obtains assurance of the Lord's merciful acceptance.—"He soweth righteousness, and his reward is sure." Even if he be poor, his "desire is only good," and his prayers and example will be useful. According to the degree in which God has prospered him, he waters others, and shall himself be abundantly watered: and experience proves, that they who on Christian principles abound in liberality, even beyond what rigid prudence would allow, so far from impoverishing their families, are generally prospered in a remarkable manner. On the other hand, they who profess to "know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," and learn, by hints at least, from various quarters, that they are thought to "withhold more than is meet," and plead that they cannot afford to be charitable, should consider whether God does not withhold his blessing from their temporal concerns on this very ground; and whether they ought not to *prove him* by adopting a more liberal plan. Indeed, almost in every thing, that is best for us which is best for our neighbours; in giving, lending, selling, or the contrary, covetousness commonly defeats its own ends; and he who grasps at unfair advantages, comes short of such as he might conscientiously and creditably have secured. This indeed is one effect of human selfishness, and exposes its folly: yet it still continues to influence the conduct of almost all men, and often in circumstances of such cruelty as are shocking to relate, and amidst general execration.—The common excuse indeed for covetousness is regard to a man's family: yet this should, in fact, teach a contrary lesson; for "the seed of the righteous shall be de-"livered" from those evils which overwhelm the posterity of the wicked. So that the most prosperous sinner, in every sense, "worketh a deceitful work:" he "pursueth "evil to his own death:" and as "they who are of a "froward heart are an abomination to the LORD;" it must certainly follow, that "though hand join in hand, the

WHOSO [a] loveth instruction loveth knowledge: but [b] he that hateth reproof *is* brutish.

2 A [c] good *man* obtaineth favour of the LORD: but [d] a man of wicked devices will he condemn.

3 A man [e] shall not be established by wickedness: but [f] the root of the righteous shall not be moved.

4 A [g] virtuous woman *is* a crown to her husband: but [h] she that maketh ashamed *is* [i] as rottenness in his bones.

5 The [k] thoughts of the righteous *are* right: *but* [l] the counsels of the wicked *are* deceit.

6 The [m] words of the wicked *are* to lie in wait for blood: but [n] the mouth of the upright shall deliver them.

a ii. 10, 11. viii. 17. 32. xviii 1. Ps. cxix 27 97—100 2 Thes. ii. 10.
b v. 12, 13 ix 7, 8. Ps xxxii. 9. xcii. 6. Is. i. 3.
c viii. 35. Ps. cxii. 5 Acts xi. 24. Rom. v. 7.
d i. 31 vi. 18. Ps. ix 15 Is xxxii. 5—7.
e x. 25 Job v 3—5. xv 29. xx. 5—9. xxvii. 16—18
f 12. Ps. xv. 5. cxxv. 1, 2. Eph. iii. 17. Col ii. 7.
g xiv. 1. xix. 13, 14. xxxi. 10 25. 1 Cor. xi. 11.
h xxi. 9. 19. xxvii. 15, 16.
i xiv. 30. Hab. iii. 16.
k xi. 23. xxiv. 9. Ps. cxix. 13. cxxxix 23. Is. lv. 7. Jer iv. 14.
l Ps. xii. 2, 3. xxxvi 2—4. xli. 6, 7 cxl 1—3. Matt ii. 3—8. 16. xxvi. 4. 1 Cor. iv. 5. 2 Cor. iv 2. Acts xxiii. 12 15.
m i 11—19. 2 Sam xvii 1—4 Is. lix. 7 Jer. v. 26. Mic. vii. 2, 3. xxv. 3 ——— n xiv. 1. Esth iv. 7—14. vii. 4—6.

"wicked shall not be unpunished." For if "the righteous "be recompensed in the earth," if God sharply corrects his children, in whom he delighteth, what will be the doom of his determined enemies? Alas! vast numbers throng the broad road to destruction; and keep one another in countenance and in spirits, notwithstanding the awful warnings given them in the sacred Scriptures: while the narrow way to life is still but little frequented. But they who have found the way of life should be unwearied in their endeavours to *win* over others, to accompany them in it. They should study to recommend the Gospel by a harmless and kind, as well as pious behaviour; and by a constant attention to all the proprieties of relative life: and they ought to use every means, consistent with their station in society, to make their connexions and neighbours wise unto salvation. As one soul is more valuable than the whole world; and as successful endeavours for the conversion of sinners is a peculiar evidence of true wisdom; so no disappointments or unmerited reproaches should prevent the Christian's persevering in his benevolent and zealous efforts; for if at length he prevails but in one instance, this will amply make amends for all his past discouragements. In this view how good is *the work* of the ministry! How honourable and useful the diligent and faithful minister! What encouragement is there for all, employed in this sacred service, to labour incessantly, even amidst contempt and hardship! Here especially "the fruit of the righteous is a tree of life:" and it will soon appear, that "they who win souls" are far wiser, than they who heap up wealth: for he who "trust-"eth in his riches shall fall; but the righteous shall flou-"rish as a branch." Indeed we cannot turn any way without seeing the excellency of the righteous: it may be useful to many readers to compare the prudent and pious matron, who retains her reputation, and grows in the affections of those related to her, and increases in respect, when external accomplishments are wearing out; who often wins to the paths of holiness the souls of her children, or servants, and perhaps even that of her husband; with the fair woman that wants discretion, whose beauty only serves to render her more conspicuously infamous and mischievous. Let the young then contemplate this contrast: and seek wisdom and grace, as the only enduring embellishments, and recommendations to constancy of affection and esteem. Finally, let us all desire and pursue those blessings, which our Surety purchased for sinners by his sufferings and death; and study to imbibe his instructions, to copy his example, and to keep his commandments.

NOTES.

CHAP. XII. V. 1. *Brutish.* (*Note, Ps.* xcii. 6.)

V. 2. *A good*, &c. That is, *a man of a kind, friendly, and merciful disposition.* Where this is genuine and habitual, and pervades a man's whole conduct, without allowed exceptions of persons or cases, it must be the effect of divine grace: and such a person will be proportionably favoured by the Lord, both with inward peace, and a blessing on his undertakings. But he who allows himself to devise wickedness, waiting for an opportunity of committing it; or who covers selfish and vicious designs under a profession of religion, friendship, or affection, will be condemned by the righteous Judge of the world.

V. 3. The prosperity, which is obtained by wickedness, cannot be permanently established by any sagacity or power: but the righteous resemble trees that strike deep root in the earth, and grow up gradually; the branches of which may be shaken by furious tempests, but they are secured by the root from material detriment. 'They are 'so grounded in the favour of God, that their root shall 'prosper continually.' (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 4. A prudent and faithful woman, who has strength of mind to govern her passions, and who diligently attends to domestic affairs, will prove a great comfort to her husband, and conduce more to his credit than the wearing of a crown could do. But a contentious, imperious, extravagant, improvident, or adulterous woman, is like a disease which wastes the bones. She will injure his character, ruin his circumstances, prevent the proper care of his family, lead him into temptation, drive him into bad company and excess, or perhaps shorten his days, by the inward anguish that she occasions.

V. 5. (*Note, Psalm* cxix. 113.) The righteous habitually devise, contrive, and purpose those things that are good and just; they desire to know and to do the will of God, and have no sinister or malicious intentions covered over with fair professions. But the wicked secretly contrive how to compass their interested purposes, and to avoid detection and disgrace on account of their concealed iniquities; they consult with themselves how to over-reach, and obtain undue advantages in bargains; and they would commit more fraud, injustice, or other wickedness, if they were not afraid of hurting their reputations, or of falling under the lash of human laws.

V. 6. Wicked men frequently consult together concerning the most effectual means of gratifying their avarice, ambition, revenge, lust, or enmity against the servants of God; and they are ready to lie in wait for blood, when they can do it with impunity. Hence unrighteous wars, massacres, assassinations, oppressions, persecutions, and murders of various kinds, have prevailed in the world, ever since Cain lay in wait for the blood of righteous Abel: and far

7 The [o] wicked are overthrown, and *are* not: but [p] the house of the righteous shall stand.

8 A man shall be [q] commended according to his wisdom: but [r] he that is * of a perverse heart shall be despised.

9 *He that is* [s] despised, and hath a servant, *is* better than he that honoureth himself, and lacketh bread.

10 A [t] a righteous *man* regardeth the life of his beast: [u] but the † tender mercies of the wicked *are* cruel.

11 He that [x] tilleth his land shall be satisfied with bread: but [y] he that fol-

o xi. 21 xiv. 11. xv. 25 Esth. ix. 6—10. 14. Job v. 3, 4. xl. 20. xviii. 15 — 20. xxvii. 18—23. Ps. xxxvii. 10. 35, 36. lxxiii. 18, 19.
p xiv. 1. xxiv. 3, 4. 2 Sam. vii. 16. 26. Matt. vii. 24—27.
q Gen. xli. 39. 1 Sam xvi. 18. xviii. 30 Ec. viii 1. Luke xii. 42—44. xvi. 8. 1 Cor iii. 10—15 iv. 5. 2 Cor. x. 18.
r i. 26 iii. 35 v. 23. 1 Sam xiii 13. xxv 17. Ps. cxxxii. 18. Dan. xii. 2. Mal. ii 3, 9. Mat xxvii. 4, 5 Acts xii. 23.
* Heb. *perverse of heart*
s xiii. 7. Luke xiv. 11.
t Gen. xxxiii 13, 14. Num. xxii. 28—32. Deut. xxv. 4. Jon iv. 11.
u Gen. xxxvii. 26—28. Judg. i. 7, 1 Sam. xi. 2. John xix. 31, 32. Jam. ii. 13—16.
† Or, *bowels* 1 John iii 17.
x xiii. 23. xiv. 4. 23. xxvii. 27. xxviii. 19. Gen iii. 19. Eph. iv. 28. 1 Thes. iv. 11, 12. 2 Thes. iii 8.
y i. 10, &c. iv. 14, 15. ix. 6. xiii. 20. Judg. ix. 4. Ps. xxvi. 4. Tit i. 10, 11.

loweth vain *persons is* [z] void of understanding.

12 The wicked [a] desireth the ‡ net of evil *men:* but [b] the root of the righteous yieldeth *fruit.*

13 The § wicked is [c] snared by the transgression of *his* lips: [d] but the just shall come out of trouble.

14 A man shall be [e] satisfied with good by the fruit of *his* mouth: [f] and the recompense of a man's hands shall be rendered unto him.

15 The [g] way of a fool *is* right in his own eyes: [h] but he that hearkeneth unto counsel *is* wise.

z vi. 32 vii 7. ix. 13. 16.
a i. 17—19. xxix. 5, 6 Ps. ix. 15. x. 9. Jer. v 26—28. Mic vii. 2 Hab. i. 15—17.
‡ Or *fortress*. x. 15.
b Ps i. 3 Is. xxvii 6, 7 xxxvii. 31 Jer. xvii 7, 8. Luke viii. 13 — 15. John xv 5 16. Rom. vi 22.
§ Heb *snare of the wicked is in the transgression*, &c
c vi 2. xv. 2. xviii 5, 6. 1 Kings ii. 2?. Ps. v. 6 lxiv. 8. Dan. vi 24. Matt xxvii 25.
d xi. 8. Gen. xlviii. 16. 2 Sam. iv. 9. Ps. xxxiv 19. Ec. vii 18. Rom. viii. 35 — 37.
2 Pet. ii. 9.
e xiii. 2. xviii 20, 21. Ps. lxiii. 5
f Is. iii 10, 11 Matt x 41, 42. xvi 27. 2 Thes. i. 6, 7. Heb. ii. 2 xi 26.
g iii. 7. xiv. 16. xvi. 2. 25. xxvi. 12. 16. xxviii. 11. xxx. 12. Luke xviii. 11. Gal. vi. 3.
h i. 5 ix. 9. xix. 20 Ec iv. 13. Jer. xxxviii. 15, &c.

more innocent blood would be shed, were the restraint of human laws removed. But the mouth of the upright, pleading their own cause with wisdom that cannot be gainsayed, often delivers them from false accusers and persecutors: and they frequently give such information, cautions, and counsels to those who are laid in wait for, as deliver them also from the danger.

V. 7. When ungodly men have attained the summit of prosperity: through the fickleness of their patrons, or of the multitude and envy of rivals; through the instability of human affairs, the failure of their projects, or the detection of their wickedness; or through their insolence, cruelty, and rashness, they are often overthrown at once, their families and party are ruined with them, and they are gone and neglected in a very short time. (*Notes*, &c. *Esth.* vi. vii.) But the moderate prosperity of the righteous stands on a firmer basis, and, by the blessing of God, is often continued to their descendants.

V. 8. Whatever transient reputation a man may acquire for his external or superficial accomplishments, or even for abilities, learning, and achievements; if he be of a perverse disposition, and go on in the crooked ways of iniquity and impiety, he will at length sink into contempt. But the man of true wisdom and piety, though for a time neglected, will at length assuredly be approved, commended, and had in honour. The first clause is literally, "According to "the mouth of his wisdom a man shall be praised:" and the capacity of giving wise counsel, in an agreeable and impressive manner, seems especially intended.

V. 9. Many persons, who have been brought up in the higher ranks of life, but have not proportionable wealth, are too proud to employ themselves in inferior occupations: and thus they become miserably poor, want things necessary for themselves and families, spunge upon their friends, and even defraud their creditors, to maintain a vain appearance of dignity. But he who is despised for engaging in a mean employment and wearing a homely appearance: but by so doing can have the comforts of life without dependence or disingenuous arts, is more happy, wise, useful, and respectable, than "he that honoureth himself and lacketh bread." The old translation, (with which many versions agree,) gives a different sense to this proverb. "He that is despised, and 'is *his own servant*, is better than he that boasteth him-'self and wanteth bread." The poor man, who is despised, yet lives by his honest labour, is more valuable and happy than the proud boaster.

V. 10. A pious man is always compassionate, and would deem it cruelty to put even an animal to needless pain, or to abuse those useful creatures, which conduce so much to the comfort of life. But wicked men are hard-hearted and cruel even in their tenderest mercies. Thus they deem themselves very merciful, when their oppressions are not quite so cruel as they might be: and they often affect to speak of the poor and distressed, as being very well used, and in a very desirable situation; when they themselves could not endure such treatment for a single day. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'It is very laudable to exercise kindness to-'wards brute creatures, that we keep ourselves the more re-'mote from all manner of cruelty towards men.' (*Grotius.*)

V. 12. When the ungodly see others prosper by iniquity, they straightway wish that they could act with similar ingenuity, or obtain the same opportunities: they would be glad of the advantages of sin, forgetting or despising its guilt and after-reckoning; and they are not so great plunderers or cheats as some are, merely because they cannot or dare not. But the root of divine grace, in the heart of the righteous, produceth good desires and purposes, and yieldeth more comfort to themselves, besides doing much good to others. 'The wicked man affects those methods of 'fraudulent invention, which he sees some fraudulent op-'pressors use to their advantage.' (*Bp. Hall.*)

V. 13. Perjuries, treasonable words, defamations, and lies, often involve wicked men, however subtle, in most perplexing troubles, and they are snared by the transgression of their own lips; while a frank and open conduct eventually tends to credit and comfort.

V. 14. When a man speaks that which is useful to others, he receives satisfaction from it himself: by counselling and instructing others, he edifies himself; and God will graciously recompense the good words and works of his servants, as well as punish the wicked according to their deserts.

V. 15. A fool is so conceited and headstrong, that he is incapable of taking warning or counsel; and he is determined

16 A [i] fool's wrath is * presently known: [k] but a prudent *man* covereth shame.

17 *He* [l] *that* speaketh truth sheweth forth righteousness: [m] but a false witness deceit.

18 There is [n] that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: [o] but the tongue of the wise *is* health.

19 The [p] lip of truth shall be established for ever: [q] but a lying tongue *is* but for a moment.

20 [r] Deceit *is* in the heart of them that imagine evil: [s] but to the counsellors of peace *is* joy.

21 There shall [t] no evil happen to the just: but the wicked shall be [u] filled with mischief.

22 [x] Lying lips *are* abomination to the LORD: [y] but they that deal truly *are* his delight.

23 [z] A prudent man concealeth knowledge: [a] but the heart of fools proclaimeth foolishness.

24 The [b] hand of the diligent shall bear rule: [c] but the † slothful shall be under tribute.

25 [d] Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: [e] but a good word maketh it glad.

26 The [f] righteous *is* more ‡ excellent than his neighbour: [g] but the way of the wicked seduceth them.

27 The [h] slothful *man* roasteth not that which he took in hunting: [i] but the substance of a diligent man *is* precious.

i xxv. 28 xxix. 11. 1 Sam. xx. 30—34. 1 Kings xix. 1, 2.
* Heb. *in that day.*
k x. 12 xvi. 22 xxii. 9. xix. 11. Jam. i 19
l xiv. 5 25. 1 Sam xxii. 14, 15.
m vi. 19 xix. 5 28. xxi 28. xxiv. 28. Matt. xv. 19. xxvi. 59. Acts vi. 13. 1 Pet. iii. 16.
n xxv. 18. Ps. lii. 2 lvii 4 lix. 7. lxiv. 3. Jam. iii. 6—8
o x. 20 21. xiii. 17. xv. 7. xvi. 24. Dan xi 33 Rev. xxii. 2.
p Zech i. 4—6. Mat. xxiv. 35.
q xix. 9. Job xx. 5 Ps lii. 5. Acts v. 3—10.
r 12 xxvi 24—26. Jer. xvii. 16. Mark vii. 21, 22. xii. 14—17. Rom. i. 29.
s Is ix. 6, 7 Zech. vi 13. Matt. v. 9. Heb xii. 14. 1 Pet. iii 8—13.——t Rom. viii 28. 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. 2 Cor. iv. 17.
u i. 31. xiv. 14 Jer. xiii. 12—14. Hab. ii. 16. Rev. xviii. 6.

x vi 16, 17. Ps. v. 6. 15. ix. 15 Ez. xiii 19. 22 Rev. xxi. 8. xxii. 15.
y xi. 1. 20. xv. 8. Jer. ix. 24.
z x. 19 xi. 13. xiii 16
a xv. 2 Ec x. 3. 12—14.
b x. 4 xiii. 4 xvii. 2. xxii. 29. 1 Kings xi. 28. xii. 20.
c 27 xix. 15. xxi. 25, 26. xxii. 13. xxiv. 30—34. xxvi. 13—16.
† Or, *deceitful.*
d xiv. 10. xv. 13. 15. xvii. 22. xviii 14 Neh. ii. 1, 2. Ps xxxviii. 6. xlii 11. Mark xiv. 33, 34.
e 18 xv 23. xvi. 24. xxv. 11. xxvii. 9. Is. 1. 4. Zech. i. 13. 2 Cor. ii. 4—7.
f xvii 27 Ps xvi 3. Matt v. 46—48 Luke vi. 32—36. 1 Pet. ii. 18—21
‡ Or. *abundant.*
g Ps. lxxxi. 12, 13. Jam i. 13, 14. 2 Pet ii. 18—22. 1 John ii 26. Rev. xii. 9. xiii. 14 ——h xiii. 4 xxiii. 21 xxvi. 15.——i xv. 16. xvi 8. Ps. xxxvii. 16.

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to vindicate all he does, and persist in all his rash enterprises, as if he were infallible. But a wise man distrusts his own judgment and heart; he is afraid of being misled, and desires to be convinced of his errors and misconduct; and so he hearkens to instruction, that he may grow wiser and wiser.

V. 16. A foolish man is soon made angry, and is hasty in expressing his resentment, without regard to company or circumstances; and thus he is ever embroiled in quarrels, and running into mischief. But a prudent man carefully stifles his resentment, and avoids such words and actions as would afterwards cover him with shame; or he covers the shameful behaviour of such as abuse him, and lets it pass unnoticed. The old translation is more literal; 'a fool in a day shall be known by his anger,' &c. The word rendered prudent, commonly means *cunning:* and so may point out the shrewd crafty man, who seems to take no notice of affronts, because he designs hereafter either to revenge them, or to turn them in some way to his own advantage.

V. 17. He who, in a court of justice, unreservedly testifies to the whole truth, subserves the cause of equity, and assists the magistrate in decreeing righteous judgment: but false witnesses impose on him, and may thus lead him unintentionally to decide in favour of the wicked. The maxim holds equally good, in many other cases, when a full and fair declaration of the truth effectually subserves the cause of justice and piety.

V. 18, 19. False accusations and perjuries may murder like a sword, or rob a man of his estate: and calumnies may wound his credit, or excite suspicions and contentions destructive of domestic comfort, and of the peace of his mind. But the tongue of the wise is employed in composing differences, in vindicating aspersed characters, in comforting the distressed, and in promoting justice, piety, and charity. And he who thus makes truth his standard, and equity and peace his aim, will gradually establish his own character, and will not have cause to fear any investigation: but lies and deceit only serve a present purpose, expose a man to speedy detection, and render him suspected and distrusted in every thing.

V. 20. They who imagine evil dare not openly avow their designs; so that malice and mischief are always attended with dissimulation, and are productive of terrors and perplexities: but such as consult the peace and happiness of others, have joy and serenity in their own minds.

V. 21. This verse may be rendered, "The just shall "not be given up to any iniquity; but the wicked are full "of mischief." The Septuagint renders the last clause 'nothing iniquitous shall please.'

V. 22. (*Note*, vi. 16—19.)

V. 23. Men of prudence and discretion make no ostentation of their knowledge; but reserve it for suitable occasions, and show it in their conduct: but ignorant and frivolous persons are generally vain-glorious, and by attempting to display their wit or learning, they commonly proclaim their own emptiness and folly.

V. 24. Diligence has a natural tendency to advance men in society, and will generally conduct them to eminence in their occupations, or to influence or authority in the community: but the slothful are never likely to be any thing but dependents or slaves. The word rendered *slothful*, may mean *deceitful*; and indeed sloth is commonly an inlet to dishonesty, which exposes a man to penalties, confinement, and severe treatment. (*Note*, x. 4.)

V. 25. Distress of conscience, sharp afflictions, and discouraging fears, deject the heart, and unfit a man for his duty: but a kind and encouraging word may often give a favourable turn to his thoughts, inspire him with hope, and animate him to activity; this maxim points out an easy and cheap way of being useful.

V. 26. Though wicked men cannot but see that the righteous are more excellent than their neighbours, and in general more abound in comforts: yet the pleasures and gains of their iniquities *seduce* their minds, and cause them to continue in their disgraceful, perilous, and wretched courses.

V. 27. The slothful (or deceitful) man makes no good

k viii. 35. ix. 11. x. 16. xi. 19. Ez. xviii. 9 20—24. Rom. v. 21. vi. 18. 23. Tit. ii. 11. 12. 1 John ii. 29. iii. 7. 3 John 11.

28 k In the way of righteousness *is* life; and in the path-way *thereof there is* no death.

use of the advantages that Providence throws in his way, and has no comfort of them: if at any time he make a vigorous exertion, or seem successful, he loses all the benefit for want of perseverance, and so he brings nothing to perfection. But the possessions of a diligent man are valuable to himself, and to others also.

V. 28. What is the meaning of this verse, if Solomon confined his views, as some would persuade us, to this mortal life and dying world?

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14.

The degree of our love to any object may fairly be measured by our value for the means of obtaining it. He who loves science loves study, and prizes information. He who chooses wisdom and grace, values the word and ordinances of God; and is thankful even for reproofs, which conduce to his improvement. On the other hand, the man whose main object it is to gratify his appetites and passions, cannot but despise instruction and hate reproof: and consequently he chooses to reside in places and frequent companies, where he is least likely to meet with any check in his evil courses. The Lord seeth, and will at length discover to the whole world, the secret thoughts of every heart. Then the contrivances, speculations, and desires of those who devise evil, will be condemned, though they have never been reduced to practice: and the benevolent intentions, the pious meditations, the plans and counsels of the righteous to do good, though here frustrated, will be made known and graciously rewarded. And when the concealed part of every character shall be made public and manifest; the difference between the righteous and the wicked will appear so evident and immense, that none shall have one word to speak against the sentence awarded to each of them. Let us for a moment realize the idea of every word that men have spoken, during their whole lives, being called over at the day of judgment. What a discovery will thus be made of men's hearts! Not to dwell on the vain and corrupt communication which proceeds out of the mouths of the ungodly: all the secret cabals of those who lie in wait for blood, all the perjuries and calumnies by which men accomplish their cruel or unrighteous purposes; all their lies, flatteries, reproaches, proud boastings, and blasphemies; when made known before the assembled world, will form such a discovery as must overwhelm the wicked with unutterable confusion. On the other hand, the pious discourse and wise counsels of the righteous, by which they rescued many from snares and dangers, or endeavoured to be useful to their souls; and every good and profitable word which they have spoken, will be made known to their joy, and contribute to evince their real character. Thus they shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of their lips, as well as recompensed according to the work of their hands. Even those men of the world, who are the wisest in their generation, are unable to establish themselves by their wickedness: and frequently they and their families fail and perish, as rapidly as they at first prospered. But the righteous, being rooted in the favour of God, and secured by his promises, shall never be moved: they are fruitful and useful, and the generation of the upright shall be blessed. Many of them indeed are poor in this world, and earn their bread by hard labour: but having food and raiment, they are content and satisfied. They think no honest labour a disgrace: and while the proud and slothful, and such as follow after vain persons, affect the appearance of affluence, honour themselves and despise the industrious, often sink into deep distress; the very persons they slight, possess very many comforts, and also find something to spare to relieve the indigent. Again, who are they that enjoy most comfort, and prove the greatest blessings, in domestic life? Mark the difference between the pious and prudent woman, who is a crown to her husband; and her that maketh ashamed, and is as rottenness in his bones! Can any one seriously consider this subject, and endure the thought of ever becoming the disgrace, misery, and ruin, of the nearest relation on earth? Yet vice and folly commonly produce this dreadful consequence: and there is no security against it; or reasonable hope of becoming creditable, comfortable, and useful, in any relation of life, without piety and heavenly wisdom. How then are they deluded, who in forming the conjugal union, prefer beauty, wit, or external accomplishments, to substantial excellency of character! Indeed the real and consistent Christian not only endeavours to make his relations, domestics, and neighbours comfortable; but he sympathizes in the sufferings of the very animals; is incapable of cruelty to them, will not allow others to abuse them, and takes pleasure in seeing them enjoy that kind of happiness of which they are capable. Surely then he will never desire the net of evil men: but rather at any time renounce his own indulgence and interest, than add to the miseries of human beings, in any part of the globe. But the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel. They lavish outward favours, while they would seduce the objects of their selfish affection to those crimes which are most ruinous in this world and the next. They are prodigal to the worthless and harsh to the industrious. They exact by merciless oppression from one set of men, what they bestow on another, with ostentatious liberality. They weep over the tragic tale of imaginary wo, and are callous to real misery. They affect the praise of philanthropy, by a specious conduct abroad; while their harsh spirit and furious passions, render their own families a scene of confusion and misery! It is indeed most wonderful, how generally these *truths*, or rather *facts*, are overlooked or forgotten; and how little effect they produce on the judgment and conduct even of professed Christians! But at length "a man shall certainly be commended according to his "wisdom," "the righteous shall come out of trouble," "and he that is of a perverse spirit shall be despised."

V. 15—28.

In proportion as men are foolish, they commonly are self-sufficient. "Their way," however rash and absurd in itself, "is right in their own eyes:" and instead of growing wiser by hearkening to prudent counsel, they consider every intimation that they are mistaken as an almost unpar-

CHAP. XIII.

The advantages of prudence, diligence, piety, and sincerity; and the mischiefs resulting from the opposite vices, 1—25.

A [a] WISE son *heareth* his father's instruction: [b] but a scorner heareth not rebuke.

2 A man shall [c] eat good by the fruit of *his* mouth: but [d] the soul of the transgressor *shall eat* violence.

3 He [e] that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: *but* he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction.

4 The soul of the sluggard [f] desireth, and *hath* nothing: [g] but the soul of the diligent shall be [h] made fat.

5 A [i] righteous *man* hateth lying: but a wicked *man* [k] is loathsome, [l] and cometh to shame.

a iv. 1—14. 20—22. x. 1. xv. 5. 20
b ix. 7, 8. xiv. 6 1 Sam ii 25.
c xii. 14. xviii. 20.
d i. 11—13. 18. 31. iv. 17. x 11. Ps cxl. 11. Hab. ii. 8. 17. Rev. xvi. 6.
e x. 19. xii. 13. xxi. 23. Ps. xxxix. 1. Matt. xii. 36, 37. Jam. i. 26. iii. 3, &c.
f x. 4. xii. 11. 24. xxvi. 13. Num. xxiii. 10
g i. 2—9. viii. 34. John vi. 27. Heb. vi. 11. 2 Pet. i. 5—11
h xi. 25. xxviii. 25. Ps. xciii. 14. Is lviii. 11.
i vi. 17. xxx. 8. Ps cxix. 163. Eph. iv. 25. Col. iii. 9.——k Ez. vi. 9. xx.——l iii. 35. Dan. xii. 2. 43. xxxvi. 31. Zech. xi. 8. Rev. xxi. 8.

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donable affront. The first appearance of this spirit should be carefully checked, in young people especially; for when it has got the ascendency, there is little hope of repressing it. (*Note*, ix. 7, 8.) When persons of this character take offence, their wrath is presently known, by passionate language, upbraidings, and slanders, if not by furious endeavours to revenge themselves. They "speak like the piercings of a sword;" not caring whose character, interest, or comfort they wound or destroy: but in thus pouring out of the abundance of their hearts, they proclaim their own foolishness, and will soon be filled with mischief. "Lying lips are abomination to the LORD: but "they that deal truly are his delight." Among the several ways in which this maxim may be improved to practical purposes it peculiarly applies to the ministers of religion. "He, who in this respect speaketh truth showeth forth righteousness; but a false witness deceit." And that minister, who "shuns not to declare the whole counsel of God," and "keeps back nothing profitable;" who never wounds, but in order to heal; who injures no man's credit or peace, as with the piercings of the sword of an enemy; but often lays open the conscience with the faithful wounds of a friendly surgeon, to prepare the way for heavenly consolations: this man, however despised and hated at present, will at length "receive the crown and glory which fadeth not away." In this case especially, "the lip of truth shall be established for ever: but the lying tongue is but for a moment." Even the silence of a pious man, while he represses resentment, meekly endures provocation, hides the shame that folly would expose; conceals the knowledge which ostentation would display, or frowns silent disapprobation where a mere direct reproof would be improper, is an evidence of wisdom, and full of instruction. In short, in every thing, "the righteous is more excellent than his neighbour," and far more happy also. While "deceit in the heart of those who imagine evil" often fills them with alarm and anguish, to the counsellors of peace is joy; and when the good words or kind actions which they speak make glad the hearts of the afflicted or desponding, they share the comfort which they communicate. The diligence, modesty, prudence, and integrity, which true religion teaches, procure men influence and respect, frequently among such as are themselves irreligious; and so advance them to desirable and useful situations: while sloth, prodigality, and duplicity, tend directly to abject dependence, deep distress, or general contempt, even in this world. These things indeed are undeniable; and many ungodly men have transient convictions, nay, sometimes an abiding opinion, that their pious neighbours or relations are and will be happier than themselves: but they are seduced by evil companions and indulged passions, and they remain the slaves of sin. Their temporary efforts at reformation, with all their knowledge and advantages, prove unavailing, for want of resolution and perseverance: they either adopt false principles, and so are hardened in presumption; or, being baffled in their feeble and heartless endeavours, they lie down in despondence. O then, let every reader hear the Saviour's call, "and strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, "I say unto you, will seek to enter in and not be able." But happy indeed are they who are walking in the way of "righteousness;" for in it is life, and in "the path-way "thereof there is no death." Generally, when the wicked take a hasty resolution, or make a vigorous effort, they lose all the benefit for want of persevering diligence and dependence on the Lord: so that whilst the diligent acquire dominion over their passions, the slothful is under tribute to his lusts. Every advantage is precious to the former, but useless or ruinous to the latter; and he is always either buoyed up in presumption, or sunk down into despondency. In short, all the knowledge and convictions of the ungodly settle in something short of a holy life: but the prudent Christian makes no ostentation of his knowledge, except in his exemplary conduct and useful conversation, and in encouraging the dejected to hope in and wait upon the Lord.

NOTES.

CHAP. XIII. V. 1. A young man of prudence and good sense will pay attention to his father's good *instruction*, and not require reproofs or corrections to induce his obedience: on the contrary, a scorner will not hear, obey, or be influenced by even the severest rebukes.

V. 2. "A man shall eat good things by the fruit of "his mouth; but the soul of the trespassers shall suffer "violence." (*Old Translation.*) 'If he use his tongue to 'the glory of God and the good of his neighbour, God 'shall bless him.'

V. 3. 'He that looks carefully to his tongue, takes a 'safe course for preserving his life, which is oft endangered by much and wild talking.' (*Bp. Hall.*)

V. 4. *Sluggard, &c.* 'He ever desireth, but taketh 'no pains to get any thing.' This applies both to things temporal and things eternal. God gives every thing; but in a way of diligence. He works in us to will and do; but, in all things, his order has connected industry and prosperity, sloth and misery.

6 [m] Righteousness keepeth *him that is* upright in the way: but [n] wickedness overthroweth * the sinner.

7 There [o] is that maketh himself rich, yet *hath* nothing: *there is* [p] that maketh himself poor, yet *hath* great riches.

8 The [q] ransom of a man's life *are* his riches: but [r] the poor heareth not rebuke.

9 The [s] light of the righteous rejoiceth: but [t] the † lamp of the wicked shall be put out.

10 [u] Only by pride cometh contention: but [x] with the well advised *is* wisdom.

11 [y] Wealth *gotten* by vanity shall be diminished: but [z] he that gathereth ‡ by labour shall increase.

12 [a] Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but [b] *when* the desire cometh, *it is* [c] a tree of life.

13 Whoso [d] despiseth the word shall be destroyed: but [e] he that feareth the commandment [f] shall § be rewarded.

14 The [g] law of the wise *is* a fountain of life, [h] to depart from the snares of death.

m xi. 3. 5, 6. Ps. xv 2. xxv. 21. xxvi. 1.
n v. 22. xxi. 12. cxl. 11. 2 Chr. xxviii. 23.
* Heb. *sin.*
o xiii. 9. Luke xviii. 11—14. 1 Cor. iv. 8. 2 Pet. ii. 19. Rev. iii. 17.
p 1 Cor iv. 10, 11. 2 Cor. iv. 7. Rev. ii. 9.
q vi. 35. Ex. xxi. 30. Job ii. 4. Ps. xlix. 6—10 Jer. xli. 8. Matt xvi. 26. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.
r 2 Kings xxiv. 14. xxv. 12. Jer. xxxix. 10. Zeph. iii 12.
s iv 18. 1 Kings xi. 36. Ps. xcvii. 11. cxii. 4.——t xx. 20. xxiv. 20 Job xviii. 5, 6. xxi. 17. Is. l. 10, 11. Matt. xxii. 13 xxv. 8.——† Or, *Candle.*——u xxi. 24 Judg. xii 1—6. 1 Kings xii 10, 11. 16. 2 Kings xiv. 10. Luke xxii. 24. 1 Tim. vi. 4. Jam. iii. 14—16 iv. 1. 5, 6. 8. John 9, 10.
x xii. 15, 16. xvii. 14. xix 20. xx. 18. xxv 8. Judg. viii. 1—3. Luke xiv. 28—32. Acts vi. 1—5.
y x. 2. xx. 21. xxviii. 8 Job xv. 28, 29. xx. 15. 19—22 xxvii. 16, 17. Ec. v. 14. Jer. xvii. 11. Hab. ii. 6, 7. Jam. v. 1—5
z 22, 23. xxii. 29. xxvii. 23—27. Ps cxxviii. 2
‡ Heb. *with the hand.*
a Ps. xlii. 1—3. lxix. 3. cxix. 81—83. cxliii. 7. Cant. v. 8. Lam. iv. 17.
b 19. Gen. xxi. 6, 7 xlvi. 30.
1 Sam. i. 26—28. Ps. xvii. 15 xl. 2 Luke ii. 29, 30. John xvi. 22 ——c iii. 18 xi. 30. Rev. xxii 2.——d i. 25. 30, 31. 2 Sam xii. 9. 10. 2 Chr xxxvi. 16. Jer. xliii. 2. xliv. 16, 17. Ez. xx 13 16. 24. Heb. x. 28, 29.——e Ezra x. 3. Is. lxvi. 2 Mal iii. 16——f Ps. 11. Matt. v 12. 2 John 8.——§ Heb. *be in peace.* Ps. cxix. 165.——g ix. 11. x. 11. xiv. 27. xvi. 22.——h xv 24 xvi. 6. 17. Ps. xviii. 5. cxvi. 3.

V. 5. A pious man abhors deceit and lies, as detestable in themselves; and he has no occasion for such base *means;* because he has no bad *ends* to accomplish: but the wicked endeavour to impose on their neighbours, to conceal their crimes, and to gratify their passions by deceit; till at length they render themselves generally contemptible and odious.

V. 6. (*Notes*, xi. 3. 5, 6.) 'Wicked contrivances are 'overthrown by their own iniquity.' (*Marg.*) (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 7. Many persons make a show of wealth, and live at a great expense, and engage in large concerns, who are indeed possessed of little or no property; and thus they become public cheats. Others, who are very rich, pretend to be, and live as if they were, poor; and thus they bereave themselves and their families of good, and refuse to improve the talents committed to their stewardship. Pharisees and hypocrites also make a show of that piety which they have not, and so impose on others and deceive themselves; whilst some true Christians are always discouraging themselves by groundless fears: and in many instances men impose on multitudes, by pretending to skill which they have not; whereas others through excessive or affected modesty obstruct their own usefulness.

V. 8. Riches often tempt men to rob, or to raise prosecutions against, those who possess them: and then, if they can ransom their lives by parting with their treasures, they think themselves well off. But the poor man is exempt from such rebukes, perils, and terrors; for no one thinks it worth while to lodge an accusation against him, for such purposes: and he commonly escapes best in public calamities. Some indeed take the sentence quite otherwise. 'A rich man when he fears any evil from his 'enemies, can divert it by a sum of money; but a poor 'man when he is threatened, dare not stay, but runs 'away.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) 'The poor cannot bear the 'reproach: for by his poverty he is not able to escape the 'threatenings which the cruel oppressors use against him.' —The latter clause is taken in an unfavourable sense in the first verse: but in other respects the first interpretation seems best grounded.

V. 9. 'The happiness of the just is great and illustri-'ous, like the light of the sun; and increases still to their 'endless joy, &c.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 10. "Only by pride will *a man* engage in contention," &c. The various quarrels which disquiet the world; whether in families, churches, or communities, or between nations, with all the fatal consequences of them, are in general excited and perpetuated by pride. From that odious principle arise resentment, revenge, envy, and ambition: and though other vicious dispositions excite contentions; yet disputes would more easily be prevented or terminated, if pride did not intervene. Some point of honour must be maintained, some affront must be resented, some rival must be crushed or eclipsed, some renowned character emulated, or some superior equalled and surpassed. But they who hear prudent counsel, will show their wisdom, by avoiding quarrels and disputes. 'They 'whose minds are infected with a vain opinion of them-'selves, either cannot see the truth;——or if they do, 'they will not acknowledge it, for fear they should yield 'and confess themselves overcome.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 11. Wealth acquired by dishonest practices, such as gaming, cheating, oppression, or subserving the vices and follies of men, is attended with a secret curse which speedily wastes it: and this all sagacious observers of mankind have remarked. But that which is gotten by honest labour, is attended by a blessing, and is likely to endure and increase.

V. 12. When any thing earnestly desired, is long delayed, the mind is fatigued with waiting, the soul becomes feeble and diseased, and often the body shares the malady: but when the desired object is attained, it gives peculiar delight. The expression, "A tree of life," seems to imply that spiritual blessings are especially meant; which are never earnestly sought in vain, and never disappoint the expectation of those who long and wait for them.

V. 13. 'Meaning the word of God, whereby he is 'admonished of his duty.' 'He who despises and hates divine truth, shall be given up to a strong delusion; but *peace* shall be conferred on him that reverences the command of God.'

V. 14. The rule by which the wise man regulates his own conduct, and the injunctions that he prescribes to others, are "*his laws.*" In both senses they are a fountain yielding life and happiness, and a guide directing men at a distance from the snares of death.

15 [i] Good understanding giveth favour: [k] but the way of transgressors *is* hard.

16 Every [l] prudent *man* dealeth with knowledge: but [m] a fool * layeth open *his* folly.

17 A [n] wicked messenger falleth into mischief: [o] but † a faithful ambassador *is* health.

18 [p] Poverty and shame *shall be to* him that refuseth instruction: but [q] he that regardeth reproof shall be honoured.

19 [r] The desire accomplished is sweet to the soul: but [s] *it is* abomination to fools to [t] depart from evil.

i iii. 4 xiv. 35. 1 Sam xviii. 14—16 Luke ii. 52. Acts vii 10. k iv. 19 xv. 10. Ps. xcv. 9—11. Jer. ii. 19. Rom. vi. 21. l xii 22, 23. xv. 2. xxi 24. Ps. cxii. 5 Is lii. 13. Matt. x. 16. Rom. xvi. 19 1 Cor xiv. 20. Eph v. 17. m xii 16 1 Sam. xxv. 10, 11. 17. 25 Ec. x. 3. * Heb *spreadeth.* n x 26 xxvi. 6. Jer xxiii. 13—16. 28 Ez. iii. 18. xxxiii. 7, 8. 2 Cor ii. 17 o xxv 13 1 Cor. iv 2 2 Cor. v. 20 1 Tim i 12. 2 Tim ii 2 † Heb *an ambassador of a faithfulness* ——p 13. v 9—14. xii. 1. xv 5 31, 32 xix 16. Jer. v. 3. 9 Heb. xii. 25——q ix. 9. xxv. 12 cxli. 5 ——r 12 1 Kings i 48 Ps xxi. 1. 2 Cant iii. 4. 2 Tim iv. 7, 8 Rev. vii. 14 17 ——s xxix 27.——t iii. 7 xvi. 6. 17. Job xxviii. 28 Ps. xxxiv. 14. xxxvii. 27 2 Tim ii 19.

20 He [u] that walketh with wise *men* shall be wise: [x] but a companion of fools shall be ‡ destroyed.

21 Evil [y] pursueth sinners: but to the [z] righteous good shall be repayed.

22 A good *man* [a] leaveth an inheritance to his children's children: and [b] the wealth of the sinner *is* laid up for the just.

23 Much [c] food *is in* the tillage of the poor: but there is *that is* [d] destroyed for want of judgment.

24 He that [e] spareth his rod [f] hateth his son: but [g] he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.

u ii. 20 Ps. cxix. 63. Cant. i. 7, 8. Mal iii 16 Acts ii. 42 Heb x. 24. x i. 11—19 ii. 12—19. vii. 22, 23. 27. ix. 6. Gen. xiii. 12, 13. xiv. 12. 1 Kings xii. 8 10. xxii. 4. 32. 2 Chr. xix. 2. 1 Cor. xv. 33, 34 2 Cor. vi. 14.—18. Rev. xviii. 4 ‡ Heb. *broken.* y Gen iv. 7. Num. xxxii 23. Ps. cxl 11 Acts xxviii. 4. z Is. iii. 10. 11. Rom. ii. 7—10. a Gen. xvii 7, 8. Ps. xxv 12, 13. cii 28 cxii. 2. cxxviii. 6. b xxviii. 8. Job xxvii 16, 17. Ec. ii 26. c xii. 11. xxvii. 18. 23—27 xxviii 19. Ec. v. 9 ——d vi. 6—11. xi 5, 6. Ps. cxii 5. Ec. viii. 5, 6. Jer. viii 7—10.——e xix. 18. xxii. 15. xxiii. 13, 14 xxix. 15. 17.——f viii. 36. Luke xiv. 26. John xii. 25——g iii. 12. Heb. xii. 6—8.

V. 15. 'Good insight into businesses, and discreet 'carriage in them, procureth thankful acceptance: but 'those that take wrong courses cause much trouble and 'vexation.' (*Bp. Hall.*) Ungodly men expect to tread a smooth and pleasant path: but their vices have such consequences on their constitutions, circumstances, and reputations, as render their road very rugged and painful: and their misery is increased by stings of conscience, and by the dread of death and judgment.

V. 16. 'Every wise man will work by knowledge, 'but a fool will spread abroad folly.' (*Old Translation.*) Wise men deliberate before they act, and conduct their concerns with skill and judgment: but a foolish man exposes himself, by his rash undertakings and imprudent management.

V. 17. A wicked messenger who betrays his trust, or a faithless ambassador who sells the interests of his prince and country, do not more certainly injure others, than expose themselves to infamy and ruin. But the faithful messenger or ambassador gives satisfaction, is useful, and will be honoured and rewarded. This is *emphatically* applicable to the ambassadors, whom the Lord sends with his message to sinners.

V. 18. (*Note* 1.) The Septuagint renders the first clause, 'Education taketh away poverty and disgrace.' The best method of preserving our children from poverty and shame, is to educate them well.

V. 19. The pleasure and satisfaction, arising from the attainment of a desired object, abundantly compensate for the trouble and self-denial of pursuing it. This especially holds good, in respect of the comforts of true religion. But fools, or ungodly men, have so strong and rooted a dislike to repentance, reformation, and religious duties; that they cannot be induced to take the proper method of obtaining these comforts, or even of escaping the wrath to come

V. 20. It is a hopeful indication of prudence and piety, when wise and good companions are habitually preferred: and by continual intercourse with them, good principles are strengthened, good habits formed, and wisdom matured. But he that chooses bad company proves his folly, and is in the way of learning and practising more and more all those evils that lead to ruin, temporal and eternal.

V. 21. (*Marg. Ref.*) The sinner may long escape: but evil pursues him, and will at length surely overtake him; as the hounds steadily follow, and after many windings, seize on their prey.

V. 22. The liberal servant of God, whilst he shakes his hands from iniquitous gain, and is not solicitous about riches, and even disperses in charity as if about to impoverish his family, takes the best method of providing for his posterity: for the wealth which wicked men get by crimes, with great labour and inquietude, is laid up for the righteous and their families: and by the secret disposal of providence shall come into their possession, when they have occasion for it.

V. 23. The poor and industrious, who labour to cultivate a little spot of land, often live in a plentiful though homely manner: whilst they who have inherited large estates, are reduced to poverty by negligence, indiscretion, ostentation, and extravagance. *In this way* the wealth of the covetous hoarder is often in the next generation transferred to the good man's family.

V. 24. The perverseness of our fallen nature renders correction necessary to children. He therefore, who indulges his son, connives at his perverseness, suffers him to contract vicious habits, and to grow stubborn in rebellion, for want of correction; acts as if he hated him: because he permits those diseases of the mind to gather strength, which will prove the sources of inexpressible sorrow to him in this world, and perhaps of eternal misery. Whereas the parent, who wisely loves his child, will *early* begin to teach him submission, application, and the government of his passions: and having thus bent the tender twig, and established his authority, he will gradually be enabled to rule him more by persuasion and argument, and to treat him with the lenity of a kind and prudent friend. But when children are permitted to get the mastery in their tender years, they can scarcely ever after be taught subjection, and the attempt is often made by a severity which is both perilous and painful.—The word rendered *chasteneth* is often translated *instruction*, (18.) 'He that spareth the 'rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him, diligently 'educates, or *disciplines* him.' (*Septuagint*) The same term being used in the original both of the Old and New Testa-

h Ps xxxiv. 10. xxxvii 3 16. 18, 19. 1 Tim. vi 8—8. Heb. xiii 5.

25 The [h] righteous eateth to the satisfying of his soul: but [i] the belly of the wicked shall want.

i vi 11 xxiv. 34 Deu. xxviii. 48. xxxi 24. 14. lxv. 13, 14.

ment, for *tuition* and *correction*, strongly indicates the close connexion between them, in a *scripturally* good education. (*Comp. Eph.* vi. 4. with *Heb.* xii. 5—11. *Greek.*)

V. 25. The servants of God are satisfied with their temporal provisions though mean or scanty, and use them with cheerfulness and thankfulness. But the wicked are never satisfied; have no enjoyment of their possessions; and will sink at last into final and eternal want and misery.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

Teachable and dutiful children commonly, if spared, become wise, useful, and prosperous men: but such as scorn reproof, and harden themselves under rebukes and corrections, are likely to be miserable themselves, and causes of misery to others. He who speaketh "that "which is good, to the use of edifying," will generally share the comfort and benefit which he imparts: and in every way, the government of the tongue tends exceedingly to the happiness of life; and preserves a man from numberless troubles, temptations, and sins, into which they, "who open wide their lips," fall and often perish. In what various ways, and emphatical language, are we reminded, that sloth tends to dissatisfaction, vexation, and ruin; and industry to credit, prosperity, and comfort! And can we imagine, that these maxims of heavenly wisdom relate only to the affairs of this transient world? Can we doubt, whether the difference between the indolent and the diligent, in spiritual concerns, will or will not be at least equally manifest, both here and hereafter? —The hateful nature likewise of lies and duplicity is shown, in Scripture, in every way most suited to convince and affect us. God hates lies, and the righteous hate lies: for every man of genuine piety abhors and loves what his Lord abhors and loves. Let then such as allow themselves to belie, in their professions of whatever kind, the secret purposes and thoughts of their hearts, look well to themselves: and if they pretend to religion, let them tremble, lest at last they should have their portion with the hypocrites. They may, at present, deceive others and even themselves: but when the whole shall be laid open, (and the awful day approaches,) they will appear loathsome and be overwhelmed with confusion. It does not indeed consist with Christian simplicity, for a man to assume the appearance of wealth, knowledge, or skill in any profession, which he does not possess; or even to deny, under an affectation of modesty, the talents which he ought to improve, to the benefit of his brethren and the honour of God.—But righteousness preserveth the upright in the middle path; and an honest desire to do the LORD's will secures a man from important mistakes, and from that wickedness which overthroweth the sinner, far better than the most exact casuistical decisions. In all things, the knowledge, grace, and success of the righteous, are a source of increasing joy, which will be perfected in heavenly felicity; but the lamp of the wicked will soon be extinguished, and his transient mirth be exchanged for everlasting darkness and despair. Even when men grow rich and great in a course of ungodliness, besides the secret curse of God, which eats out all the comfort of their prosperity, and often diminishes their ill-gotten wealth, their affluence and grandeur expose them to the envy, enmity, and rapacity of their less successful rivals, to whose rebuke the poor are strangers: and should they be able to ransom their lives by their wealth, they cannot in the same way bribe the great Judge of the world, or redeem their souls from hell. The pride also and ambition of ungodly men commonly involve them in quarrels destructive of their comfort and that of their families. From this source, not only domestic discords, and fierce contentions between the nearest relations, arise, but ruinous lawsuits, fatal duels, and perpetuated implacable resentments. Whereas, true religion teaches us to be humble, harmless, meek, patient, and forgiving; to conquer our own spirits by looking to the example of the bleeding Saviour, and to overcome our enemies by persevering kindness. Thus "only by pride cometh contention; but with the well advised," who are taught by the word of God, "is wisdom:" and every Christian finds, that he enjoys peace and happiness, in exact proportion as he exercises meekness, forbearance, and love. It is indeed allowed, that our gracious God, for wise and holy purposes, *defers the hope* of those who seek his holy consolations; and often pains their hearts, while he proves their sincerity, abates their self-confidence, and excites their earnest exertions: but when the desired peace and joy are given, (and there will be no useless delay,) it will prove a tree of life, and satisfy their souls with inexpressible delight. And if the earnest be so sweet, what will the incorruptible inheritance itself be? But while we wait for this blessedness, let us recollect the painful feelings of such as wait for good, and experience delays and disappointments; and never prolong the uneasiness of those who expect relief from us, when we can with propriety at once fill their hearts with gladness.

V. 13—25.

Again and again, because of our unteachableness, we are reminded, that "poverty and shame shall be to him that "despiseth instruction;" and that "whoever despiseth "the word of God shall be destroyed: while he that re-"gardeth reproof, and feareth the commandment, shall "be honoured and rewarded." And indeed, every reflecting man's observation or experience must confirm the truth of these maxims; and make it evident, that "the "law of the wise is a fountain of life to depart from the "snares of death." "A good understanding," especially that which the intelligent Christian possesses, conciliates respect and favour, and introduces a man to many advantages, and opportunities of usefulness: whereas irreligion generally makes way for those vices which embitter this present life, and render the thoughts of another most dreadful. Again, prudent men, observing the counsels of the Bible, conduct their affairs with caution, and deal with knowledge in forming and executing their plans: but they who foolishly reject the instructions of the sacred oracles, though considered by themselves or their admirers as poli-

CHAP. XIV.

Integrity, prudence, piety, meekness, and diligence recommended: and the ruinous effects of pride, injustice, sloth, hypocrisy, anger, envy, and oppression; and the vanity of carnal mirth and ungodly prosperity pointed out, 1—35.

EVERY [a] wise woman buildeth her house: but [b] the foolish plucketh it down with her hands.

2 He [c] that walketh in his uprightness feareth the LORD: [d] but *he that is* perverse in his ways despiseth him.

a xxiv. 3, 4. xxxi. 10, &c. Ruth iv. 11. b ix. 13—15. xix. 13. xxi. 9. 19. 1 Kings xvi. 31. xxi. 24, 25. 2 Kings xi. 1. c xvi. 17. xxviii. 6. 1 Kings iii. 6. Job i. 1. xxviii. 28. Ps. cxii. 1. Ec. xii. 13. Mal. ii. 5, 6. Acts ix. 31. x. 22. 35. ——— d xi. 12. Job xii. 4. Ps. xxxvi. 1—4. Luke x. 16. Rom. ii. 4, 5. 2 Tim. iii. 2, 3.

tic and sagacious men, often venture on perilous undertakings, engage in ruinous contests, and lay open their folly to the view of all men. It should also be considered, that nothing inspires such fortitude and perseverance in the pursuit of objects worthy of our desires, as faith in the truths and promises of Scripture; nothing so strengthens the soul for exertion and self-denial; nothing so animates a man to lay aside every weight, that he may run with patience the race set before him. The zealous Christian therefore will most enjoy the pleasure of having his desires accomplished: while those to whom "it is an abomination to depart from evil," will find, that their ineffectual wishes, temporary convictions, and feeble endeavours, serve only to increase the bitterness of their final disappointment. They who sustain the character of ministers, are especially concerned in these important words; "A wicked messenger falleth into mischief; but a faithful ambassador is health." They whose ignorance, (the effect of negligence,) whose vices, sloth, or unfaithfulness, have prejudiced, deceived, and ruined the souls of others, will themselves be most miserable: but the vigilant and skilful, the exemplary and faithful servant of God, while he is the messenger of salvation to others, will himself soon hear the gracious words, "Well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." In every way "evil pursueth sinners:" the very persons with whom they associate, on whom they lavish their favours, and who pretend to be their friends, help forward their destruction: their temporal concerns are often neglected, for want of judgment; their spiritual always; and the wealth, of which some are possessed, is laid up for the righteous and their posterity. How wonderful then is it, that if the young and inexperienced overlook these truths, the aged, the fathers of families, should so little regard them, either in their own behalf or that of their children? And should so mistake in their expressions of affection to those whom they tenderly love, as if a part of themselves! Yet it may be asserted, without fear of refutation, that the errors of parents in educating their children are entirely as pernicious as the rashness and self-indulgence of young persons. Perhaps the modern improvement of *sparing the rod and spoiling the child;* and of teaching children various kinds of knowledge, without habituating them to submit to superiors, to apply at stated times to things useful, and to exercise self-denial, has not only made way for much profligacy, but has also introduced a system of insubordination which has shaken Europe to its very centre. Obedience to the authority of parents, even in infancy, is the best preparation for subjection to every ordinance of man in future life: nay, it is a grand mean of bringing young persons to submit to God, as inuring them to the idea, that self-will must be subdued. And when destructive and irrational fondness prevent parents from thus subduing the rebellious spirits of their children, the event will generally prove that their worst enemies could not have done them a greater injury. It should, however, be observed, that correction is properly the province of *parents:* and that important and delicate trust can seldom be safely delegated, at least it should be done with great caution. For when this exercise of *authority* is separated from tender affection, it often becomes a species of tyranny, productive of most pernicious consequences. How dire then the effect, when the parent himself, not knowing how to govern his passions, sets his child an evidently bad example, even when correcting him for his faults! In general no man can well govern others, who cannot govern himself: and it too often happens, that chastisement, having been neglected in early years, and afterwards attempted with violence and severity, drives young persons for refuge among bad companions, renders the company of the parent terrible, or at least unpleasant, and lays way for a ruinous alienation in future life. Happy then are those young persons, whom early and judicious correction, good instruction, with kind and wise regard to their time of life, have taught to consider their parents as their best friends and counsellors, and their most pleasant companions, nay, their most faithful confidants! In this way they will readily be led to "walk with wise men," and so learn wisdom. They will also be inured to application, and form habits of industry, which even in the lowest condition seldom fail of securing a comfortable support with a good conscience, and a satisfied mind, which wealth cannot purchase. Nor let it be thought superfluous to remark, that "the tillage of the poor" is preferable to many of those more lucrative employments, which are little useful to society, and too often subserve its vices and follies.

NOTES.

CHAP. XIV. V. 1. A prudent woman, by her proper management of domestic concerns, exceedingly promotes the durable advantage and credit of the family to which she belongs; and even raises it from obscurity and embarrassments to permanent credit and prosperity. But an indiscreet woman, who wastes time, and squanders away money, in vain ornaments, trifling visits, and expensive pleasures, often proves the ruin of her family; even though it hath been in a thriving condition, and though her husband be frugal and industrious: for she acts as if she would pull down the house with her own hands. This coincides with a common observation, that 'a fortune *in* a wife, is better than a fortune *with* a wife.'

V. 2. "The tree must be known by its fruits:" and a man's conduct, as it is either conscientious and upright, or perverse and disobedient, shows whether he reverences or despises God. The last clause may denote, that men of loose characters despise the piety and holiness of such as fear God and walk in his ways; "thinking it strange that

3 In [e] the mouth of the foolish *is* a rod of pride: [f] but the lips of the wise shall preserve them.

4 Where no oxen *are*, the crib *is* [g] clean: [h] but much increase *is* by the strength of the ox.

5 A [i] faithful witness will not lie: but a false witness will utter lies.

6 A [k] scorner seeketh wisdom, and *findeth* it not: but [l] knowledge *is* easy unto him that understandeth.

7 Go [m] from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not *in him* the lips of knowledge.

8 The [n] wisdom of the prudent *is* to understand his way: but [o] the folly of fools *is* deceit.

9 [p] Fools make a mock at sin: but [q] among the righteous *there is* favour.

e xviii. 6. xi. 24. xxii. 8. xxviii. 25. 1 Sam ii. 3. Job v. 21 Ps. xii. 3. xxxi. 18. lii. 1, 2. lvii. 4. Jam. iii. 5, 6. 2 Pet. ii. 18. Rev xiii. 5, 6. f xii 6. Rom. x. 9, 10. Rev. iii. 10. xii 11. g Am. iv. 6. h xiii 23. 1 Cor. ix. 9—11. i 25. vi 19. xii. 17. xiii 5. xix. 5. 9. Ex. xx. 16. xxiii 1. 1 Kings xxi. 13 xxii. 12—14.——k xviii. 2. xxvi. 12. Is. viii. 20. Jer. viii. 9. Matt. vi. 22, 23. xi. 25—27. Rom i 21, 22. ix. 31, 32. 1 Cor. iii. 18, 19. viii. 2. 2 Pet. iii. 3—5.

l viii. 9 xvii. 24 Ps. cxix. 18. 98—100 Mat. xiii. 11, 12. Jam. i. 5. m ix. 6. xiii. 20. xix 27. 1 Cor. v. 11 Eph v. 7. n ii 9. viii 20. Ps. cxi 10 cxix. 5. 34, 35. 73 cxliii. 8. Eph. v. 17. Col. i. 9, 10. 2 Tim. iii. 15—17. Jam. iii. 13. o xi. 18. Jer. xlii. 20 *Marg.* Luke, xii 19, 20. p Tim. iii. 13 p i. 22. x 23. xxvi. 18, 19. xxx. 20. Job xv. 16. xxxiv. 7—9. Jude 18.——q iii. 4. viii. 35. xii. 2. xiii. 15. Rom. xiv. 17, 18.

"they run not with them to the same excess of riot."

V. 3. The profane, insolent, and abusive language which foolish men utter, springs from excessive pride: and whilst they smite others with it as a rod or staff, they prepare severe corrections for themselves. Whereas the prudent and conciliating words of wise men preserve them from contentions, and extricate them out of difficulties.

V. 4. 'If the fields lie fallow and be neglected, a 'famine must needs follow, but good husbandry bestowed on 'them makes great plenty.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) There is no profit without labour and inconvenience: and he that would have the crop of corn, must take the trouble of tending the oxen, and cleansing the stall; which the indolent or over delicate care not to do.

V. 5. (*Notes*, xii. 17—19. xiii. 5.)

V. 6. *A scorner* is one, who treats divine things with profane contempt. He thinks his own understanding equal to the investigation, and even comprehension, of every subject: he therefore rejects as false what he cannot account for, and finds contrary to his preconceived sentiments or vain reasonings; and indeed all, that tends to condemn his conduct or expose his folly. In this presumptuous frame he may seek for wisdom, even in the Scriptures, without success. The state of his heart disposes him to despise the sacred mysteries, the humbling doctrines, and the holy precepts of revelation: he will therefore, by criticisms and bold conjectures, alter the text, or explain away its meaning. Or disgusted by finding that those doctrines which he dislikes are certainly contained in the Bible, he will at length take shelter in infidelity. These are indeed *modern* ways in which "scorners seek wisdom and find it not;" but doubtless the scorners of former days had methods equally successful of evading conviction, and closing their eyes against the light of truth. 'He that comes to seek 'after knowledge with a mind to scorn and censure, shall 'be sure to find enough for his humour, but none for his 'instruction.' (*Lord Bacon.*) 'This humour of deriding 'springs from a great pride and conceit of their own wit, 'which disposes them to seek wisdom, not from others, but 'wholly from themselves; and so they are not likely to 'find it, where it is not to be had.' 'Some who having 'laughed at religion all their days, at least desire to under 'stand it; but cannot, through their own inveterate indispo-'sition to it.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) 'They seek it, as Simon Ma 'gus, for their own ambition, not for God's glory.'

'Hear the first law, the judgment of the skies
'He that hates truth shall be the dupe of lies.'—(*Cowper.*)

But he, who is humbly conscious of his ignorance and unworthiness, will search the Scriptures in a teachable spirit, and with seriousness, reverence, and prayer: thus the Author of wisdom will deliver him from prejudice, preserve him from error and uncertainty, and show him his truth and will. And with this state of the heart, the understanding is as well suited to receive the instructions of God's word, as sound and strong eyes are to receive the light of the sun: so that knowledge becomes easy to those who are of an understanding heart.

V. 7. 'It is best to flee the company of such persons, 'whose discourse thou perceivest tends to nothing but 'vice and mischief.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 8. The prudent man does not value that wisdom, which consists in abstruse speculations or profound policy: but that which teaches him the paths of safety and of duty: and directs him to escape the dangers, avail himself of the advantages, and surmount the difficulties, of his situation in life, that he may proceed with increasing satisfaction, credit, and usefulness. But that which ungodly men call wisdom, is indeed folly; it is mere craft and imposition, which at length deceives them, and they are taken in their own net. 'New stratagems must be devised, the old failing 'and growing useless; and as soon as ever a man has 'got the name of a cunning crafty companion, he hath 'deprived himself utterly of the principal instrument for 'the management of his affairs, which is *trust*.'—(*Lord Bacon.*)

V. 9. Foolish and profane men consider sin as a mere trifle, rather a laughing matter than a dreadful and hateful evil. They divert themselves with tempting others to sin: they commit iniquity without scruple, in pursuit of pleasure or gain; and they in a jesting manner talk over their knavish or licentious practices, and recount how many they have over-reached, debauched, or surpassed in profaneness or intemperance. The word translated *mock at* signifies also *palliate*, or excuse. 'There may be this sense in the 'words, Fools endeavour to make handsome apologies for 'their faults, and to find out colourable excuses for them. '—Or fools laugh and jeer at those who have committed a 'sin, but good men pity them, and by kind reproofs seek 'their amendment.' Or 'when fools offend God, they 'make nothing of it: but if good men in the least offend, 'they presently beg his pardon, and seek his grace and 'favour. The former part of the sentence may also be 'inverted. Sin will expose those to scorn, who are so 'foolish as to commit it. A good admonition to those who 'make a mock at sin, which will in time make a mock of 'them, and expose them as ridiculous fools.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) Indeed these are no more than illustrations of the general exposition before given.

10 The [r] heart knoweth * his own bitterness; and [t] a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy.

11 The [t] house of the wicked shall be overthrown: but [u] the tabernacle of the upright shall flourish.

12 There [x] is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof *are* the ways of death.

13 Even [y] in laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth *is* heaviness.

14 The [z] backslider in heart shall be [a] filled with his own ways: and [b] a good man *shall be satisfied* from himself.

15 The [c] simple believeth every word: but [d] the prudent *man* looketh well to his going.

16 A wise *man* [e] feareth, and departeth from evil: but [f] the fool rageth, and is confident.

17 *He* [g] *that is* soon angry dealeth foolishly: and [h] a man of wicked devices is hated.

18 The simple [i] inherit folly: but [k] the prudent are crowned with knowledge.

r xv. 13 xviii 14. 1 Sam. i. 10. 2 Kings iv. 27. Job vi. 2—4. vii. 11. ix. 18. x. 1. Ez. iii. 14. Mark xiv. 34. John xii 27.
* Heb *the bitterness of his soul.* Gen. xlii 21.
s John xiv 18 23. Phil iv. 7. 1 Pet i. 8. Rev ii. 17.
t iii. 33 xii. 7. xxi 12 Job viii. 15 xv 34 xviii. 14, 15. 21 xx. 26—28. xxi. 28. xxvii. 13—23. Zech. v. 4 Mat vii. 26, 27.
u xi. 28. xxi. 20. Job viii 6 Ps cxii. 2, 3 cxxviii. 3. Is. xliv 3—5. lviii. 11. 12.
x xii 15 xvi. 25. a xxx 12 Matt. vii. 13, 14. Luke xiii. 24 Gal vi 3. Eph. v 6. Jam i. 22.——y Ec. ii 2 10, 11. vii. 5, 6. xi 9. Luke xvi. 25. Jam iv 9. Rev xviii. 7, 8.——z i 32 Jer viii. 5 xvii 5. Hos. iv 16. Zeph. i. 6. Heb iii. 12.——a i. 31 xii. 14. Ez. xxii. 31 ——b 10. 2 Cor. i. 12. John iv. 14. Gal. vi. 4. 8.
c xxii. 3. xxvii. 12. Rom xvi. 18, 19. Eph. iv. 14. v. 17. 1 John iv. 1.
d 8. Am. v. 13. Acts xiii. 7.
e iii. 7. xvi. 6. 17. xxii 3 Gen. xxxix. 12 Neh. v. 15. Job xxxi. 21—23. Ps cxix. 120. 1 Thes v. 22
f vii 22. xxviii. 14. xxix. 9. 1 Kings xix 2. xx. 10, 11. 18. Ec. x. 13 Mark vi. 17—19. 24, 25. John ix. 46.
g 29 xii. 16. xv. 18 xvi. 32. xxii. 24. xxix. 22 Ec. vii. 9 Jam i. 19.
h vi. 18. xii. 2. Esth. iii. 6 vii. 5, 6. Is xxxii. 7. Jer v. 26—29.
i iii 35. xi 29. Jer xvi 19 xliv. 17. Matt. xxiii. 29—32. 1 Pet i. 18.——k iv. 7—9. xi 30 Dan xii. 3. 2 Tim iv. 8. 1 Pet. v 4.

V. 10. No man is competent to judge of the inward anguish or pleasure of others, who are often more happy or miserable than they appear to be. None can tell what stings of conscience or corroding passions torment the prosperous sinner, whilst he appears gay, and indulges in mirth. Nor can ungodly men know what satisfaction a serious Christian enjoys, at a distance from scenes of vain merriment; or even in poverty, sickness, or at the hour of death. 'We should not censure too heavily the passions of grief 'or of joy in others: because the causes of them may be 'unknown to us.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) 'As a man's conscience 'is witness of his own grief, so another cannot feel the joy 'and comfort which a man feeleth in himself.'

V. 11. The contrast between the *house*, or grand mansion of the wicked, and the *tabernacle*, or mean tent, of the righteous, is especially to be noted.

V. 12. Open iniquity and impiety must seem wrong to every reflecting person. But there is another way, which joins those ways of death at last, yet at present seems right to a man. Formality, superstition, self-righteousness, enthusiasm, and in short, all that is called religion, but is unscriptural, must certainly be intended. 'Shadows too 'often cheat us of the reality; against which there is no 'remedy.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) This idea of a man confidently thinking himself right, till, on ending his journey, he finds he had all along been in the road to hell, is tremendous beyond the power of expression or even conception.

V. 13. That show of happiness which attends laughter and noisy mirth, is a mere imposition. In the midst of such turbulent scenes the heart is often oppressed with sorrow; and when they are over, the mind becomes more gloomy than ever. Especially when these are used as expedients to banish reflection, or quiet convictions, as they frequently are. Such ways of driving away care bring numbers to bankruptcy, and even suicide, and hurry still greater numbers into everlasting misery.

V. 14. He that forsaketh God shall be punished, and made weary of his sins, wherein he delighted. "The "backslider in heart" once appeared religious, but after a while, through persecution or temptation, he deliberately renounces his profession, and shows that the world always had his heart and supreme affections. The last state of such a man will be worse than the first: his case is peculiarly hopeless, and he will be filled with his own devices. This was Judas' case: he acted according to the habitual state of his heart, in betraying his Lord. But Peter, when, overcome by a sudden temptation, he betrayed Christ, behaved inconsistently with his real character: his heart was not apostate: he repented and was pardoned. The latter clause may, more literally, be rendered, "the good man "*will depart* from his paths." "He that is begotten of "God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." (1 *John* v. 18.) According to our translation it may be thus explained. He whose delight is in doing good, will have a spring of satisfaction in his own soul, which will preserve him from returning to the world, through desire of its friendship, or dread of its power.

V. 15. Heedless and unstable men are easily imposed on, not only as to their worldly concerns, but also in religion. Confidence, insinuation, flattery, and plausible eloquence, easily entangle them in error and delusion. They are at best "children tossed to and fro by every "wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, &c." And "Sa-"tan transformed into an angel of light," fatally deceives numbers of them. But "the prudent man looks well to "his going," and the word of God teaches us more caution; and warns us to "beware lest any man deceive us:" and he who attends to it will shun the snares of Satan and his servants.

V. 16. A wise man fears God and hates sin, and thus he avoids the occasions and appearances of evil; and is thankful for cautions and directions. But the foolish are self confident and regardless of consequences: they are vehement in their courses and enraged at those who would give them warning or advice. Thus they rush forward to the brink of the precipice, and at length fall headlong into destruction.

V. 17. He that is hasty in resentment very foolishly exposes himself to manifold troubles, and often does much mischief, and is both pitied and blamed: yet he, who conceals his hatred, and devises how to take deliberate revenge, is a far more odious and dangerous character.

V. 18. Careless sinners seem to claim ignorance as their patrimony, and to consider it as their privilege to act without reflection; and thus folly, with all its consequences, will be their final portion. But the prudent consider useful

19 The [l] evil bow before the good; and the wicked at the gates of the righteous.

20 The [m] poor is hated even of his own neighbour: [n] but the * rich *hath* many friends.

21 He [o] that despiseth his neighbour sinneth: but [p] he that hath mercy on the poor happy *is* he.

22 Do they not [q] err that devise evil? [r] But mercy and truth *shall be* to them that [s] devise good.

23 In [t] all labour there is profit: but the [u] talk of the lips *tendeth* only to penury.

24 The [x] crown of the wise *is* their riches: *but* [y] the foolishness of fools *is* folly.

25 A true [z] witness delivereth souls: but a deceitful *witness* [a] speaketh lies.

26 In the [b] fear of the LORD *is* strong confidence; and [c] his children shall have a place of refuge.

27 The fear of the LORD *is* [d] a fountain of life, [e] to depart from the snares of death.

28 In [f] the multitude of people *is* the king's honour: but in the want of people *is* the destruction of the prince.

29 *He that is* [g] slow to wrath *is* of great understanding: [h] *but he that is* † hasty of spirit [i] exalteth folly.

l Gen. xlii. 6. xliii. 28. Ex viii. 8. ix. 27, 28. xi. 8. 2 Kings iii. 12. Esth vii. 7, 8 Is. lx. 14. Mic. vii 9, 10. 16, 17 Rev. iii 9. m x. 15. xix 7. Job vi 21—23. xix. 13, 14. xxx. 10.
n xix. 4. 6. Esth. iii. 2. v. 10, 11.
* Heb *many are the lovers of the rich*
o xi. 12. xvii. 5. xviii. 3 Job xxxi. 13—15. xxxvi. 5, 6. Ps. xxii 24. Luke xviii 9. Jam. ii. 5, 6. 14—16.
p 3t. xi. 24, 25. xix. 17. xxviii. 27. Ps xli 1, 2. cxii 5—9. Ec. xi. 1, 2. Is. lviii. 7—12 Dan iv. 27. Luke vi. 30—36. Acts xx 35. 1 John iii. 17.——q 17. xii 2 Is xxxii 7, 8——r Gen. xxiv. 27. Ps. xxv. 10 lxi. 7. Matt v. 7 John i 17.——s xix 22 2 Chr. vi 8.
t xiii 24 xxviii 19. John vi. 27. Heb vi. 10 11——u x 10. Ec v 3 2 Thes iii. 10—12. 1 Tim. v. 13——x 18. iii. 9, 10. Ps. cxii. 9. Ec. vii. 11 12. Is. xxxiii. 6. Luke xvi. 9.
y xxvii 22. Ps xlix. 10—13. Luke xii 19, 20. xvi 19—25.
z 5. Acts xx. 21. 26, 27 xxvi. 16—20
a 1 Tim. iv. 1—3. 2 Pet ii. 3
b iii. 7 8. 25, 26. xix. 23. Gen. xxxi. 42. Ps. xxxiv 7—11. cxii 1. 6—8. cxv 13, 14 Mal. iii. 16—18. iv. 2. Acts ix. 31
c xviii 10. Is. xxvi. 20, 21. Jer xv. 11. xxxii 39, 40.
d xiii. 14. Rev. xxi. 6
e ii 10—18 xxii. 5. Ps. xviii 5. Ec vii 26.
f Ex. i. 12 22. 1 Kings iv. 20, 21. xx. 27. 2 Kings x. 32, 33. xiii 7
g 17. xv 18 xvi. 32. Num xii. 3. Matt xi. 29.
1 Cor xiii 4, 5. Jam i. 19. iii. 17, 18——h xxii. 24, 25. xxv. 8. 28. Ec. vii. 9. Dan. iii 19, &c. Matt. ii. 16.——† Heb. *short of spirit.*——i iv. 8 Ec. x. 6.

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knowledge as their grand object; and having obtained it, will be crowned with honour and immortality.

V. 19. It often happens, in the course of providence, that wicked men are reduced to the necessity of making submission to the righteous, and are brought to crave their assistance and prayers. Thus the Egyptians waited on Joseph, and Pharaoh called for Moses: and this is a pledge of their final prevalence and pre-eminency. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 20. This is an illustration of the selfishness and dissimulation of mankind. It is evident, in fact, that when a man is impoverished, his former friends and acquaintance grow shy of him, and treat him with neglect and unkindness: but when a man grows rich, he has friends in abundance, who pretend great esteem and respect for him.

V. 21. 'But let such men know, that it is a greater sin 'than they imagine, and shall be severely punished, to 'overlook their poor neighbour, and deny him their chari-'table relief.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The wicked man is rather an object of pity than of contempt: but to despise men, on account of their low circumstances or mean employment, is peculiarly foolish, and is ungrateful to God, who alone has made the difference. The latter clause is peculiarly emphatical, "Oh the felicities of him that showeth favour to the "poor, or modest!" He shall be happy beyond expression.

V. 22. Are they not fatally deceived who expect to prosper by craftily devising mischief? 'But they who 'take pains to study how to do men good, shall never fail 'of that bountiful reward, which is secured to them by 'the faithful promise of God.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) They who trust in the mercy and faithfulness of God, will be followers or *imitators* of him, in their conduct towards men. They *devise good*, and experience abundantly the truth and goodness of God.

V. 23. 'Solomon here separates the fruit of the la-'bour of the tongue, and of the labour of the hands; as 'if want was the revenue of the one, and wealth the 'revenue of the other. For it commonly comes to pass, 'that they who talk liberally, boast much, and promise 'mighty things, are beggars.' (*Lord Bacon.*)

V. 24. When men of wisdom and piety possess riches, they do so much good with them, that they are as *a crown* to them, enhancing their reputation and enlarging their sphere of usefulness. But foolish and wicked men act in character in all situations, and riches only render their folly more egregiously and emphatically *foolishness*.

V. 25. *Deceitful*, &c. "Deceit poureth out lies."—If a man be influenced by deceit, he is very ingenious in inventing, and ready in propagating lies, without regarding the mischief arising from them: but a faithful witness often preserves the lives of such as were in danger of perishing by false accusation. The maxim is still more important, when interpreted of the faithful minister, and the teacher of lies; and the consequences of their conduct, in the salvation or ruin of immortal souls.

V. 26, 27. 'They who fear the Lord, have a strong ground of confidence in his promises, and will generally be preserved from distressing fears in life and death. Indeed they are *his children*, and have a refuge in their Father's love, power, and truth, to which they may always resort. So that their faith and piety prove a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.' Some interpret the clause "his children have a place of refuge," as referring to the believer's posterity. 'His children after him may flee to 'God for safety, and hope to fare the better for their pious 'father's sake.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 28. 'The honour and splendour of a king depends on 'the multitude of his subjects; whom therefore he ought 'to cherish: for if they be wasted by unnecessary wars, 'or forced into other countries by oppression and unjust 'exactions, it proves the ruin of his kingdom.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) Various other ways of discouraging population, and destroying or driving away industrious subjects, might be mentioned, and illustrated by examples, from the times of Pharaoh, to this present day. (Ex. i.) The crusades, especially against the Albigenses, &c. the persecutions of the infamous Duke of Alva in the low countries; the revocation of the edict of Nantz, by Lewis XIV; the expulsion of the Moors from Spain; the Inquisition; and finally the cruel treatment of slaves in the West Indies, which renders the detestable slave-trade in some sense necessary to prevent depopulation, are a few instances of that ruinous policy which is here reprobated.

30 A [k] sound heart *is* the life of the flesh: but [l] envy the rottenness of the bones.

31 He [n] that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker: [o] but he that honoureth him hath mercy on the poor.

32 The wicked is [p] driven away in his wickedness: but [q] the righteous hath hope in his death.

33 Wisdom [r] resteth in the heart of him that hath understanding: but *that which is* in the midst of fools is made known.

34 [s] Righteousness exalteth a nation: [t] but sin *is* a reproach to * any people.

35 The [u] king's favour *is* toward a wise servant: but his wrath is *against* [x] him that causeth shame.

k iv. 23. Ps. cxix. 80. 2 Tim. i. 7. l Job v. 2. Ps. cxii. 10. Acts vii. 9. Rom. i. 29. Jam. iv. 5. m iii. 8. xii. 4. xvii. 22. n xvii 5 xxii 2. 16. 22, 23. Job xxxi. 15, 16. Ps. xii 5. Ec. v. 8. Matt. xxv. 40—46. o 21. xix. 17. Matt. xxv. 40. John xii. 3. 2 Cor viii 7—9. 1 John iii 17. iv. 20.——p Job xviii. 18. xxvii. 20—22. Ps. lviii 9. Is. viii. 21, 22. Dan. v. 26—28. John viii. 21 24. Rom. ix. 22. 1 Thes. v. 5.——q Gen. xlix. 18. Job xiii. 15. xix. 25—27 Ps. xxiii. 4. xxxvii. 37. Luke ii. 29. 1 Cor. xv 55—58. 2 Cor. v. 8. Phil. i. 22, 23. 2 Tim iv. 18. Rev. xiv. 13.

r xii. 23. xiii. 16. xv. 2. 28 xxix. 11 Ec. x. 3. s Deut. iv. 6—8. xxviii 1—14. Judg. ii. 6—14. Jer. ii. 2, &c. Hos. xiii. 1. t Deut. xxviii. 15, &c. xxix. 13—28. Ps. cvii. 34. Ez xvi xxii. xxiii. * Heb. *nations.* u xv. 12, 13. xx 8. 26. xxii. 11. xxv. 5. xxix. 12. Ps ci. 4—8. Matt. xxiv 45—51. Luke xii. 42—48.——x x. 5. xvii. 2. xix. 26.

V. 29. *Exalteth*, &c. The passionate man exalteth folly to the throne, and willingly executes her senseless commands.

V. 30. An upright, contented, and benevolent mind conduces to health and long life; whereas envy and other malignant passions, prey upon the spirits and ruin the constitution, like some incurable disease.

V. 31. The oppression of the needy seems to reproach the Creator, as if he had formed the poor of another species; or had cast them down on purpose that they should be trampled on. The oppressor reproacheth the Lord, by despising or defying his engagement to avenge the cause of the poor and oppressed. Nay, he does his best to bring reproach on the providential government of God, in that he hath put so much into the power of such vile wretches, and connives so long at their crimes. But every one that honours God, will for his sake treat the poor with compassion, and endeavour to alleviate their distresses, not to add to them.

V. 32. The wicked, (at death, for that is evidently spoken of,) is not only cast away for his crimes, but driven out of the world by irresistible force, with all his unrepented guilt on his soul, and under the power of all his domineering evil propensities and long continued bad habits; the slave of pride, avarice, malice, envy, and other hateful passions; "a vessel of wrath fitted for destruction:" but the righteous hath hope in his death, his sins being pardoned, and his heart renewed; and while he gives thanks for being made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, he trusts in the promises of God, that he shall speedily join them, and at length be reunited to those whom he most loved here on earth. What can this proverb mean, worthy to be compared with this obvious interpretation, if we do not take in the belief and expectation of the eternal world?

V. 33. Wisdom possesses the heart, and regulates the affections and tempers, of him that hath understanding; and it is not spent in ostentatious displays. But it soon appears how the head and heart of a fool are furnished: for he continually betrays his ignorance and wickedness, by all his words and actions, as if ambitious of being known in his true character.

V. 34. Righteousness powerfully tends to promote public peace and prosperity, and to give an ascendency to that nation in which it generally prevails. Genuine piety, is inseparably connected with industry, sobriety, equity, and mercy, and also with frugality; and these conduce to health, population, union, and competency. Moreover they ensure the divine blessing to the community, which must needs exalt any nation. But every kind of sin has the contrary tendency: the prevalency of vice and impiety is a national reproach; conduces to disunion, weakness, and disgrace; and exposes any people to the wrath and vengeance of God. The word translated *reproach*, is the same which is commonly rendered *mercy* or *goodness;* and this has given rise to other interpretations of the latter clause; as if it meant that *mercy* was as a *sin-offering* for any people, where it prevailed: and the margin of the old translation renders it, "but the mercy of the people is the sacrifice for sin." Others think it relates to the Gentiles (the word *people* being plural;) and they render it "The goodness of the nations is sin;" meaning that the religion and virtues of idolaters, instead of righteousness, are sinful in the sight of God. This interpretation is, doubtless, more scriptural than the preceding: but as the word in question does in one place evidently mean *reproach* or *atrocious wickedness;* (*a wicked thing*, *Lev.* xx. 17:) and as a verb from the same root has clearly a similar meaning even in this book, (xxv. 10;) so there appears no sufficient reason for altering our translation, and departing from the interpretation above given. The word indeed, (like some others in different languages, (*Notes*, *Job* i. 5. ii. 9.) seems to mean what is uncommon, either of *goodness* or of *baseness;* but more generally it is used in the former sense.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—16.

The more the religion of the Scripture is examined, the fuller must be the conviction of every impartial judge, that it is of divine original; because in all things it is conducive, in proportion as received and practised, to the welfare of individuals, families, and nations. This appears conclusively, when we consider that the character and conduct which scriptural principles are suited to form, would be far more eligible, in any relation, than the opposite character, even to those who are prejudiced against the principles themselves. For who would not prefer, on sober reflection, as a wife, that prudent woman who, making the word of God her rule, takes pleasure in the concerns of the household, the care of her children, and the credit and comfort of her husband; to one of those foolish women, whose negligence and extravagance are the ruin of so many families, and the calamity of all related to them? Who can doubt whether the former character be not incomparably more valuable as a parent also, and as a member of the community? Nay, posterity are greatly concerned in this remark: for prudent women are not only the stay of fami-

CHAP. XV.

Maxims, about bridling the passions; improving the gift of speech; receiving reproof; the omniscience of God; his dealings with the righteous and the

lies, but a blessing to the rising generation, and the support of declining empires; while the foolish entail poverty, shame, and ignorance on their descendants; and bequeath as a legacy to the community, a vicious and worthless progeny. Wherever the fear of God is the ruling principle, a man will walk in his integrity: but they who despise Him and his servants, cannot reasonably be expected to be conscientious in their general behaviour. In the mouth of such men is 'a rod of pride,' which renders them mischievous, and exposes them to immense vexation; from which "the lips "of the wise preserve them." In numerous instances, they who fear not God, declining the self-denial and fatigue of labour in any mean employment, and affecting gentility and delicacy, become the burdens and nuisances of society, which in one way or other is pillaged for their support. But humility, submission to the will of God, and the desire of living at a distance from temptation and without injuring any one, render the pious man ready for any honest employment, and for such inconveniences as necessarily attach to it. These, therefore, form the most valuable and most comfortable part of the community: for indeed "where "no oxen are, the crib is clean; but much increase is by "the strength of the ox:" and the public is as much advantaged as the husbandman himself. While the irreligious, to answer their wicked purposes, are induced to multiply lies and even perjuries; and while they excuse their crimes, and make a mock at sin, the pious man strictly adheres to truth and equity, and exercises himself to have a "conscience void of offence towards God and man:" for the divine favour is his choice and object, which is with the righteous alone. The way of peace and holiness lie open before him, because he seeks wisdom seriously and humbly from the Scriptures, and with earnest prayer that he may glorify God and do good: but the pride, levity, and profaneness of the scorner, render him incapable of distinguishing truth from falsehood, right from wrong; and his very genius and learning only make him more extensively mischievous, by propagating infidelity, heresy, or impiety, in a specious and imposing manner. Here again the "wis-"dom of the prudent, which is to understand his way," appears invaluable. He, "who fears God and walks in his "ways, will go from the "presence of the foolish man, "when he perceives not in him the lips of knowledge." Wit, ingenuity, politeness, or eloquence make no amends, in his judgment, for the want of seriousness, for erroneous and pernicious opinions, or scoffing and jesting at things sacred. Thus he will be kept from the fatal contagion of profane company, and that worst deceit and folly even of fools, namely, excusing vice by principles subversive of all justice and truth, as well as piety and religion. As "there "is a way which seemeth right unto a man; yet the end "thereof are the ways of death;" "the wise man feareth "and departeth from evil;" he not only shuns the profane scoffer; but the soothing or ostentatious deceiver. While "the simple believeth every word," he prudently "looks "well to his going;" for eternal happiness or misery are at stake. While "the fool rageth and is confident;" he fears lest he should be deceived, and humbly seeks to God, praying to be kept from every delusion. When he sees men, who have appeared to be religious, turn back into the ways of sin; he mourns over them, foreseeing the awful consequences; and becomes more jealous of himself and watchful over his own heart: and knows, that in general, they that forsake God, do it, "loving this present world;" he becomes more and more afraid of covetousness, and often seems to hear the Saviour caution him, as he did the disciples of old, "Remember Lot's wife!" and remember that "the house of the wicked shall be overthrown; but the "tabernacle of the upright shall flourish." It is indeed of the greatest importance to possess a source of consolation, independent of all outward things: and this is the peculiar advantage of the pious man, and the means of preserving him from temptation. External appearances are very inadequate evidences of a man's happiness or misery. Even in the midst of prosperity and laughter sinners are conscious that they are not happy. They often strive to repress their sighs, to silence their consciences, and to quiet their fears: but they will find their sensual mirth end at length in weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth. And as none but themselves know the bitterness of their hearts in their hours of solitude; so none, but the true believer, can understand the nature of that serious joy, which is possessed in communion with God, and in the hope and first-fruits of heaven: with this no stranger can intermeddle, this no event can destroy, or long suspend; and this causes the Christian to cease from envying the prosperous sinner: it mars his relish for worldly pleasure, and turns the balance of happiness vastly in his favour, even amidst the trials of life. Let then the sons of vanity and sensuality possess their inheritance of folly, unenvied, but not unpitied; and let every believer rejoice with gratitude, and say, "The "lines are fallen to me in pleasant places, yea, I have a "goodly heritage."

V. 17—35.

These verses only give us another view of the advantages, which true religion confers on the possessor, and on others by his means. Whilst the passionate man exalteth folly, and rashly plungeth himself into discord and mischief, by which he becomes wretched and contemptible, whilst the malicious is hated for his sullen devices of revenge; and whilst the envious torments himself because of the success of his competitors: the Christian is instructed to exercise meekness and forgiveness, to be contented and benevolent, and to take pleasure in witnessing and aiding the success and comfort of all around him. He showeth his superiority of understanding by being slow to anger: and increasing knowledge crowns him with true honour. For wisdom resides in the heart, to direct a man's judgment, and moderate his desires; and thus without ostentation it appears in his life and actions: whilst fools continually expose themselves by their vain boastings, as well as by their ill behaviour. But, in all cases a sound heart and

wicked; the advantages of piety and peace; and the evil of sloth, rashness, and avarice, 1—33.

A [a]SOFT answer turneth away wrath: but [b]grievous words stir up anger.

a xxv. 15. Judg. viii. 1—3 1 Sam. xxv. 21—33. b 18. x. 12. xxviii. 25 xxix. 22 Judg. xii. 3—6. 1 Sam. xxv. 10, 11. 21, 22. 2 Sam xix. 43. 1 Kings xii. 14—16.

well governed passions, are life and comfort; while every domineering sinful temper is as rottenness in the bones.—Again, view that part of ungodly men, who seek affluence as their chief good; and expect happiness in worshipping Mammon. How do these men oppress the poor by merciless exactions, by defrauding them of their wages, and by numberless methods of injustice and cruelty! But, while they thus reproach and despise the common Creator of rich and poor, and of the whole human race; and glory, as it were, in their ingratitude to their Benefactor: do they not also become most worthless and pernicious members of society? and are they not, by corroding suspicions, harassing fears, and turbulent passions, wretched amidst their immense possessions, and multiplied indulgences? "The "wicked is like the troubled sea, whose waters cast forth "mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, for the "wicked." Now contemplate the opposite character. He who honours God has mercy on the poor: he dares not, nay, he is not inclined to, despise the mean appearance, or uncouth behaviour, of his neighbour, in whatever clime he was born, or of whatever complexion; but, as he would be happy himself, so he would endeavour to promote the happiness of others; and he finds it an accession to his own comfort to relieve their distresses. He feels his need of the mercy and truth of God, in order to the salvation of his soul: and he copies them in devising to do good to the afflicted who expect it from him. Thus he best consults his own good, "for do they not err, who devise evil" when in the "fear of the LORD is strong confidence," and none but his children can have a refuge in the approaching hour of death, and day of judgment? Let us then now seek to this Fountain of life, that we may escape the snares of death, and be safe and confident, when the wicked are sinking in consternation and despair. It is no less evident that righteousness is the grand support of nations: and that sin cuts the sinews and undermines the foundations of every community in which it prevails. And though the long-suffering of God hath hitherto spared this nation for the sake of a small remnant, which he hath reserved to himself: yet as sin is become the reproach, so it will be the ruin of our favoured land, except a general reformation take place; for it will at length be found to be universally true that "the evil bow before the good, and the wicked at the "gates of the righteous." The wise and pious are therefore the best patriots: by their examples, prayers, labours, and influence, they endeavour to stem the torrent of infidelity, profaneness, profligacy, and iniquity, and to promote that righteousness, which alone establisheth prosperity. Wisdom and piety form also the grand qualifications of good princes. Such will not waste the lives, or drain off the riches of their subjects by needless wars, to gratify their own ambition, rapacity, or revenge: they will not destroy or drive away the people by oppression, persecution, or bloody executions, or exorbitant taxes: nay, they will study to preserve peace, plenty, and good order, and the impartial administration of justice, and to encourage industry and ingenuity. This will induce strangers to come and settle in the land, and "in the multitude of the people is the king's honour; but "in the want of people is the destruction of the prince." At the same time they will, by their example and influence, and every scriptural means, endeavour to promote the spread of vital godliness. As "their favour will be shown "to the wise and righteous, and their wrath will be against "those that cause shame:" they will be rid of corrupt ministers as soon as they detect them; and will employ those who heartily concur in their wise, equitable, and pious measures: and happy will that people be, who are in such a case. But as genuine religion is in every thing most excellent: so we are required to be peculiarly upon our guard against counterfeits: for prejudice, ignorance, and fashion even canonize false schemes of religion. Here then we should learn to distinguish betwixt the faithful witness who will not lie, and who delivereth souls; and those deceitful witnesses who speak lies, either through ignorance or hypocrisy, for filthy lucre's sake, and to the destruction of their hearers. If we carefully compare their lives and doctrine with the word of God, we shall soon learn to know one from the other. And this distinction is far more important with respect to those witnesses who speak from the pulpit, than those who bear their testimony in courts of justice; and the false witnesses are, alas! in the former case, far more numerous in proportion. The importance of this remark will appear most evident when the wicked is driven by death from all their possessions and enjoyments, under the wrath of God, and the power of their lusts, into the eternal world; and when the righteous shall rejoice in hope of a blessed immortality, without sin or sorrow, in the presence of his Lord: and this will reconcile him to the separating stroke, and smooth the countenance of the king of terrors. Let us also endeavour to be always well employed: "for in all labour there is profit;" but in every thing the mere talk of the lips tendeth only to penury: and let those to whom the Lord hath given riches, endeavour to show their wisdom by making a good use of them: for thus they will be a crown to them; otherwise they will only enable them to be more conspicuously and perniciously foolish. 'Tis true, that at present many will profess to esteem and respect them, merely because they are rich: and the poor, however wise and pious, will be despised and hated, because he is poor. But ere long, Lazarus will be honoured, as well as comforted, and Dives despised as well as tormented. For "the favour of our "King will" uniformly "be toward the wise servant; but "his wrath will be against him that causeth shame."

NOTES.

CHAP. XV. V. 1. 'We should not think it enough, 'not to begin strife and contention; but if others begin 'it, we should not continue it by rough answers, but endeavour to make an end of it presently by mollifying the 'matter; and yield much for the common tranquillity's 'sake.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) 'Contentions arise out of pride, 'ambition, morosity of nature, emulation, wrath, superstition; which move men either to give ill words, or to

2 The [c] tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools * poureth out foolishness.

3 The [d] eyes of the LORD *are* in every place, beholding the evil and the good.

4 † A wholesome tongue *is* [e] a tree of life: but perverseness therein *is* [f] a breach in the spirit.

5 A [g] fool despiseth his father's instructions: [h] but he that regardeth reproof is prudent.

6 In [i] the house of the righteous *is* much treasure: but [k] in the revenues of the wicked is trouble.

7 The [l] lips of the wise disperse knowledge: but [m] the heart of the foolish *doeth* not so.

8 The [n] sacrifice of the wicked *is* an abomination to the LORD; but [o] the prayer of the upright *is* his delight.

9 The [p] way of the wicked *is* [q] an abomination unto the LORD: but [r] he loveth him that followeth after righteousness.

10 ‡ Correction *is* [s] grievous unto him that forsaketh the way: [t] *and* he that hateth reproof shall die.

c 23, 28. xii. 23. xiii 16. xvi. 23. xxv. 11, 12. Ps xlv. 1 Ec. x 12, 13. Is l. 4.
* Heb. *belcheth, or bubbleth* Ps. lix 7.
d v. 21 2 Chr. xvi. 9. Job xxxiv. 21, 22 Jer xvi. 17. xxiii 24. xxxii. 19. Heb. iv 13.
† Heb. *The healing of the tongue* xii. 18. xvi 24. Mal iv 2
e iii 18 Gen. iii. 22—24 Rev. ii 7.
f xviii. 8 14. xxvi. 22. Ps. lii. 2—4 cix 22.
g x. 1. xiii 1. 18. 1 Sam ii 23—25. 2 Sam. xv 1—6. 1 Chr. xxii. 11—13 xxviii. 9. 20 ——h 31, 32. i. 23. vi 23. xix. 29 xxv. 12. Ps. cxli. 5. Tit i. 13. ii 15. i 16. viii. 21. xiii 22 xxi. 20. Ps. cxii. 3 Heb xi. 26.——k x 22. xvi. 8. Job xx. 19—23. Ps. xxxvii 16. Ec. iv. 6. v. 10—14. Jam. v. 1—3.

l Ps xxxvii. 30. xlv 2 li 13—15 lxiii. 5—8. lxxviii 2—6. cxix. 13. Ec. xii. 9, 10. Cant. iv. 11 Matt. x 27. xxviii 18—20 Mark xvi. 15. Acts xvi. 9, 10. Rom x. 14—17. xv. 18—21. Eph. iv 29 2 Tim. ii 2
m x 20. 21 Mat. xii 34. Jam. iii. 6.
n xxi 27 xxviii. 9. Is i 10—15. lxi. 8. lxvi. 3. Jer. vi 20. vii. 21, 22, 23. Amos v. 21 22
o 29 1 Chr xxix 17 Ps. xvii. 1. Cant ii 14
p iv. 19 xxi. 8.
8. Ps. i. 6. cxlvi. 8, 9. Matt. vii. 13.——q Jer. xliv. 4. Hab. i. 13.——r xxi. 21. Is. li. 1. 7. Hos vi. 3. 1 Tim vi 11. 2 Tim. ii 24.——‡ Or, *instruction*.——s xii. 1. xiii. 1. xxiii. 35. 1 Kings xviii. 17. xxi. 20. xxii. 8. John iii. 20. vii. 7.——t i. 29. v. 12. x. 17. Is. i. 5, 6. Ez. xxiv. 13, 14.

'return worse to those which are given them; endeavour-'ing to overcome by sharpness and bitterness, not by lenity 'and moderation.' (*Bp. Patrick.*

V. 2. Wise men know how to communicate knowledge, as circumstances require, in the most acceptable and useful manner: but even the learning and right notions which wicked men obtain, as well as their errors and follies, are poured out so indiscriminately, that they do more harm than good. It is indeed evident, that many have good capacities and considerable knowledge, who totally want judgment and discretion for improving them.

V. 3. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 4. "The healing of the tongue is a tree of life." When a man is able and willing to speak for the instruction of the ignorant, the encouragement of the troubled conscience or afflicted heart, the calming of the spirits of those who are enraged, and the healing of differences among neighbours, his tongue is as a tree of life; it will, as it were, create a paradise around him, and exceedingly promote the comfort, peace, and salvation of mankind. But proud, passionate, scurrilous, and exasperating language, makes breaches upon a man's spirit; it throws him off his guard, distresses his mind, misleads his judgment, excites his anger, and brings guilt on his conscience. The same word signifies both *spirit* and *wind*. 'Perverseness,' in the tongue, 'is like a blustering wind among the boughs of 'the trees; rending and tearing the life and spirit of a 'man's self and others.' (*Bp. Hall.*)

V. 5. (*Note*, xiii. 1.) 'He that profits by instruction 'and correction, when a child, is likely to become a pru-'dent man.'

V. 6. A moderate provision, a contented mind, and confidence in God, are an inestimable treasure in the house of the righteous, both for the good of them, and of their children after them. But the large revenues of wicked men increase their fears and suspicions; add strength to their passions, augment their pride and impatience of contradiction, expose them to envy and enmity, engage them in discords, tempt them to inordinate and injurious indulgence, bring guilt upon their consciences, and render the fears of death and judgment doubly distressing.

V. 7. Knowledge, like wealth, is valuable in proportion as it is communicated with prudence and propriety. To acquire useful knowledge, therefore, is a great object to a wise man, who would glorify God and do good; but to find out, and embrace opportunities of communicating it, in the most extensive measure, and in such ways as render the imparted instruction permanent in its effects, is the grand improvement of the talent, when acquired, and of the influence it gives. Thus the apostles scattered the knowledge of Christ by preaching and writing, through the nations; and the fruit remains to this day. But men of knowledge, who do not impart instruction, are *misers* among the learned, in the world and in the church: and ignorant men have nothing worth communicating, so that they are beggarly, lazy spendthrifts.

V. 8, 9. The most costly sacrifices of the wicked, under the Mosaic law, must have been an abomination to the Lord; because their whole way was abominable to him, and because of their corrupt motives: and the case is precisely the same, with all external acts of worship, nay, with the largest oblations and most liberal alms, of the impenitent and unbelieving, under the Christian dispensation. For, by them, they either mean nothing determinate, or they intend to cover their sins, to bribe their Judge, to make compensation for past, or to purchase indulgences for future transgressions; they put their services in the stead either of Christ's atonement, or of holy obedience; they present them with hypocritical hearts; and they grossly affront the holy God, by supposing that he can be imposed on by forms or gifts, or pleased by them whilst they are enemies to his justice, his authority, and his grace. But will the greatest of sinners, if he desires to repent, or seek salvation, be rejected? By no means: when this desire brings the poor murderer, or thief, to cry for mercy in the Redeemer's name, he begins to offer "the prayer of the upright, in which God delighteth:" and may be sure of acceptance, in proportion as he is ashamed on account of former crimes and present unworthiness; and as in brokenness of heart he dares not lift up his eyes unto heaven, but at a humble distance, smites upon his breast, crying, "God be merciful to me, "a sinner." Such intimations, under the law, were a kind of prophecy, that another and more spiritual dispensation was at hand.

V. 10. 'He that swerveth from the word of God can-

11 [u] Hell and destruction *are* before the LORD: how much more then [x] the hearts of the children of men?

12 A [y] scorner loveth not one that reproveth him: [z] neither will he go unto the wise.

13 A [a] merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: but [b] by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.

14 The [c] heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge: but [d] the mouth of fools feedeth on foolishness.

15 All the days [e] of the afflicted *are* evil: [f] but he that is of a merry heart *hath* a continual feast.

u xxvii. 20. Job xxvi. 6. Ps. cxxxix 8. Rev. i. 18.
x 2 Chr. vi. 30. Ps. vii. 9. xliv. 21. Jer. xvii. 10. John ii 24, 25. xxi 17. Acts i. 24. Heb iv. 13. Rev. ii. 23.
y 10. ix. 7, 8. Am. v. 10. John iii. 18—21 vii 7. 2 Tim. iv. 3
z 2 Chr. xviii. 7
a 15. xvii. 22. 2 Cor i. 12
b xii. 25. xviii. 14. Neh. ii. 2 John xiv. 1. 2 Cor. ii. 7. vii. 10
c i 5. ix. 9. 1 Kings iii. 6—12. Ps. cxix. 97. 100 Acts xvii. 11. 2 Pet iii. 18
d xii. 23. Is. xxx. 10 xliv. 20. Hos. xii. 1.
e Gen xxxvii 35. xlvii. 9. Ps xc. 7—9.——f xvi. 22. Acts xvi. 25. Rom. v. 2, 3. 11. xii. 12 2 Cor. i. 5. 12. vi. 10. 1 Pet. i. 6—8. iv. 13.

16 Better *is* [g] little with the fear of the LORD, than [h] great treasure and trouble therewith.

17 Better *is* [i] a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.

18 A [k] wrathful man stirreth up strife: but [l] *he that is* slow to anger appeaseth strife.

19 The [m] way of the slothful *man is* as an hedge of thorns: but [n] the way of the righteous *is* * made plain.

20 A [o] wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish man [p] despiseth his mother.

g xvi. 8. xxviii. 6. Ps. xxxvii. 16. 1 Tim. vi. 6.
h x. 22. Ec. ii. 10, 11. 18—23. v. 10—12.
i xvii. 1. xxi. 19. Ps. cxxxiii. Phil. ii. 1 1 John iv. 16.
k x 12 xxvi. 21. xxviii 25 2 Sam. xix. 43. xx. 1. Jam. iii. 14—16.
l 1. xxv. 25. Gen. xiii. 8, 9 Judg. viii 1—3. 1 Sam. xxv. 24, &c. Ec. x. 4. Matt v. 9. Acts vi. 1—5. Jam. i. 19, 20.
m xxii. 5. 13. xxvi. 13. Num. xiv. 1—3. 7—9.
n iii 6. viii. 9. Ps. v. 8 xxv 8, 9. 12 xxvii. 11. Is xxx 21. xxxv. 8.——* Heb. *raised up as a causeway* Is. lvii. 14——o x 1. xxiii 15, 16. xxix 3. 1 Kings i. 48. ii. 9. v. 7., Phil. ii. 22.——p xxiii. 22. xxx. 17. Ex. xx. 12. Lev. xix. 3.

'not abide to be admonished.' Sharp and grievous rebukes must be inflicted on him that refuseth instruction: and if he set himself against these, he will finally perish, as incorrigible.

V. 11. *Abaddon*, the word here rendered *destruction*, sometimes means *the devil, the destroyer:* and the verse may denote, that the deepest machinations of the prince of hell, and of all his legions of fallen angels, are open to the Lord's inspection, and must end in their disappointment and deeper torment: how then can man, who is so inferior in sagacity and subtlety, expect to hide his counsels from God, or to prosper in rebellion against him? (*Marg. Ref.*) 'There is nothing so deep and secret, that can be hid from 'the eyes of God, much less man's thoughts.'

V. 12. "Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, "neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be re-"proved: but he that doeth truth cometh to the light, "that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are "wrought in God." (*John* iii. 20, 21.)—"Behold a "greater than Solomon is here."

V. 13. (15.) A peaceful conscience, a joyful hope, and a contented mind, give habitual and substantial cheerfulness, conduce to health, and tend greatly to a man's success in every useful undertaking.—But a gloomy, unthankful, envious, impatient spirit, arising from pride, an evil conscience, and attachment to worldly objects, and disappointments about them, breaks the spring and vigour of the mind, and renders a man uneasy to himself and others, as well as inactive and unfit for service.

V. 14. *Feedeth, &c.* Empty, curious speculations, or the imposture of the day, are the very *food* of profane and sensual minds; who can credit any absurdity, if it do not disquiet their consciences, affront their pride, or militate against their lusts. Such foolish persons are found in every age, of every rank, and among the learned as well as the unlearned. As the ignorant can feed upon transubstantiation, purgatory, and indulgences, or the wildest absurdities of enthusiasm: so learned men can relish the more refined, but not less absurd, speculations of skeptics and infidels; till professing themselves wise, they become fools, doubt of every thing, or even deny the existence of the God that made them. Alas! how do the mouths of numbers, not only pour out such foolishness, but greedily devour it, as if it were the most delicious and wholesome food of the soul!

V. 15. Affliction, or poverty, without a cheerful spirit, renders a man's life wretched; but with it much habitual satisfaction may be enjoyed, even in very unfavourable circumstances. 'A mind conscious of good intentions, 'though success be wanting, affords truer and purer joy, 'than all that the world can furnish a man withal.' (*Lord Bacon.*)—The original is *good of heart*, and seems to denote that inward peace, which springs from the testimony of conscience, and submissive confidence in God. Some render the clause, "The good of heart, are a continual "feast:" Their company is peculiarly pleasant and desirable.

V. 16. (*Notes, Ps.* xxxvii. 16.)

V. 17, 18. 'The meanest fare with the love of him 'who invites, and with agreement among the guests, is 'much better than the most sumptuous entertainments of 'him that hates us, or among those that quarrel.—A man 'prone to wrath will easily disturb the most peaceable 'companies: but a meek and patient person is so far from 'raising strife, that he will endeavour to compose it, where 'he finds it begun by others.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) Thus some connexion has been supposed between these two maxims: but each of them is capable of a much more extensive application; in respect of the true enjoyment of life, and the peace of families, neighbourhoods, churches, and nations. "If there be any comfort of love." "Blessed are the "peace-makers." "For the wrath of man worketh not the "righteousness of God." (*Note* 1.)

V. 19. Whatever a sluggard has to do, seems full of intolerable difficulties: like a man's forcing his way repeatedly through a hedge of thorns: and indeed his delays tend to increase his perplexities, and expose him to many sufferings, which a prudent and upright attention to every duty in its proper season would have prevented: "But the "way of the righteous is *cast up*, or *paved*;" so that he proceeds with ease and safety.

V. 20. (*Note* x. 1.) It is very common for a heedless young man to consider his disregard to the prudent and pious admonitions of an aged mother, as a proof of wit,

21 Folly *is* [q] joy to *him that is* * destitute of wisdom: but [r] a man of understanding walketh uprightly.

22 [s] Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellors they are established.

23 A man hath [t] joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word *spoken* † in due season, [u] how good *is it!*

24 The [x] way of life *is* [y] above to the wise, [z] that he may depart from hell beneath.

25 The LORD will [a] destroy the house of the proud: [b] but he will establish the border of the widow.

26 The [c] thoughts of the wicked *are* an abomination to the LORD: [d] but *the words* of the pure *are* ‡ pleasant words.

27 He [e] that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; [f] but he that hateth gifts shall live.

28 The [g] heart of the righteous studieth to answer; but [h] the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things.

29 The LORD *is* [i] far from the wicked: but [k] he heareth the prayer of the righteous.

30 The [l] light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart: *and* [m] a good report maketh [n] the bones fat.

31 The [o] ear that heareth the reproof of life [p] abideth among the wise.

32 He that [q] refuseth § instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that ‖ heareth reproof * getteth understanding.

q x. 23. xiv. 9. xxvi 18, 19. * Heb. *void of heart.* xi. 12. *Marg.* r xiv. 16. Job xxviii 28 Ps. cxi. 10. Eph v. 15. Jam. iii. 13. s xi 14. xx. 18. Ec. viii. 6. t xii. 14. xvi. 13. xxiv. 26 xxv. 11, 12. Eph. iv. 29 † Heb. *in his season.* Ec. iii. 1. Is. i. 4. u 1 Sam xxv. 32, 33 x vi. 23. Ps. xvi. 11. cxxxix. 24. Jer. xxi. 8. Matt. vii. 14. John xiv. 6. y Phil iii. 20. Col. iii. 1, 2. z iii. 18. v. 5 vii 27. ix. 18. xxiii 14. a xii. 7. xiv. 11. Job xi. 11—13. Ps. lii. 1. 5. cxxxviii. 6. Is ii 12. Dan v. 20. 1 Pet v. 5. b Deut x. 17, 18 Ps. lxviii. 5, 6 cxlvi. 9 Jam. i. 27.——c vi 16—18 xxiv. 9 Jer. iv. 14. Matt xv. 19.——d 23. Ps xix. 14 xxxvii. 30, 31 xlv. 1. Matt xii 34—37.——† Heb *words of pleasantness*

e i. 19. xi. 29. xx. 21. Deut. vii. 26. Josh. vi. 18 vii. 11, 12. 24, 25 1 Sam viii. 3—5. 2 Kings v. 27 Is v. 8—10. Jer. xvii 11. Hab. ii. 9—11 Zech. v. 3, 4. f xxviii. 16 xxix. 4. Ex. xviii. 21 xxiii. 8 Deut. xvi. 19. Is. xxxiii. 15, 16. g 2. xvi. 23. 1 Kings iii 23—28. Ec. v. 2. 6. 1 Pet iii. 15. h x. 19 xiii. 10. xxix. 11. 20. Ec. x. 12—14. Matt. xii 34. Tit. i. 10, 11 Jam. iii. 6—8. 2 Pet ii. 18. i Ps. lxxiii. 27 cxxxviii 6. Matt xxv. 46. Eph. ii. 12, 13. k 8. Ps. xxxiv. 15, 16. lxvi. 18, 19. cxlv 18, 19. Is. lviii 8, 9. John ix. 31. Rom. viii. 26, 27. Jam. v. 16—18 1 Pet iii. 12.——l xiii 9. Ezra ix. 8. Ec. xi. 7 Rev. xxi. 23. xxii. 5. m xvi. 22. xxv 25. Ps lxxxix 15. Luke ii. 10—19.——n iii. 8 Is. lviii. 11.——o 5. i 23. ix. 8, 9 xiii. 20. xix 20 xxv 12. Is lv 3.——p 1 John iii. 19.——q i. 24, &c. v. 11, 12. viii 33—36 Ps l. 17 Heb xii. 25.——§ Or. *correction* xxix 1. Is i. 5. Jer. v. 3. Ez. xxiv. 13, 14.——‖ Or. *obeyeth* v. 13 Deut xxi. 18. 20. Matt. vii 24—27. Jam. i 22 Rev. iii. 19.——* Heb. *possesseth an heart.* 14. 21 *Marg* xvii. 16. xviii. 15.

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spirit, or superior understanding; and even to turn them into ridicule among his gay companions: but this maxim may show such youths what their true character is in the sight of God, and in that of all wise men.

V. 21. (*Note*, x. 23.)

V. 22. (*Note*, xi. 14.) Where no *secret* consultation is held on the means of accomplishing important purposes, or where *secrecy* is not observed by those concerned, disappointment may be expected: but among a number of faithful counsellors the best measures for establishing the design, and of securing success, will be suggested.

V. 23. When a wise and pious man is enabled to speak to the purpose, and to time his observations well, so that they prove evidently *words in season*, and produce the desired effect, immense good may be done, which many will see and acknowledge; and this will be to him a source of satisfaction and a cause of gratitude. Some connect this with the preceding verse. When prudent and seasonable advice is given by any one, amidst a multitude of counsellors, which the rest had not thought of; so that the success of the measure was owing to it: such a man shall "have "joy by the answer of his mouth." No words can express how useful one permanent and seasonable remark may prove. 'If we will have our talk comfortable, we 'must wait for time and season.'

V. 24. The way of life is above the reach and conception of sensualists, and of those who despise divine instruction: it is also above the revolutions of this unstable world. Being of heavenly origin, it raises the heart to the love of those things which are above. And the treasure, and the heart being in heaven, wise men depart further and further from the ways that lead to hell beneath. 'He that is 'truly wise, hath his conversation and affections above: and 'in the holy way of obedience walketh on unto eternal 'life.'' (*Bp. Hall.*)—If *life*, in this verse, means any thing more than continuance in this world, *hell beneath* cannot mean *the grave*, but the place of future misery: otherwise, where is the contrast?

V. 25. The proud and insolent often trample on the poor, whilst they despise God, and scorn submission. But though they build grand *houses* and get large estates by oppression and wrong, and leave flourishing families, in a little while those will be crushed, and justice done to the orphans and widows whom they have despoiled. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 26. Wicked designs and contrivances, though not accomplished, are abominable to God, and will accordingly be punished: but the pious and benevolent discourse of those who "have purified their souls, in obeying the truth "through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love," are acceptable to him; even when little more is in their power, or when their endeavours to do good fail of success.

V. 27. The covetous man will let none of his family have any rest or enjoyment. Greediness of gain often tempts men to embark in projects which entail ruin on their families; to commit perjuries, or to take bribes, which cause perhaps their estates to be confiscated; or to use such iniquitous methods of growing rich, as bring the curse of God on all their possessions, which descend to their heirs with that dreadful encumbrance. But he who hateth bribes, and every dishonest or unseemly gain, shall live in credit and comfort.

V. 28. (*Note* 23.)

V. 29. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 30. The works of creation and the various objects that we behold, give great pleasure to the mind, and endear to us the light of the sun, and the organs of sight: and good tidings cheer the heart, and conduce to health. How delightful then must it be to the humble sinner, to hear the good report of salvation, and to have the eyes enlightened to behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ! Many understand the *good report*, or *hearing*, of the pleasure arising from a good character. 'Nothing makes a 'man so cheerful in well-doing, as to hear a fair report of 'his own honest actions; or to receive the good news of 'the well doing of other virtuous men.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) But any other really *good news* may have a similar effect.

r i. 7. viii. 13 Job xxviii. 28. Ps. xxxiv. 11. cxi. 10.

33 The [r] fear of the LORD *is* the instruction of wisdom; [s] and before honour *is* humility.

s xviii. 12. xxv. 6, 7 xxix 23. Luke xiv. 11. Phil. ii. 5–11. Jam. iv. 10. 1 Pet. v. 5.

V. 31, 32. (*Notes*, i. 5, 6. ix. 7—9.) A humble teachable temper, attended with patient and obedient endurance of reproof, is one of the "things which accompany salvation." This man "possesseth an humble heart," (*Note*, xvii. 16.)

V. 33. The grand instruction of heavenly wisdom, is this, 'Fear God, submit to him, and obey him:' and humility is the fore-runner and preparation for genuine honour. 'God exalteth none, but them that are truly humbled.' (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—18.

What inexhaustible mines of wisdom are contained in the sacred Scriptures! Every chapter we consider forms a rich vein of this invaluable ore, and our researches serve only to convince us, that we are as yet working merely on the surface! May the Lord give us a heart to value, and to labour for, and to appropriate these treasures, that we may be of good understanding in "the way of godliness!" As "the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, "gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good "fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy;" it always dictates those "soft answers which turn away wrath, and "bridles the tongue from uttering the grievous words that "stir up anger:" even when the sarcastical wit and ingenuity of them are suited to gain the applause of the ill-judging multitude. He that is humble and meek shuns all dispute, whenever he can do it with a clear conscience: He appeases anger, and disarms resentment by every reasonable concession. He uses his influence to calm the passions of others; to terminate or prevent litigations and controversies; to promote peace among his neighbours and among his fellow-christians, as far as truth and holiness will admit of it. Thus he leads, comparatively, a happy life, and is a blessing to others: for "the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace;" but "where envy and strife are, there is confusion and "every evil work." Yet, alas! those wrathful men that stir up the fire of strife, provided they have wit or eloquence, are most admired, not only in the world, but even in the church: and are the great favourites of the several sects and parties, into which it is unhappily divided In this view, however, how important is the use or abuse of the tongue!—For "A healing tongue is indeed a tree of "life; but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit." Nor can the mischief be conceived, which is continually done, while "the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness, impiety, and profligacy, and every pernicious principle; and while others, no wiser than they, but not such proficients in the school of profaneness, relish and feed on their foolishness. Yet this unruly member, which is full of deadly poison; yea, a fire, a world "of iniquity,—"which setteth on fire the whole course of nature, and "is set on fire of hell:" is also one main instrument, which God employs in displaying his own glory and promoting the cause of truth and righteousness on earth! For "a good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, "bringeth forth good things." He hath understanding, and he seeks knowledge: "the word of Christ dwells in "him richly, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;" and thus he learns to "use knowledge *aright*." For it is not enough to speak things that are true and good: but much wisdom is required to adapt our discourse to the occasions which present themselves: that by a due respect to the character, circumstances, and wants of the persons addressed, we may speak to the case decisively, and so as to obviate objections and evasions; whether our object be to silence gainsayers, to rectify mistakes, to preserve those that are in danger of being deceived, to encourage the desponding, to conciliate those that are entering into contention, or to convince the prejudiced. In this way "the lips "of the wise disperse knowledge:" they learn the instructions of life from each other, and then communicate them in their circles, whether as ministers or private Christians, and thus render many wise unto salvation, who at length become able to teach others also. They who would be qualified for such useful services, and employed in them, must begin by welcoming instruction and even reproof; and by learning to profit by their own mistakes; for he who proudly or carelessly refuses instruction, despises his own life and the interests of his immortal soul: but he who with docility, seriousness, and humility, can bear to be reproved for his faults, and convinced of his errors, will always be getting understanding. In like manner, when any one thankfully and patiently hearkens to the admonitions of the Scriptures, and takes pleasure in faithful instruction; though he finds himself continually condemned for one part or other of his conduct: when he evidently loves those who reprove him, and prefers the company of wise and pious men, from whom he may learn some salutary lessons: we may confidently expect that he will become a wise and useful man. But when he, who is evidently in the path of ruin, is offended with those that would set him aright: when he imbibes a strong prejudice against every one who rebukes him, and despises even a father's admonition, when he shuns the company or ministry of those that point out to him his guilt and danger; there is too great reason to fear that he is a scorner, who hates to be reformed, and is bent on his own destruction: for "correction is grievous to him that forsaketh the way, "and he that hateth reproof shall die."—Forgetfulness of God is the great source of all the other sins and follies into which men are hurried by their passions; for did they well consider that "the eyes of the LORD are in every "place, beholding the evil and the good: and that "hell and destruction are before him; much more the "hearts of the children of men;" they must be restrained in their evil courses by dread of his almighty indignation. But "God is not in all their thoughts;" and therefore their ways are an abomination unto him. Would we then be found among those who "follow after righteousness," and "whom the LORD loveth;" let these thoughts be habitually in our minds. "Thou God seest me;" thou seest my most secret desires and motives; "Thou requi-"rest truth in the inward parts." "The sacrifice of the "wicked is an abomination to thee, but the prayer of the

CHAP XVI.

Maxims of wisdom, relating to the providence of God; the power and duty of kings; the evil of pride, calumny, discord, and violence; and the excellency of prudence, meekness, and integrity, 1—33.

"upright is thy delight." For these considerations are peculiarly suited to arm our minds against temptation; and to animate our hope of his mercy and favour. It is of great importance to have right principles early imprinted in the minds of young persons. Alas, how few parents continually endeavour, by instruction, conversation, and example, to convince their children, that "Better is a little "with the fear of the LORD, than great treasure, and "trouble therewith!" How few seem to believe it themselves! yet it is the sure testimony of God; and confirmed by universal experience and observation. For indeed "godliness with contentment is great gain;" and they who possess it, have all and abound, even when the carnal eye sees very little; they have treasures in heaven, and treasures in the heart, and in the house: their present wants are supplied, and the Lord is with them as their Portion, and their Treasurer to supply their temporal wants, without the cares, troubles, and temptations, which accompany the revenues of the wicked. Brotherly love and harmony likewise spring from love to God, and their sense of his love to them: and this renders a dinner of herbs more relishing, than the most luxurious feasts of those who "are living in malice and envy, hateful, and "hating one another." And as riches too commonly increase pride, and furnish abundant causes of litigation; the rich are seldom exempt from wrath, envy, and strife, which spoil all their enjoyment. By faith and prayer, they who fear the LORD and hope in his mercy, derive from him inward consolations: the discoveries which they make of the glory of God and the excellency of heavenly things, rejoice their hearts; and the glad tidings and precious promises of the Gospel, comfort and nourish their souls. A merry heart thus obtained maketh a cheerful countenance, and is a continual feast: but all other mirth is madness. Nay, even the sorrow of the world worketh death; cares, fears, disappointments, loss of friends, and other trials, when there is no hope in God or submission to him, induce sullen despondency, break the spirit, render life miserable, shorten a man's days, or even tempt him to suicide. But the grace of God teaches patience and thankfulness for remaining unmerited mercies, and inspires hope; and thus enables a man to be joyful in tribulations. Even godly sorrow has its peculiar sweetness and supports; it breaks the heart into a penitent and submissive frame, and makes way for joy in the Lord. And if any pious persons are dejected, this arises either from some misapprehension, or from the want of a more single and devoted frame of mind. We should therefore cultivate cheerfulness; lest we bring an evil report on our profession, and cause the unexperienced to conclude that we serve a hard master, and that wisdom's ways are not pleasantness and peace.

V. 19—33.

A considerable part of the miseries of life, and even of the disconsolation of professed Christians, arises from sloth and procrastination, which also very generally occasion the ruin of men's immortal souls. For the way of the sluggard is, in every thing, like pressing through a thorn hedge: a thousand hinderances and difficulties obstruct his path, which he has not vigour to break through: thus many are all their life uneasy, because indolent; they live in continual war with their own consciences, and in doubt about their state, because in continual neglect of some part of their duty: but the path of the wise and consistent Christian, who is diligent in his proper work, and exercises himself to have a conscience void of offence, becomes plain and pleasant. In like manner, many form very good designs, which come to nothing for want of due deliberation and advising with prudent counsellors: and thus disappointment enhances their uneasiness; whilst a man's purposes being established gives him inward satisfaction. That greediness of gain also, which springs from ignorance or neglect of a better inheritance, whether a man be rapacious in order to hoard, or to squander, instead of producing an accession to his happiness, proves a perpetual source of uneasiness to himself and family: whereas the disdain of filthy lucre conduces more to comfort than the largest gains of ungodliness possibly could. But this "way of life is above "to the wise;" and fools never raise their hearts or thoughts high enough to desire, or even conceive of, such pleasures, honours, and treasures, as are found in it; but cleaving to the dust, or grovelling in the mire of sinful pursuits, they fall into hell beneath. For, refusing instruction, delighting in folly and mischief, and not so much as regarding whether an aged father or a tender mother rejoice or mourn over them; numbers reduce to practice the abominable thoughts of their hearts, till shame and conscience make little resistance, and till their crimes, by necessary consequence, plunge them into ruin without remedy. But the pure in heart speak such things as are pleasing to God and useful to man, and such as will give them satisfaction when afterwards recollected, especially at the day of judgment. They "study to answer," and often are enabled to speak a word in season, unspeakably more valuable than gold or precious stones: and they will eventually find, that the Lord heard and answered, in the best manner, all their prayers: for He giveth wisdom, strength, victory, and joy. Let then the hearts of those rejoice who seek his face: let the fatherless and widow trust in him; and let the haughty oppressor tremble before him: "for he will destroy the house of the proud, but he "will establish the border of the widow." And let us all remember that the fear of God is the instruction of wisdom; and that before durable honour is humility: for he causes every man to feel his own vileness and poverty, before he confers on him wisdom, righteousness, honour, and immortality; or employs him in any very honourable and useful service.

a Ps. x. 17. cxix. 36. Jer. x. 28. xxxii. 39, 40. Ez. xxxvi. 26, 27. Phil. ii. 13. Jam. i. 16—18.
* Or, *disposings*.
xxi. 1. 2 Chr. xviii. 31. Ezra vii. 27. Neh. i. 11. 2 Cor. viii. 16.
b Ex. iv. 11, 12. 15. Jer. i. 7—9. Matt. x. 19, 20. Luke xii. 11. 12. xxi. 14, 15.
c 25. xxi. 2. xxx. 12. 1 Sam. xv. 13, 14. Ps. xxxvi. 2. Jer. ii. 22, 23. Luke xviii. 9—11. Rom. vii. 7—9.
d v. 21. xxiv. 12. 1 Sam. xvi. 7. Is. xxvi. 7. Jer. xvii. 10. Dan. iv. 27. Luke xvi. 15. Rev. ii. 18. 23.——† Heb. *Roll*.——e Job v. 8. Ps. xxxvii. 4, 5. lv. 22. Matt. vi. 25, &c. Luke xii. 22. Phil. iv. 6. 1 Pet. v. 7.——f Job xxii. 18. 18. vii. 5—7——g Is. xliii. 7. 21. Rom. xi. 36. Rev. iv. 11.——h Job xxi. 30. Rom. ix. 22. 1 Pet. ii. 8. 2 Pet. ii. 3. 9.——i vi. 16, 17. viii. 13. Job xi. 12. Jam. iv. 6.

a THE * preparations of the heart in man, b and the answer of the tongue, *is* from the LORD.

2 All c the ways of a man *are* clean in his own eyes; d but the LORD weigheth the spirits.

3 † Commit e thy works unto the LORD, and f thy thoughts shall be established.

4 The g LORD hath made all *things* for himself: h yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.

5 Every one i *that is* proud in heart *is* an abomination to the LORD: k *though* hand *join* in hand he shall not be ‡ unpunished.

6 By l mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and m by the fear of the LORD *men* depart from evil.

7 When a man's ways n please the LORD, o he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.

8 Better p *is* a little with righteousness, than q great revenues without right.

9 A man's r heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps.

k xi. 21.
‡ Heb *held innocent*. Ex. xx 7. Is. iii. 11. Rom. ii 8, 9
l xx 28. Ps. lxxxv. 10. Mic vii. 18—20. Luke xi. 41. John xv. 2. Acts xv. 9. 1 Pet. i. 22.
m viii. 13. xiv. 16. Gen. xx. 11. Neh. v. 9. 15. Job i. 1—8. xxviii. 28. 2 Cor. vii. 1. Eph. v. 21.
n Ps. lxix. 31. Phil. iv. 18. Col. i. 10. iii. 20. Heb. xiii. 21. 1 John iii. 22.
o Gen. xxvii. 41. xxxii. 6, 7. 28. xxxiii. 4. Jer. xv. 11. Acts ix. 1, 2. 19, 20.——p xv. 16. Ps. xxxvii. 16. 1 Tim. vi. 6—9——q xxi. 6, 7. Jer. xvii. 11. Mic. vi. 10.——r 1. xix. 21. xx. 24. xxi. 30. Ps. xxxvii. 23. Is. xlvi. 10. Jer. x. 23.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVI. V. 1. The grace of God alone prepares the heart for every good work; and the wisdom which he gives, dictates every prudent and pious answer and observation which we make. 'From him all holy desires, 'all good counsels, and all just works do proceed:' This is a scriptural and obvious exposition of the verse, as it stands in our translation: but the original does not seem to admit of it. Literally it is, "To man the orderings of the heart; "and from JEHOVAH, the answer of the tongue." Man may form his plans according to the desires of his heart; and he may purpose what he will speak, on any important occasion: but at the last God will so order it, that nothing shall be said but what serves to accomplish his purposes. Thus Baalam could only speak that which God put into his mouth; though his love for "the wages of unrighteousness" made him very desirous of cursing Israel. 'Man revolves 'innumerable thoughts in his mind, but he cannot even lisp 'them, or move his tongue without God.' 'He derideth 'the presumption of man, who dareth to attribute to him-'self any thing, so as to prepare his heart; seeing he is 'not able to speak a word, except God give it him.'

V. 2. Ignorance, pride, and self-flattery render men very partial judges in their own cause; so that in general they vindicate or palliate the most evident iniquity or profligacy, *in their own case*, and still more their neglect of God and religion. But the Lord judges with perfect impartiality, and with complete knowledge of the motives of every heart, and he decides upon every action and character, according to the immutable standard of his holy law: no wonder then that his decisions are so different from those which men form of themselves.

V. 3. Whatever a man undertakes according to the will of God, either in his personal concerns, or in those of a more public nature, he ought to put it into His hands, to be disposed of and prospered by him as he pleases. Then he will avoid anxiety, and cheerfully use the proper means; and his purposes will be established and accomplished, as far as is for his true interest.

V. 4. The Lord orders and governs all things, with a view to the display of his own perfections, that they may be known and adored by his rational creatures; He is his own great end in all his works; and though some of his creatures have apostatized and rebelled against him, even they, though undesignedly, aid in displaying his glory. He is not the author of their wickedness; but he foresaw it, and formed his plan with a view to it. Contrary to their intentions, he uses their agency to accomplish many of his wise and holy purposes: he makes use of the malevolence of some wicked men to execute righteous vengeance on others; and he will at last be glorified by their final destruction, in the day of wrath and revelation of his righteous judgment. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 5. (*Marg. Ref. Note* xi. 21.)

V. 6. Mercy and truth are constantly united in Scripture, when the forgiveness and salvation of sinners are spoken of. "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ:" but nothing can be more contrary to the general tenour of the sacred oracles, than to suppose that the kindness, compassion, or faithfulness of one man to another can *expiate*, (for this the original means,) the guilt of his sins before God. The verse therefore seems to mean, 'By the mercy and 'truth of God, through the promised Saviour,' an expiation has been devised and revealed for taking away the sins of the world, and pardons actually granted to believers; and when sinners are brought to fear God, they repent, and "do works meet for repentance; and walk in newness of life." Some indeed explain it of the happy effects arising from the exercise of mercy and truth, in averting national judgments, and their remarks are worthy attention; but yet the term *covered*, or *expiated*, does not admit of this construction. These things may be a "lengthening of tranquillity;" but they cannot be a *propitiation for sin*.

V. 7. 'The best way to have our enemies reconciled 'to us, is for us first to be reconciled to God.' 'When 'all their actions and designs are such as he approves, he 'inclines those who were their foes to be at peace with 'them.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 8. 'A small estate, honestly got and charitably en-'joyed, is much to be preferred to vast incomes, heaped 'up by oppression, and kept without hospitality.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) So indeed is the scanty maintenance earned by hard but honest labour. (*Note, Psalm* xxxvii. 16.)

V. 9. 'He showeth the folly of man which thinketh 'that his ways are in his own hand; yet is not able to 'move one foot, except God give him leave.' (*Note* 1.) (*Marg. Ref.*)

10 * A [s] divine sentence *is* in the lips of the king: his mouth [t] transgresseth not in judgment.

11 A [u] just weight and balance *are* the LORD's: all the † weights of the bag *are* his work.

12 *It is* [x] an abomination to kings to commit wickedness: [y] for the throne is established by righteousness.

13 [z] Righteous lips *are* the delight of kings; and they love him that speaketh right.

14 The [a] wrath of a king *is as* [b] messengers of death: [c] but a wise man will pacify it.

15 In [d] the light of the king's countenance *is* life; and [e] his favour *is* as a cloud of the latter rain.

16 How much [f] better *is it* to get wisdom than gold? and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver?

17 The [g] highway of the upright *is* to depart from evil: [h] he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul.

18 [i] Pride *goeth* before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.

19 Better *it is* [k] *to be* of an humble spirit with the lowly, [l] than to divide the spoil with the proud.

20 He that ‡handleth a matter wisely shall find good: and [m] whoso trusteth in the LORD, happy *is* he.

21 The [n] wise in heart shall be called prudent: and [o] the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning.

* Heb. *Divination.* Gen. xliv. 5. 15.
s 12. 13. Deut. xvii 18—20. [2 Sam. xxiii. 3, 4. Ps. xlv. 6, 7. lxxii. 1—4 xcix. 4. Is. xxxii. 1, 2. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6.
t Hos. x. 4. Am. v. 7. vi. 12
u xi. 1. xx. 10, 23. Lev. xix. 35, 36. Deut. xxv. 13—15. Ez. xlv. 10. Hos. xii. 7. Am. viii. 5. Mic. vi. 11.
† Heb. *stones.*
x xxviii. 9. Deut. xxv. 16. Luke xii. 48.
y xx. 18. xxv. 5. xxix. 14. Ps. xcix. 4. Rev. xix. 11.
z xiv. 35. xxii 11. Ps. ci. 5—7.
a xx 2. Dan. iii. 13, &c. Luke xii. 4, 5.
b xviii. 11. 2 Kings vi. 31—33 Mark vi. 27.
c Ec. x. 4. Acts xii. 20. 2 Cor. v 20———d xix. 12. Job xxix, 23, 24. Ps. iv. 6. xxi. 6. Acts ii. 26.
e Ps. xxx. 5 lxxii. 6. Hos. vi. 3 Zech. x. 1.
f iii. 15—18. iv. 7. viii 10, 11. 19. Job xxviii. 15, &c. Ps cxix 127 Ec vii. 12 Matt xvi. 26. Luke xii. 21.
g iv. 24—27 Is. xxxv. 8. Acts x. 35. xxiv. 16 Tit. ii. 10—14
h xix. 16. Matt. xxiv. 13 Heb. x 30. Jude 21, 24 Rev. iii 10.
i xi 2. xviii. 12. xxix 23. Esth. iii 5. vii. 10. Is. ii. 11, 12. xxxvii. 10—13. 36. Dan. iv. 30, 31—37. v. 22—44. Ob. 3, 4. Matt xxvi. 33—35. 74. Rom. xi. 20. 1 Tim. iii. 6.
k Ps. xxxiv. 18. cxxxvii. 6. Is. lvii. 15 Matt. v. 3. Luke i. 51—53. xviii. 13, 14
l Ex. xv. 9. Is. ix. 3 x. 6 12—15. liii 12

‡ Or, *understandeth a matter.* viii. 35. xiii. 15. xvii. 2 xix 8. xxiv 3—5. Gen. xli. 38—40 Dan. i. 19—21 Matt x. 16.———m xxii. 19, 20. 1 Chr v. 20. Ps. ii. 12 xxxiv. 8. cxxv. 1 cxlvi. 5. Is xxvi. 3, 4. Jer. xvii. 7, 8. Dan iii. 28 vi. 23. Eph. i. 12, 13.
n 23 x 8. xxiii. 15. 1 Kings iii. 12 Rom xvi 19. Jam. iii. 17.———o 24. xv. 7. xxvii. 9. Ps xlv. 2. Ec. xii. 10. Is. l. 4 Luke iv. 22 John vii 46.

V. 10. As the future is often used for the imperative, in the original Scriptures, (though perhaps not so frequently as translators have supposed;) this verse may be rendered, "Let a divine sentence be in the lips of the king; let not "his mouth transgress in judgment." Undoubtedly this is the meaning of the maxim. It shows how wise and good kings do act, and how all kings ought to act. Their edicts and decisions should, without exception, be the result of heavenly wisdom and justice: and they ought to be the more careful to avoid errors or partial decrees, as there is no appeal on earth from their tribunal. Who would have expected to find in this proverb a proof of the Pope's infallibility? yet it hath actually been brought forward as one! If kings are infallible, much more popes. Arguments must be extremely scarce, where such are alleged.

V. 11. 'If they be true and just, they are God's work, 'and he delighteth therein: but otherwise, if they be 'false, they are the work of the devil, and to the condem-'nation of those that use them.' Kings should not only do justice themselves; but see that their subjects do justice to each other, not thinking the inspection of weights and measures, and such other matters as may prevent fraud and oppression, beneath their notice; as the Lord himself peculiarly notices them, and accounts a just weight and balance his own work, his own appointment and delight.

V. 12, 13. These verses are in some versions rendered imperatively. 'Let it be an abomination to kings,' &c. As wickedness is more pernicious and abominable in kings than in other men, seeing they are the delegates of heaven for the punishment of evil-doers; so they ought to abominate it more than other men, and consider righteousness as the basis and support of their thrones. They should therefore discourage all flatterers, calumniators, officious informers, and lying teachers; and delight in those alone who speak the words of truth and righteousness. They who adhere to our translation feel the necessity of supplying the epithet *good* to the kings of whom they speak.

V. 14, 15. The monarchs of the East had the power of life and death, without any check or control, and often sent messengers to inflict vengeance at once on such as had offended them. A wise man would therefore be very careful not to provoke one so powerful: or if he had inadvertently given offence, he would make every allowable submission in order to pacify him: and many would be candidates for the favour of a sovereign, who could so much promote their prosperity. (*Marg. Ref.*) But this ought to have been an additional reason to these princes, why their frowns and favour should be directed entirely according to the good or bad behaviour of those around them.—The word rendered *pacify*, is the same as that before translated *purge* iniquity, (*Note* 6:) but here man, not God, is spoken of. We may compensate for our offences against our fellow-creatures: but not for our sins against God.

V. 16. 'Wisdom is, after all, eminently preferable to 'all the wealth or preferment which the favour of the 'mightiest princes can bestow.' (*Notes*, ii. iii.)

V. 17. He that is upright before God, goes further and further from evil; as a man travels on a high road, without diverting from it. And in keeping his way, he preserveth his soul. (*Note, Rom.* ii. 7—11.)

V. 18. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 19. He that is unambitious, meek, and contented in a low condition, and associates with the humble and peaceable, better consults his own happiness, than they do, who have the greatest success in pursuing the honours and riches of the world, and in contesting with haughty and rapacious rivals for the same idolized objects.

V. 20. 'He that understands his business thoroughly, 'and manages it prudently, is likely to have good success: 'but none so happy, as he that confides more in the 'LORD than in his own skill and industry.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 21. The man whose wisdom regulates his temper and affections, and directs his conduct, will at length be more honoured for prudence, than many who possess the most shining talents: and if he have the gift of conversing or teaching in a convincing and persuasive manner, he has a vast advantage for communicating the knowledge of divine truth to others. 'Profoundness of wisdom may

22 Understanding *is* [p] a well-spring of life unto him that hath it: but [q] the instruction of fools *is* folly.

23 The [r] heart of the wise * teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips.

24 [s] Pleasant words *are as* [t] an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and [u] health to the bones.

25 There is [x] a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof *are* the ways of death.

26 † He that laboureth, [y] laboureth for himself; for his mouth ‡ craveth it of him.

p x. 11. xiii. 14. xiv. 27 xviii 4. John v. 24. vi. 63. 68
q xv. 2. 28. Matt. xv. 14. xxiii. 16—26. Luke vi. 39. 40.
r xv 28 xxii. 17, 18 Ps xxxvii. 30, 31. xlv 1 Matt. xii 34, 35. Col. iii. 16
* Heb. *maketh wise*
s xii 18. xv. 23 26. xxiii. 16. xxv. 11, 12. xxvii. 9. Deut. xxxii. 2 Cant. iv. 11. John xx. 19—21.
t xxiv 13, 14. Ps. xix 10. cxix. 103. Jer. xv 16.
u iii. 8. iv. 22.
x xiv. 12. Is. xxviii. 15—19. John vii. 47—49. ix. 40. Acts xxvi. 9. 2 Cor xiii. 5 ——† Heb. *the soul of him that* ——y ix. 12. xiv. 23. Ec. vi. 7. 1 Thes. iv. 11, 12 2 Thes iii 8—12 ——‡ Heb. *boweth unto him.*

27 § An ungodly man [z] diggeth up evil: and [a] in his lips *there is* as a burning fire.

28 A [b] froward man ‖ soweth strife: and [c] a whisperer separateth chief friends.

29 A [d] violent man enticeth his neighbour, and leadeth him into the way *that is* not good.

30 He [e] shutteth his eyes to devise froward things: [f] moving his lips he bringeth evil to pass.

31 The [g] hoary head *is* a crown of glory, [h] *if* it be found in the way of righteousness.

§ Heb. *A man of Belial.* 1 Sam. xxv. 17. 2 Sam. xx. 1.
z ii 4. Ps. vii. 14, 15. Is. v. 18. Hab. ii 13.
a Ps. lii. 2—4. lvii. 4. Jam. iii. 6.
b vi. 14. 19. xv. 18. xviii. 8. xxvi. 20—22. xxix. 22. xxx 33. 1 Tim. vi. 3—5. Jam. iii 14—16.
‖ Heb. *sendeth forth.*
c xvii. 9. Gen. ii. 1, &c. 1 Sam. xxiv. 9. Rom. i. 29. 2 Cor. xii. 20.
d i. 10—14 ii. 12—15. iii 31. 1 Sam. xix. 11. 17. xxii. 7—9. xxiii 19—21. Neh. vi. 13.
2 Pet iii. 17.——e vi 12—14. x. 10. Is. vi. 10. Matt. xiii. 15. John iii. 20.——f 27. Mic. vii 3. Matt. xiv. 7, 8. xxvii. 23—26.——g xx. 29. Lev. xix 32. Job xxxii. 6, 7. h Gen. xlvii. 7-10 1 Sam. xii 2—5 1 Chr. xxix. 10, &c. Ec. iv. 13. Luke i. 6. ii. 29, &c. 37, 38. Philemon 9.

'help men to fame and admiration; but it is eloquence 'which prevails in business, and active life.' (*Lord Bacon.*) —This is ingenious; but it can hardly be thought the meaning of the proverb: for the Scriptures by no means recommend that eloquence which often gives bad men and a bad cause the ascendency in the most important transactions; and bears down wisdom, truth, and justice, by its fascinating delusions.

V. 22. 'If fools undertake to instruct others, they only 'make them like themselves.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) Understanding is to the possessor a fountain of life, whence salutary streams flow all around him, communicating the instructions of life to others also: (1 *John* vii. 37—39:) but, on the contrary, fools pour forth foolishness, like poisonous streams, and by their baneful instructions widely propagate vice, impiety, and pernicious errors of every kind. (*Note*, xv. 2.) Some understand the last clause to mean, "It is "folly to instruct fools." It is labour lost. (*Note*, ix. 7—9.)

V. 23. The wise man's self-knowledge and acquaintance with his own heart, in the various circumstances of life, joined with his careful observation of men, will always suggest something proper to be spoken to others, according to their characters and situations: as the accurate knowledge of anatomy directs the experienced and sagacious physician in respect of the causes of diseases, and the methods of cure. Thus he is enabled to communicate knowledge, pertinently, judiciously, and successfully.

V. 24. 'The sweet words of consolation, which come 'forth of a godly heart.' (*Notes*, xii. 18, 19. xxiv. 13, 14.)

V. 25. (*Note*, xiv. 12.)

V. 26. Men must needs labour, for their appetites continually crave supply, and eventually they enjoy the benefit of their labour. Thus we must either labour for the meat which endureth unto everlasting life, or perish. The verse, however, may be translated very differently. "The "soul of him that is troublesome shall suffer trouble, for "his mouth will be turned upon him." 'He cannot speak 'so much as an evil word, but it will return upon him, and 'fly in his own face.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The original word rendered *labour*, signifies either *to take pains*, or *to molest others*.

V. 27. Ungodly men frequently bestow more pains to do mischief, than would be needful in order to do good. They dig for evil, as if delving in a mine for the precious metals; they make diligent search to find out some occasion of discord or calumny, their lips are set on fire of hell, and kindle the flame of contention in families and communities, or the flame of lust in the hearts of others. 'His 'tongue is a burning firebrand, to set all the world in com-'bustion.' (*Bp. Hall.*) The Septuagint thus translates this proverb, 'The perverse man carries perdition on his own 'mouth. The foolish man diggeth up evils to himself; he 'treasures up fire on his own lips.' Hear now the observation of a popish interpreter, and, it is said, one of the most learned and judicious among them, on this passage. 'This 'is apparent by the example of the Spanish Inquisition, 'whereby he that speaks any thing rashly against the faith, 'is *deservedly* delivered to the fire, *which I wish were done* '*every where.*' (*Maldonate.*) 'Thus in the most literal 'sense, this Jesuit's lips are a burning fire, in which he 'would have us not only singed; but devoured.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) Let it not be forgotten that this inquisition still is in existence and active, though the order of the Jesuits is abrogated.

V. 28. In various ways perverse men sow the seeds of strife and mischief. The whisperer, for instance, by hints, surmises, misrepresentations, and slanders, not only sets the nearest friends and relations at variance; but excites jealousies among nobles and princes, whence spring seditions, and destructive wars between nations, and even between the inhabitants of the same nation. Being a child of the devil, he is tormented at seeing others happy, and can only find relief in doing mischief, and rendering mankind miserable. What a hateful, yet what a common character!

V. 29, 30. (*Notes*, i. 10—19. vi. 12—15.) 'Another 'sort' (of the men of Belial,) 'live by rapine, and per-'suade others to enter into their society. With profound 'study they contrive the ruin of others; and the signal 'being given, they furiously execute the mischief they 'have designed.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) 'This man is a furnace 'of mischief:' (the man described in these verses.) (*Sept.*)

V. 31. 'That is, when it is joined with virtue, or else

i xiv. 29 xv. 18. xix. 11 Ps. ciii. 8. Eph. v. 1. Jam. i. 19.
k 19. xxv. 28. Rom. xii. 21. Rev. iii. 21.

32 *He* [l] *that is* slow to anger *is* better than the mighty; [k] and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.

33 The [l] lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof *is* of the LORD.

l Num. xxvi. 55, &c. Josh. vii. 14. xviii. 5. 10. 1 Sam. xiv. 41, 42. Neh. xi. 1. Acts i. 26.

'the older that the wicked are, the more they are to be 'abhorred.'

V. 32. The noblest courage is shown in withstanding and conquering a man's own passions, and in overcoming enemies by kindness; and the most desirable authority is self-government.

V. 33. 'So that there is nothing that ought to be 'attributed to fortune: for all things are determined in the 'counsel of God which shall come to pass.' 'Though 'men cast the lots into the lap of a garment, or into a hollow 'vessel, and thence draw them out again: yet it is the 'LORD who directs entirely in what order they shall come 'out; and so determines the matter in doubt according to 'his pleasure.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) What is *chance* to man, is the *appointment* of God.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—16.

True wisdom greatly consists in a practical conviction of our dependence on God, in every respect. He will assuredly be glorified in or by all his creatures. He hath formed, and he orders, every thing *for himself*, and the display of his own glorious perfections; so that the rebels against his authority cannot finally defeat any of his purposes: for a season they dishonour his name by their sins, and refuse him their tribute of adoration and obedience; but when they have filled up their part in his vast, his universal plan, he will make known his justice, holiness, truth, and power, by executing deserved vengeance on them. Thus while men of every character, according to their prevailing passions, and with all their sagacity, devise their own ways; the Lord, with secret but invincible energy, directs their steps in that manner which coincides with his grand designs. It is not for us to comprehend the manner of his operation, or to solve the difficulties which appear in it to our narrow minds: rather let us beseech him to direct our hearts into the fear and love of his holy name, and our feet into the paths of truth and holiness; that we may willingly glorify him on earth, and that he may be glorified in our eternal salvation. For when we habitually depend on him to prepare our hearts, guide our tongues, and direct our steps; our words and works will be such as we may with comfort commit unto him and his disposal, assured of all desirable success. Humility, which is inseparable from true wisdom, renders a man suspicious of himself, and afraid of the delusions of self-flattery, where eternity is at stake; nay, in the general tenour of his conduct, the humble man is jealous of his heart, lest he should allow of any thing sinful, and not be aware of it: but his only security consists in fervent prayer to him that "weigheth the spirits," after David's example, "Search me, O LORD, and know my heart; "try me and know my thoughts: and see if there be any "wicked way in me." How different is this from the conduct of those who, fearless of being deceived, are offended by the most friendly caution, and count for an enemy every faithful reprover! Let such, however, recollect, that 'Every one that is proud of heart is an abomina-'tion to the LORD:' and should such vain confidence become fashionable, and vast multitudes concur in it; let it be remembered, that "though hand join in hand, they "shall not be unpunished." How evident is it, and yet how seldom considered, that "a little with righteousness "is better than great revenues without right." For however it may be with the princes of the earth, "a divine "sentence is in the mouth of our almighty King; his "mouth transgresseth not in judgment." "Wickedness "is an abomination unto him;" for "his throne is esta-"blished in righteousness." His wrath is infinitely more dreadful than any messengers of death, for man can only "kill the body; but He is able to destroy both body and "soul in hell:" while his favour and the light of his countenance are better than life itself, and far more refreshing to the soul, than fertilizing showers to the parched fields. This is then our grand concern. Man's true wisdom consists in avoiding the wrath, and securing the favour of almighty God: and who can estimate how much "better "it is to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding "rather to be chosen than silver!" Yet who can help observing, how much more men in general labour to get riches, than to get wisdom or how much more pains they take to pacify the indignation, or obtain the patronage of an earthly prince, or minister of state, than to flee from the wrath of God, and secure his invaluable favour! But the true believer is taught another lesson. He is conscious that he has in innumerable instances offended the Lord, and that unless his iniquities be purged away, he must be for ever miserable: he depends for this pardon on the mercy and truth of God in Christ; but in order to obtain an interest in that redemption, he would make every submission, and use every means of grace; and the fear of God induces him to depart from evil, and to copy that mercy and truth on which he relies, and in all things to act with the strictest equity and integrity. And should he in this course meet with enemies and injuries; he dares not attempt to pacify the wrath, or court the favour, of man by sinful compliances: but he perseveres in endeavouring to please God, who hath all hearts in his hands, and who in this way generally influences a man's enemies to be at peace with him; of which experienced believers can often recollect many affecting instances.

V. 17—33.

Nothing is more observable in Scripture, than the repeated warnings against every kind and degree of pride. This hateful vice often shows itself, by self-confidence, and a reliance on men's own wisdom, industry, or ability for success in their selfish designs; forgetting not only that they are sinners, but that they are weak and dependent creatures. Whatever men may imagine, it is certain that this "pride goeth before destruction, and this haughty spirit before a fall:" it generally ends in confusion and disgrace

CHAP. XVII.

Cautions against many vices; a quiet, friendly, and cheerful spirit inculcated; and several wise and pious observations concerning the conduct and events of life, 1—28.

BETTER *is* [a] a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than [b] an house full of * sacrifices [c] *with* strife.

2 A [d] wise servant shall have rule over a son [e] that causeth shame, and shall have part of the inheritance among the brethren.

[a] xv. 17. Ps. xxxvii. 16.
[b] vii 14.
* Or, *good cheer.*
[c] xxi. 9 19
[d] xi. 29. xiv. 35 Gen. xxiv. 3. &c Ec. iv. 13.
[e] x. 5. xix. 26. xxix. 15.

in this world; and, unless abased in true repentance, it will certainly terminate in everlasting misery and contempt. Better then is it to live humbly in some obscure corner, surrounded with penury and contempt, than to share all the riches and distinctions of the sons of ambition and violence. This is the highway of holiness, in which the upright walk with God, and endeavour to depart to a still greater distance from every evil work; and in keeping this way, without deviating on either side, or turning back again into sin or the world, they preserve their souls from the destruction of the wicked. But wisdom also teaches a man to be afraid of deception in so important a concern: for the prudent Christian knoweth, "that there is a way, "which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof "are the ways of death." We cannot please the Lord, if we act with rashness or acrimony: it is our happiness to trust him, but it is also our duty to seek wisdom from him, that we may not intermeddle with matters out of our sphere, or beyond our capacities, and may manage well those affairs which we do undertake: that we may prudently avoid giving needless offence, obviate the ill effects of such as have been given, and do our own business conscientiously, yet quietly and in an affectionate spirit. Thus we shall find good to ourselves and do good to others. Indeed understanding is a well spring of life to him who hath it, and supplies inexhaustible resources of salutary cautions, for the conduct of life: whereas all the instruction, which an ungodly man can give or will receive, is mere folly.—When the Giver of all good is pleased to bestow, not only an enlightened understanding, a sound judgment, and a loving spirit, but the faculty of speaking with energy and propriety, and winning persuasion; the possessor may hope to be very useful in diffusing heavenly knowledge and wisdom. A reputation for prudence gives additional efficacy to a man's admonitions and counsels: and the experience of his heart teaches his mouth, and adds learning to his lips. Such seasonable and useful words, meeting with a teachable disposition in those that hear them, "are pleasant as the honeycomb; being sweet to "the soul, and health to the bones;" giving encouragement to the heart, and directing to the paths of truth and holiness. And surely we ought to be as strenuous in doing good, as wicked men are in doing mischief: but with what perverse diligence do many seek out occasions for slanders and strife! How do they sow the seeds of discord, and kindle the flames of hatred and revenge, by their calumnies, whisperings, and lies! How do many study to commit violence, entice others to sin, and employ the whole extent of ingenuity, to accomplish iniquity, and propagate vice and impiety! Such men live to do mischief, and to treasure up wrath; and pre-eminence in rank, or in abilities, renders them more like Satan, and exposes them to a deeper share in his condemnation: nay, the hoary head of a veteran infidel, debauchee, oppressor, or slanderer, is a ten-fold stigma of reproach. But the hoary head of him, who hath spent his life in doing good, and is found walking without weariness in the way of righteousness, is indeed a crown of glory. This man, though poor, and no way eminent in other respects, is more entitled to respect, veneration, and affection, than the most learned, affluent, or noble of the workers of iniquity. But when wisdom and righteousness belong to him who fills a throne or exalted station; when a king has the just ambition of copying the example of the sovereign Lord of all, by promoting the peace and happiness of mankind, and subserving the interests of true religion; when he abhors iniquity, provides for the impartial administration of justice, and takes all care and pains to promote integrity and equity among his subjects, by his example, and influence, and authority; when the favours shown to upright counsellors, statesmen, magistrates, and ministers of religion, give countenance to piety and virtue; when his wrath is to be dreaded by none but the workers of iniquity; and when a long life hath been spent in this manner, and a king is grown hoary in the way of righteousness, a father to his people, a blessing to the church, and a common friend to mankind: then the summit of earthly honour is attained, and only the crown of glory that fadeth not away, can add any thing to it. Behold a greater than Alexander or Cæsar is here! Incomparably, inconceivably greater. For if being slow to anger render a mean man more honourable and excellent than the mighty, and if the victory over a man's spirit be a more arduous and important achievement than the taking of a fortified city, how honourable is it for one, surrounded with every incentive and opportunity of gratifying his passions, to rule over them with steady authority, and to spend his life in glorifying God and doing good to men! It is true, that none can in these things command success: disappointment and tardy progress must be expected by those who would do good; but this is a labour which will redound to their own advantage, and be satisfying to their souls, though not successful to the extent of their wishes. And having used proper means, they may leave it with comfort: the lot is then cast; and "the whole "disposal thereof is of the LORD."

NOTES.

CHAP. XVII. V. 1. (*Notes*, xv. 17, 18.) 'Where 'were many sacrifices, there were many portions given to 'the people, on which they feasted.' The original is "sacrifices of strife." Sacrifices offered, to furnish an occasion for strife and debate. (2 *Sam.* xv. 10—12. 1 *Kings* i. 8, 9.)

V. 2. Wisdom uniformly tends to advance, and folly to depress men, and this causes a constant fluctuation in human affairs. Indeed the prudent and faithful servant is

3 The [f] fining pot *is* for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the LORD tri-
eth the hearts.
4 A [g] wicked doer giveth heed to false lips; *and* a liar giveth ear to a naughty tongue.
5 Whoso [h] mocketh the poor reproach-
eth his Maker: [i] *and* he that is glad at calamities shall not * be unpunished.
6 [k] Children's children *are* [l] the crown of old men; [m] and the glory of children *are* their fathers.
7 † Excellent [n] speech becometh not a fool: [o] much less do ‡ lying lips a prince.
8 A [p] gift *is as* a § precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it; [q] whithersoever it turneth, it prospereth.
9 He [r] that covereth a transgression ‖ seeketh love; [s] but he that repeateth a matter separateth *very* friends.
10 * A reproof entereth more into a wise man, than an hundred stripes into a fool.
11 An [t] evil *man* seeketh only rebellion: therefore a cruel messenger shall be sent against him.

f xxvii 21. Ps. xxvi. 2. lxvi. 10. Is. xlviii. 10. Jer. xvii. 10. Zech. xiii. 9. Mal. iii. 2, 3. 1 Pet. i. 7. Rev. ii. 23.
g xxviii. 4. 1 Sam. xxii. 7—11 1 Kings xxii. 6, &c. Is. xxx. 10. Jer. v. 31. 2 Tim. iv 3, 4 1 John iv. 5. Rev. xiii. 3—8.
h xiv 21. 31 Ps lxix. 9. 1 John iii. 17.
i xxiv. 17, 18. Job xxxi 29. Jer. xvii. 16. Ob 12, 13. Rom. xii. 15.
* Heb. *held innocent.* xvi 5. *Marg*
k Gen. l. 23. Job xlii 16, 17. Ps. cxxvii. 3—5. cxxviii. 4—6.——l xii. 4.——m Ex iii. 14, 15. 1 Kings xi. 12. xv. 4.——† Heb. *A lip of excellency.*——n xxvi. 7. Ps l. 16, 17. Matt. vii. 5.

o xvi 10—13. xxix. 12. 2 Sam. xxiii 3. Job xxxiv 18. Ps. ci. 3—5.
‡ Heb *A lip of lying.* xii. 19.
p 23 xviii. 16. xix. 6. xxi 14. xxix 4 Ex. xxiii. 8. Deut. xvi. 19.
§ Heb *stone of grace.*
q Gen. xxxiii. 9—11. xliii. 11. 1 Sam. xxv. 35. 2 Sam. xvi. 1—4 Mic vii. 3.
r x 12. Ps xxxii. 1. 1 Pet. iv. 8.
‖ Or, *procureth.*
s xvi 28.
* Or. *A reproof aweth more a wise man, than to strike a fool an hundred times.* ix. 8, 9. xiii. 1. xxiii. 35. xxvii 22. xxix. 19. Ps. cxli 5. Rev. iii. 19
t 2 Sam xv. 12. xvi 5—9 xviii. 15, 16. xx. 1. 22. 1 Kings ii. 24, 25 31. 46. Matt. xxi. 41. xxii. 7. Luke xix. 27.

more valuable, and will often be more respected, than a profligate son the scandal of the family; and his services may very properly be recompensed with some portion of the inheritance; or, he may be employed as guardian to the children, with special authority over "the son that caus-"eth shame." In some way or other, however, he will acquire the ascendency, and be considered more as one of the family, than the degenerate branch of it.

V. 3. Men both prove and refine the precious metals, by the furnace. Thus the Lord, by his providential dispensations, makes an experimental trial of the hearts of rational creatures: he searches out and brings to light what was before concealed; and by manifold experiments he hath shown, that there is no dependence to be placed on any creature, left to itself. In like manner, he has shown what desperate wickedness the human heart contains, and of what enormities it is capable when exposed to suitable temptations, and has detected the hypocrisy of many who were before unsuspected. By similar means he discovers the remaining evil concealed in the heart of true believers; he evidences the reality and the power of his grace in his servants; he makes them sensible, that they need constant watchfulness and dependence, and have great reason to be humble and thankful; and thus he purifies them from pride and sin, forms them to himself a peculiar people to show forth his praise, and prepares them for eternal glory. By these manifold trials of the heart, the Lord also discovers, and will discover to all the world, the justice and holiness, mercy, truth, and wisdom, of his final dealings with all his creatures.

V. 4. Flatterers, calumniators, and liars of various descriptions, especially false teachers, are welcome to those that are living in iniquity or hypocrisy: not only because they love their own image in them; but because they soothe their consciences, buoy up their hopes, keep them in countenance, and help them to cover their crimes and believe their own delusions.

V. 5. (*Notes*, xiv. 21. 31.) Not only he that oppresseth, but he that mocketh, a poor man, or derides him for his poverty, reproacheth God: he treats his providence and his precepts with contempt, and seems to blame his distinguishing care of the poor. And every one, who rejoices, when others fall into calamities, will be condemned, as guilty of detestable envy, malice, selfishness, and presumption.

V. 6. (*Notes*, xvi. 10. 12, 13.) A man's descendants ought to be his honour and comfort in old age. They should be educated in such a manner as may warrant a confidence that their pious and prudent conduct will render them such; and it is their duty to consult the credit of their progenitors, as far as it can be made consistent with superior obligations. And parents should act in such a manner, that their children may be respected for their sakes, and have cause to rejoice in their relation to persons of such piety and wisdom. And thus it will be, in proportion as men attend to the dictates of heavenly wisdom.

V. 7. The wisest maxims, and the most pious remarks, when spoken by a man notorious for his vice and folly, lose their energy and grace, and are received with neglect or disdain: but it is still more inconsistent, when princes, or priests, or other eminent persons, who ought to be the guardians of truth and justice, are so base as to impose upon mankind with lying pretences, and to deceive those that rely upon their veracity.

V. 8. 'A gift is so tempting, that it can no more be 'refused than a lovely jewel, by him to whom it is pre-'sented: and such is its power, it commonly prevails over 'all men, dispatches all businesses, carries all causes, and, 'in a word, effects whatsoever a man desires.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) What a description of the mercenary selfishness of mankind! (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 9. 'He that concealeth an offence done to him by 'his friend, takes the course to preserve love: but he 'that will be calling every little unkindness into question, 'and expostulates on every occasion, will be sure to lose 'his friends.' (*Bp. Hall.*) Repeating grievances, and complaining of men's conduct to us among others, seem especially meant. (*Notes, Matt.* xviii. 15—17.) The word translated *very friends*, signifies *a prince;* and some give the last clause a very different turn. 'He that admo-'nisheth the prince of his fault, maketh him his enemy. (*Notes*, xvi. 28.)

V. 10. (*Notes*, ix. 7—9. xiii. 1. xxvi. 3. xxvii. 22.)

V. 11. Men of a turbulent untractable spirit, (the fool of the preceding verse,) are ever seeking to disturb the peace of the community, and to engage in rebellion, or abet insurrections: but they generally come to an untimely end, by the hand of the executioner; and indeed they must be treated with severity. The proverb is equally applica-

12 Let [u] a bear robbed of her whelps meet a man, [x] rather than a fool in his folly.

13 Whoso [y] rewardeth evil for good, evil shall not depart from his house.

14 The [z] beginning of strife *is as* when one letteth out water: therefore [a] leave off contention, before it be meddled with.

15 He [b] that [c] justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both *are* [b] abomination to the LORD.

16 Wherefore *is there* [e] a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, [f] seeing *he hath* no heart *to it?*

17 A friend [g] loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.

u xxviii 15 2 Sam. xvii. 8 2 Kings ii 24. Hos xiii. 8. x xxvii. 3. Matt. ii. 16
y 1 Sam xxiv. 17. xxxi. 2, 3. 2 Sam xxi. 1, &c. Ps xxxv. 12. xxxviii 20. cix. 4—13. Jer. xviii. 20, 21. Matt. xvii. 5. 25. Rom xii. 17. 1 Thes v. 15 1 Pet iii 9
z 19. xxvi. 21. xxix. 22 Judg. xii 1—6. 2 Sam. ii. 14 27. xix. 41. 43. xx. 1, &c. 2 Chr. x 14—16. xiii. 17 xxv. 17, &c xxviii. 6.
a xiii. 10. xiv. 29. xv. 1. xvi. 32 xix. 11. xx. 3. xxv. 8. Gen xiii. 8, 9. Judg. viii. 1—3. Ec. vii. 8, 9. Matt. v. 39—41. Acts vi. 1—5 xv 2, &c. Rom. xii. 18. 2 Tim. ii. 23, 24 Jam. iii. 14—18.——b xxiv. 23, 24. Ex. xxiii. 7. 1 Kings xxi. 13. Is v. 23. Ez. xxii 27—29 Am. v. 7. 12. vi. 12. Luke xxiii. 18—25 Jam. v. 6.——c Is lv. 8, 9. Rom. iv 5.——d vi 16. xi. 1. xv. 8.——e i. 22, 23. viii 4, 5. ix. 4—6. Is. lv. 1—3. Acts xiii. 46. 2 Cor. vi. 1——f i. 7 25. xiv. 6. xviii 15. Deut v. 29. Ps lxxxi. 11—13 Hos. iv. 11. John iii 20. Acts xxviii. 26, 27——g xviii. 24. xix. 7. Ruth i 16. 1 Sam xviii. 3. xix. 2. xx. 17 xxiii. 16, 2 Sam. i. 26. ix. 1, &c. Esth. iv. 14. John xv. 13, 14. Heb. ii. 11.

18 A man [h] void of * understanding striketh hands, *and* becometh surety in the presence of his friend.

19 He [i] loveth transgression that loveth strife: *and* [k] he that exalteth his gate seeketh destruction.

20 † He that [l] hath a froward heart findeth no good: [m] and he that hath a perverse tongue falleth into mischief.

21 He [n] that begetteth a fool *doeth it* to his sorrow: and the father of a fool [o] hath no joy.

22 A [p] merry heart doeth good ‡ *like* a medicine; but [q] a broken spirit drieth the bones.

23 A wicked *man* [r] taketh a gift [s] out of the bosom, to pervert the ways of judgment.

h vi. 1—5. xi. 15. xx. 16. xxii. 26, 27.
* Heb. *heart.*
i 14 xxix. 9 22. 2 Cor. xii. 20. Jam i. 20. iii. 14—16.
k xvi. 18. xviii. 12. xxiv. 27. 1 Sam. xxv. 36—38. 2 Sam. xv. 1. 1 Kings i. 5. Jer xxii. 13—15. Dan. iv. 30, 31.
† Heb. *The froward of heart.*
l iii. 32 vi. 12—15. viii. 13. Ps xviii 26.
m x. 10. 14. 31 xviii. 6, 7. Ec x 12. Jam iii 6—8.
n 25 xv. 20. xix 13 Gen. xxvi. 34, 35. 1 Sam. ii 32—35 viii. 3. 2 Sam. xviii. 33.
o xxiii. 15, 16. 2 Cor. ii. 3. Philemon 19, 20. 3 John 4.
p xii 25, xv 13. 15 Ec. ix. 7—9. Rom. v. 2—5.——‡ Heb. *to a medicine.*——q Ps. xxii. 15 xxxii. 3, 4. cii. 3—5. 2 Cor. ii. 7. vii 10.——r 8. xviii. 16. Ex. xxiii. 8. Deut. xvi. 19 1 Sam. viii. 3. xii. 3. Is. i. 23. Ez. xxii. 12. Mic. vii. 3. Mark xiv. 11.——s xxi. 14.

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ble to the wicked, who rebel against God, and bring upon themselves his awful vengeance.

V. 12. 'He meaneth the wicked in his rage, who hath 'no fear of God.' It is less dangerous to meet a fierce she-bear, when enraged by having her young ones taken from her, than to encounter a profligate and unprincipled man, when impetuously urged on by his headstrong passions, and provoked to anger by meeting with resistance or disappointment.

V. 13. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'The punishment of ingratitude shall not rest in a man's own person, but descend on 'his posterity, to all generations.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) This is a fair exposition of the proverb; a solemn warning against this hateful sin: but it admits of an exception, in the case of those who carefully avoid the crimes of their wicked parents or ancestors. (*Notes, Ez.* xviii.)

V. 14. When the bank or dam, that confines a large weight of water, is cut, and a small opening made, the current soon forces a wider passage, and a terrible inundation follows from a small beginning. Thus, when any affront is given, and anger begins to rise in the heart, if the least vent be given to it, one passionate and provoking word will bring on another: every retort will widen the breach and increase the violence of resentment: and durable malice or bloody revenge will probably be the effect. It is therefore best to stifle passion, and not to take notice of an offence. For this strengthens the bank, and keeps in the water, without giving it the least passage. 'Therefore, ere the contention be meddled with, leave off.'

V. 15. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 16. The advantages which Providence confers, are a *price* put into men's hands, with which to acquire wisdom: such are a pious education, the instructions and counsels of wise and good men, the preaching of the gospel, and above all the written word of God. But of what use is this price to a fool, who has *no heart* to make use of it, who hates to be reformed, who will not read the Bible, or regard the preacher? He hates the light which condemns his wickedness; and will be condemned, because he would not profit by it. Many explain this of a rich foolish man. 'Of what use are riches to a fool? He has no heart, by means of them to get wisdom.'

V. 17. 'A true friend becomes a brother in adversity. 'He was a friend before; this makes him a brother.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) These maxims show men their duty. No change of outward circumstances should abate our affection for our friends or relatives; we should be constant and persevering in our endeavours to do them good; regard the time of their adversity, as an opportunity of showing disinterested love; and consider ourselves as born into the world and preserved in life, on purpose to help them at those trying seasons when the rest of the world forsakes them.

V. 18. Though it is a man's duty to assist his friends, especially in distress; yet he should not rashly engage for them beyond his ability, to the injury of his creditors, and the ruin of himself and family. Indeed there is great reason to suspect the reality of the friendship of those who would draw others into unreasonable engagements; especially when, being present, their own integrity and solvency are questioned. (*Notes*, vi. 1—5.)

V. 19. A man, who affects magnificence in his buildings and style of living, above his rank and income, goes the way to ruin himself, as certainly as if he intended it: even as a man, who is fond of controversy and contention, acts as if in love with sin and punishment. "He that "loves sin rejoices in fightings." (*Sept.*)

V. 20. (*Notes*, xv. 13. 15.)

V. 21. 'Great is the care which ought to be taken in 'the contract of marriage, and in the education of children; 'for if a son prove vicious and lewd, it will be such an inexpressible grief to his father, that he will take no comfort 'in any thing he enjoys.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 22. (*Note*, xv. 13.) "A joyful heart causeth good "health: but a sorrowful mind drieth the bones." (*Ol Trans.*)

24 Wisdom *is* [t] before him that hath understanding; but [u] the eyes of a fool *are* in the ends of the earth.

25 A [x] foolish son *is* a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him.

26 Also [y] to punish the just *is* not good, *nor* [z] to strike princes for equity.

27 He that hath knowledge [a] spareth his words: *and* a man of understanding is of * an excellent spirit.

28 Even [b] a fool when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: *and* he that shutteth his lips *is esteemed* a man of understanding.

t xlv. 6. xv 14. Ec. ii. 14. viii. 1. John vii. 17. u xxiii. 5. Ps cxix. 37 Ec vi. 9. 1 John ii. 16. x 21. x. 1. 2 Sam. xiii 1 &c. Ec ii. 18, 19. y 15. xviii. 5. Gen. xviii 25. z 2 Sam. iii 23—25. 39. xvi. 7, 8 xix. 7 Job xxxiv. 18, 19. Mic. v. 1 John xviii 22, 23.

a x 19 xv. 28. Jam. i. 19. iii. 2.

* Or, *a cool spirit.* xvi 32. Ec. ix. ix 17. Jam. iii. 17.

b xv. 2 Job xiii. 5 Ec. v. 3. x. 3 14.

V. 23. (*Note*, 8.) No man would be willingly known 'to be bribed to injustice: but there are too many, who 'will suffer themselves to be secretly corrupted by pre-'sents, to give counsel or judgment contrary to law and 'equity.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 24. The prudent man keeps the maxims of wisdom and the oracles of God continually in view, as the rule and measure of his conduct; and thus his attention is fixed upon his path and what relates to it. But the foolish man regards every thing more than his own duty and safety; his thoughts are roving about every vanity, even to the ends of the earth: and he acts as a man would do who, in a narrow way, full of pits and traps, and bordering on tremendous precipices, should be gazing at distant objects, but entirely heedless how he walked, or where he set his feet.

V. 25. Solomon might speak the oftener on this sub 'ject, having an example before his eyes of the great 'weakness of his own son, who it is not unlikely was a 'perpetual grief to him.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) (*Note*, x. 1.)

V. 26. It is very criminal for magistrates to punish those who have not offended, and to oppress and persecute their peaceable subjects: but it is also very wrong for subjects to revile their rulers, or excite insurrections against them, when administering justice impartially, merely because their decrees bear hard upon individuals.

V. 27, 28. A wise man will spare his words, if he cannot speak with a prospect of doing good: he will no more be a prodigal than a miser in the use of this good treasure. Especially he will be slow to speak when he is offended, or to intermeddle in matters not belonging to him, being "of a cool spirit," as the words may be rendered. This command of the tongue and temper are of so good repute, that even an ignorant man may be accounted wise, at the small expense of holding his tongue, as if he were reflecting and learning, instead of speaking to expose his own folly.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—15.

The depravity of human nature is peculiarly discovered, by the very general perversion of divine ordinances into occasions of increasing iniquity. It might have been thought that a house full of peace-offerings, would have been replete with harmony and love; and yet it was frequently full of strife and animosity. The Gospel itself has often been preached out of envy and malice; divine truth has been the watchword of acrimony, abuse, and slander; the cause of God has been pleaded with cruelty and persecution; long prayers have been made the cloak of the basest injustice; and the Lord's table approached from gross ambition and avarice, to secure emoluments, or the expenses of lewdness and intemperance; or to obtain power for the purposes of faction and rebellion. But as it would be far happier to feed upon a dry morsel with quietness, than upon the richest dainties with hatred and contention: so communion with God in secret is preferable, even to public solemnities and the professed communion of the saints, when these prove occasion of strife and contention. If we would keep a clear conscience and a quiet mind, we must shun all incitements to anger: we must suppress the rising emotions of resentment; and reject those hasty suggestions, which to the disordered mind appear pertinent and proper to be spoken, but which prove, like the cutting of a bank, and the letting out of water, and make way for domestic broils, implacable resentments, confusion, and every evil work. These we cannot avoid without much forbearance and prudence: we must learn to give as little offence as we consistently can in our own conduct: we must suppress our passions, when offended; and conceal, or make every candid and honest apology for, the faults of our friends towards each other. Thus he "that covereth transgression seeketh love;" for he that repeateth all that he sees and hears, separateth nearest friends and relations, and does immense mischief, in private and public life, in the world, and even in the church. The Christian has nothing to do with the slanders of the day; or the parties, which pride, selfishness, or resentment form in the world, or in the church. He should also avoid those false teachers, who "privily bring in damnable "heresies," and who may be known by their fruits, and especially in that they are approved and applauded by ungodly men, and by such professors of religion as are of dubious character. He should not regard the good things, which they mix up with these poisonous ingredients, to render them more palatable; for excellent speech becometh not a fool, and must be used by him for some foolish and wicked purpose; and lying lips are not more detestable in a prince, than in a minister of religion: for as the magistrate, who "justifieth the wicked, or condemneth the "just, is an abomination to the LORD;" so is that teacher, who encourageth a wicked man in impenitency, or discourageth the heart of the humble believer, by false doctrine. The love of money has often warped the minds of judges to favour those who brought them large bribes: and wicked men, who can afford it, are ever ready to part with their beloved treasures, to purchase impunity for their crimes; thus, many called ministers "teach things which they "ought not, for filthy lucre's sake;" the rich are often willing to pay well for a quietus to their conscience, and an encouragement to their presumption; and thus they wrap it up, till the day of judgment unfold and discover the infamous business. For to the scandal of human na-

CHAP. XVIII.

Maxims about seeking wisdom; avoiding contention; governing the tongue; the mischiefs of pride, sloth, &c.; the righteous and the rich man's strong tower; and the trials or comforts arising from relations and friends, 1—24.

ture, it is a general rule, (though it admits of exceptions,) that valuable gifts blind men to their interest and duty; and whithersoever they turn they prosper. The good Lord deliver us from the love of money, which is the root of all evil, and teach us to lay up our treasure in heaven, and to set our affections on things above; for otherwise we can never be steadfast in any part of our duty. When these alluring baits are presented to us, we should remember that the Lord our God maketh trial of our hearts, whether we will keep his commandments or not. And by various temptations, as well as afflictions, he distinguishes the hypocrite from the true Christian. May "the trial of our "faith then prove to praise, and honour, and glory at the "coming of Jesus Christ." If ingratitude to our fellow-creatures be so base as to bring a curse on a man and his posterity, how abominable must ingratitude be to our Maker, yea, our Redeemer, the Friend of sinners! How great is his forbearance towards us; and what cause have we to be humble and thankful! It is of great importance, that we receive instruction and take reproof, especially those of the sacred oracles, in good part. This is a test of our wisdom, and tends to exempt us from numberless sorrows and sufferings. For "a reproof enter-"eth more into a wise man, than an hundred stripes into "a fool." This is every one's own concern; for foolish and wicked men are indeed the shame and grief of their parents and relations, and the nuisance of society, being always stirring up strife or rebellion: but they prepare stripes for themselves, if not the rigorous messengers of justice to arrest them and lead them to ignominious death; and afterwards they have nothing to expect, but the wrath and vengeance of an offended God. But a bear bereaved of her young is a faint emblem of the brutal ferocity of exasperated transgressors. We cannot disdain a poor man, or a slave, without reproaching the Lord who hath chosen the poor of this world: nay, the Lord of glory for our sakes became a poor man, and had not where to lay his head. Indeed wisdom and integrity are far more honourable, than riches or noble descent, which only shame their worthless possessors, and render them the scandal of illustrious families: whilst wisdom ennobles and advances the meanest servant, and entitles him to respect and consideration. We should also be very watchful over our own spirits, that we do not fall into the common fault of secretly rejoicing, or openly exulting, over the calamities of other men; lest we should incur the indignation of the Lord. In fine, we should, in every circumstance and relation of life, endeavour to act in that manner which may be most creditable and useful to all with whom we are connected: and so to educate our children as may be most likely to render them blessed and blessings; and this will most effectually tend to our comfort and joy in them.

V. 16—28.

It can never be unseasonable to turn our meditations to Him who is, in the highest and the most important sense, a "Friend who loveth at all times, and a Brother who "was born for adversity." His love to us lost sinners induced him to assume our nature, that he might become our Brother, Friend, and Surety. This was the grandest display of the divine justice, holiness, and abhorrence of iniquity, which any creature ever did, or can behold. Nay, his becoming Surety for us *insolvent debtors*, when he knew how dear the engagement would cost him, was perfectly consistent with it, and a most glorious display of it. For the Lord's ways and thoughts are above ours, even as the heavens are above the earth. Whenever the distressed sinner applies for salvation to the once crucified but now glorified Redeemer, he communicates to him mercy, and grace, and peace: and he is the constant and condescending Friend and Brother of every believer, in the lowest scenes of adversity, in the hottest fire of persecution, in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment. And it is his will that we should be grateful to our earthly benefactors, and forgiving to our enemies; and that we should copy his example of love in our conduct to afflicted friends and relatives, according as they need our help, and we are able to relieve or comfort them, consistent with other duties; but to avoid all rash and perilous engagements. Thus the sacred Scripture in every thing points out to us the path of safety, prudence, and duty: it is an invaluable price put into our hands, to get wisdom, and learn the way of happiness, both in this world and the next. Yet, alas! many have no heart to this wisdom, and are thus proved more egregiously and inexcusably foolish. Indeed we might all have been much wiser than we are, if we had duly valued and improved the advantages afforded us. May the Lord give us an understanding heart, that we may lay this heavenly wisdom ever before us, for the direction of our whole conduct: and may He turn away our eyes from beholding vanity, and our imaginations and desires from roving to the ends of the earth, that we may consider and look well to our goings. If we have trials from the misconduct of our children, we should remember, not only that they derived their evil nature *from us*, but perhaps also imbibed some of their prejudices, and were encouraged in giving loose to their passions, through our examples and neglect; and in that case, we ourselves are in some sense the causes of our own sorrow. We should, however, bear this and every other affliction, with humble patience; and watch against repining and desponding grief, which can only add to our misery, break our spirits, and dry up our bones: and we should cultivate a cheerful frame of mind, which does good as a medicine, to both soul and body. We should also study accurately our duty to all ranks of men; what becomes every order in society, and in what true excellency consists. We cannot leave our proper rank in the community, by emulating our superiors, in equipage, buildings, furniture, or attire, without great folly, sin, and mischief: yet on this fatal rock thousands are continually shipwrecked!—As the Lord will call the

* Or, *He that separateth himself seeketh according to* his *desire, and intermeddleth in every business.* Ex xxxiii 16. Zech. vii. 3. Rom i. 1. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Jude 19.
a ii. 1—6. Matt. xiii. 11, 12. 44. Mark iv. 11. Eph. v. 15—17.
b xiv. 10 xvii. 14. xx. 3. 19. xxiv. 21. xxvi. 17. Is xxvi.8, 9. Jer. xv. 17. Mark i. 35.
c i. 7. 22. xvii. 16. Ps. i. 1, 2. Matt. viii. 31. 1 Cor. viii. 1.
d Num. xxiv. 15, 16. Acts viii. 9, 10. 1 Cor. xiv 12 Phil. i. 15 2 Pet. ii. 15—19.——e xi. 2. xxii. 10. xxix. 16 1 Sam. xx. 30 Neh. iv. 4. Ps lxix. 9. 20. cxxiii. 3, 4 Matt. xxvii. 39—44 §1 Pet. iv. 4, 14.——f x. 11. xiii. 14. xvi. 22. xx. 5. Matt. xii. 34. John iv. 14. vii. 38, 39. Col. iii. 16. iv. 6.

* THROUGH desire a man having separated himself, [a] seeketh *and* [b] intermeddleth with all wisdom.

2 A [c] fool hath no delight in understanding, [d] but that his heart may discover itself.

3 When [e] the wicked cometh, *then* cometh also contempt, and with ignominy reproach.

4 The [f] words of a man's mouth *are as* deep waters, *and* the well-spring of wisdom *as* a flowing brook.

g xxiv. 23 xxviii. 21. Lev. xix 15 Deut i 16, 17. xvi. 19 Job xiii 7, 8. xxxiv. 19. Matt. xxii 16.
h 1 Kings xxi 9—14 Is. v. 23 lix 14 Mic vii 3
i xii. 16 xiii. 10 xiv. 16. xvi 27, 28. xx i 14 xx 3. xxvii. 3.
k xiv. 3. xix. 19. xxii. 24, 25. xxv. 24. xxix. 9
l x 8. 14. xii. 13. xiii. 3. Ec. x. 11—14.
m vi. 2. Judg. xi. 35. 1 Sam xiv. 24, &c Mark vi. 23—28 Acts xxiii. 14, &c.

5 *It is* [g] not good to accept the person of the wicked, [h] to overthrow the righteous in judgment.

6 A [i] fool's lips enter into contention, and [k] his mouth calleth for strokes.

7 A fool's mouth *is* [l] his destruction, and [m] his lips *are* the snare of his soul.

8 The [n] words of a † tale-bearer *are* ‡ as wounds, and they go down into the ∮ innermost parts of the belly.

n xii. 18. xvi. 28. xxvi. 20, 21 Lev. xix. 16. Ps. lii. 2. lxiv. 3, 4 ——† Or, *whisperer.* ‡ Or, *like as when men are wounded.*——∮ Heb. *chambers.*

greatest monarch to account, if he oppress his meanest subject: so will he not hold those guiltless, that speak evil of dignities, and magnify the errors of their superiors, or invent calumnies against them. A man of wisdom and piety will be sparing of his words, and not waste them to such unworthy purposes: he is of a more excellent, because of a more peaceable spirit. Indeed it is an invariable observation that "he loveth transgression that loveth strife." And even ignorant and ungodly men may justly be counted *so far* wise, if they hold their peace, and meddle not with things not belonging to them, and of which they are incompetent judges: but in general they are most noisy and busy, who have the least capacity to say or do any thing to the purpose; or, "who are wise to do evil, but to do "good have no understanding."

NOTES.

CHAP. XVIII. V. 1, 2. Some render the first verse as follows: 'A hair-brained man seeks to satisfy his 'fancy, and intermixeth himself with all things.' And it is explained of the mischief arising from a self-conceited, innovating, intermeddling spirit in public and private life; and in affairs both civil and religious. But I find no instance in which the word rendered *separated* has this meaning: and the contrast between the characters described in the two verses, seems to require a different interpretation. The verse may be thus translated:—"According to "desire, he that is separated seeketh; and he engages in "all concerns." Whatever a man earnestly desires, he seeks after, and secludes himself from other avocations, that he may not be interrupted in the diligent pursuit of it. Thus it is in all kinds of business, or learning; none excel, but those who desire to excel, and who separate themselves, that they may have leisure to pursue their favourite object, whether more or less valuable: and even mischievous designs are formed, matured, and rendered successful in the same manner. The word translated *wisdom*, in our version, in some places seems to have that meaning; (ii. 7. iii. 21.) In one place it is translated *the thing as it is;* (*Job* xxvi. 3;) and there it signifies satisfactory knowledge of the subject in debate. And as knowledge is spoken of in the subsequent maxim, it seems to be here intended, and the meaning conveyed by our translation is preferable. 'He that loveth 'wisdom, will separate himself from all impediments, and 'give himself wholly to seek it.' A man has a strong desire to be wise, and this induces him to avoid vain company, diversions, trifling studies, and needless engagements, that he may have leisure and retirement to examine things to the bottom. But trifling and vain men have no delight in knowledge, except to make ostentation of it among such as are more ignorant and empty than themselves: a superficial smattering suffices for this purpose; and the way in which they seek and use their scanty stock, discovers the vanity of their hearts, as well as the poverty of their minds, whilst they show a way to make every body admire them, as wits or oracles.

V. 3. When profane and wicked men find admission into places of public trust, societies, seminaries of learning, or company, they soon betray their contempt of every thing good, and treat others with ignominious reproaches; and by their ill behaviour and wrong measures, expose themselves and those connected with them, to ridicule or reproach.

V. 4. The fountain of wisdom in the heart of a pious, well-informed, and experienced man, is like deep waters, 'which can never be drawn empty, but ever bring profit.' This supplies him with inexhaustible resources for useful conversation, prudent counsels, and good instructions. These flow from him with ease, and as it were spontaneously, (like the deep and gentle stream,) and do abundance of good; and are totally unlike the shallow current, whose scanty waters, and noisy rapid stream, is the known emblem of the unmeaning, vociferous loquacity of a fool. (*Note*, xv. 22.)

V. 5. To favour the wicked is always wrong; but worst of all, when magistrates, from respect of persons, and contrary to justice, decide for the wicked and against the righteous.

V 6, 7. The proud, the passionate, and the drunken; with those that give defiances and send challenges, and many others, enter into contention, as volunteers; as do all who intermeddle in disputes which belong not to them. Men of this description foolishly call on others to chastise their insolence, and they commonly meet with such as answer that call. Many are thus drawn into frays and duels, which end in wounds, bruises, or death; many incur law-suits and prosecutions; and still more bring destruction upon their souls.

V. 8. "The words of the tale-bearer are as flatterings, "and they go down into the bowels of the belly." (*Old*

9 He also [o] that is slothful in his work, [p] is brother to him that is a great waster.

10 The [q] name of the LORD *is* [r] a strong tower: [s] the righteous runneth into it, and is * safe.

11 The [t] rich man's wealth *is* his strong city, and as an high wall in his own conceit.

12 Before [u] destruction the heart of man is haughty, [x] and before honour is humility.

13 He [y] that † answereth a matter before he heareth *it*, it *is* folly and shame unto him.

14 The [z] spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; [a] but a wounded spirit who can bear?

15 The [b] heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge.

16 A man's [c] gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men.

17 *He* [d] *that is* first in his own cause *seemeth* just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.

o x. 4. xxiii. 20, 21. xxiv. 30–34. Matt. xxv. 26. Rom. xii. 11. Heb vi. 12.
p Job xxx. 29. Luke xv. 13, 14. xvi. 1, 2.
q Gen. xvii. 1. Ex. iii. 13—15. vi. 3. xxxiv. 5—7. Is. ix 6. lvii 15 Jer. xxiii 6. Matt. i. 23 Rev. i. 8.
r 2 Sam xxii 3. 51. Ps. xviii. 2. xxvii. 1. lxi 3, 4. xci. 2 cxliv. 2 Is xxvi. 4.
s Gen. xxxii. 11. 28, 29. 1 Sam. xxii 45—47. xxx. 6. Ps. lvi. 3, 4
* Heb. *set aloft.* Ps. xci 14. Hab. iii 19.
t x. 15 xi. 4. Deut. xxxii 31. Job xxxi. 24, 25. Ps. xlix 6—9. lii. 5—7. lxii. 10, 11 Ec. vii. 12. Luke xii. 19. 20, 21. ——u xi. 2 xvi 18. xxix. 23. Ez. xvi. 49, 50. xxviii. 2 9. Dan. v. 23, 24. Acts xii. 21—23. ——x xv. 33. Job xlii. 6, &c. Is. vi 5, &c. Dan ix 20. 23 1 Pet v. 5. ——y Deut. xiii. 14. 2 Sam xvi. 4. xix 24—30 Esth iii. 10. &c. viii. 5, &c Job xxix. 16, Dan. vi. 9. 14. John vii. 51. ——† Heb. *returneth a word.*

z Job i 20, 21. ii. 7—10. Rom. v. 3—5. viii 35—37. 2 Cor. i 12. xii 9, 10 Jam. i. 2. 1 Pet. i. 6.
a xvii. 22 Job vi. 4. vii. 14, 15. x. 15—17. Ps. xxxi 9, 10 xxxii. 3, 4. xxxviii. 2—4. xlii. 10, 11. lv. 3. 5 lxxvii. 2, 3. lxxxviii. 14—16. cix. 22. Mark xiv. 33, 34. 2 Cor. ii. 7.
b i 5 iv. 5. 7. ix. 9. x. 14. xv. 14. xxiii. 23. 1 Kings iii. 9. Ps. cxix. 97—104. Luke viii. 8—10. x. 39. 2 Tim. iii 15—17. Jam. i. 5.
c xvii. 8 xix. 6. xxi 14. Gen. xxxii. 20. xxxiii. 10. xliii 11.
1 Sam. xxv. 27. ——d 13 2 Sam. xvi. 1—3. xix. 24—27. Acts xxiv. 5, 6. 12, 13.

Trans.) This seems more literal. 'A whisperer of false 'stories makes a great show of harmlessness, if not of love, '—when he backbites others; nay, seems to do it unwil-'lingly, and not without excuses for the persons whom he 'detracts; but his words sink deep into the minds of 'those that hear them:' (*Bp. Patrick.*) and incurably wound the very vitals. They infuse suspicions into those *to whom he speaks*, which embitter their minds against those whom they ought to love, and give rise to contentions that ruin their peace and comfort: and they wound the reputations of those *of whom he speaks;* they bereave them of their friends, and lead them into innumerable troubles and temptations. (*Note*, xi. 13.)

V. 9. Sloth and extravagance are nearly related; they often accompany each other; but either of them is sufficient to bring any man to ruin.

V. 10, 11. "The name of JEHOVAH" denotes his perfections, as revealed in the Sacred Scripture, and as harmoniously displayed, through the great Redeemer.—He who, under a consciousness of guilt, and dread of misery or enemies, believing the testimony, and embracing the promises of God, flees to take refuge under the shadow of his wings, by living faith, is "a righteous man:" and thenceforth, whenever guilt or danger, of whatever kind, oppresses him; he immediately runs to the same secure abode; and not only is preserved, but exalted. The unchangeable mercy, power, wisdom, righteousness, and faithfulness of God, are his security. His refuge is ever near, and will prove impregnable, through life, 'in the 'hour of death, and in the day of judgment:' and the righteous are "kept by the power of God, through faith, "unto salvation." But rich men are prone to confide in their wealth, and to deem *that* their strong city and their high wall, to defend them from dangers and calamities. But it is so only *in their own conceit;* for trouble will find entrance into their castle, death will storm and take it, and judgment will sweep it and them into final perdition. (*Note*, x. 15.)

V. 12. (*Note*, xv. 33. *Marg. Ref.*)

V. 13. Eagerness of spirit, united with self-conceit, and affectation of appearing more penetrating than others, often betrays men into the practice of interrupting those that are speaking, and answering them before they have finished their discourse; by which they presume to confute arguments, and contradict conclusions, which they have not heard. This is peculiarly the case with vehement controversialists. But it is a great folly, and will expose the man to deserved shame; and will *at least* be a considerable abatement from his character, as a man of wisdom, humility, and meekness. 'But if it be a shame to a 'private person, in ordinary discourse, to "answer a "matter before he heareth it:" much more will it be to a 'magistrate, if in matters of justice and judgment he 'come to a resolution before he hath taken full cognizance 'of them.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 14. The mind can well bear the infirmity of the 'body: but when the spirit is wounded, it is a thing most 'hard to sustain.'—Even natural courage and resolution will support a man under manifold pains and calamities, if his mind and conscience be composed: and the inward consolations of the Holy Spirit will enable a believer to bear any tedious affliction or persecution without fainting. But when the conscience is tortured with remorse and terror; when the heart is racked with furious and disappointed passions; when He that made the soul, causes his sword to approach unto it, or even permits Satan to pour in his horrid temptations; no human fortitude can sustain the misery; even the believer, like Job, will be almost driven to madness and the borders of desperation. Nay, the incarnate Son of God, in circumstances of this kind, cried out, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful even unto death." And unbelievers in such a case are often driven into despair, blasphemy, and suicide.

V. 15. (*Note*, 1, 2.) The prudent man, fearing the misery described in the preceding verse; will seek that wisdom and knowledge which may preserve him from it.

V. 16. A man's gift 'getteth liberty to speak, and 'favour of them that are most in estimation.'—'It will 'produce his enlargement if he be in prison; and bring 'him into the favour of great men.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)—In some cases, it may be allowable to conciliate with presents, when applying for any favour; and perhaps may here be recommended as a prudential measure: but too generally the present is given to blind the eyes and pervert the judgment. (*Marg. Ref. Note*, xvii. 8.)

V. 17. Self-love imperceptibly leads men to make the best of their own characters and conduct. Without design

18 The [e] lot causeth contentions to cease, and parteth between the mighty.

19 A [f] brother offended *is harder to be won* [g] than a strong city: and their contentions *are* like the bars of a castle.

20 A [h] man's belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth; *and* with the increase of his lips shall he be filled.

21 [i] Death and life *are* in the power of the tongue: [k] and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.

22 *Whoso* [l] findeth a wife findeth a good *thing*; [m] and obtaineth favour of the LORD.

23 The [n] poor useth entreaties; but [o] the rich answereth roughly.

24 A man [p] *that hath* friends must shew himself friendly; and [q] there is a friend *that* sticketh closer than a brother.

e xvi. 33. Josh. xiv. 2. 1 Sam. x. 21, &c. xiv. 42. 1 Chr. xvi. 63. xxiv. 31. Neh. xi. 1.
f vi. 19. Gen. iv. 5—8. xxvii. 41—45. xxxii. 6—11. xxxvii. 3, 5, 11. 18. 27. 2 Sam. xiii. 22. 28. 1 Kings ii. 23—25. xii. 18. 2 Chr. xiii. 17. Acts xv. 39.
g xvi. 32.
h xii. 13. 14. xiii. 2. xxii. 18. 21. xxv. 11, 12.
i 4—7. x. 20, 21. 31. xi. 30. Matt. xii. 35—37. Rom. x. 14, 15. 2 Cor. ii. 16. xi. 15. Eph. iv. 29. Col. iv. 6. Tit. i. 10, 11. Jam. iii. 6—9. 2 Pet. ii. 18.
k x. 19. Ec. x. 12—14.
l v. 15. &c. xii. 4. xix. 14. xxxi. 10, &c. Gen. xxiv. 67. xxix. 20, 21. 28. Ec. ix. 9. Hos. xii. 12. 1 Cor. vii. 2.
m iii. 4. v. 11. 35.
n Ruth ii. 7. 1 Sam. ii. 36. 2 Kings iv. 1, 2. Is. lxvi. 2. Matt. v. 3. Jam. i. 9—11.
o Gen. xlii. 7. 30. Ex. v. 2. 1 Sam. xxv. 10, 11. Jam. ii. 3.
p xvii. 17. xxvii. 9. 1 Sam. xix. 4, 5. xxx. 26, &c. 2 Sam. ix. 1, &c. xvi. 17. xvii. 27—29. xix. 30—39. xxi. 7. 1 Chr. xii. 38—40. Matt. xxvi. 49, 50.
q xxvii. 10. 2 Sam. i. 26. John xv. 14, 15.

almost they adduce and place in a clear light what makes for them, and keep back or throw a shade over what makes against them; and they state inaccurately some circumstances, apparently trivial, yet of consequence: and thus the cause seems just, when one side of it has been pleaded. But when the other party, actuated by the same propensities, comes to search out the matter, and states it in his way, it will appear very different. Thus it often is *without intentional misrepresentation on either side:* but when that is taken into the account, as in most cases it ought to be, it appears evident, that no judgment can be formed, or opinion passed, upon any transactions, till the matter has been heard impartially from both parties. This maxim is peculiarly important to judges and juries; to caution them against making up their minds, till they have heard the whole evidence on both sides.

V. 18. 'If a controversy cannot otherwise be decided, 'it is best to cast lots, to know whose the thing shall be.' —When causes could not satisfactorily be decided; when the parties could not be induced to refer themselves to arbiters; or when they were too powerful to be dealt with, it was customary to refer the matter to God, by casting lots, attended with solemn prayer. Perhaps this would still be preferable to the perpetuating of discords and law-suits betwixt Christians, or to the embroiling of nations in bloody wars. (*Note*, xvi. 33.)

V. 19. It is evident by facts, that when fierce contentions are excited among brethren or near relations, their resentment becomes more implacable, and the consequences more terrible, than in quarrels among strangers. It is more difficult to conciliate their differences, than to take a fortified city, and their stubborn minds resist all endeavours to bend them to a cordial reconciliation, like the iron bars of a castle. The same melancholy observation holds equally true in the case of civil wars, religious controversies and persecutions, and the dissentions in societies.

V. 20, 21. As a man should be careful what seed he sows, or what fruit-trees he plants, because such will his increase be: so, and much more, careful should men be what words they speak; as they will at length be inwardly filled with the fruit and increase of their habitual conversation. For death and life are in the power of the tongue, and the consequences, good or bad, of men's words upon the interests, peace, or souls of others, will be recompensed to themselves. They who love to speak good things shall eat good fruit; they who love to speak lies, impiety, or iniquity, shall gather fruit accordingly; and they that love to hear themselves speak, will have cause to repent their loquacity. (*Marg. Ref. and Notes on them.*)

V. 22. A good wife must exclusively be meant, as alone deserving that honourable title. 'He that is joyful 'with a virtuous woman in marriage, is blessed of the 'Lord.' (*Notes*, xix. 13, 14.) 'He that hath married a 'wife, who is truly an help-meet for him, hath met with 'an excellent blessing; and ought thankfully to acknow-'ledge the singular favour of God, in guiding his mind to 'make so happy a choice.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) He that has found a prudent and suitable companion is peculiarly favoured. And his success in this most important concern, which so nearly connects with a man's eternal interests, should not be ascribed to his own discernment or to chance, but to the kind providence of God. And he who desires so valuable an acquisition, should observe the directions of Scripture, and beseech God to bestow it on him.

V. 23. The poor are generally led, notwithstanding the pride of the human heart, to use the language of humble entreaty, in addressing the rich, even when they meet with repeated refusals: but the rich are apt to give way to arrogance and harshness, and to answer the humble petitioner with contempt and severity. This observation respecting the effect of men's circumstances on their spirit and conduct, serves to illustrate the nature and value of poverty of spirit: it leads a man to use earnest entreaties with God; and "he who is rich in mercy," will not continue to answer the humble supplicant roughly. (*Notes*, *Matt.* v. 3. xv. 21—28.)

V. 24. He that would obtain and preserve valuable friends, must cultivate a friendly disposition, and act in a faithful and beneficent manner: and the friends whom God raises up to a man, and who are attached to him for his piety and integrity, will cleave closer to him in afflictions, than his nearest relations who are not *thus* united. Nay, this friendship shall not be dissolved in death, but shall endure for ever.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—13.

The most important difference in respect of true wisdom, originates rather from the heart than the understanding. Ungodly men, however ingenious, have no delight in the knowledge of heavenly things; and therefore, they can only seek them as much as may serve the purposes of ambition or interest, and consist with the quiet enjoyment of their sins: and they are too much occupied in other pleasures and pursuits, to separate themselves; and to "cry after know-"ledge, and lift up the voice for understanding; to seek "for her as silver, and search for her as for hid treasures."

CHAP. XIX.

Commendations of wisdom, integrity, kindness, meekness, &c. The fatal effects of rashness, impatience, wrath, sloth, &c.—The punishments awaiting false witnesses, disobedient children, scorners, &c.: with pious and prudential max-

But when the heart loves wisdom, in some measure according to its worth, other objects will be disregarded or subordinated: and did we value it properly, we should all disentangle ourselves more than we do from various employments, studies, and diversions; and redeem time, for reading the Scriptures, meditation and prayer: nor should we suffer trifles and triflers to deprive us of our precious hours, whilst we are so much upon our guard against those that would rob us of our money. When the heart thus becomes a well-spring of wisdom, it soon appears in the conversation; like the flowing brook, that with a copious and gentle current, fructifies the adjacent country. And whilst comfort and advantage accrue to others, from a man's wise counsels, pious discourse, or conciliating proposals, his own heart will be refreshed and satisfied. How different this man's discourse from that of those who foolishly suffer their "lips to enter into contention; and their "mouths to form a rod for their own correction, or a snare "for the destruction of their lives and souls!" But we should not only watch against the contemptuous and reproachful language of the wicked, and the cruel words of detestable tale-bearers; but even against the unseemly manner of such as, for want of a due command of themselves, attempt to answer a matter before they have had patience to hear it, and thus expose themselves to shame for their impertinence. Most of these errors and iniquities spring from pride and self-preference. Aware therefore of the odious nature and dreadful effects of this vice, which God abhors above all others, we should repress its first emotions, and mortify it by every possible means: for we are repeatedly reminded that "before destruction the "heart of man is haughty, and before honour is humility." Satan frequently gains advantage against good designs, through the indiscretion, or partiality, by which wicked men obtain admission into societies formed for pious purposes, and authority in conducting their affairs; "for when "the wicked cometh, then cometh shame, and with "ignominy reproach." And as it is not good for magistrates to accept the person of the wicked, and to overthrow the righteous in judgment: so it is equally abominable and subversive of all good, when partiality intrudes into the concerns of religion. Yet, alas! how often is this done, through the fascinating influence of wealth, which not only seems to the vain conceit of the possessor as an impregnable fortress; but even to others, as a most important recommendation! But let us remember that "the Name of the "LORD is" in reality, the Christian's strong Tower, which will never fail him that betakes himself to it: whilst public or private calamities, perhaps death, and judgment certainly, will expose the folly of "trusting in "uncertain riches, and not in the living God." In the common affairs of life, sloth ensures indigence, nearly as much as prodigality: and let us never forget, that neglect of Christ, of the means of grace, and of the duties of a man's station, will as certainly plunge him into destruction, as open impiety and vice.

V. 14—24.

A peaceful conscience and a joyful hope enable the true Christian to bear trials and infirmities, and even to meet death, with fortitude and comfort: but "a wounded spirit "who can bear?" And it is remarkable, that more in proportion of the superior people, than of the poor, become their own murderers. But if inward anguish here be so intolerable, what will be "the worm that never dieth," "the unquenchable fire," "the blackness of darkness for "ever!" May the Lord give us 'the heart of the prudent, 'that we may seek and find the knowledge of salvation, and 'wisely hearken to the instructions and invitations of the 'gracious Redeemer.' He is "indeed a Friend that sticketh "closer than a brother," he will never, never forsake those who trust in and love him: and blessed be his name for those Christian friends which he hath given us, and whose constant and faithful love, *for his sake*, is our chief comfort, next to communion with him, in this unkind world, where brethren are often most strange to us in our distresses. May we be such friends to others, for his sake, and may we show our love to him by keeping his commandments, and promoting his cause, and not only by gratitude to our benefactors, but by kindness and compassion to the poorest of his people, nay, to the worst of our own enemies. How different from this kind and gentle spirit, is that rough and disdainful language, which rich and eminent men frequently use towards their inferiors and dependents! If they were poor in spirit, and humble supplicants to the Lord for his mercy and grace, they would soon learn more gentleness and kindness to their indigent fellow-sinners, who use entreaties to them; and without poverty of spirit, they will doubtless perish everlastingly. From the same proud and selfish disposition, originate contentions among the mighty, which often cannot be decided but by the blood of ten thousands of better men than themselves: and hence arise the implacable contentions in families and among brethren, which cannot be terminated by any mediation. How careful then should every one be, to shun every occasion of quarrels; and to do every thing that may cement union and cordiality among brethren! How base are they who sow contention in families! And what fatal effects may be expected from the smallest beginnings of domestic jealousy! All this equally, nay, more emphatically, applies to the occasions and first beginnings of intestine commotions in states. Such sparks of dissention should be watched and quenched, by all who love peace, as if fire had fallen close to a heap of gunpowder. But it is most melancholy to observe that controversies among professed Christians have commonly been conducted with the most indecent acrimony; and that, frequently proportioned to the degree in which they approach to coincidence in opinion; so that, whilst they who are agreed in all the great fundamentals of religion, dispute with virulence about some abstruse sentiment or frivolous ceremony; infidels, and those whose doctrines subvert Christianity, are often

ims and remarks of a more general nature, 1—29.

[a] BETTER *is* the poor that walketh in his integrity, than *he that is* [b] perverse in his lips, and is a fool.

2 Also, [c] *that* the soul *be* without knowledge, *it is* not good; [d] and he that hasteth with *his* feet sinneth.

3 The [e] foolishness of a man perverteth his way: and his heart [f] fretteth against the LORD.

4 Wealth [g] maketh many friends; but [h] the poor is separated from his neighbour.

5 A [i] false witness shall not * be unpunished, and *he that* speaketh lies shall not escape.

6 Many [k] will entreat the favour of the prince: [l] and every man *is* a friend to † him that giveth gifts.

7 All [m] the brethren of the poor do hate him: how much more do his friends go far from him? [n] he pursueth *them with* words, [o] *yet* they *are* wanting *to him.*

a 22. xii. 26 xv. 16 xvi. 8. xxviii. 6. Ps. xxxvii. 16. Matt. xvi. 26. Jam. ii. 5, 6. b 1 Sam. xxv. 17. 25. Is. lix. 3. Mat. xii. 31—34. c x. 21. Ec. xii. 9. Is. xxvii 11. Hos iv. 6. John xvi. 3. Rom. x. 2 Phil. i. 9. d i. 16. xiv. 29 xxi 5. xxv. 8. xxviii. 22. Job xxxi 5. Ec. vii. 9 Is. xxviii. 16. e Gen iii. 6. 12. iv. 5—14. Num. xvi. 19—41. xvii. 12, 13. 1 Sam. xiii. 13. xv. 23. xxii. 13, &c. 1 Kings xx. 42, 43 2 Kings iii. 9, 10 vi. 33. 2 Chr. xvi. 9, 10. Acts xiii. 45, 46. ——— f Ps. xxxvii. 1. 7. Is. viii. 21, 22. Rev. xvi. 9—11. ——— g 6, 7. xiv. 20. Luke xv. 13—15.

h x. 15. Job vi. 15—23. xix. 13—17. i 9. vi. 19. xxi. 28 Deut. xix. 16—21. Ps. cxx. 3, 4. Dan. vi. 24.

* Heb. *held innocent.* Deut. v. 11. 1 Kings ii. 9.

k 12. xvi. 15. xxxix. 26. Gen. xlii. 6. 2 Sam xix. 19, &c. Job xxix. 24, 25. Ps. xlv. 12. Matt. ii 11. l xvii. 8. xviii 16. xxi. 14. Gen. xxxii. 20. xliii. 14. Rom. vi. 23.

† Heb. *man of gifts.*

m 4. xiv. 20. Ps. xxxviii. 11. lxxxviii. 8 18. Ec ix. 15, 16. Jam. ii. 6 ——— n xxi. 13. Luke xviii. 38—40. ——— o xviii. 23. Jam. ii. 15, 16. John iii. 17, 18.

disregarded. And when the members of the same religious fraternity are betrayed into dispute, it commonly proves irreconcileable, and ends in another and so another division, almost *in infinitum!* In all these facts, not only the pride and folly of man, but the subtlety of Satan may be discerned: for love and union are the strength, the ornament, and the very criterion of Christianity: and disunion gives its enemies their most plausible arguments against it. As a gift maketh room for a man into the presence of the great, and into high offices, which having bought, he often thinks himself authorized to sell, or to render subservient to his own ends: so, regard to a man's wealth often makes room for him into the confidence or company of Christians and ministers, who would not judge very favourably of him if he were a poor man. Thus temporal advantages are catched at; and an influence is admitted, which secretly undermines the credit and peace, and tends to disunion and scandalous contentions. Indeed the self-flattery of the human heart cannot be traced into all its effects. None of us are entirely free from its influences: we can scarcely ever state facts, in which our own interest or reputation are concerned, without partiality; nor can we know where truth and justice lie, in contested matters, without great candour and impartiality, and patient investigation, which are peculiarly requisite to magistrates, umpires, and peacemakers. It is on this account profitable to hear what our enemies say of us, that by balancing matters betwixt their prejudice and our own partiality, we may form a better judgment of ourselves. By reference to the Lord, however, even without casting lots, we may generally avoid, or speedily extricate ourselves out of quarrels. He causeth contentions to cease, and parteth between the mighty: and he can take the fortress, or bend the iron bars, of an offended brother's resentment. (*Notes*, &c. *Gen.* xxxii. xxxiii.) We can never too much attend to the repeated admonitions given us, concerning the government of the tongue, and the improvement of that important talent, the gift of speech. Life and death, in every sense, both to ourselves and others, are in the power of the tongue: the beneficial or fatal effects of the tongue are incalculable. Indeed we should regard the will of God, and "acknowledge him in "all our ways." As he hath sanctified marriage, and pronounced it honourable: the believer, who deems it not good to be alone, should seek to him for direction and blessing, that he may make such a choice as may best conduce to his present comfort and his eternal salvation: he should receive the wife whom he hath taken as the gift of God, and love her for his sake: and if a man have obtained a pious and prudent companion, he has exceeding cause for gratitude; especially if he be conscious that he did not seek her in the *prescribed* manner. The same maxim shows us, with what view young females ought to be educated, and what ought to be their ambition and aim: namely, to be such prudent and pious wives, that their husbands may know by experience they have "found a good thing, and have obtained favour of the LORD."

NOTES.

CHAP. XIX. V. 1. A poor man, who fears God and behaves with integrity towards all men, is, in reality, more honourable, valuable, and happy, than a man destitute of wisdom and grace, who gives a loose to his tongue to speak mischievous things, however high he may be in rank or affluence.

V. 2. 'Ignorance and inconsideration are equally mis-'chievous: for a mind that knows not what it ought to 'choose, can never do well: and if a man hastily and un-'advisedly pursue an end, (which he reasonably propounds 'to himself,) and will not take time to deliberate; he must 'needs commit many errors.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) This maxim is peculiarly important in religious concerns; ignorance can be the parent only of superstition and enthusiasm, not of true piety: and rash, inconsiderate attempts to propagate the true Gospel of Christ, generally prejudice the bulk of mankind the more against it.

V. 3. Men run themselves into difficulties and troubles by their own folly and wickedness: and then they murmur against the appointments of God. Whereas, if they had kept the plain way of duty, and not perversely turned aside into crooked paths, they would have escaped these trials. Thus sinners, instead of seeking salvation by the Gospel, complain of the rigour of the law, and make excuses for their crimes and impenitence, which, implicitly at least, throws the blame of their guilt and ruin upon God. 'The 'folly of a man maketh his way sorrowful; and in heart 'he blameth God.' (*Sept.*)

V. 4. (*Note*, xiv. 20.)

V. 5. (*Note*, xiv. 25. *Marg. Ref.*)

V. 6. 'A prince never wants suitors for his favour:— 'and every one loves, or pretends to love, him, whose 'liberality is well known.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) (*Note*, xvii. 8.)

8 He that getteth * wisdom [p] loveth his own soul: [q] he that keepeth understanding shall find good.

9 A [r] false witness shall not be unpunished, [s] and *he that* speaketh lies shall perish.

10 [t] Delight is not seemly for a fool; [u] much less for a servant to have rule over princes.

11 The † discretion of a man [x] deferreth his anger; [y] and *it is* his glory to pass over a transgression.

12 The [z] king's wrath *is* as the roaring of a lion; but [a] his favour *is* as dew upon the grass.

13 A [b] foolish son *is* the calamity of his father; and [c] the contentions of a wife *are* a continual dropping.

14 House and riches *are* [d] the inheritance of fathers: [e] and a prudent wife *is* from the LORD.

15 Slothfulness [f] casteth into a deep sleep; [g] and an idle soul shall suffer hunger.

16 He that [h] keepeth the commandment [i] keepeth his own soul; *but* [k] he that despiseth his ways shall die.

* Heb. *an heart* xvii. 16. Ez xxxvi. 26. p viii 35, 36 John xii. 25. 1 Pet. iii. 10. q ii. 1—9. iii. 18. 21. iv 4. 6 21. xxii 18 Ps. xix. 11. John xiv 21. r 5 s Is. ix. 15—17. Jer. xxiii 25—32 xxviii. 15—17. xxix 31, 32. Ez. xiii. 22. 2 Thes ii. 8—10 1 Tim. iv 1, 2. 2 Pet. ii 1—3 Rev xix 20 xxi 8 xxii 15. t xxx. 21, 22. 1 Sam. xxv 36 Esth. iii. 15 Is. v. 11, 12. xxii. 12—14. Hos. vii 3—5. ix 1. Am x 5—7 Is iii 5 ——† Or, *prudence.* ——x xii 16 xiv 29 xv 18. xvi. 32 xvii. 14. Col. iii 12. 13. Jam. i. 19.——y xx 3. xxv. 21, 22 Gen l. 15—21. Matt v. 44, 45. xviii 21, 22. Rom xii. 18—21. Eph iv 32. v 1.——z xvi. 14, 15 xx. 2 xxviii. 15. Esth. vii 8. Ec. viii. 4. Dan ii. 12, 13. iii 19—23 v. 19. vi. 24. Luke xii 4, 5.

a 2 Sam xxiii. 4. Ps lxxii 6. Hos. xiv. 5. b x. 1. xv. 20. xvii. 21 25. 2 Sam. xiii—xix. Ec ii. 19, 19 c xxi. 9. 19 xxv. 24. xxvii. 15. Job xiv 19. d xiii 22. Deut. xxi. 16 Josh. xi. 23 2 Cor. xii. 14. e iii. 6. xviii 22. xxxi 10, &c. Gen. xxiv. 7. xxviii. 1—4. Jam. i. 17. f 24. vi. 9, 10 xx. 13. xxiii. 21. xxiv 33. Is lvi. 10. Rom xiii. 11, 12 Eph. v. 14 g x. 4, 5. 2 Thes. iii. 10 h iii. 1. xxix. 13. Ps. ciii. 18. Ec. viii. 5. xii. 13. Jer. vii. 23 Luke x. 28. xi. 28. John xiv. 15. 21—23. xv. 10—14. 1 Cor. vii. 19. 1 John ii. 3, 4. iii. 22. v. 3 Rev. xxii 14.——i xvi. 17. xxi. 23. xxii. 5 Ez. xxxiii 5. Matt xvi. 26.——k xiii. 13. xv. 32.

V. 7. 'All the kindred of a poor man hate his company as a disgrace and trouble to them; and therefore, no wonder if his companions grow strange to him. He urges them with their former protestations or promises of kindness, but finds that signified nothing: and if he earnestly implore their pity, it is to no purpose.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 8. He that makes the study of heavenly wisdom his grand object, best consults his own good; and is the only man, who can be said to love his own soul, in a rational and prudent manner: and persevering in this pursuit, he shall certainly find happiness. (*Note*, ii. 1—9.)

V. 9. (5.) 'He that testifies to a lie, to the perverting of justice; if the judge do not find him out, shall be punished by God: and he who whispers slanders and kindles strife, shall perish by these wicked practices.' (*Bp. Patr.*)

V. 10. Prosperity and abundance do not become foolish and wicked men: they behave themselves unseemly in circumstances which increase their insolence and presumption, and enable them to be more extensively mischievous, and in the event render them still more contemptible and miserable. Much less is it fit for men of low extraction and base spirits, to have influence over princes, or to domineer over those to whom eminent places properly belong. This is not uncommonly the folly of a weak prince, who makes some worthless minion his favourite, merely for his external embellishments, flattery, or willing subserviency to his pleasures. And thus he gives himself up to be ruled by his own servant, who engrosses all authority, and serves his own selfish purposes, at the expense of both king and people; and treats with insolence the most eminent and respectable persons; till jealousies are excited, parties formed, conspiracies and insurrections resolved on, and the state is thrown into convulsions. 'No man is fit to govern another, who cannot govern himself.' (*Note*, xxx. 21—23.)

V. 11. "The understanding of a man renders him "slow to anger, &c." Wisdom induces a man to suppress resentment; and to keep a strict guard on himself under provocations. A prudent man, even when it is necessary to reprove or expostulate with the offending party, will defer it till he can do it with temper and decency, indeed it is most honourable to pass over a transgression unnoticed; and he attains the highest degree of true glory, who overlooks or forgives the most numerous and gross affronts, and persists the most steadily in endeavouring to evercome evil with good. Let it not be overlooked, that these proverbs exactly coincide with our Lord's instructions and those of his apostles; though men in general think that such precepts are peculiar to the New Testament.

V. 12. (*Note*, xvi. 14, 15. *Marg. Ref.*) 'The more power a man hath, the harder it is for him to govern his passions. None find it more difficult than a king, especially in the heat of youth, to bridle his wrath. The young lion, as he is the strongest, so he is the fiercest of all others.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 13. 'Two things make a man exceeding unhappy; a dissolute son and a scolding wife. For the former breaks the heart of his father, to see him like to prove the utter destruction of the family: the other drives a man to undo his family himself; when he is no more able to live at home with her, than to dwell in a rotten and ruinous house, through the roof of which the rain drops perpetually.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) A wise man would take prudent measures to prevent such calamities: but he would not ruin himself and family, either because of the contentions of his wife, or the uncomfortableness of his house; but rather beg of God to give him meekness and patience to bear what he could not remedy. (*Note*, xxvii. 15, 16. *Marg. Ref.*)

V. 14. (*Notes*, xii. 4. xviii. 20. xxxi. 10—31.) Splendid houses and large inheritances sometimes descend to men from their parents, without their own care or prudence; and they are often given in Providence to very worthless characters. But a prudent wife is the Lord's more immediate and valuable gift to such as he favours; and contributes more to his passing through life comfortably, and at a distance from temptation, than the largest riches with a contentious or wicked woman. 'A prudent and virtuous wife is a special blessing of God's immediate choosing; and must therefore be obtained by our prayers, at the hand of the Giver.' (*Bp. Hall.*)

V. 15. (*Notes*, 24. vi. 6—11. x. 4. xv. 19.)

V. 16. Without obedience to God and to men in authority, no prudent care can be taken either of the immortal

17 He [l] that hath pity upon the poor, [m] lendeth unto the LORD; and * that which he hath given will he pay him again.

18 [n] Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare † for his crying.

19 A [o] man of great wrath shall suffer punishment: for if thou deliver *him*, yet thou must ‡ do it again.

20 Hear counsel, and [p] receive instruction, that thou mayest [q] be wise in thy latter end.

21 *There are* [r] many devices in a man's heart: [s] nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.

22 The [t] desire of a man *is* his kindness: [u] and a poor man *is* better than a liar.

23 The [x] fear of the LORD *tendeth* to life; and *he that hath it* [y] shall abide satisfied; [z] he shall not be visited with evil.

24 A slothful *man* [a] hideth his hand in *his* bosom, and will not so much as bring it to his mouth again.

25 [b] Smite a scorner, and the simple will § beware: and [c] reprove one that hath understanding, *and* he will understand knowledge.

26 He that [d] wasteth *his* father, *and* chaseth away *his* mother, *is* [e] a son that causeth shame, and bringeth reproach.

27 [f] Cease, my son, to hear the instruction *that causeth* to err from the words of knowledge.

l xiv. 21. xxviii. 8. 27. 2 Sam. xii 6.
m xi. 24, 25. xxviii. 27. Deut. xv. 7—14. Is. lviii 7—11. Matt. x. 41, 42. xxv. 40. 2 Cor. ix. 6—8. Phil. iv. 17. Heb vi. 10.
* Or, *his deed.*
n xiii 24 xxii. 15 xxiii. 13, 14. xxix. 15. 17 Heb. xii. 7—10.
† Or, *to his destruction*, or, *to cause him to die.*
o xxii. 24, 25. xxv. 28. xxix. 22. 1 Sam xx. 30, 31. xxii. 7, &c. xxiv. 17, &c xxvi. 21, &c. 2 Sam xvi. 5, 6.
‡ Heb. *add*
p i. 8. ii. 1—9. viii. 34, 35.
q Num. xxiii. 10. Deut viii 16 xxxii 29 Ps. xxxvii. 37. Luke xvi. 19—23.
r xii. 2. Gen. xxxvii. 19, 20. Esth. ix 25. Ps. xxi. 11. xxxiii 10, 11. lxxxiii 4. Ec. vii. 29. Is. vii 6, 7. Dan xi. 24, 25. Matt xxvi. 4, 5 xxvii. 63, 64.——s xvi. 9. xxi. 1. Gen. xlv 4—8 1. 20 Job xxiii 13. Is. xiv 24 26. xlvi 10. Dan. iv. 35. Acts iv. 27, 28 v. 38, 39. Eph. i. 11 Heb. vi. 17, 18. 1 Pet. ii. 8. Jude 4.——t 1 Chr. xxix 2, 3. 17. 2 Chr. vi. 8. Mark xii. 41—44. xiv. 6—8. 2 Cor. viii. 2, 3. 12.——u 1. Job vi. 15. xvii. 5. Ps. lxii 9. Tit. i. 2.

x x. 27. xiv. 26, 27. xix. 23. Ps. xix. 9. xxxiii. 18, 19. xxxiv. 9—11. lxxxv. 9. ciii. 17. cxlv. 18—20. Mal. iii. 16, 17. iv. 2. Acts ix. 31.
y Ps xc. 14. xci. 16. Is lviii. 10, 11. Matt v. 6. Phil. iv 11, 12. 1 Tim. iv. 8 vi. 6—9 Heb. xiii. 5, 6
z xii. 21. Rom. viii. 28. 2 Tim. iv. 18.
a 15 vi 9, 10. xii. 27. xv. 19. xxiv. 30—34 xxvi 13—16. Ps lxxiv. 11.
b xxi. 11. Deut. xiii 11. xxi 21.
§ Heb. *be cunning.*
c ix. 9, 10. xv. 5. xvii 10 Rev. iii. 19.
d x. 1. xvii. 25. xxiii 22—25. xxviii 24. xxx. 11 17. Deut. xxi. 18—21. Luke xv. 12—16. 30.
e x 5. xvii 2. xxviii. 7.——f xiv 6. Deut xiii. 1—4. 1 Kings xxii. 22—28. Matt. vii. 15. xvi. 6. 12. Mark iv. 24 vii. 6—14. John x 5. 2 Cor. xi. 13—15. Eph. iv. 14. 1 Tim. iv. 6. vi. 3—5. 2 Pet. ii. 1, 2. 1 John iv. 1. 2 John 10. Rev. ii, 2.

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soul, or of temporal life: and the careless or obstinate transgressor must suffer the penalty of the law.

V. 17. Whatever kindness a man shows to the poor, whether by giving them money, or doing them any service, out of compassion to them, and in believing obedience, will be considered as lent to the Lord; and he will take care that it shall be repaid with large interest, in one way or other, to him or his posterity.

V. 18. 'Chasten thy son, before he hath contracted 'bad habits, and become apparently incorrigible: and do 'not refrain because of his cries.' Or, 'Do not concur in 'his mischiefs,' (by conniving at them,) or in his ruin.

V. 19. Some connect this verse with the preceding: if he, (that is, the child that ought to have been corrected,) be of great wrath, he must suffer punishment; for if he be delivered at one time, it must be done again and again. Thus, if the parent spare the child when young, he may probably fall into the hands of the magistrate when grown up, perhaps come to an untimely end; or it may prove the ruin of his soul. A very different meaning, however, has been given to the maxim. 'He whose wrath exceeds all 'bounds, and makes him severe beyond measure, undoes 'his child.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) This is an important hint: but it does not seem the meaning of the verse.

V. 20. (*Notes*, viii. 30—34. *Marg. Ref.*)

V. 21. 'Man's device shall not have success, except God 'govern it, whose purpose is unchangeable.' (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 22. If a man desire to serve us, *that* "*desire* is his "kindness," and should be accepted as such, though he have it not in his power to do any thing effectual. Thus the widow's two mites were honoured, as the expression of her love to the house of God: Mary was commended, when she did what she could to honour Christ: and "if "there be a willing mind, it is accepted according to what "a man hath." (*Marg. Ref.*) By the same equitable rule the poor man who makes no promises, is to be preferred to those rich and powerful persons, who amuse their dependents with assurances of doing great things for them, which they never intend, or take no care to perform. This is a very common species of *lying*, but no better for being fashionable in polite circles.

V. 23. Some render this maxim in a far different sense. "The fear of the LORD *tends* to life: but the *full*," (or self-sufficient prosperous man,) "shall lie down in it; he shall "be visited with evil." 'He that is swollen with pride, and 'forgets God, when worldly goods flow in upon him, shall 'lie down at last in sorrow, and never want something to 'afflict him.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)—The original is certainly obscure to us.

V. 24. Habits of indolence so grow upon people, that they have no heart to do the most needful things for themselves; as if a man were so slothful, that he would not take his hand out of his bosom to feed himself, and should prefer the gnawings of hunger to so trivial an exertion!

V. 25. (xxi. 11.) 'The simple and ignorant learn, 'when they see the wicked punished.'—'Some are so 'bad, that they must be handled with great sharpness, 'especially such profane men as deride admonition, and 'grow thereby more furious. But there are those who 'grow better, even by the example of severity against 'notorious offenders:—and a third sort, who, being ad-'monished are obedient to those who tell them of their 'faults.' (*Melancthon in Bp. Patrick.*)—In many cases the sharp rebukes, disgraceful censures, or severe punishments, inflicted on the incorrigible, are very beneficial to such as were in danger of being deluded by their mischievous principles, or seduced to imitate their bad examples; and are the means of rendering them more circumspect and prudent. (*Note*, ix. 7—9.)

V. 26. The debauched young man, who wastes his father's substance by his extravagance, or turns his aged mother destitute, that he may have the more to spend on his vices; or who drives her from home by his insolence and turbulency, is a scandal to his family, a nuisance to society, and will at length come to contempt and ignominy. Such monsters are there in human form, in every generation.

28 * An ungodly witness [g] scorneth judgment; and [h] the mouth of the wicked devoureth iniquity.

29 [i] Judgments are prepared for scorners, [k] and stripes for the back of fools.

* Heb. *A witness of Belial.* l Kings xxi 10. 14 Acts vi. 11—13 g Ps. x. 5. 11. Is. xxviii. 14—18. Luke xviii 2—4 —— h xv 14. Job xv. 13. xx. 12 13. xxxiv. 7.

i iii. 34. ix. 12. Is. xxviii. 22. Acts xiii. 40, 41. 2 Pet. iii 3—7. k vii 22 x. 13 xvii. 10. xxvi 3 Heb. xii. 6.

V. 27. "Cease, my son, from hearkening to instruc-"tion, in order to wander from the words of knowledge." This is the literal rendering, of which different interpretations have been given. 'My son, hearken not to instruc-'tion, but with the desire and intention to grow better by 'it.' But as a man cannot become wiser and better by hearkening to bad counsel and imbibing corrupt principles, the obvious meaning of our translation is at least implied; and it is of so much importance, that it should not be lightly departed from. 'In order to profit by good instruc-'tions, no longer regard such as are of a contrary nature 'and tendency.' As many "turn away their ears from the "truth, and are turned unto fables;" so they that would hearken to the truth must turn away their ears from lies, especially such as are most plausible and agreeable, and set off with the greatest show of wit, genius, eloquence, and learning.—"Take heed *what* you hear;" and "Take "heed *how* you hear." (*Mark* iv. 24. *Luke* viii. 18.) Insinuating infidels, skeptics, and ungodly men, who endeavour to argue young persons out of their religious scruples, and excite their contempt of their pious parents, or teachers, under the pretence of enlarging their minds, and freeing them from the shackles of prejudice and superstition; with all those ministers of religion, however distinguished, whose instructions are unscriptural, answer the description here given. They administer poison instead of medicine: and their books, sermons, harangues, and conversation should carefully be shunned. "To the law and "to the testimony, if they speak not according to this "word; it is because there is no light in them."

V. 28. 'A wicked witness mocks if you tell him 'of law and justice, or of the judgment of God upon 'perjured persons.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) "The mouth of "the wicked" 'takes pleasure in iniquity, as gluttons 'and drunkards in delicate meats and drinks.' (*Note*, xv. 14.)

V. 29. This verse seems connected with the foregoing. 'But terrible punishments shall certainly be in-'flicted upon those that scoff at religion and conscience; 'nor shall other wicked men escape, who are such fools 'as to despise good instructions.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) (*Note*, xxvi. 3.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—14.

The wisdom of this world generally contradicts the holy Scriptures: and we need not wonder at this, if we consider who is the god and prince of this world, and by whose influence ungodly men are swayed. According to the maxims of this world, "wealth procureth many "friends:" numbers of mercenary men pay court to the rich and prosperous, and entreat the favour of princes and nobles, whatever be their character, and are their obedient servants for what they can get. Nay, they flatter them, and write panegyrics on their endowments and excellencies; though their folly and wickedness are conspicuous to all the world! This is especially the case, when liberality, exercised from any motive, or by any or no rule, forms a part of the character; for then it is hoped that flattery will be well rewarded: and there are but few exceptions to the general rule, that "every man is a friend to him that "giveth gifts," and has good preferments to bestow. Whereas poverty exposes even a wise and good man to contempt; "All the brethren of the poor do hate him;" and his relations are pained to see him enter their doors, or claim kindred to them. How much more then do they, who professed friendship to him in his prosperity, go far from him! Thus he is separated from his neighbour, and if he harass his faithless and unkind friends and relations, with entreaties and expostulations, it proves to no purpose; for they are still wanting to him; and he may sink under his calamity, or seek refuge in an alms-house or a work-house. But the maxims of divine wisdom declare, that "the poor "man, that walketh in his integrity, is better than he "who is perverse in his lips and is a fool;" yea, far better than those dissembling rich men, who despise and desert them. The Son of God hath shown poverty to be most honourable, by choosing it for his own condition: and "God hath chosen the poor of this world rich in "faith and heirs of his kingdom." Let us then take care neither to despise those whom God honours, nor to envy or flatter those whom he abhors. If Providence have allotted to us a low condition, let us learn to be contented: and by cheerfulness, honesty, industry, frugality, and a friendly behaviour to all around us; by showing decent respect to superiors, without paying court to them; by avoiding every improper way of mending our circumstances; and by an universal conscientiousness, endeavour to show poverty to be respectable. And it is far more becoming the poor, and more comfortable to bring up their families by honest labour, and with mean fare, than to place confidence in rich relations, or to entreat the favour of princes, or the friendship of those who give gifts.—Again, whilst the proud and revengeful count it their glory to resent every affront: nay, would be disgraced among those of similar principles, if they would not venture on murder, and without regard to their most endeared connexions, risk their own lives and souls, in seeking satisfaction for the most trivial injury; the word of God teaches us, that it is a proof of a "man's discretion to defer "his anger; and his glory to pass over a transgression." And who does not see how much more rational and beneficial this is? How much better it suits the present state of mankind, and conduces to a man's own peace, and happiness? As the knowledge of God, and of his truth and will, are essential to our present and everlasting good; the employment of time and labour in searching the Scriptures, and in meditation and prayer, is more conducive to our own advantage, than it would be if we could thus gain some powerful earthly friend. This is the true wisdom, which "whosoever getteth, loveth his own soul, and he that "keepeth shall find good." Thus we may avert the wrath of our almighty King, and secure his favour: and

CHAP. XX.

The evils of intemperance, dishonesty, and many other vices and imprudences. The power of kings, and the good use to be made of it. The benefit of deliberation and good counsel. The deceitful-

then we need not doubt but that he will protect us and supply all our wants, as our all-sufficient Friend and Father. But while men neglect both the salvation of God and their own evident duty, they run into distress; and instead of condemning themselves, they charge God foolishly, and quarrel with him, as if he were the Author of their sin and misery. They complain of being unfortunate, and of having bad luck and a hard lot; or they throw the blame on relations and friends; and thus in numberless ways, "their hearts fret against the LORD." They who have inherited, or acquired houses and riches, should take care that they do not trust in them, or on the flattering and fallacious respect that is paid them. They should recollect from whom, and for what purposes, they received them; and consider how much good or harm they may do by their example and influence. A man's greatest troubles often arise from that quarter whence he expected the greatest comfort. For an ungodly, extravagant, and disobedient son, who brings scandal upon his family and ruin on himself; or an imprudent, unfaithful, or contentious wife, may render the most prosperous person extremely miserable. When the Lord gives one of his servants a prudent wife, she will add more to his comfort than riches could. But if, without his criminal preference of wealth, or external accomplishments to piety, he should find himself mistaken in his choice; he may confidently expect wisdom to enable him to behave properly in such difficult circumstances, for comfort adequate to the affliction, and grace to extract good to his soul from it. But though the Lord will not forsake his offending servants; yet the consciousness of having brought upon themselves the calamity by sin, will add a poignancy to it. So that the way of duty is in all things the way of peace and safety. Indeed every crooked path, every instance of falsehood and dissimulation, nay, of rashness and harshness, will certainly be awfully punished hereafter, or sharply corrected in this present world. And the more wicked men here live sumptuously and luxuriously; the more they lord it over their inferiors, or equals, or even superiors; (for "*slaves* have often had rule over princes,") the more dreadful misery and disgrace await them in a future state.

V. 15—29.

No man can warrantably trust in the Lord who is slothful in business. "For slothfulness casteth a man into a deep "sleep," and he is not aware of the event, till he feels, that hunger is the portion of the idle, both in respect of soul and body. Yet numbers shrink from labour and self-denial, hiding their hands in their bosoms, and not having resolution to bring them to their mouths, till they are reduced to the most extreme distress: and then they bitterly complain, not only of the unkindness of their friends, but of their hard lot, by which they reflect on the providence of God. But they ought to know that man is not at all to be depended upon; and that God has not engaged to maintain the lazy and extravagant, even if they *seem to be religious.* For there is little evidence that a man is really religious, who will not work; or who refuses to submit to Providence, as to his condition in life. How much better for a man to "labour, working with his hands the thing that is good, "that he may have to give to him that needeth!" For "he that giveth to the poor, lendeth unto the LORD, and "that which he hath given will he pay him again." But, alas, how few have got faith! And how little faith have the most! Men in general dare credit their neighbours with more pounds than they dare trust the Lord with pence: else they would deduct more from what they spend or hoard, to put out on this unexceptionable security, and on this highest interest. Thus indeed "wealth would procure "many friends," whose prayers would bring down blessings, and abound in every way to their good; and every good man would be a friend to him, who thus gave gifts. But if we have very little in our power, we may buy into these funds as fast as the richest can do: for "the desire "of a man is his kindness;" and the widow's two mites, given from proper motives, will go as far as the large donations of the wealthy. Indeed every advantage results from true wisdom. It teaches us to fear the LORD which tendeth to life, to render a man inwardly satisfied, and secure, that he shall not be "visited with evil;" and to trust in God and keep his commandments, and so to keep our own souls: whereas he that despiseth his way, and cares not by what rule he walks, shall die. Let us then leave it to those ungodly men who scorn judgment and justice, and make a scoff of the vengeance of God, to devour in luxurious living the wages of iniquity, and to treasure up wrath to themselves: "for judgments are prepared for "scorners, and stripes for the back of fools:" and they are often here made examples of, that the simple may beware. Let us "hear counsel, and receive instruction, that we "may be wise at our latter end:" for we have all been foolish and disobedient. Let us be glad of reproof, that we may understand knowledge: and study with propriety, when occasion offers, to check the insolence of scorners, and prevent them from doing mischief; and to give seasonable reproof to men of understanding, that they may be stirred up to do more good. Above all, let us cease to hear those instructions, whether from the pulpit, or the press, or the stage, or in witty and admired publications, or in convivial meetings, which cause men to err from the words of knowledge. For such *false witnesses* are of all most dangerous: others may, by their lies and perjuries, rob us of our characters, property, or lives, but these aim at the ruin of our souls: other false witnesses perish alone; but when "the "blind lead the blind, they both fall into the ditch toge-"ther." We need not envy their carnal mirth or jollity; seeing the wrath of God abideth upon them; and their insolence and licentiousness in prosperity must appear unseemly in the eyes of all sober men. Should they even be favourites of earthly princes, and lord it over better men than themselves, or persecute the children of God, they will only at length sink deeper in contempt and misery.

ness of men, and the curse attending dishonest gain. The honour of young and old men. The advantage of correction; and man's obligation to trust in God, 1—30.

WINE *is* [a] a mocker, strong drink *is* raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.

2 The [b] fear of a king *is* as the roaring of a lion: *whoso* provoketh him to anger [c] sinneth *against* his own soul.

3 *It is* [d] an honour for a man to cease from strife: [e] but every fool will be meddling.

4 The [f] sluggard will not plow by reason of the * cold; [g] *therefore* shall he beg in harvest, and *have* nothing.

5 [h] Counsel in the heart of man *is like* deep water; but a man of understanding will draw it out.

6 Most men will [i] proclaim every one his own † goodness; [k] but a faithful man who can find?

7 The [l] just *man* walketh in his integrity; [m] his children *are* blessed after him.

a xxiii. 29—35. xxxi. 4 Gen. ix. 21—23. xix. 31—36. 1 Sam. xxv. 36—38. 2 Sam. xi 13. xiii. 28. 1 Kings xx. 16—21. Is. xxviii. 7. Hos. iv. 11 vii. 5 Hab. ii. 15, 16. 1 Cor. vi. 10 Gal v. 21. Eph v. 13

b xvi. 14, 15. xix. 12. Ec. x. 4. Hos xi. 10. Am iii. 8.

c viii. 36 1 Kings ii 23.

d xiv. 29. xvi 32. xvii. 14. xix 11. xxv. 8—10. Eph. i. 6—8. iv. 32. v. 1.

e xiv 17. xviii. 6. xxi. 24. 2 Kings xiv. 9, 10 Jam. iii. 14—18. iv. 1.

f x. 4. xix. 24. xxvi. 13—16.

* Or, *winter.*

g vi 10, 11. xix. 15. xxiv. 34. Matt. xxv. 3—10. 24—28. 2 Pet. i. 5—11.

h xviii. 4. 1 Cor. ii 11 Ps. lxiv. 6.

i xxv. 14. xxvii. 2. Mat. vi. 2. Luke xviii. 11. 28. xxii. 33. 2 Cor xii. 11.

† Or, *bounty.*

k Ps. xii. 1. Ec. vii. 28. Jer. v. 1. Mic. vii. 2. Luke xviii. 8. John i. 47.

l xiv. 2. xix. 1. Ps. xv. 2. xxvi. 1. 11. Is xxxiii. 15. Luke i. 6.

2 Cor. i. 12. Tit ii. 11, 12. 3 John 3, 4.——m xiii. 22. Gen. xvii. 7. Ps. xxxvii. 26 cxii. 2. Jer. xxxii. 39. Acts ii. 39.

But we should still recollect our dependence on God for every thing. "There are many devices in a man's heart, "but the counsel of the LORD shall stand." If he then be for us, who can be against us? Whom then need we fear? Or what more can we desire, but that all our devices may be directed to coincide with his holy will? When we educate our children properly, and chasten them when young, and whilst there is hope of rendering the stubborn will submissive and patient of contradiction; and when in obedience to God we repress our foolish tenderness, and do not spare for their crying: we do our best to render them a comfort to us, and happy in themselves, and to preserve them from manifold perils and miseries in future life. It is peculiarly important to govern our passions: for if men yield to evil tempers and furious wrath, they may indeed be rescued once and again; but should they persist in their contentious conduct, at length it will bring on them destruction, temporal and eternal. In short, God commands nothing but what is good for us; and forbids nothing but what is injurious: and the instructions of wisdom are, in fact, so many infallible rules of happiness.

NOTES.

CHAP. XX. V. 1. Strong drink of every kind, when improperly used, throws down the fences of reflection, fear, and shame; excites men to profane mockery of things sacred, to revile the most respectable characters, to ridicule or reproach their best friends, to commit the greatest outrages, to embroil themselves in riots and quarrels, to gratify the basest lusts, or to commit the most rash and ruinous crimes. 'Drunkenness is an enemy to wisdom, 'even in common things; much more in those of ever-'lasting consequence.' 'Let him whose design it is to be 'wise and good, take heed of accustoming himself to ex-'cess of wine.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The last clause may be rendered more literally: "He that errs therein, will not "be wise." As habitual drunkenness is madness and folly: so occasional and repeated falls into that hateful vice, indicate that a man will never become wise or eminent.

V. 2. "The terror of a king is as the roaring of a "young lion; whosoever is angry with him sinneth against "his own life." 'The word properly signifies, (not to '*provoke;*) but *to be angry*, which is a kind of madness; 'for thereby he is provoked to such fury, as is in young 'lions, who are fiercest of all others.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) Thus nothing so highly provokes the King of heaven, as impiously and virulently quarrelling with his commandments, testimonies, decrees, and dispensations.

V. 3. (*Note*, xix. 11.) 'It is below a wise man, or 'one who is truly great, to scold and brawl: or if a quar-'rel be begun, it is no disparagement to him, but the no-'blest thing he can do, to withdraw himself from it, and 'let it rest: but all fools and lewd persons love to thrust 'themselves into contention, and fancy when they are en-'gaged in strife, they are bound in honour to maintain it.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 4. If a husbandman, from sloth and unmanly fear of the cold, should leave his land uncultivated; he could expect nothing but want, when his neighbours were reaping their harvest: and should he beg of them, they would not be disposed to pity and relieve him. Thus they who, through sloth or impatience of difficulties, neglect favourable opportunities, either in their temporal or eternal concerns, must bear the consequences, perhaps without pity or redress, whilst the diligent are rejoicing in the fruit of their labour and self-denial.

V. 5. Designing and politic men endeavour to conceal their real purposes and intentions, that it may be as water in a deep well; yet men of sagacity and insinuation, often find means to draw the secret from them, or in some way to find them out. Many likewise, who are capable of giving wise counsel, are so reserved, or diffident, that there requires much address to draw any thing from them. But it may be done as waters may be raised from the deep well by skill and labour; and it will well recompense those who can effect it.

V. 6. Men in general love to be thought very upright, conscientious, and generous; and they are ready to proclaim to others, how much they have done, or intend to do, for their relations, friends, or dependants: but a truly honest man, whose integrity, veracity, and fidelity may safely be depended on, is as rare as such boasters are numerous.

V. 7. "He that walketh in his integrity is a righteous "man: *and* blessed *shall* his children *be* after him." "He "that doeth righteousness is righteous:" He is a genuine son of Abraham, and inherits the blessings of Abraham. He is justified by faith, and shows his faith by his works. (*Notes, Jam.* ii.)

8 [n] A king that sitteth in the throne of judgment scattereth away all evil with his eyes.

9 Who [o] can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?

10 * Divers weights, *and* divers measures, [p] both of them *are* alike [q] abomination to the LORD.

11 Even [r] a child is known by his doings, whether his work *be* pure, and whether *it be* right.

12 The [s] hearing ear, and the seeing eye the LORD hath made even both of them.

13 [t] Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty; [u] open thine eyes, *and* thou shalt be satisfied with bread.

14 *It is* naught, [x] *it is* naught, saith the buyer: but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth.

15 There is gold, and a multitude of rubies: [y] but the lips of knowledge *are* a precious jewel.

n 26. xvi. 12. xxix. 14. Ps. lxxii. 4. xcii. 9. xciv. 4. ci. 6—8. Is. xxxii. 1.
o 1 Kings viii. 46. 2 Chr. vi. 36. Job xiv. 4. xv. 14. xxv. 4. Ps. li. 5. Ec. vii. 20. 1 Cor. iv. 4. Jam. iii. 2. 1 John i. 7—9.
* Heb. *A stone and a stone; an ephah and an ephah.*
p 23. xi. 1. xvi. 11. Lev. xix. 35. Deut. xxv. 13—15. Am. viii. 4—7. Mic. vi. 10, 11.
q Deut. vii. 25, 26. Rev. xxi. 8.——r xxi. 8. xxii. 15. Ps. li. 5. lviii. 3. Luke i. 15. 66. ii. 46, 47. 51, 52. vi. 43, 44.
s Ex. iv. 11. Ps. xciv. 9. cxix. 18. Matt. xiii. 13—16. Acts xxvi. 18. Eph. i. 17, 18.
t vi. 9—11. x. 4, 5. xiii. 4. xix. 15. xxiv. 30—34. Rom. xii. 11. 2 Thes. iii. 10.
u Jon. i. 6. Rom. xiii. 11. 1 Cor. xv. 34. Eph. v. 14.
x Ec. i. 10. Hos. xii. 7, 8. 1 Thes. iv. 6.
y iii. 15. viii. 11. x. 20, 21. xv. 7. 23. xvi. 16. 21. 24. xxv. 12. Job xxviii. 12—19. Ec. xii. 9. Rom. x. 14, 15.

V. 8. 'When righteous judgment is executed, there 'vice dares not appear.' When wise and just kings take pains to look carefully into judicial transactions, and examine for themselves how justice is administered to the people in general; there fraud and oppression will be prevented, and grievances effectually redressed, as if by their very looks. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 9. Where is the man who has a right to boast, either that he was originally free from sin, or that he is entirely pure at present, or that he hath made his own heart clean? If there be such a one, who and where is he, among the sons of fallen Adam? Men form antiscriptural systems, and fall into self-flattering delusions, but the omniscience of God knows nothing of such a man among all the inhabitants of the earth. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'Who can say, and say 'truly, that he hath not the least evil affection remaining 'within him, no unruly passion stirring in his soul; or 'that he is so free from sin, that he needs no further pu-'rifying.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 10. "A stone and a stone; an ephah and an ephah." That is, one set of weights and measures to buy with, and another to sell with: some according to the standard, to produce to the officers appointed to inspect them, or to use when afraid of detection; and others, to be brought from their concealment, when the widow, the orphan, the destitute, and the dependent, who cannot or dare not seek redress, are to be cheated and oppressed. (23. *Note*, xi. 1. xvi. 11.) 'They are unclean before the LORD, even both of 'them, and they also who do such things.' (*Septuagint.*) 'Such injustice is detestable to Him beyond expression.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 11. By observing the first actions of a child, or the conduct, contrivances, pursuits, and even diversions, of a youth, a judgment may often be formed of what his character will be, when arrived at maturity: and indeed the propensities of human nature may be learned in the same manner. If children were generally observed to be submissive, sincere, docile, gentle, and loving to each other, averse to all ill and propense to all good; the wickedness of the world might with some plausibility be exclusively ascribed to bad habits, examples, and tuition. Yet even then it would be a mystery, (which men adopting that system ought to explain,) how it comes to pass, that bad habits should be so universally contracted, bad examples set, and bad instructions given. But if children are observed to be very early susceptible of violent anger, of envy, and of pride, to be humorsome and deceitful, to quarrel and to tell lies, to learn bad words and evil things almost without a teacher, and to be very backward to learn what is good, and prone to rebel with pertinacity against every exertion of authority: in this case we must conclude, that we are born in sin and the children of wrath. So that they who would know what human nature is, previous to habits, examples, and tuition, should watch their children, and inquire, "whether their work be pure and whether it be right?" The verse may also mean, that God notices the conduct even of children, and will require an account of them, whether their work be right or not.

V. 12. 'There are ears which hear not, and eyes that 'see not: but if a man have an hearing ear and a seeing 'eye, he is doubly bound to God, both for his sense and 'the improvement of it.' (*Bp. Hall.*) 'As the LORD is 'the Fountain of all good, particularly of those excellent 'and useful senses, whereby the knowledge of all things is 'conveyed to us: so the towardly disposition, which we 'observe in any child, to listen to instruction, and a clear 'understanding to discern, and a sound judgment to resolve 'aright, are likewise, above all things, to be peculiarly 'ascribed to the divine grace.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 13. (*Notes*, 4. vi. 6—9.)

V. 14. Whilst the seller often seeks to impose on the ignorance, credulity, or necessity of his customers, by fraudulently commending or concealing the faults of his goods, or by demanding an unfair price; the buyer vilifies them far beneath his own judgment of their value. Especially, if he knows that the owner must sell, he will run him down in the price, and pretend many faults in the commodity: and when by these tricks of trade he has got a good bargain, he will go and boast of it among his neighbours! But is not this to boast that he is an artful knave, who met with a man simple enough to be cheated? 'As fraud 'makes men dispraise that to which they have a mind; so, 'in the other cases, out of *ignorance*, or out of *partiality* or *faction*, nay, sometimes out of *natural disposition*, men 'disparage what is praise-worthy, and commend that which 'is good for little. (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 15. Gold and precious stones were very common in the days of Solomon, who greatly enriched his people; and wisdom ought to have been equally plentiful under so wise a prince: but an understanding heart, and lips fitted to disperse knowledge, remained still *precious*, not only for their *excellency* and *utility*, but also for their scarceness.

16 [z] Take his garment that is surety *for* a stranger: and take a pledge of him for [a] a strange woman.

17 Bread of * deceit [b] *is* sweet to a man; but afterwards [c] his mouth shall be filled with gravel.

18 *Every* [d] purpose is established by counsel: [e] and with good advice make war.

19 He [f] that goeth about *as* a tale-bearer revealeth secrets: therefore [g] meddle not with him that † flattereth with his lips.

20 Whoso [h] curseth his father or his mother, [i] his ‡ lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness.

z xi. 15. xxii. 26, 27. xxvii. 13. Ex. xxii. 26, 27. a ii. 16. v. 3. vii. 5. 10. xxiii. 27. * Heb. *lying* or *falsehood*. iv. 17. b ix. 17, 18. Gen. iii 6, 7. Job xx. 12—20. Ec. xi. 9. Heb. xi. 25. c Lam. iii. 15, 16. d xv. 22. xxiv. 6. e xxv. 8. Judg i. 1, 2. xix. 30. xx. 7. 18. 23. 26—28. 2 Sam. ii. 26, 27. 2 Chr. xxv. 15 — 20. Luke xiv. 31. f xi. 13. xviii. 8. xxvi. 20 — 22. Lev. xix. 16. g 3. xxiv. 21. † Or, *enticeth*. xvi. 29. Rom. xvi. 18. h xxx. 11. 17. Ex. xx. 12 xxi. 17. Lev xx. 9. Deu. xxvii. 16. Matt. xv. 4. Mark vii. 10—13. ——— i xiii 9. xxiv. 20. Job xviii. 5. 18. Matt. xxii. 13. xxv. 8. Jude 13. ——— ‡ Or, *candle*. 27.

21 An inheritance *may be* [k] gotten hastily at the beginning; [l] but the end thereof shall not be blessed.

22 Say not thou, [m] I will recompense evil; *but* [n] wait on the LORD, and he shall save thee.

23 Divers [o] weights *are* an abomination unto the LORD; and § a false balance *is* not good.

24 [p] Man's goings *are* of the LORD; [q] how can a man then understand his own way?

25 *It is* [r] a snare to the man, *who* devoureth *that which is* holy; and [s] after vows to make inquiry.

k xxiii. 4. xxviii. 20. 22 1 Tim. vi. 9. l xiii. 22 xxviii. 8. Job xxvii 16, 17. Hab. ii. 6 Zech. v. 4. Mal. ii. 2. m xvii. 13. xxiv. 29. Deut. xxxii. 35. Rom. xii. 17—19. 1 Thes. v. 15. 1 Pet iii. 9. n Ps. xxvii. 14. xxxvii. 34. Is. xl 31. Lam. iii. 25, 26. 1 Pet. ii. 23. iv. 19. o 10. Ez. xlv. 10. § Heb *balances of deceit*. Hos. xii. 7. Am viii. 5. p Ps. xxxvii. 23. Jer. x. 23. Dan. v. 23. Acts xvii. 28. q xiv. 8. xvi. 9. Ps. xxv. 4. 12. Is. x. 6, 7. r xviii. 7. Lev. v. 15 xxii. 10—15. xxvii. 30. Mal. iii. 8—10. ——— s Lev. xxvii. 9, 10. 31. Num. xxx. 2, &c. Ec. v. 4—6. Matt. v. 33.

V. 16. Lend that man nothing without good security, who is ready to be bound for the debts of any new acquaintance whose company entertains him; or for bad women with whom he hath formed connexions: for he will surely and speedily be ruined. (*Note*, vi. 1—5.)—'Teach him 'wit, that he cast himself not rashly into danger.'

V. 17. Under the term, "Bread of deceit," all things obtained or enjoyed by sin may be comprised. Fraudulent gains and licentious indulgences may for the moment be pleasant: but they will soon become like gravel in the mouth, which cuts the gums, breaks the teeth, and disgusts the palate.

V. 18. Kings, and rulers of every description, should be very careful that they do not rashly or needlessly engage in war. They should advise whether the object in contest be of that importance, to warrant so destructive a manner of decision? And whether the power to be opposed be not too great for them to cope with? If they must go to war, what armies they must raise, and where, and with what funds they may pay them? What alliances they can form? By what plan they may conduct the operations of the war, &c.? Till such questions are answered, it is madness to involve a nation in difficulties, from which no human wisdom may be able to extricate it. "Establish thy thoughts "by counsel, and by counsel make war." (*Old Translation.*)

V. 19. (*Note*, xi. 13.) The tale-bearer is commonly a flatterer. Thus he insinuates himself into the favour, and pries into the secrets, of one person or family: and then he goes and tells all he knows, with a malevolent comment, in another family: accompanying the slanders of the absent with flattery of those present, and in both addressing himself to the corruptions of the human heart. Whoever ridicules or reviles the absent, and flatters those present, may safely be deemed a tale-bearer; and in the next company he will act the same part: who then would have any thing to do with so infamous a character?

V. 20. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'The pupils of his eyes shall 'behold darkness.' (*Sept.*)

V. 21. Covetous men sometimes grow rich very rapidly: but they build on a rotten foundation, the fabric must soon fall, and in the mean time its tottering continually alarms them. In short, their prosperity is accompanied by the curse of God, instead of his blessing; as both they and their posterity will learn at the last.

V. 22. Men are apt to say, 'If I should tamely bear this insult, and should not show that I have a spirit to defend or avenge myself, I shall be exposed to further and more intolerable injuries, and become a prey to ill-designing men.' But let no pious man speak thus: let him obey and wait on the Lord, and he will save him from all enemies and dangers. How exactly doth this accord with the precepts of Christ and his apostles, which many erroneously consider as peculiar to the Christian dispensation! (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 23. (*Note*, 10.) 'This is a sin so heinous, and yet 'so commonly practised, that it is fit to be repeated again, 'that it is a most wicked thing to cheat another; though 'it be but in a little matter.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 24. "The steps of a mighty man are of the LORD: "How then can a man," (a poor feeble man) "understand "his way?"—Ungodly men can proceed no further than God is pleased to permit, and can effect nothing which he cannot render subservient to his grand designs. Pious men derive all their good desires, counsels, inclinations, and strength from him. Their works are in his hands, and their designs will meet with success, and produce effects, in a degree unknown to them, but known to him. How then can a man form plans, conduct operations, accomplish designs, or foresee the event, independent of the Lord? In this case he must always be in uncertainty, as to his way and the end of it; and he will find every thing turn out contrary to his expectation, or beyond his conception: for the LORD "turneth the way of the wicked upside down."

V. 24. Tithes, firstlings, first-fruits, and some other things, were by the law holy to the Lord: but many Israelites would be tempted secretly to appropriate a part of them to their own use: and thus they would be caught in a snare and involved in guilt. In like manner men would often vow inconsiderately; and then be tempted to make inquiry how to elude the vow, or excuse the infringing of it. This sin likewise exposed men to sharp rebukes, from which they would have been preserved, if they had previously inquired whether they could cheerfully perform their vow; or having

t 8. 2 Sam. iv. 9—12. Ps. ci. 7, 8.
u 2 Sam. xii. 31. Is. xxviii 27,28.
x Gen. ii. 7. Job xxxii. 8. Rom. ii. 15. 1 Cor ii. 11. 2 Cor. iv. 2—6. 1 John iii. 19—21.
* Or, *lamp.* 20
y 30. Heb iv. 12, 13.
z xvi. 6. Ps. lxi. 7. ci. 1.

26 A wise king [t] scattereth the wicked, and [u] bringeth the wheel over them.

27 The [x] spirit of man *is* the * candle of the LORD, [y] searching all the inward parts of the belly.

28 [z] Mercy and truth preserve the king: and [a] his throne is upholden by mercy.

29 The [b] glory of young men *is* their strength: and [c] the beauty of old men *is* the grey head.

30 The blueness of a wound † cleanseth away evil: so *do* [d] stripes the inward parts of the belly.

a xvi.12 xxix. 14. Ps. xxi. 7. xxvi. 3. Is. xvi. 5.
b Jer. ix. 23, 24. 1 John ii. 14.
c xvi. 31. Lev. xix. 32.
† Heb. *is a purging medicine against evil*
d xix. 25 xxii. 15. Is xxvii. 9. Heb. xii. 10.

vowed, if depending on God, they had honestly submitted to the present loss. 'A sacrilegious man finds devices to rob 'God of things that are consecrated to God, and then makes 'vows, in hopes by them to expiate his sacrilege.' (*De 'Dieu.*) A corruption which never more infested the world, 'than in this age, in which most men give nothing, but 'do all they can to take away that which their ancestors 'have given to the service of God, and the support of his 'ministers, and schools, or of the poor. By which they 'are guilty not only of their own destruction, but of the 'loss of the souls of others.' (*Cartwright.*) 'A man vows 'in his distress, to give something to God; but having ob-'tained his desire, studies how he may be loosed from his 'obligations.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 26. *The wheel*, &c. (*Note* 8.) As the wheel crushes the sheaves, in forcing out the corn; so the impartial administration of justice crushes the wicked, and separates them from among the more virtuous members of society.

V. 27. The rational soul and conscience of man are as a lamp of God within him, which he may continually use in examining the dispositions of his own heart, and the motives of his actions, that he may become acquainted with his own character, form a proper judgment of his past conduct, and learn properly to act for the future. This candle should neither be obscured by ignorance and delusion, nor employed in conceiving, contriving, or apologizing for iniquity. Thus it is indeed extinguished or misemployed by ungodly men: but the grace of God causes the lamp to burn clearly and to better purposes. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 28. 'The strongest guards for the preservation of a 'prince's person, and for the security of his government, 'are bounty and clemency, joined to justice and faithful-'ness to his word.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) Let kings imitate the King of kings, exercising justice, truth, and mercy, "in "all wisdom and prudence;" especially let them delight in mercy; and this will establish their thrones, (in the affections of their people, and by the peculiar blessing of God,) more firmly, than either mercenary armies, or mercenary courtiers can do.

V. 29. Young men are distinguished by vigour and courage, and are apt to glory in them, even when made a bad use of; and old men grow infirm and lose their comeliness, so that their gray hairs, an emblem of experience and discretion, are their chief ornament. But when the young spend their vigour to good purpose, it is really an honour to them: and when the old are wise, and devise and direct useful measures for the good of their families, the church, or the community; their gray hairs are really an ornament, and they have an amiableness which far exceeds all the fire and activity of youth.

V. 30. "The livid colour of a wound is a purification "for a wicked man: and stripes, for the inward parts of "the belly." 'Though stripes chiefly affect the body: 'yet they have likewise an effect upon the inward recesses 'of the mind, restraining the offender by the fear of pu-'nishment.' 'That this is the meaning of the words,' (rendered "the inward parts of the belly") 'appears from 'that elegant comparison of the conscience or spirit of a 'man (27) to a light within him, searching out and dis-'covering his inmost thoughts.' (*Grey.*) Sharp punishments, by which the offender is scourged, till livid tumours remain, are necessary in many cases, and sometimes effectual, where all other remedies fail.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—16.

If it were not notoriously evident, it could scarcely be credited, that men of the most brilliant capacities and accomplishments, as well as the ignorant and rude multitude, should be capable of rendering themselves fools and madmen, merely for the sake of the pleasant flavour, or transient exhilaration, of wine and strong drink! But fallen man, having lost his original happiness in the fruition of God, and not finding the vacancy filled by a moderate use of the creatures, foolishly seeks for satisfaction in intemperance, and proceeds to an excess in animal indulgences, to which none of the brutes can habitually be induced. Excess of wine, however, not only deludes the expectations of its votaries, and yields far more anguish than satisfaction: but it leads to scenes of impiety and iniquity; to outrageous passion, discord, and bloodshed; and to various most perilous and disastrous situations. It is not only a base and worse than beastly vice: but it runs a man directly into the snare of the devil, to be for the season blinded and employed at his pleasure. Whosoever then is *once* deceived by this sin is, in that instance, a fool: what then are they, who for many years together experience its painful and ruinous effects, and yet run themselves continually into the same fatal snare? In every station of society this vice is pernicious: but it is most terrible in those possessed of authority. How tremendous is it, when a monarch, (who is the absolute arbiter of life and death to his subjects, and whose frown terrifieth like the roaring of a lion,) inflames his passions and clouds his judgment by inebriation! In such a case, who can be safe? Whosoever provoketh him, sinneth against his own life: but who can be secure against provoking a tyrant intoxicated with pride, with exaltation, and with excess? Yet to such abuses is power liable, as exercised by sinful men! We may then heartily wish, that JEHOVAH, whose infinite wisdom and holiness secure the beneficent use of his authority, may be

CHAP. XXI.

The evil of pride, hypocrisy injustice, sloth, voluptuousness, falsehood, and cruelty to the poor: commendations of diligence, prudence, equity, and mercy: and the misery of domestic contention, 2—29. All hearts in the Lord's

the only *absolute* sovereign: and that all subordinate rulers may be restricted by prudent limitations; that they may have power to do good but not evil, to be a terror to evil doers, and to scatter and crush them, but not to terrify or oppress those who do well. Authority, directed by law, and exercised in wisdom, is honourable to them and beneficial to the community. Thus seated in the throne of judgment, and showing a decided abhorrence of impiety and iniquity; they detect and frown upon the wicked, drive them from their presence, and exclude them from those important offices, which should be filled with such as, by their example, influence, and use of their authority, promote piety and righteousness. No confidence can be placed in ungodly men: they are indeed ready enough to proclaim their own goodness, and to make vast professions of their zeal, and readiness to venture or expend, in the cause of those whom they favour: but a faithful man who can find? Numbers flatter the very persons whom they ridicule and revile in the next company into which they go! And especially the divers weights and measures, and the false balances, which the Lord seeth and abhorreth; and the innumerable falsehoods and cheating tricks in bargains, which are often gloried in, show how deceitful and faithless selfish man is. But the Lord our King beholdeth and is displeased; and whoso provoketh him to anger, sinneth against his own soul. He will scatter and crush the wicked, and drive them from his presence into everlasting punishment. And, though none can say, "I have made my "heart clean, I am pure from my sin:" yet every believer is so far made pure by divine grace, that he walks in his integrity, rendering to God and to every man his due, to the best of his ability. And this conscientious adherence to equity proves the best method of rendering his children blessed after him. Regard to the word of God keeps a man from various other sources of mischief. The pious man will count it his honour to cease from strife, and follow after peace: "but every fool will be meddling to his ruin or vexation." He will labour and endure hardship in this seed-time for eternity, and likewise be diligent in proper measure about his secular business: he will watch against the love of sleep and indulgence; he will fear that poverty which comes through negligence; he will keep far from those ruinous connexions, which reduce the spendthrift to beggary; and improve the advantages, and guard against the temptations, of his situation and relations in life. Wherever we turn our eyes, we discover conclusive proofs of human depravity. Even in accurately considering our children, while we may discern a vast difference in their tempers, endowments, and pursuits; we cannot but also lament the tendency to evil, in various directions, which every one of them manifests. But "every good and every perfect gift is from above:" and as the Lord gave them, as well as us, their senses and faculties, we should pray without ceasing, that he would bestow on them that special grace, by which they will be inclined and enabled to use his other gifts in a proper manner. Our thankful praises also are his due, if he hath, either in our own case or theirs, opened the eye, the ear, the understanding, and the heart, to the perception of his glory, in the person and salvation of Christ. We should desire for them, (as well as ourselves,) the lips of knowledge, far more than gold and a multitude of jewels: that they may both be enabled "from the good treasure in "their own hearts to bring forth good things," for the benefit of all around them; and also understanding and address to draw forth from the hearts of other men, that useful instruction, which diffidence and timidity would have concealed. Finally, he who would know mankind, and discern the characters and purposes of those with whom he has to do, must first study his own heart: for self-knowledge, experience, and acquaintance with the word of God, confer the deepest discernment in this respect, and it is the most capable of improvement to valuable purpose.

V. 17—30.

The true interest of princes, is the same as that of their subjects: for wisdom, justice, truth, and mercy, securely uphold their thrones; whilst the tyrant continually feels that his totters under him. The regular and impartial administration of justice, a strict adherence to every engagement, and a delight in acts of clemency and mercy, as far as can consist with the vigour of good government, procure a monarch the love of his people; which is a surer protection than ten thousands of mercenary guards; who, by hope of better pay, may be induced to murder those whom they were hired to protect. The evasion, and equivocation, which men use with their consciences, respecting that part of their substance, which by precept, or by vow, belongs to the Lord or to the poor, but which is otherwise consumed; and the great ingenuity and care with which they find excuses for the neglect of their evident duty, show the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of the human heart. It is thus that they who will be rich fall into temptations and snares, and into divers foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown them in destruction and perdition. Such bread of deceit may be sweet to a man, and he may be greatly pleased with his unlawful gain or forbidden indulgences: but afterwards his mouth will be filled with gravel, and the anguish of his punishment will far exceed his momentary satisfaction. Thus estates are often gotten in a very rapid manner; and the successful cheat or plunderer thinks himself, and is thought by the foolish, very fortunate. But a wise man sees that a secret curse entwines round such prosperity, and will never permit either the owner or his family to enjoy it with durable comfort.—Scriptual meekness, instead of exposing a man to insults, puts him under the protection of the Almighty. Pride and resentment indeed dispose men to say, "I will recompense evil:" and every fool will engage in quarrels to his own vexation or destruction. But the pious Christian conquers his passions, and avoids or ceases from strife, and when injured or endangered, he waits upon the Lord and

hands, and all events at his disposal, 1. 30, 31.

THE [a] king's heart *is* in the hand of the LORD, [b] *as* the rivers of water: he turneth it withersoever he will.

2 Every way of a man *is* [c] right in his own eyes: but [d] the LORD pondereth the hearts.

3 To [e] do justice and judgment *is* more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.

4 * An [f] high look, and a proud heart, [g] *and* the † ploughing of the wicked, *is* sin.

5 The [h] thoughts of the diligent *tend* only to plenteousness; but [i] of every one *that is* hasty only to want.

6 The [k] getting of treasures by a lying tongue *is* a vanity tossed to and fro of them that [l] seek death.

a xvi. 1. 9. xx. 24. Ezra vii. 27, 28. Neh. i. 11, ii. 4. Ps. cv. 25. cvi. 46. Dan. iv. 35. Acts vii. 10
b Ps. lxxiv. 15. xciii. 4. cxiv. 3. 5. Is. xliii. 19. xliv. 27. Rev xvi 4 12.
c xvi. 2. 25. xx. 6. xxx 12. Ps. xxxvi. 2. Luke xviii. 11, 12. Gal vi. 3. Jam. i. 22.
d xxiv. 12. 1 Sam xvi. 7 Jer. xvii. 10. John ii. 24, 25. Rev. ii 23
e xv. 8. 1 Sam. xv. 22. Ps. l. 8. Is. i. 11, &c. Jer. vii. 21—23 Hos vi. 6—8. Mic. vi. 6—8. Mark xii. 33.

* Heb. *Haughtiness of eyes.*
f vi. 17. viii. 13. xxx. 13. Ps x 4. Is. ii. 11 17 iii. 16. Luke xviii. 14. 1 Pet. v. 5.
g 27 xv. 8. Rom. xiv. 23.
† Or, *light.*
h x. 4. xiii. 4. xxvii. 23—27. Eph iv. 28. 1 Thes. iv. 11, 12.
i xiv. 29 xx. 21. xxviii 22.
k x. 2. xiii. 11. xx. 14. 21. xxii. 8 xxx. 8. Jer. xvii. 11. 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10. Tit. i. 11. 2 Pet. ii. 3.
l viii. 36. Ez. xviii. 31.

spreads his hands before him, and is preserved. When the conscience, that candle of the Lord, is enlightened according to the sacred word; a man by it daily searches the inward recesses of his imagination and affections, and is employed in regulating his whole temper and conduct according to it. Thus he learns that his goings are of the Lord, and that his way leadeth to eternal life. At the same time he is taught to shun both flatterers and slanderers; and those who revile, insult, and curse their parents, whom they are bound by every obligation to love, honour, and comfort to the utmost of their power. Nothing but misery and ruin can await such monsters in human form; and if severe afflictions and distresses do not bring them to deep repentance; their lamp will shortly be put out in obscure darkness. But when the active vigour of youth is employed to useful purposes, it is indeed beautiful and honourable: and if pious and prudent young persons live to be old, they may hope, when no longer able to endure bodily labour, to become capable of advising and encouraging others, in the most important undertakings; and then their gray hairs will be more ornamental than even their youthful comeliness and agility were. For every purpose is established by counsel, and war itself is rendered successful by good advice, even more than by valour. But it must be said to great numbers, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the "dead, and Christ shall give thee light." They are still in love with the sleep of sin, and shut their eyes on the brink of ruin: nay, they are making war against God, by their impiety, and reproaches and persecutions of his people: and what can be expected in so ill-advised a contest? But let us make war against the world, sin, and Satan: let us do it with good advice, counting our cost, and forming an alliance with the Lord, whose power alone can render us victorious: let us enlist under the Captain of the Lord's host, and put on his whole armour: let us implicitly obey his orders and follow his steps: let us neither make peace nor truce with our foes, nor give them any quarter: if we be wounded, or baffled in any conflict, let us apply for help to the Lord, and renew the battle with increased watchfulness and vigour: and let us still wait on him, and he will save us, and at length make us more than conquerors, and give us the crown of glory.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXI. V. 1. The Lord formed and regulates the courses of rivers as he pleases: yet the water runs according to its own nature without any force put upon it. Thus he influences the thoughts and determinations of the human mind, to suit his own wisdom and holy purposes, without interfering with the exercise of our natural powers, as rational and accountable agents: and the hearts of the mightiest or most absolute monarchs are as much under his control, as that of the meanest person. 'Their wills are subject to the great Lord of all, who di-'verts them as easily from what they intend, or inclines 'them to that which they resolve against; as the gardener 'draws the water through the trenches he cuts, to water 'what part of the ground he thinks good.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 2. (*Note* xvi. 2.) 'For the weightiness, I suppose, of the matter, and the proneness of men to flatter themselves, and not to judge sincerely of their own actions: 'this is here again repeated.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 3. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 4. "A haughty look, and a proud heart, *which is* "the light of the wicked" ('that is, the thing whereby 'he is guided,') "is sin." (*Old Trans.*) The word rendered *ploughing* more frequently signifies a *lamp*, or *light:* and it is difficult to determine in which sense it is here used. 'A lofty look and a proud heart generally go to-'gether; (that is, the countenance shows the disposition 'of the mind.') "The lamp of the wicked is sin." 'The 'lamp signifies that which men make the rule or guide of 'their actions. In this sense the law of the Lord is the 'lamp of the righteous: but the lamp of the wicked is sin.' (*Grey.*) 'The sentence may be inverted in this manner, "Sin is the pride, the ambition, the glory, and joy, (or "the business,) of wicked men." That upon which they 'value themselves, and for which they think themselves, 'brave fellows, is, that they dare do wickedly.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) But our translation of this clause admits of an important meaning. The ungodly man does not perform a single action, *because it is the will of God, out of submission to his authority, or from a desire to glorify him:* and therefore even the ploughing of his ground, in order to grow rich, and to have what he may spend upon his lusts, is sinful as to its motive and object, and the spirit in which he does it.

V. 5. They who are steadily diligent, employ foresight and contrivance, as well as labour, in order to provide for what they may want hereafter; and generally are prosperous. But if a man use some industry, yet do not consider how to conduct his affairs; but goes about his work hastily, or engages in rash projects, or undertakes more than he is capable of managing, as unduly eager after the world, and in haste to be rich: he acts, as if his thoughts were employed in devising how to reduce himself to poverty.

7 The [m] robbery of the wicked shall
* destroy them; [n] because they refuse
to do judgment.

8 The [o] way of man *is* froward and
strange: [p] but *as for* the pure, his work
is right.

9 *It is* [q] better to dwell in a corner of
the house-top, than with a † brawling
woman in a wide house.

10 The [r] soul of the wicked desireth
evil: his neighbour † findeth [s] no favour
in his eyes.

11 When [t] the scorner is punished,
the simple is made wise; and when the
wise is instructed, [u] he receiveth knowledge.

12 The righteous *man* [x] wisely considereth the house of the wicked: *but God* [y] overthroweth the wicked for *their* wickedness.

13 Whoso [z] stoppeth his ears [a] at the cry of the poor, he also shall [b] cry himself, but shall not be heard.

m i. 18, 19. x. 6. xxii. 22, 23. Ps. vii. 16. ix. 16. Is. i. 23, 24. Jer. vii. 9—11. 15. Ez. xxii. 13, 14. Mic. iii. 9—12.
* Heb. *saw them*, or, *dwell with them*. Zech. v. 3, 4.
n 24 Ez. xviii 18. Eph. v. 6.
o Gen. vi. 5, 6. 12. Job xiv. 14—16. Ps. xv. 2, 3. Ec. vii. 29. ix. 3. 1 Cor. iii. 3. Eph. ii. 2, 3. Tit. iii. 3.
p xv 26. xxx. 12. Dan. xii. 10. Matt. v. 8. xii 33. Acts xv 9. Tit. i. 15. ii. 14. iii 5. 1 Pet. i. 22, 23. 1 John ii 29. iii. 3.——q 19. xii 4. xix. 13. xxv. 24. xxvi. 15, 16.
† Heb. *Woman of contentions in an house of society*. xv. 17. xvii 1.——r iii. 29. xii. 12. Ps. xxxvi. 4. lii 2, 3. Mark vii. 21, 22. 1 Cor. x. 6. Jam. iv. 1—5. 1 John ii. 16.
‡ Heb. *is not favoured*.——s 13. 1 Sam. xxv. 8—11. Ps. cxii. 5, 9. Is. xxxii 6—8. Mic. iii. 2, 3. Jam. ii. 13. v. 4—6.

t xix. 25. Num. xvi. 34. Deut. xiii 11. xxi. 21. Ps. lxiv. 7—9. Acts v. 5. 11—14. 1 Cor. x. 6—11. Heb. ii. 1—3. x. 28, 29. Rev. xi. 13.
u i. 5. ix. 9. xv. 14. xviii. 1. 15.
x Job v. 3. viii. 15. xviii. 14—21. xxi. 28—30. xxvii. 13—23. Ps. xxxvii. 35. 36. lii. 5. cvii. 43. Hos. xiv. 9. Hab. ii. 9—12.
y v. 3—5. xiii 6. xiv 32. Gen. xix. 29. Am. iv. 11. 1 Cor. x. 5.
2 Pet. ii. 4—9. iii. 6, 7.——z Ps. lviii. 4. Zech. vii. 11. Acts vii 57. Deut. xv 7—11. Neh. v. 1—5. 13. Is. i. 15—17. lviii 6—9. Jer. xxxiv. 16, 17. Zech. vii. 9—13. Matt. vi. 11. vii 2. xviii. 30—35. Jam. ii. 13—16.——a xxviii. 27, 28.——b i. 28. Luke xiii. 25.

V. 6. Schemes of growing rich, speedily and easily, by fraud and imposition in trade, or by lies, perjuries, or flattery, are learned by wicked men from each other, and are handed about as great mysteries and valuable discoveries. But they are vain and foolish projects; wealth thus gotten is vanity and vexation; and they who get it, act as if intentionally seeking for death and perdition.

V. 7. *Destroy*, Or, *Terrify*. 'He meaneth this chiefly 'of judges and princes, which leave that vocation unto 'which God hath called them, and powl,' (or exact from,) 'their subjects to maintain their lusts.' (*Notes*, *Is.* i. 23. *Jer.* v. 28—30.)

V. 8. The various paths of ungodliness and iniquity, into which men turn aside, are so many proofs of the frowardness and rebellion of the human heart; and of the blindness and folly of the human understanding, which are strange and surprising. But the few, who by divine grace are true in heart, will show it, by their works being right, *i. e.* according to the straight rule of God's word. The words are also capable of this meaning. 'As a man is, 'so are his works: a man of tricks will act strangely, (quite 'different from all that whereby we ought to govern our-'selves:) but an honest man you may know where to have; 'for he acts conformably to the laws of righteousness.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The *honest man*, in this paraphrase, must mean a *truly pious person*, as distinguished from all ungodly men: and thus the interpretation comes nearly to the same thing.

V. 9. (*Note*, xix. 13.) The most solitary, inconvenient, and exposed dwelling, is preferable to a large and commodious house and a great family, where the comforts of social life are embittered by contention; especially the contention of a passionate and clamorous wife. Such maxims are especially intended to caution men, in respect of the choice they make in this important matter; and not, for love of money or other worldly motives, to risk such a calamity as no wealth can counterbalance.

V. 10. The selfish desires of a wicked man's heart necessarily lead to baseness in his conduct. He is intent upon gratifying his avarice, ambition, lust, or revenge; and the reputation, interest, peace, connexions, nay, the life or soul of his neighbour, seem to him but secondary considerations: he is therefore ready to seduce, defraud, libel, oppress, or even rob and murder, when he can do it with impunity, and render it subservient to his purposes. No one can be safe who stands in his way: for he loves his lusts better than either friend or brother; so that none must expect to find favour in his eyes, when they interfere with his vile pursuits.

V. 11. (*Note*, xix. 25.) This verse may mean, that *the simple*, (or such as are incautious, inexperienced, and liable to be deluded by profane scoffers, and not avowed and hardened in vice and impiety,) will not only be taught wisdom by the punishment of the wicked, but also by observing how wise men profit by instruction. 'When 'the scorner is punished, the simple is made wise: and 'when the wise is instructed, he' (the simple,) 'receiveth 'knowledge.' He profits by the example of the scorner's punishment, and by that of the wise man's *teachableness*, or *prosperity*, for so the word may signify.

V. 12. Some explain this verse to mean, that righteous magistrates carefully search the houses of wicked men, to detect their crimes, that they may punish them. As we read it, the meaning is, that the righteous make a proper estimate of the prosperity of ungodly men, knowing that God will speedily overthrow them for their wickedness.

V. 13. They who oppress the poor, by beating down their wages till they cannot earn the necessaries of life, and then refuse to hear their complaints; and they who will not relieve, according to their ability, those who cry unto them in distress; and such magistrates as neglect to do the poor justice against the rich oppressors, evidently "stop their ears at the cry of the poor." The number of beggars in our streets, many of whom are poor through idleness and drunkenness, or mere impostors in their apparent distress, and who spend all they can extort by pathetic cries upon their vicious indulgences, render an *apparent stopping of the ears at the cry of the poor* absolutely unavoidable. Certainly they who are known to be honest and industrious, and in real distress, have by far a preferable claim to assistance: few are able to contribute to both classes, and doubtless discretion should direct the exercise of charity; for every shilling a man can spare is so much committed to him, to be made the best use of that he can.—But he who selfishly and unfeelingly disregards the sufferings of the poor, in general, without contributing his portion to relieve them, may now mock God with hypocritical prayers, but he will not be heard; and he may at length cry for a drop of water to cool his tongue, and not obtain even that small alleviation of his misery: "For he "shall have judgment without mercy, who hath showed "no mercy." (*Marg. Ref.*)

14 A [c] gift [d] in secret pacifieth anger, and a reward in the bosom strong wrath.

15 *It is* [e] joy to the just to do judgment: but [f] destruction *shall be* to the workers of iniquity.

16 The man that [g] wandereth out of the way of understanding, shall [h] remain in the congregation of the dead.

17 He that [i] loveth * pleasure *shall be* a poor man: he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich.

18 The [k] wicked *shall be* a ransom for the righteous, and the transgressor for the upright.

19 *It is* [l] better to dwell in the † wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman.

20 *There is* [m] a treasure to be desired, and [n] oil in the dwelling of the wise; [o] but a foolish man spendeth it up.

21 He [p] that followeth after righteousness and mercy, [q] findeth life, righteousness, and honour.

22 A [r] wise *man* scaleth the city of the mighty, and casteth down the strength of the confidence thereof.

23 Whoso [s] keepeth his mouth and his tongue, keepeth his soul from troubles.

24 Proud *and* [t] haughty scorner *is* his name, who dealeth in ‡ proud wrath.

25 The [u] desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labour.

26 He [x] coveteth greedily all the day long: but [y] the righteous giveth and spareth not.

c xvii. 8. 23. xviii. 16. xix. 6. Gen. xxxii. 20. xliii. 11. 1 Sam xxv. 35.
d Matt. vi. 3, 4.
e Job xxix. 12—17. Ps xl. 8. cxii. 1. cxix 16. 92. Ec. iii. 12 Is. lxiv. 5. John iv 34. Rom. vii. 22.
f 12 x. 29. Mat. vii. 23. xiii. 41, 42. Luke xiii. 27, 28.
g Ps. cxxv. 5. Zeph i. 6. John iii. 19, 20. Heb vi. 4—6. x. 26, 27. 38. 2 Pet ii. 21, 22. 1 John ii. 19.
h ii 19 vii 28, 27 ix. 18 Eph. ii. 1. Jude 12.
i 20. v 10, 11. xxiii. 21. Luke xv. 13—16. xvi. 24, 25. 1 Tim v. 6. 2 Tim. iii 4.
* Heb. *sport.*
k xi. 8. Is xliii. 3, 4 liii 4, 5. lv. 8, 9. 1 Pet. iii. 13
l 9. Ps. lv. 6, 7. cxx. 5, 6. Jer. ix. 2.———† Heb *land of the desert.*———m x. 22. xv. 6. Ps. cxii 3. Ec. v. 19. vii. 11. x. 19. Matt. vi. 19, 20.

n Ps. xxiii. 5 Jer xli. 8. Mat xxv. 3, 4
o Matt. xxv. 8 Luke xv. 14 xvi. 1 19—25.
p xv. 9. Is lv. 1 Hos. vi. 3. Mat. v. 6. Rom. xiv 19 Phil iii. 12. 1 Thes. v. 15 1 Tim. vi 11. 2 Tim. ii. 22. Heb xii. 14.
q xxii 4 Rom. ii. 7—10. 1 Cor. xv. 58 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8 1 Pet. i. 7.
r 2 Sam. xx 16, &c. Ec. vii. 19. ix. 13—18.
s x. 19. xii. 13. xiii. 3. xvii. 27, 28. xviii. 21. Jam. i. 26 iii. 2, &c.
t vi. 17. xvi. 18. xviii. 12. xix. 29. Esth. iii. 5, 6 Ec. vii. 8, 9. Matt ii. 16.
‡ Heb. *wrath of pride.*
u vi. 6—11. xii. 24. 27. xiii 4. xv. 19. xix 24. xx 4. xxii. 13. xxiv. 30—34. xxvi. 16. Matt. xxv 26.———x Acts xx. 33—35. 1 Thes. ii. 5—9
y Ps. xxxvii. 26 cxii. 9. Luke vi. 30—36. Acts xx. 35. 2 Cor. viii. 7—9. ix. 9—14.

V. 14. (*Notes*, xvii. 8. xviii. 16. xix. 6.) Presents, conferred to induce men to deviate from impartial justice and sincerity, must always be abominable: but a gift made to one who hath taken offence and is greatly exasperated, may be a proper, and an effectual, means of subduing his resentment and preventing discord; as it may appear a testimony of respect, and dispose him to conclude that the offence was not intended, or that the giver is sensible of his fault. But then it must be the gift of something which is known to be acceptable, and it must be presented with prudence and secresy, as conceding the superiority, and not as making an ostentation of generosity.

V. 15. The righteous delight in justice and equity; good magistrates take pleasure in the conscientious discharge of their important duties; and good members of the community rejoice when justice is impartially executed: but the workers of iniquity are alarmed at such proceedings, as tending to the destruction which awaits their evil deeds.

V. 16. 'He that will not live by those wise laws, 'which God hath prescribed him, but follows the conduct 'of his own foolish lusts and passions, shall be sent 'down to hell, and there confined to the company of the 'old giants, who, giving themselves over to debauched 'courses, were swept away with a deluge.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) (*Notes*, ii. 18. ix. 18.) Apostates seem especially intended. (*Ps.* cxxv. 5.)

V. 17. Addictedness to carnal mirth and sensual indulgence is inconsistent with a man's interest, both here and hereafter.

V. 18. The Lord ransoms his people from calamities, by punishing the wicked. He ransomed Israel by desolating Egypt; he slew Sennacherib's army, to ransom Hezekiah and Jerusalem; in short, he so values the righteous, that when their welfare requires it, he gives up any number of the wicked to destruction. 'God shall cause that 'to fall on the head of the wicked, which they intended for 'the just; by delivering the just, and putting the wicked 'in their places.'

V. 19. (*Note*, 9.) 'I had rather dwell with a lion or a 'dragon, than to keep house with a wicked woman.' (*Ecclesiasticus.*)

V. 20. That plenty, which is obtained by prudence, industry, and frugality, is a most desirable treasure: and it may generally be found in the homely dwellings of the wise and righteous. But the extravagant and self-indulgent spend even their ample revenues in debauchery and excess, and thus run in debt, and involve themselves in extreme difficulties. (*Note*, 17.) Oil was a chief production of Canaan, and seems to be put for all things needful and comfortable.

V. 21. 'He that greedily lays hold on all occasions 'to exercise justice and mercy, shall lead a most happy life; 'and be highly esteemed, honoured, and praised.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The marginal references show that infinitely greater blessings are included, though these are not excluded.

V. 22. Wisdom is more efficacious than force. A wise man, by ingenuity, prudence, circumspection, and perseverance, will surmount the greatest difficulties; even those which resemble "the scaling of the city of the "mighty, and the casting down of the strength of the con-"fidence thereof." (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 23. (*Note*, xiii. 3.)

V. 24. 'A proud and haughty person, who may well 'be called a scorner, proceeds furiously and unsufferably 'in all that he doeth. He is puffed up with a great conceit 'of himself; he regards neither God nor man; he cannot 'endure the least opposition; but being enraged with in-'solent fierceness, he proceeds against those who cross his 'designs.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 25. The unsatisfied desires of the slothful wear him out: or, "refusing to labour," he is tempted to plunder, and so comes to an untimely end. 'He thinketh to 'live by wishing and desiring all things; but will take no 'pains to get aught.'

V. 26. Some make this a distinct maxim. 'The un-'righteous lusteth all the day after evil things: but the 'righteous pitieth, and shows compassion without sparing.' (*Marg. Ref.*)

27 The [x] sacrifice of the wicked *is* abomination: how much more, *when* he bringeth it * with a wicked mind?

28 [a] A † false witness shall perish; but [b] the man that heareth speaketh constantly.

29 A wicked man [c] hardeneth his face: but *as for* the upright, [d] he ‡ directeth his way.

30 *There is* [e] no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the LORD.

31 The [f] horse *is* prepared against the day of battle: [g] but ∮ safety *is* of the LORD.

x xv. 8. xxviii. 9. 1 Sam. xiii. 12, 13. xv. 21—23. Ps. l. 9. Is. i. 11. 16. lxvi. 3. Jer. vi. 20. vii. 11, 12. Am. v. 21, 22.
* Heb. *in wickedness* Mat. xxiii 14.
a vi. 19. xix. 5. 9. xxv. 18. Ex. xxiii. 1. Deut. xix. 16—18.
† Heb. *witness of lies*.
b xii. 19. Acts xii. 15. 2 Cor. i. 17—20. iv. 13. Tit. iii. 8.
c xxviii. 14. xxix. 1. Jer. iii. 2, 3. v. 3. viii. 12. xliv. 17.
d xi. 5. 1 Thes. iii. 11.
‡ Or, *considereth*. Ez. xviii. 28. Hag. i. 5. 7. ii. 15. 18, 19. Luke xv. 17, 18.
e xix. 21. Is. viii. 5—7. viii. 9, 10. xlvi. 10, 11. Jon. i. 13. Acts iv. 27, 28. v. 39. 1 Pet. ii. 8.
f Ps. xx. 7. xxxiii. 17, 18. cxlvii. 10. Ec. ix. 11.
g Ps. iii. 8. cxliv. 10.
∮ Or, *victory*.

V. 28. (*Note* xix. 9.) He that testifies only to what he himself hath heard, or is fully acquainted with, will persevere in his testimony, and gain more and more credit; even if at first neglected.

V. 29. 'A man resolvedly wicked, endeavours to grow 'so impudent, that he may not blush at what he doeth; 'nor be moved in the least at any man's admonitions or 'reproofs: but a man sincerely virtuous, examines and 'censures his own actions if they be amiss; and makes it 'all his care so to live, that he may not be ashamed of 'what he doeth.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 30. Whatever appears to be wisdom, understanding, or counsel, but is employed in forwarding sinful projects, will in the end appear to have been madness and folly: and those plans which have been laid with the most consummate policy, and are conducted with the utmost discretion, cannot but be frustrated, when they run counter to the purposes of God. 'They all signify nothing, if 'they oppose the counsels and decrees of heaven.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 31. Warlike preparations, however formidable, (of which the horse seems here to be mentioned as the chief,) are no more effectual against God's purposes, than wisdom and counsel. The security and salvation of those whom he favours are effected without them; and the destruction of his enemies cannot by them be prevented.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—16.

As we are extremely prone to confide in second causes, or to perplex ourselves about them, we need repeated admonitions, that God is the great first Cause of all. Faith rests on this truth: and the believer, in proportion to his faith, perceiving that the Lord rules every heart, seeks to have his own heart directed in his fear and love; and then relies on Him to restrain, incline, or change the hearts of others, as may best prevent their injuring him, or dispose them to help and favour him. Should then some potentate menace vengeance against him; instead of seeking to appease his wrath by sinful compliances, he will make "the name of the LORD his strong tower," and by fervent prayer seek to him to dispose the prince's heart to lenity. (*Notes, Gen.* xxxii. xxxiii.) On the other hand, should he need the countenance and assistance of the king or his nobles, he would make his first application to Him who hath their hearts in his hand. (*Notes, Neh.* i.) And this carries him through the greatest difficulties and improbabilities. For prayer can unlock all gates, divide rivers and seas, and even remove mountains; when it engages the arm of the Almighty to support the cause or succeed the measures of his servants. If we then profess to be of that favoured company, we ought most of all to fear, "lest our "way should be right in our own eyes," but wrong in his sight, "who pondereth the hearts." Here is the preciousness of true knowledge: for "the man that wandereth "out of the way of understanding," and remains in ignorance or embraces error, because he hateth the truth and loveth sin, "must remain in the congregation of the dead." Through ignorance and error, poor wretched sinners are rendered arrogant and vain-glorious: and their high looks and proud hearts are their sin and condemnation: and while they glory in the management or success of their temporal concerns, they seldom consider, that the covetous, ambitious, or sensual motives, by which they are actuated, render the employments, which are most lawful in themselves, acts of selfishness and disobedience, as performed by them. To do justice and judgment are more acceptable to the Lord, than any sacrifices we can offer; though it doth not supersede the necessity of the Redeemer's sacrifice of inestimable value, or of our entire dependence on it. He who is taught according to the word of God, will escape many ruinous extremes. He will not desire those riches which are got by lies or robbery: for however ungodly men toss this vanity to and fro, and please themselves with it; yet, he knows that in so doing they seek death; and that destruction will be to the workers of iniquity who refuse to do judgment. He wisely considers the splendid houses of prosperous sinners; and, foreseeing their overthrow, he desires and envies nothing that they possess. And he had rather deny his vanity a useless ornament, or his appetite an injurious or needless gratification, or even be censured for not treating his rich friends according to their expectation; than be condemned for stopping his ears at the cry of the poor: and as he cries and hopes for mercy from God, he dares not embezzle or waste that which was intrusted to him for the relief of such as are distressed; lest he should call for mercy from God and not be heard. The judicious Christian will also avoid all those hasty schemes, by which many ruin themselves. He will study by frugality and industry to keep out of temptation to mean dependence or shuffling dishonesty; and he will be ready to labour, that he may have to give to him that needeth. But after every warning, wicked men sin on without fear or shame, getting all they can by their injustice, and spending it upon their lusts; and showing no mercy or favour to their neighbours, because of the evil which their souls desire. So froward and strange is the way of man, as left to himself! so different from that of "the pure, whose work is right!" Hence it is, that while the righteous delight in justice and mercy; the workers of iniquity are not only determined to go on in the way of destruction, but show scorn and enmity against those, who "run not with them to the same excess of riot" and

CHAP XXII.

The worth of a good name; and the dependance of both rich and poor on God, 1, 2. *Commendations of prudence, humility, piety, charity, and the proper tuition of children; and cautions against frowardness, iniquity, sloth, intimacy with bad women, and oppression,* 3—16. *An address to the rea-*

impiety! Nay, their anger and hatred are often more vehement against those who testify of them that their works are evil, than against such as behave most injuriously and deceitfully towards them: so that, while in the latter case, a few well-timed and acceptable gifts will pacify their strongest wrath; in the latter the most persevering, disinterested, and liberal kindness are insufficient to conciliate them! When sinners arrive at this pitch of hardened impiety; it seems almost desirable, though awful in itself, that some punishment may overtake them, which may make the simple wise enough to shun their destructive paths, to imitate the wise who hearken to instruction, and to escape the miseries which scorners must undergo; and thus become happy in themselves, and blessings in the families to which they belong; and, instead of driving their nearest relatives into retirement, or into bad company to escape contention, make numbers ready to say, "Happy are" even "thy "servants which stand continually before thee, and hear "thy wisdom," share thy amiable society and kindness, and witness thy edifying example.

V. 17—31.

He that has a well grounded assurance that God is on his side, need not fear what man can do to him; for there is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel "against the "LORD;" nor can any power reach those whom he protects. And though "the horse may be prepared against "the day of battle;" and various means may be used to secure our persons and habitations; yet safety is only from the LORD. But in vain do men expect to please a holy and omniscient God by such formal services, as the unconverted, while persisting in their evil courses, can present; even when they offer them in a kind of ignorant sincerity. How greatly then must he abhor the most costly oblations, or abundant devotions of those who are consciously hypocrites; and who employ these methods with a most wicked mind, to mask their covetousness, oppression, or secret licentiousness, and to blind the eyes of their fellow-creatures. True repentance, and reliance on the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, always influence men to follow after righteousness and mercy in their own conduct. Such believers, and such only, "find life, righteousness, and "honour." "They seek first the kingdom of God and "his righteousness; and all other things are added to "them." Thus they generally partake of the desirable treasures found in the dwellings of the wise, which they obtain with credit and a good conscience, enjoy with gratitude, and use to the best of purposes. To this plenteousness their thoughts, as well as labours, tend. They desire, in submission to Providence, to have things needful and comfortable for themselves and families, and to be enabled to use hospitality without grudging. They will not therefore spend all for themselves as foolish men do; being aware that they who love pleasure and indulge their appetites, will always be too poor to do much good to their indigent neighbours. Though they do not account riches worthy of being obtained by iniquity, or of being idolized, yet they consider them as too good to be wasted in revellings, banquetings, and other extravagant expenses: and though not disposed to look on honest poverty, as an intolerable evil; they dread and shun the disgraceful and ruinous "desires of the slothful, whose hands refuse to la-"bour;" even when "he coveteth greedily all the day "long." By the due government of their appetites and passions, and by keeping their tongues, they preserve their souls from numberless troubles, to which the sensual, the passionate, and the loquacious expose themselves: and, learning wisdom from its very source, they are enabled to accomplish important designs, for their own good and that of others, in a quiet and unexceptionable manner; while the "proud and haughty scorners, who deal in proud wrath," render themselves hated and dreaded; and with all their violence, (even when possessed of sagacity and power,) seldom prosper in their enterprises. For the great Disposer of all events so orders it, that "The wicked is a "ransom for the righteous; and the transgressor for the "upright." The consistent Christian is always a lover of peace; and ready to give up any thing, except his duty, for the sake of it. He will not, therefore, either in private, or in a court of justice, be a false witness: but if called to bear his testimony, he must speak constantly, and declare what he knows; whatever offence it may give, or however it may tend to the condemnation of the guilty. Much more then must the minister of the Gospel speak constantly the whole of his message; whatever ridicule, anger, and obloquy he may incur by his faithfulness, from proud and haughty scorners; for in this case especially, "A false witness shall perish;" and generally he occasions the ruin of multitudes along with him.—That state of the judgment and heart, which is produced by Christian principles, will never permit a man to risk the want or the loss of domestic peace, for the sake of acquiring an accession of wealth: knowing that it is better to dwell in a garret or a desert, than with a brawling woman in a wide house. But should his patience be exercised by such a painful trial, he will shun embittered contention, by retiring into any corner, or into the fields and deserts, that he may pour out his heart before God, rather than run into temptation, into vain company, excess, or the society of other women. Nay, he will not despair but that, by meekness, prudence, patience, firmness, and persevering kindness; and by constant prayer to Him who hath all hearts in his hand, the cross may at length be removed, or at least its worst effects prevented. For as every thing lawful may be rendered a part of a believer's duty, so every event may subserve his growth in grace; whilst even the lawful and needful employments of ungodly men become their sin; and their best comforts tend to their increasing condemnation.

der, calling his attention to wisdom; again exhorting him to avoid oppression, friendship with angry men, suretyship, and removing ancient landmarks; and showing the advantages of diligence, 17—29.

A GOOD[a] name *is* rather to be chosen than great riches, *and* * loving favour rather than silver and gold.

2 The [b] rich and poor meet together: [c] the LORD *is* the Maker of them all.

3 A [d] prudent *man* foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but [e] the simple pass on, and are punished.

4 † By [r] humility, *and* the fear of the LORD *are* riches, and honour, and life.

5 [g] Thorns *and* snares *are* in the way of the froward: [h] he that doth keep his soul shall be far from them.

6 ‡ Train up [i] a child in § the way he should go: and [k] when he is old he will not depart from it.

7 The [l] rich ruleth over the poor, and [m] the borrower *is* servant to the || lender.

8 He [n] that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity: and * the [o] rod of his anger shall fail.

9 † He that [p] hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor

a 1 Kings i. 47. Ec. vii 1. Luke x. 20. Phil. iv. 3. Heb. vi. 39.
* Or, *favour is better than*, &c.
b Acts vii. 10.
b xxix 13. 1 Sam. ii. 7. Ps. xlix. 1, 2. Luke xvi. 19, 20. 1 Cor. xii. 21. Jam ii. 2—5
c xiv. 31 Job xxi. 15. xxxiv 19.
d xiv. 16. xxvii. 12. Ex ix. 20, 21 Is. xxvi 20, 21. Matt xxiv. 15, &c. 1 Thes v. 2—6. Heb. vi. 18. xi. 7.
e vii 7. 22, 23. ix. 16—18. xxix 1.
† Heb. *The reward of humility*, &c.
f iii 16. xxi. 21. Ps. xxxiv. 9, 10. cxii 1—3. Is. xxxiii. 6. lvii. 15. Matt. vi. 33. 1 Tim. iv. 8. Jam. iv. 6. 10.
g xiii. 15. xv. 19. Josh. xxiii. 13. Ps xi. 6. xviii. 26, 27.
h xiii. 3. xvi. 17. xix 16. Ps. cxi. 1. 1 John v 18. Jude 20. 21.
‡ Or. *Catechise.*
i Gen. xviii. 19. Deut. iv 9. vi. 7 Ps. lxxviii. 3—6. Eph. vi. 4. 2 Tim. iii. 15.
§ Heb *his way.*
k 1 Sam i. 28. ii. 26. xii. 2, 3.
l 16. 22. xiv 31. xviii. 23. Am. ii. 6. iv. 1 v. 11, 12. viii. 4. 6. Jam ii. 6. v. 1.4.
m 2 Kings iv. 1. Neh v. 4, 5. Is. xxiv. 2. Matt. xviii. 25
|| Heb. *man that lendeth*
n Job iv. 8. Hos. viii. 7. x. 13 Gal. vi 7, 8 ——Or. *With the rod of his anger he shall be consumed.*
o xiv. 3. Ps. cxxv. 3 Is. ix 4 x. 5. xiv 29. xxx. 31. ——† Heb. *Good of eye.* Deut. xxviii 56. Matt xx. 15 Mark vii 22 ——p xi 25. xix. 17. xxi. 13. Deut xv. 7—11. Job xxxi 16 20. Ps xli 1—3 cxii. 9 Ec xi 1, 2. Is. xxxii. 8. lviii. 7—12. Matt xxv. 34—40 Luke vi 35—38. Acts xx. 35. 2 Cor. viii. 1, 2. ix. 6—11. 1 Tim. vi. 18, 19. Heb. vi 10 xiii. 16 1 Pet iv. 9.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXII. V. 1. A reputation for wisdom, piety, and integrity, is far more valuable than great riches; and the loving favour which it procures, renders a man more respected than wealth can do: and whilst affluence commonly tempts the possessor to give a loose to his inclinations, an established character is a perpetual restraint, and renders a man doubly watchful against every kind of impropriety. Above all, it enables him to do more good, than riches without a good name can do: it gives peculiar influence, and adds energy to all his counsels, exhortations, and measures; and it obtains him access to such opportunities of usefulness, and enables him to compass such designs, as otherwise had been impracticable. (*Notes, Ec.* vii. 1. x. 1.)

V. 2. The rich and poor live together on earth, and but seldom without envy and contempt, though they have mutually need of one another. They will likewise soon meet in the grave, and at the judgment-seat they will be convened before their common Maker. He hath wise reasons for making this difference in their outward station; but he will judge them, without respect of persons, concerning the manner in which they have discharged their respective duties. 'The wisdom of God hath not thought 'fit to make all men rich, or all poor; but hath intermixed 'the one with the other, that each of them might have use 'of the other; neither is it for the wealthy to insult upon or 'oppress the needy; since it is God that hath made them 'both such as they are; and he both can and will revenge 'any unjust measure that is offered by the one to the 'other.' (*Bp. Hall.*)

V. 3. Prudence consists very much in foreseeing the various evils to which men are exposed, and discerning the methods by which they may escape. In temporal affairs, however, they can seldom proceed beyond probability, in either respect: but in the concerns of the soul, faith foresees the evil coming upon sinners in the eternal state, and discerns Jesus Christ as the Refuge from this impending storm; and the believer flees thither, hides himself, and is safe as Noah in the ark. But the careless and unbelieving, go on without concern, till, for the first time, they "lift "up their eyes in hell, being in torments." (xxvii. 12.)

V. 4. (*Notes*, iii. 7—11. xv. 33.)

V. 5. (*Notes*, xv. 19. *Ps.* xi. 6.) The man who takes proper care either of his life or soul, will shun the society, that he may escape the thorns and snares which are in the way of designing ungodly men.

V. 6. When children are instructed from infancy in the truths and ways of God; when they are inured to submission, industry, and the government of their passions; when they are restrained and corrected, with a due mixture of firmness and affection; when they are trained up, as soldiers are disciplined to handle their arms, endure hardship, keep their ranks, and obey orders; and when all is enforced by good examples set before them, and constant prayers made for and with them: they generally retain the early impression even to old age. If they turn aside into devious paths, they always have an inward check, and will frequently be brought back again: and the good effects will commonly be visible to the end of their lives. But a way of talking to children about religion, whilst they are left to contract bad habits, and to indulge wayward tempers; and whilst they see little or nothing of the tendency of the Gospel in the conduct of their parents, or teachers, is very different from this "nurture and admonition of the Lord;" and often leaves a rooted prejudice in the mind against those truths, of which they heard much, but perceived no good effects. (15.)

V. 7. This proverb shows how important it is for every man, who would consult his own inclinations, or act according to his own judgment and conscience, to be frugal and industrious; and to keep as much as he can out of debt: for the rich too commonly domineer over the poor. And even they who are not poor, if on any account they lay themselves under great obligations, by borrowing money, are frequently treated as servants to the lenders; who sometimes expect even sinful compliances from them, and call them ungrateful if they refuse to make them.

V. 8. *And the*, &c. The power, which many possess and abuse, of making others feel the weight of their resentment, will soon fail them; and then they must reap the fruits of their injustice and oppression. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 9. 'Whoso is liberal of his meat, men shall speak 'well of him; and the report of his good house-keeping

10 [q] Cast out the scorner, and contention shall go out; yea, strife and reproach shall cease.

11 He [r] that loveth pureness of heart, * *for* the grace of his lips [s] the king *shall be* his friend.

12 The [t] eyes of the LORD preserve knowledge, and [u] he overthroweth the † words of the transgressor.

13 The [x] slothful *man* saith, *There is* a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets.

14 The [y] mouth of strange women *is* a deep pit; he that is [z] abhorred of the LORD shall fall therein.

q xxiii. 24. xxvi. 20, 21. Gen. xxi 9, 10. Neh. iv. 1—3 xiii. 28 Ps. ci 5. Matt. xviii. 17. 1 Cor. v. 5, 6. 13.
r xvi 13 Ps. ci.6. Matt v. 8.
* Or, and hath *grace in his lips* Ps. xlv. 2. Luke iv. 22
s Gen xii. 39, &c. Ezra vii. 6, &c.
t 2 Chr. xvi 9. Is. lix. 19—21. Matt xvi. 16—18. Acts v. 39. xii. 23, 24. Rev. xi. 3—11. xii. 14—17.
Neh. ii. 4—6. Esth x. 3. Dan. ii. 46—49. iii. 30. vi. 20—23
u Job v. 12, 13. Acts viii. 9—12. xiii. 8—12. 2 Thes ii 8. 2 Tim. iii. 8, 9.
† Or, *matters.*
x xv 19 xxvi. 13—16. Num. xiii. 32, 33.
y ii. 16—19 v. 3, &c vi. 24—29, vii. 5, &c Judg. xvi 20, 21. Neh. xiii 26. Ec. vii. 26.
z Deut xxxii. 19. Ps. lxxxi 12.

'will be believed: but against him that is a niggard of his 'meat the whole city shall murmur, and the testimonies of 'his niggardliness shall not be doubted of.' (*Ecclesiasticus.*) The *good of eye*, (*Marg.*) is the opposite to the *evil eye*, which marks out those who envy, and grudge, and are niggardly and selfish. (*Marg. Ref.*)—The bountiful shall not only be spoken well of by men, but also, when their bounty springs from proper motives, receive an abundant blessing from God. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 10. Profane scoffers and contentious revilers disturb the peace of every family, society, or company, into which they gain admission, and where they are allowed to continue, or have any influence: the only method therefore of obtaining or restoring peace, is to expel them: and even if this be painful, and expose them to imminent peril, it is only like pulling down a ruinous house to stop the progress of a conflagration.

V. 11. The construction of this verse is peculiarly difficult: so that some think it is imperfect, and that the word JEHOVAH in the first clause has been omitted by the negligence of transcribers: and the Septuagint countenances this supposition. Accordingly they would thus render the verse. "The LORD loveth purity of heart: the king is a "friend to the grace of the lips."—'Purity of the heart 'alone, gives favour in the sight of God: though elo-'quence of speech and gracefulness of address may be 'sufficient to recommend a man to the favour of his 'prince.' (*Grey.*)—The authority of the Septuagint, however, in this book, is very small indeed: and it is not desirable, without absolute necessity, to alter the received reading. 'He that loves sincerity, above all things, and 'is able to deliver his mind in acceptable language, is fit 'to be a privy-counsellor to a king.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)—But "loving pureness of heart," seems to imply more than loving sincerity, in the common use of the term: and the grace of the lips may denote the wisdom and piety, as well as the eloquence and address, of a man's discourse. (*Marg. Ref.*) Thus Pharoah was won by the wise and pious counsel of Joseph; Ezra, and Nehemiah, rather by their eminent wisdom and piety, than by eloquence and address, were greatly favoured by Artaxerxes; and Mordecai, by Ahasuerus; and Daniel, both by the Chaldean and Persian princes. (*Marg. Ref.*) In this view, the verse may perhaps be rendered, (for I would speak with great diffidence,) "He that loveth purity of heart! The grace of his lips! "the king his friend!" "Out of the abundance of the "heart the mouth speaketh." He that is eminently wise, pious, and pure in heart, is an extraordinary character. His wisdom, piety, and integrity, will lead him to give such prudent counsel, so simply and seasonably, that notwithstanding the prejudices of men against true religion, he will not unfrequently be favoured even by kings. They who suppose they have discovered in part the nature and measure of the Hebrew poetry, argue, from the incompleteness of the first clause, against the present reading: but, whatever praise be due to these learned men, it is certainly dangerous to alter the Scriptures on such uncertain grounds. According, however, either to the present reading, or that proposed above, the verse may be thus either explained or accommodated: 'He who loves pureness 'of heart, and speaks in a kind and edifying manner, will 'be found among the friends of the King of heaven.'

V. 12. The watchful care of the Lord preserves the knowledge of himself, and of his truth and will, from being lost in ignorance, idolatry, infidelity, or error; notwithstanding all the machinations of Satan and ungodly men to run it down. The plausible schemes, contained in "the words of transgressors," are overthrown one after another, and sink into oblivion or contempt: but the truth of God's word maintains its ground from age to age. Thus it had been observed during many ages, in the days of Solomon: for above 2700 years this *proverb* has been fulfilling as a *prophecy:* and it will be verified to future generations, when the words of modern opposers or perverters of Revelation, who now vaunt, as if they were about to carry all before them, shall be overthrown before the Bible, as Dagon before the ark. The marvellous preservation of the Scriptures, in a more correct state than any other book of equal antiquity; though through successive generations it hath been the evident interest of vast numbers to corrupt them, is a manifest proof how "the eyes of the LORD pre-"serve knowledge." And indeed they are so well preserved, that they little need, and are not likely to receive much good, from conjectural criticism; being capable of an useful and consistent meaning, in almost every part, as they now stand: though doubtless they want immense alterations, to make them consistent with some Creeds; and many complain of obscurity in the book, because their own eyes are blinded that they cannot read it.

V. 13. He derideth them that invent vain excuses, 'because they would not do their duty.' Lions seldom are found in the streets of cities or villages. (*Marg. Ref.*) Some apply this to cowardly magistrates, who dare not punish great and powerful offenders.—'A worthy magis-'trate, would meet with such a lion to choose; that he might 'make God's ordinance to be reverenced. He would no 'more fear to make a *worshipful thief*, or a *right worship-'ful murderer*, (if such a one should come in his circuit,) 'an example of justice, than to twitch up a poor sheep-'stealer.' (*Bp. Sanderson.*)

V. 14. 'God punisheth one sin by another, when he

15 [a] Foolishness *is* bound in the heart of a child; [b] *but* the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.

16 He [c] that oppresseth the poor to increase his *riches, and* [d] he that giveth to the rich, *shall* surely *come* to want.

17 ¶ [e] Bow down thine ear, [f] and hear the words of the wise, and [g] apply thine heart unto my knowledge.

18 For [h] *it is* a pleasant thing if thou keep them * within thee; they shall withal be [i] fitted in thy lips.

19 That [k] thy trust may be in the LORD, I have made known to thee this day, † even to thee.

20 Have not [l] I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge,

21 That [m] I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest [n] answer the words of truth to them that ‡ send unto thee?

22 [o] Rob not the poor, because he *is* poor: neither [p] oppress the afflicted in the gate:

23 For [q] the LORD will plead their cause, and [r] spoil the soul of those that spoiled them.

24 [s] Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go;

25 Lest [t] thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul.

26 Be not thou [u] *one* of them that strike hands, *or* of them that are sureties for debts.

27 If thou hast nothing to pay, [x] why should he take away thy bed from under thee?

a Job xiv. 4. Ps li 5. John iii 6. Eph ii 3.
b xiii. 24. xix. 18. xxiii. 13, 14. xxix. 15, 17. Heb xii 10, 11.
c 22, 23. xiv. 31. xxviii 3. Job xx. 19, &c. Ps. xii. 5. Mic. ii. 2, 3. Zech. vii. 9—14. Jam. ii. 13. v. 1—5
d Luke vi. 33—35. xiv. 12—14. xvi 24.
e ii 2—5. v. 1, 2.
f i. 8. iii 1. iv. 4—8. viii. 33, 34. Is. lv. 3. Matt. xvii 5.
g xxiii 12 Ps xc. 12 Ec vii. 25. viii 9. 16.
h ii. 10. iii. 17. xxiv. 13, 14 Ps. xix. 10. cxix 103. 111 162. Jer. xv. 16
* Heb *in thy belly* Job xxxii. 18, 19. John vii. 38.
i viii. 6. x. 13 21. xv. 7 xvi 21. xxv 11. Ps. cxix. 13 171. Mal ii. 7. Heb xiii. 15.
k iii 5. Ps. lxii. 8. Is xii. 2. xxvi. 4. Jer. xvii 7. 1 Pet i 21.——† Or, trust *thou also.*
l viii. 6 Ps. xii 6 Hos. viii. 12. 2 Tim. iii. 15—17. 2 Pet. i. 19—21.——m Luke i. 3, 4. John xx. 31 1 John v. 13.
n 1 Pet. iii. 15.
‡ Or, *send thee.*
o xxiii 10, 11. Ez. xxii 29.
p 16. Ex. xxiii. 6. Job xxix 12—16. xxxi. 21. Zech. vii 10. Mal. iii. 5.
q xxiii 11. 1 Sam. xxiv. 15. xxv. 39. Ps. xxxv. 1. xliii 1. lxviii. 5. cxl. 12 Jer. l. 34. li. 36. Mic. vii. 9.
r Is. xxxiii. 1. Hab ii. 8.
s xxi. 24. xxix. 22. 2 Cor. vi. 14—17.
t xiii. 20. Ps. cvi. 35. 1 Cor xv. 33.
u vi. 1—5. xi. 15. xvii. 18. xxvii. 13.
x xx. 16 Ex xxii. 26, 27 2 Kings iv. 1.

'suffereth the wicked to fall into the acquaintance of an 'harlot.' (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 15. The child is naturally given to foolishness: but seasonable correction is generally, by the divine blessing, made successful to expel it.

V. 16. Rapacious oppression of the poor, and ostentatious generosity to the rich, often go together: as the one gratifies a man's avarice, the other his pride. Nay, some fraudulently or violently rob the poor, and then by large presents bribe the rich to connive at their iniquity. But these and similar practices generally bring a secret curse on men's affairs, which at length reduces them to poverty. Either the expense of their prodigality exceeds the gain of their rapacity; or they are detected and punished for their crimes. Luther renders the verse; 'He that squeezes the 'poor to increase his own estate, gives to the rich only to 'impoverish himself.' Others will exact from him, what he hath exacted from the poor. The oppressors shall be oppressed and ruined.

V. 17. From this verse to the end of the twenty-fourth chapter, the sacred writer adopts a more connected method; and more directly addressed to the reader; not wholly unlike the introductory part of the book. This, therefore, may be considered as the third part of it. (*Notes*, ii. 1—9. iv. 1—9. v. 1, 2.)

V. 18. 'It will give thee most high satisfaction, if 'thou dost so heartily entertain them, and thoroughly 'digest them, and faithfully preserve them in mind; that 'thou art able withal to produce any of them, as there is 'occasion, and aptly communicate them for other men's 'instruction.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 20. (*Note*, viii. 6—9.) The word rendered *excellent*, may signify *three times*, that is, many times. Have I not inculcated these things many times? But some understand it according to another meaning of the same word to signify 'words fit for a prince to speak, and the best men in 'the world to hear.'

V. 21. *Send thee.* Or, 'are sent to thee,' to "ask a "reason of the hope that is in thee;" or who otherwise request thy counsel. But the clause may mean, 'That 'thou mayest be capable of managing business, however 'difficult, to the satisfaction of those that employ thee.' The prudent statesman, the sagacious ambassador, and the faithful minister of religion, are characters of this description, each of whom is able to answer, *words*, even *truth*, (that is, to give a true and faithful account of his proceedings,) to him that commissioned him.

V. 22, 23. The rich and powerful think that they may oppress the poor and helpless with impunity, either in the ordinary intercourse of life, or *in the gate*, that is, when acting as magistrates. But that very poverty which encourages their oppression, should deter them from it, not only from motives of compassion: but because God himself is the Patron of the poor, and will surely crush those who crush them, and that even to the life or soul of the oppressor.

V. 24, 25. 'It highly concerns us for the preserving 'the peace and safety of our life, that we intermingle not 'our matters with men of a choleric nature, and such as 'easily provoke or undertake quarrels and debates. For 'such kind of friends will perpetually engage us in contentions and factions: so that we shall be constrained either 'to break off friendship, or to be wanting to our personal 'safety.' (*Lord Bacon.*) Law-suits, duels, and broils of every kind, destructive of comfort, dangerous to life, and wholly inconsistent with religion, are the snares to the soul of those who venture on such intimacies: and it seldom happens, that the quarrelsome humour fails of becoming contagious: so that friends of this character often murder one another.

V. 26, 27. (*Note*, vi. 1—5.) 'Solomon here adds, 'when a man is conscious to himself that he hath no estate, 'and doth but deceive him to whom he stands bound for 'the debt: and so deprives him of benefit of the law, 'mentioned *Ex.* xxii. 26, 27. *Deut.* xxiv. 6.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) —These laws, however, relate only to *pledges*, not to

y xxiii. 10. Deu. xix. 14 xxvii. 17. Job xxiv. 2. * Or, *bound.*

28 y Remove not the ancient * land-mark which thy fathers have set.

29 Seest thou z a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before † mean *men.*

z x. 4. xii. 21. 1 Kings xi 28. Ec. ix. 10. Mat. xxv. 21. 23. Rom. xii. 11. 2 Tim iv. 2. † Heb *obscure* men.

insolvent debtors, and least of all to frauduleat debtors. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 28. (*Note, Deut.* xix. 14.) This verse is generally accommodated, as a caution against 'changing the laws, 'which antiquity by grave authority hath delivered, unless 'there be an evident necessity,' and against innovations in general, which can seldom be safely made, and without urgent necessity ought never to be ventured on. If the caution be applied to religious concerns; it must be remembered, that the religion of the Scriptures is of the most venerable antiquity; and all deviations from it, even in the first ages, were innovations. "To the law and to the "testimony." If it had been proved, that an Israelite had moved an ancient land-mark, and defrauded his neighbour; the law of God would not have allowed any *prescription*, by which the new land-mark was to continue to the injury of the honest man's posterity, and the advantage of the robbers. Much less must *prescription* be admitted against the doctrines, precepts, and ordinances of God. For we know who said, in this case, "Full well ye reject "the commandments of God, that ye may keep your own "traditions." And we know, that he and his apostles were considered, by these men, as innovators.

V. 29. The words rendered *diligent in his business*, implies *celerity, readiness*, and *cheerfulness* in a man's proper employment, whatever that may be. 'To which is required a quickness of apprehension, in discovering the 'fittest means, and of dexterity in the application of them: 'so that the business is not only done, but done speedily, 'and without much noise and bustle. Such a person, if 'he can be found, is likely to come to great preferment.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) On this text, Lord Bacon shows, that *profound* men are too prying, *popular* men draw men's eyes too much to themselves: *courageous* men are apt to be turbulent: and *strictly honest* men too stiff, to be the most successful courtiers: but celerity in dispatching business hath nothing in it that doth not please. It is, however, of small value, without some of the other qualities. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—16.

True wisdom greatly consists in being able to judge accurately of the comparative value of objects, which stand in competition with each other: that we may choose the more excellent, and bestow proportionable care and labour to secure them; and be willing to sacrifice the inferior to the superior interest. The salvation of our souls, a name in the book of life, and the loving favour of the Lord, are the grand concerns of all: but a good name among men is the next most valuable possession. Indeed that reputation, which just passes current in the world, or even in the church, is of small value. The reputation which men obtain by ingenuity, valour, learning, or illustrious actions: or by whatever merely serves to render a man popular, is so often lavished on unworthy characters, and is so ruinous to the vain-glorious idol and his besotted idolaters, that a wise man cannot desire it: nor can it be expected that the world will generally honour those whom God honours. But when a Christian, regardless of his own glory, but zealous for the honour of the Gospel, is enabled to live down prejudice and calumny, and to convince opposers by a uniform course of integrity and discretion; when he so lives, that they who dislike his creed, hesitate not to rely on his veracity and fidelity, even where their interests are most deeply concerned; when he can thus extort the concession from all parties, that he is an honest and friendly man, who would do good to every one: he then has realized a treasure, compared with which gold and silver are baubles. A long life, spent in acquiring such an ascendency over the minds and consciences of men, is by it well repaid; and the closing scene may produce effects of the most extensive benefit. But this kind of reputation is acquired with great difficulty, and it is easily forfeited; for the higher it is advanced, the more will be expected from the possessor. Nay, it may possibly admit of great abuse: and such is the inconsistency of man, that some have by a long course of good conduct acquired a deservedly high reputation, and then have strangely been induced to give currency to error with it! We should therefore not only be careful to obtain and to preserve a good name: but we should be very circumspect what use we make of that measure which we possess. We are continually reminded, that the rich and the poor will meet together before their common Creator, as their impartial Judge. If then the rich have authority over his poor neighbour, let him use it with gentleness, and without arrogance or contempt: if he lend, or give to him, let him not attempt to domineer over him on that account, remembering that both are upon a level before the Lord. Riches and power are as land to be cultivated: but he who sows iniquity, will reap vanity, and be turned out of his stewardship with disgrace. They who oppress the poor to increase their riches: yea, they who spend that in presents and entertainments for the rich, which was intrusted to them that they might feed the poor, will surely come to want, either here or hereafter. But he, whose eye is looking out continually for necessitous persons to whom he may dispense his bounty, and who gives liberally of his bread to the poor, shall abound in blessings: and the rich have the poor always with them, that whensoever they will, they may do them good, and so obtain these blessings. And let the poor remember, that the Lord made the difference betwixt their lot, and that of the rich: let them then submit to his wise and righteous will, without envy or murmurings: let them be humble, obliging, frugal, and industrious, attending to the duties of their station, and expecting the great decisive day: for "by humility, and the fear of the LORD, "are true riches, and honour, and life;" but proud, ungodly, dishonest, and licentious poverty is indeed disgraceful and ruinous. In short, "thorns, and snares are in the "path of the froward," whatever be his rank in life: he

CHAP. XXIII.

Cautions against self-indulgence before rulers; avarice, visiting a churl, speaking before a fool, and oppression, 1—11. *Exhortations, to study wisdom; and to correct children for their good,* 12—14. *The joy of teachers and parents over wise children: with cautions against envy, intemperance, and whoredom; and exhortations to buy the truth, to honour parents, and to give God the heart,* 15—26. *The infatuation of drunkards,* 27—35.

WHEN thou [a] sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what *is* before thee:

2 And [b] put a knife to thy throat, if thou *be* a man given to appetite.

3 Be not [c] desirous of his dainties: for they *are* deceitful meat.

a Gen. xliii. 32—34. Jude 12.
b Matt. xviii. 8, 9. 1 Cor. ix. 27. Phil. iii. 19.
c 6. Ps. cxli. 4. Dan. i. 8. Luke xxi. 34. Eph. iv. 22.

must be pierced with sorrows, and entangled in temptations, from which he that keepeth his soul shall be far removed. The scorner, for instance, must be excluded from every orderly family, and all instructive company, in order that strife and contention may go out, and peace may be preserved. Thus he is driven to associate with those who are pests of society, and to sink deeper into sin and misery continually. And if he be not fit for those families, which have some feeble resemblance of the regions of peace and love, he will never find admission into heaven; but must remain in outer darkness and despair. It is indeed desirable to live, as much as may be, like the blessed company above, where strife and envy never find admission: and that our families also may be peaceful and orderly, we should very carefully train up our children in the way in which they should go: that as they grow up, they may set an example of obedience to domestics, as well as give a hopeful prospect of living pious and useful lives. For every kind of foolishness and vice is bound up in the heart of a child, and will be unfolded by years, temptations, and opportunities: but the discreet use of the rod of correction has a powerful tendency to check its growth; and, when used in obedience to God, and dependance on him, is an appointed means of driving it away: so that generally they, who are properly educated, when they grow old do not depart from the way in which they were trained up. But humoured and neglected children soon contract habits of sloth: every exertion or difficulty dismays them, as if a lion were in their path ready to devour them; and thus abject and useless poverty comes upon them. Again ill-instructed youths seldom escape that deep pit, which swallows up the abhorred of the LORD. They are lazy and loitering, and come within the flattering speech of the strange woman, who decoys them into the most ruinous courses; from which a prudent and pious education is the best preservative. The prudent man, foreseeing these and similar evils, to which he or his children are exposed even in this world, will take proper precautions against them: "but the simple pass on, and are punished." Let us then be very thankful, that the good providence of God hath preserved to us these words of knowledge, during so long a course of years; while numerous systems of vain philosophy have sunk into oblivion, and the words of more atrocious transgressors have perished: and let us seek to have our hearts purified by faith, and our words seasoned by grace; and then, whatever be our outward condition, the King of kings will be our everlasting Friend.

V. 17—29.

How important is it, that we bow down our ears, and apply our hearts to knowledge! For if we keep these instructions within us, they will be a source of constant pleasure to us; and we shall learn to fit them to our lips, and to speak of them with constancy to others, when we practise them ourselves. Indeed these are excellent things in counsel and knowledge, which show us the certainty of divine truths, and how to answer all who inquire after them or object to them. And we should, after the example of the wise man, try every method of gaining the attention, and impressing the hearts of others with them.—How often are we warned against oppressing the poor and needy! and after all that Christianity has effected; and all that equitable laws and impartial judges can do, in those few places where they are found, these warnings are by no means superfluous. But let it be remembered, that he who robs the poor, especially under colour of law, rouses the dormant vengeance of the righteous and merciful God, who makes their cause his own. A great deal of the comfort, safety, and happiness of life, depends on our choice of friends: we should then especially avoid the furious and contentious man, if we value our lives and souls; and such as would draw us in to engage for more than we are worth, to the defrauding of creditors, and our own utter ruin.—Habits of industry, and expert activity in business, formed in youth, when connected with integrity and propriety of conduct, are of great importance; for they do more towards a man's comfort and credit even in this world, than large inheritances or splendid talents can do. But after all, this world is of little value. All other distinctions will soon be swallowed up in that grand one, which subsists betwixt those who trust in the Lord, and those that do not. We may come short of wealth, or reputation and the friendship of great men, but the King of heaven will guard, and bless, and honour all who trust in him; whilst he reserves the wicked to the day of judgment to be punished. Let us then be diligent in his work: and though we live and die among mean men, we shall at length be numbered with the princes of his people, and stand with acceptance before the King of glory.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIII. V. 1—3. At the tables of princes and rulers, there are abundant incentives to excess: but many reasons will induce a wise man to be more abstemi-

4 [d] Labour not to be rich: [e] cease from thine own wisdom.

5 Wilt [f] thou * set thine eyes upon [g] that which is not? for [h] *riches* certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle towards heaven.

6 Eat thou not the bread of *him that hath* [i] an evil eye, neither [k] desire thou his dainty meats:

7 For [l] as he thinketh in his heart, so *is* he: [m] Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart *is* not with thee.

8 The morsel *which* thou hast eaten shalt thou vomit up, and lose thy sweet words.

d xxviii. 20. John vi 27. 1 Tim. vi. 8—10
e iii. 5. xxvi 12. Is v 21. Rom. xi. 25. xii. 16
f cxix. 36, 37 Jer. xxii 17. 1 John ii. 15.
* Heb. *cause thine eyes to fly upon*, &c.
g Gen. xlii. 36. Ec. i. 2. xii. 8. Is. lv 2. 1 Cor. vii 29—31.
h xxvii 24 Job i. 14—17. Ps xxxix 6. Ec. v. 13, 14. Matt. vi. 19. 1 Tim. vi. 17. Jam v. 1, 2
i xxii. 9. Deut xv. 9. xxviii. 56. Matt xx. 15. Mark vii. 22.
k 3. Ps. cxli. 4. Dan. i. 8—10.
l xix. 22 Mat. ix. 3, 4. Luke vii. 39.
m Judg. xvi. 15 2 Sam. xiii. 26—28. Ps. xii. 2. lv. 21. Dan. xi. 27. Luke xi. 37, &c.

9 [n] Speak not in the ears of a fool: for [o] he will despise the wisdom of thy words.

10 [p] Remove not the old † land-mark; and enter not into the fields of the [q] fatherless:

11 For [r] their Redeemer *is* mighty; he shall plead their cause with thee.

12 [s] Apply thine heart unto instruction, and thine ears to the words of knowledge.

13 Withhold [t] not correction from the child: for *if* thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die.

14 Thou shalt [u] beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.

n ix. 7, 8. xxvi. 4, 5 Is. xxxvi 21. Matt. vii. 6. Acts xiii. 45, 46. xxviii. 25—28
o Luke xvi. 14 John viii 52. ix 30—34. 40 x. 20. Acts xvii. 18. 32. 1 Cor i 21—24. iv. 10—13.
p xxii. 28 Deut. xix. 14. xxvi. 17 Job xxiv. 2
† Or. *bound*
q Job vi. 27. xxii. 9. xxiv. 3. 9. xxxi. 21—23. Ps. xciv 6 Jer. vii. 6. xxii. 3. Zech vii. 10. Mal. iii. 5. Jam. i. 27
r xxii. 23 Ex. xxii. 22—24. Deut. xxvii. 19. Ps. xii. 5. Jer. l. 33, 34. li. 36.
s 19. ii. 2—6. v. 1, 2. xxii. 17. Ez. xxxiii 31.
Matt. xiii. 52. Jam. i. 21—25.——t xiii. 24. xix. 18. xxix. 15. 17.——u xxii. 15. 1 Cor. v. 5. xi. 32

ous there than elsewhere. Persons of inferior rank are seldom admitted to such tables, but upon particular occasions; and their behaviour will be narrowly observed, especially if they profess religion, or are public teachers. Indulgence of the appetite frequently betrays into impropriety of conduct, which excites resentment, or renders the superior less friendly. It must lessen a man's character to be delighted with an opportunity of self-indulgence: he appears to covet that abundance which he does not possess: he sanctions the excesses and carnal pleasures of ungodly men, which his example at least should protest against; and it weakens his influence, and deprives him of opportunities of usefulness, which are too valuable to be sold at so contemptible a price. A man should therefore consider diligently what and who is before him, and what consequences his conduct may produce: and if he knows himself liable to be overcome by his appetite, he should double his guard; and act as if a knife were at his throat, to give him a mortal wound if he yielded to the temptation: that is, he should dread such unseemly behaviour worse than even death. He should learn to be indifferent about *deceitful meat;* which promises pleasure; but produces painful effects to the health, character, interests, and conscience. 'For oft times the rich, when they bid their inferiors to 'their tables, it is not for the love they bear them, but 'for their own secret purposes.' The words rendered *given to appetite*, may mean, *possession of thy soul*, that is, 'if thou hast thy wits about thee.'

V. 4, 5. The *wisdom* of the world consists in labouring to be rich; and in contriving every plan, without being over scrupulous, and giving all diligence, to get forward in this grand concern: for prodigality and other vices, inconsistent with growing rich, are considered as a man's *folly*. The wise man therefore not only exhorts the reader to cease from his own *folly*, but from his own wisdom; and not to *weary himself*, about acquiring wealth: but to subordinate all his worldly interests and pursuits to the acquisition of wisdom and piety; and thus to lay up more certain and valuable treasures. For why should a man let his eyes and heart eagerly pursue an empty fleeting shadow; especially when substantial good is within his reach? Yet riches are such an empty, fleeting shadow, which the covetous man watches and broods over, till at length they form themselves, as it were, wings, and fly away, quite out of his reach, as the eagle flies towards heaven.

V. 6—8. Many make a show of entertaining their acquaintance, who sordidly grudge the expense, and often betray symptoms of this penuriousness. A wise man would not be under obligations to persons of so base and insincere a character: for though their words be friendly and their entertainment good, there is no cordial welcome; and in their hearts they are best pleased with those who decline their invitations. It is enough to make a man loath every morsel that he hath eaten at the expense of such persons, and to wish they had it again: and he cannot but be ashamed and grieved to reflect, that he wasted his sweet words in complimenting, flattering, or even thanking those who so little deserve it. The word rendered *lose*, equally means *corrupt;* and may intimate the temptation to which the guest of a churl is exposed, of deviating from sincerity and piety in his conversation, to avoid giving offence.

V. 9. (*Note*, ix. 7, 8. *Marg. Ref.*) This maxim implies speaking on important subjects, in the hearing of a foolish and wicked man, who will do all he can to expose them to ridicule and contempt. (*Ps.* xxxix. 1.)

V. 10, 11. (*Notes*, xxii. 22, 23. 28.) The Redeemer was the next of kin, who was authorized, and required, and even bound in interest, to see that his poor relations were not oppressed or defrauded, (*Note, Lev.* xxv;) and who was the avenger of blood in case they were murdered. The Redeemer of orphans and widows, in this case, might be so poor and helpless, that a rich and powerful oppressor would despise and defy him: but let it be well attended to, that the almighty God is the Redeemer of the fatherless, and will defend their cause against all who injure them. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 12. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'Do not turn over this business 'to another; but do it thyself, which may save the public 'officers the labour: nay, by making his body smart for 'his faults, both body and soul may be delivered from utter 'destruction.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The word is *Sheol*, which doubtless means here more than the *grave*.

V. 13, 14. These verses may imply a caution not to correct children in an improper manner, as well as an admonition not to withhold correction from them. They, who strike children in a passion, often use improper

15 [x] My son, [y] if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, * even mine.

16 Yea, my reins shall rejoice, when [z] thy lips speak right things.

17 Let [a] not thine heart envy sinners: but [b] *be thou* in the fear of the LORD all the day long.

18 For [c] surely there is an † end, and [d] thine expectation shall not be cut off.

19 Hear thou, my son, and be wise, [e] and guide thine heart in the way.

20 Be [f] not amongst wine-bibbers; amongst riotous eaters of ‡ flesh.

21 For [g] the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and [h] drowsiness shall clothe *a man* with rags.

x i. 10. ii. 1. iv. 1. Matt. ix. 2. John xxi. 5. 1 John ii. 1.
y 24, 25 x. 1. xv. 20. xxix. 3 1 Thess ii. 19, 20 iii. 8, 9. 2 John 4. 3 John 2, 4.
* Or, *even I* will rejoice. Jer. xxxii. 41. Zeph. iii. 17. Luke xv. 23, 24. 32. John xv. 11.
z viii. 6. Eph. iv. 29. v. 4 Col. iv. 4. Jam. iii. 2.
a iii. 31. xxiv. 1. Ps. xxxvii. 1. lxxiii 3.
b xv. 16. xxviii 14. Ps. cxi. 10. cxii. 1. Ec. v. 7. xii. 13, 14. Acts ix. 31. 2 Cor. vii. 1. 1 Pet. i 17.
c Ps. xxxvii. 37. Jer. xxix. 11. Luke xvi. 25. Rom. vi. 21, 22.
† Or, *reward*.
xxiv. 14. Heb. x. 35.——d Ps lx. 18 Jer. xxix. 11. Phil. i. 20.——e 12. 26 iv. 10. 23.
f 29—35. xx. 1. xxviii. 7. xxxi 6, 7 Is. v. 11. xxii. 13. Matt xxiv 49. Luke xv. 13 xvi. 19 xxi. 34 Rom xiii. 13. Eph v. 18. 1 Pet. iv. 3, 4.——‡ Heb *their flesh*
g xxi 17. Deut. xxi. 20. Is xxviii. 1—3. Joel i. 5. 1 Cor. v. 11. vi. 10. Gal. v. 21. Phil. iii. 19.——h vi. 9—11. xxiv. 30—34.

22 [i] Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and [k] despise not thy mother when she is old.

23 [l] Buy the truth, and [m] sell *it* not; *also* wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.

24 The [n] father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice: and he that begetteth a wise *child* [o] shall have joy of him.

25 Thy father and thy mother shall be glad, [p] and she that bare thee shall rejoice.

26 [q] My son, [r] give me thine heart, and [s] let thine eyes observe my ways.

27 For a whore *is* a deep ditch; and a strange woman *is* a narrow pit.

28 She also lieth in wait as ‖ *for* [t] a prey, and [u] increaseth the transgressors among men.

i i. 8. vi. 20. Deut. xxi. 18—21. xxvii. 16. Mark vii 10. Eph. vi. 1, 2.
k xxx. 11. 17. Lev. xix 3. Matt. xv. 4—6. John xix. 26, 27.
l ii. 2—4. iv. 5—7. xvi. 16. xvii. 16 Job xxviii. 12—19. Ps cxix. 72. 162. Is. lv. 1. Mat. xiii. 44. 46. Phil. iii 7, 8. Rev. iii. 18.
m Matt. xvi. 26. Acts xx. 23, 24. Heb xi. 26. Rev xii. 11.
n i. 2, 3. 15, 16. x 1. xv. 20. 1 Kings i 48. ii. 1—3. 9. Ec. ii. 10.
o Philemon 19, 20.
p xvii. 25. 1 Chr. iv. 9, 10. Luke i. 31—33. 46, &c. 58. xi. 27
q 15.
r iv. 23. Deut. vi. 5. Matt. x. 37, 38 Luke xiv.
26 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. viii. 5 Eph iii. 17.——s iv. 25—27. Ps cvii. 43. cxix. 9—11. Hos xiv 9. 2 Pet i. 19 ——‖ Or, *as a robber*. Jer iii 2.——t ii. 16—19 vii. 22—27 ix. 18. xxii 14 Ec vii. 26. Judg. xvi. 4, &c.——u Num. xxv. 1. Hos. iv. 11. 1 Cor. x. 8. Rev. xvii. 1, 2.

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weapons, and risk material evil consequences: and this abuse has tended to discredit wholesome and scriptural correction. But the use of the rod, though it pains the child, (and the tender parent perhaps still more,) will be sure not to kill him, and is calculated to deliver his soul from hell.

V. 15, 16. Some interpret these verses as the language of a wise and pious parent; who conscientiously corrects his child, and at the same time affectionately argues with him, and shows him that he hath nothing in view except his good, which would give the tender parent an inexpressible satisfaction; especially if the child were not only kept from evil ways, but enabled to be useful, by pious conversation, prudence, and upright counsel, to others also. This is a very interesting and instructive application of the passage, and well worthy the attention of parents. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 17, 18. When we habitually act with an awful sense of God in our minds, as in his presence, and according to his commands, seeking to please him, and expecting help and happiness from him: then we are "in the fear "of the LORD all the day long." And such persons have no need to envy prosperous sinners: for the end of their trials and of the sinner's prosperity is at hand; and the believer's expectation shall not be cut off or perish in disappointment. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 19. *Way.* 'In the observation of God's commandments.'

V. 20—22. (*Notes, Deut.* xxi. 18—21. *Marg. Ref.*) The latter clause is literally, 'Despise not thy mother, 'because she is grown old.' The very reason why the son ought to love, honour, and be a comfort to her, as far as he possibly can.

V. 23. 'Riches should be employed to get learning; 'not learning to gather up riches.' (*Lord Bacon.*)—'Spare no costs for truth's sake, neither depart from it 'for any gains.' The knowledge of divine truth, with that profession and obedience which are inseparable from it, often costs much; not only much labour, but loss of property, friends, character, liberty, and even life; yet it cannot be bought too dear. We should determine to make the truth our own, though it cost us our lives: and not to sell it at any price. Christ is this truth. Many, like the rich young man, Herod, Felix, and Agrippa, will not go to the price of becoming his true disciples: and many, after professing themselves his disciples, like Demas, forsake him, and *sell the truth*, loving this present world.—But true Christians count all but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of him.

V. 24, 25. 'There is no greater joy a parent can have, 'than to see his son take virtuous courses. Let not thy 'father and mother then want this singular pleasure: but 'by thy well-doing fill the heart of her that bare thee with 'joy and triumph, who for all the pains and care, that she 'hath had in thy birth, and about thy education, desires 'no other requital, but only this.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 26. 'Give thyself wholly to wisdom.' If this verse be considered, merely as the words of Solomon to his son, or to the reader, it means no more than an affectionate call for earnest attention to instruction, and especially to the subsequent important caution. But in these chapters, Wisdom, (that is, Christ, the Word and Wisdom of God,) seems to address the reader, as at the beginning of the book; and on that supposition, this verse is a call of Christ to every reader, to give him his heart. The law demands love to God with the whole heart and soul; but sin and the world have possession of it in fallen creatures: and the express design of the Gospel is to bring us, by repentance and faith, to give our hearts to the Saviour and to God through him; that he may there set up his kingdom, write his law, and reign the undisputed Lord of all our affections. And unless this call be obeyed, all else will be decidedly rejected.

V. 27, 28. (*Note*, xxii. 14. *Marg. Ref.*) "A narrow "pit," out of which it is extremely difficult to escape. (*Notes*, ii. v.—vii.)—'Such are her arts, notwithstanding

29 ¶ [x] Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath [y] redness of eyes?

30 They that [z] tarry long at the wine: they that go to seek [a] mixed wine.

31 [b] Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, *when* it moveth itself aright.

32 [c] At the last it [d] biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like * an adder.

33 Thine [e] eyes shall behold strange women, [f] and thine heart shall utter perverse things.

34 Yea, [g] thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the † midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.

35 They have [h] stricken me, *shalt thou say, and* I was not sick; they have beaten me, *and* ‡ I felt *it* not: when shall I awake? [i] I will seek it yet again.

x 21. xx. 1. 1 Sam. xxv. 36, 37. 2 Sam. xiii. 28 1 Kings xx. 16, &c. Is v. 22 xxviii 7, 8. Nah. i. 10 Matt. xxiv. 49, 50. Luke xii. 45, 46 Eph. v. 18
y Gen. xlix 12.
z Gen. ix 21. Is. v. 11. Am. vi 6.
a ix. 2. Ps. lxxv. 8.
b vi. 25. 2 Sam xi 2 Job xxxi. 1. Ps. cxix. 37. Matt. v. 28—30. Mark ix. 47. 1 John ii 16.
c v 11 Is. xxviii. 3, 7, 8. Jer. v. 31. Ez vii. 5, 6 12. Luke xvi 25, 26. Rom. vi. 21——d Ec. x. 8. Jer. viii. 17. Am. v. 19 ix. 3.——* Or, *a cockatrice.* Is. lix. 5.
e Gen. xix. 32 &c.
f xxxi 5. Ps. lxix. 12. Dan. v. 4. Hos. vii. 5. Jude 12, 13.
g 1 Sam xxv. 36—38. xxx. 16, 17. 2 Sam. xiii. 28. 1 Kings xvi. 9 xx. 16, &c. Joel i 5. Matt. xxiv. 38. Luke xvii. 27—29. xxi. 34. 1 Thes. v. 2—7.
† Heb *heart.* Ex. xv. 8.
h xxvii. 22. Jer. v. 3. xxxi. 18.
‡ Heb. *I knew* it *not.* xxvi. 9. Eph. iv. 10.
i xxvi. 11. Deut. xxix. 19. Is xxii. 13 lvi. 12. 1 Cor xv. 32—34. 2 Pet. ii. 22.

'all the straits and hardships thou shalt suffer by her; it 'will be an hard matter, when thou art once engaged, to 'get quit of her.' 'She is of no other use in the world, 'which already is too bad, but to make it worse, by in-'creasing the number of disloyal and faithless men.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) 'She seduceth many, and causeth them to of-'fend God.' (*Note*, v. 14.)

V. 29. 'Every wickedness brings mischief with it: 'but who is the man that especially draws on himself all 'manner of sorrows and inconveniences, both in soul, 'body, and estate? Who is he that raiseth quarrels and 'contentions upon every trifle? Who is he that is full of 'idle, obscene, and unsavory words? Who is he that in 'distempered frays gets stripes and wounds? Who is he 'that afflicts his eyes with defluctions and inflammations?' (*Bp. Hall.*) But no translation or paraphrase can do justice to the concise, abrupt, and energetic manner of the original.

V. 30. "They that are the last at the wine." 'He 'that sits long at the wine, that hunts about from one 'tavern to another, where he may find the most exquisite 'wine.'

V. 34, 35. The perils to which drunken men expose themselves, are as imminent as if they lay down to sleep upon the unstable waves of the sea, or upon the top of the ship's mast in a storm. A drunken man may be beaten and bruised, and not be sensible of it at the time; but he will feel it severely afterwards: yet so inveterate are his habits, and so great his infatuation; that as soon as he has, with difficulty, shaken off the drowsiness of the last night's debauch, he is determined to seek it yet again. No loss, pain, sickness, poverty, ill-treatment, dangers, or deliverances, can prevail with him so much as, sincerely and constantly, to desire to break his chain.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—18.

How good are all the laws and counsels of the Lord! His prohibitions only say to us, "Do thyself no harm." He "giveth us all things richly to enjoy," as far as it is good for us; and then enters his paternal caveat against our disgracing, or ruining ourselves, by excess. He requires his rational creatures to be the lords, and not the slaves, of their animal appetites: and how mean and senseless is it, to rush upon indulgence, when the honour of God, the good of our neighbour, and our own advantage, concur in laying the appetite under a temporary interdict! Such is the law in all its strictness; and its goodness renders the transgression of it inexcusable. But the Gospel alone encourages us with the assurance of pardon and effectual grace: and through the motives, encouragements, and aids thus proposed to us, we may cheerfully hearken to the instructions of wisdom, and hope practically to derive benefit from them. Let us then apply our hearts unto instruction, and "our ears unto the words of knowledge." Thus we shall learn to avoid every inexpedient indulgence, and to be of his mind, who "would eat no flesh whilst "the world stood, rather than cause his weak brother to "offend." We shall consider times and circumstances; where we are, and what is before us, and what impression our conduct may make, or what effects it may produce, upon others: we shall place the strongest guard on the weakest side, and when we most feel our weakness, we shall shun temptation, or be doubly earnest in prayer to overcome it: we shall not allow a desire after the delicacies which we find to be ensnaring to our souls; and shall endeavour most to practise abstemiousness, where incentives to excess most abound. He, who is thus instructed, will feel little inclination to come to the table of a selfish man, however well it is spread, or however pressingly he is invited. For what should he do there? Edifying conversation would be thrown away; and it would be worse than a waste of words, to speak sweet language to a man, whom he cannot but regard with a mixture of pity and contempt. He who hears the words of Christ, will beware also of covetousness. In his honest industry he will aim to do his duty, but will not "labour to be rich;" he will not set his eyes, or his heart, on such fleeting treasures, knowing how speedily and certainly a separation must take place. For he whose treasures are left on earth, and whose soul is in hell, will find that he coveted what *was not;* that his wealth was a phantom, but his crimes a reality. Who then, that is wise, would remove the old land-mark, or take possession of the estate of the fatherless, or get wealth by injustice or oppression of the poor? For their Redeemer is mighty, (though he became poor, that he might be their Brother and Redeemer;) and he will plead their cause with those that wrong them. But if any are resolved to grow rich by such means, we must let them alone: the covetous Pharisees derided even Christ, when he warned them to be faithful in the unrighteous mammon: and he bids us not to speak in the ears "of a fool, for he will despise the wisdom of our words."

CHAP. XXIV.

Cautions against envy, discontent, sinful thoughts, neglect of doing good, rejoicing over an enemy's calamity, respect of persons, flattery, revenge, and sloth; recommendations of the knowledge and fear of God, and obedience to the king; and declarations of the safety of the righteous, 1—34.

BE [a] not thou envious against evil men,
[b] neither desire to be with them.
2 For [c] their heart studieth destruction, and their lips talk of mischief.

a 19. iii. 31. xxiii. 17. Ps. xxxvii. 1. 7. lxxiii. 3. Gal. v. 19—21. Jam. iv. 5, 6.
b i. 11—15. xiii. 20. Gen. xiii. 10—13. xix. 1, &c. Ps. xxvi. 9.
c 8. vi. 14. 1 Sam. xxiii. 9. Esth. iii. 6, 7. Job xv. 35. Ps. vii. 14. x. 7. xxviii. 3. xxxvi. 4. lxiv. 2—6. cxl. 2. Is. lix. 4. Mic. vii. 3. Matt. xxvi. 3, 4. Luke xxiii. 20, 21. Acts xiii. 10.

But surely we shall not envy sinners; let us but live conscientiously in the fear of God all the day long, and wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life: and when the end cometh, and our expectations are fully answered, we shall find that true godliness is great gain. As the Lord commands us, with a solemn introduction, not to withhold correction from our children, but to beat them with the rod to save their souls from destruction: so we may expect, that he will correct us for our good, if we are the objects of his special love. Let us then take affliction in good part, and seek to have it sanctified, that we "may be partakers of his holiness." Thus our teachers will rejoice on our account; nay, the Lord himself will "rejoice over us to do us good:" and, obeying his commands and copying his example, in educating our children, we may hope to enjoy with thankful exulting hearts the highest satisfaction that can be derived from outward things, while we witness their pious, wise, and useful conduct, in the situations which Providence shall allot them; and may cheerfully leave the world, assured that the best part of all we knew, spoke, or did, will survive us, and through them be made useful to the next generation.

V. 19—35.

The gracious Saviour, who purchased for his people pardon and peace, with all the affection of a kind preceptor, yea, of a tender parent, counsels us to "hear and be "wise, and to guide our hearts in his ways:" and at the same time he is ready to assist us in obeying every one of his injunctions. "Be not," says he, "amongst wine-"bibbers, amongst riotous eaters of flesh: for the drunk-"ard and the glutton shall come to poverty," and the "drowsiness," which such excess occasions, "will clothe "a man with rags." Mark, says he, and learn wisdom by the painful experience of other men: Who has more misery and sorrow than his neighbours? Who is always engaged in riots, fightings, or law-suits? Who renders himself despised or hated by his babblings? Who is frequently covered with bruises, or is laid up with dangerous wounds, when neither called to defend himself, nor his friends, nor his country? Who carries the marks of his distempered body, in the redness of his eyes, and in his bloated countenance? Do you not see that these are the wretched appendages of those "that tarry long at the wine, that "go to seek mixed wine?" Do you envy their advantages? or do you wish to be exempted from such miseries? If you desire the latter, then beware of contracting the habit of drinking beyond the bounds of strict temperance. The wine may sparkle in the glass, and appear beautiful to the eye, and drunken poets may write very ingenious things in praise of it: it may also please the palate, and exhilarate the mind for a moment; but at "the last it biteth "like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." Whatever exceeds exact sobriety, is poisoned: it is far worse than the fabled cup of Circe, which transformed men into brutes; for it inflames the passions, and fits them for every hateful crime: it ruins a man's constitution and character, and tends to beggar his family: it is an incentive to the basest lusts, and causes many to fall into that deep ditch and narrow pit, from which so few escape with their lives; making them an easy prey to those bad women who lie in wait for them, and whose constant employment it is, *to increase the transgressors amongst men:* it looses the tongue to utter every thing impious, polluting, and provoking: it leads a man, without precaution, to run himself into unnumbered dangers; and yet it fascinates him into such a love for his cruel oppressor and his galling chains, that he only sleeps to recruit himself, that when he awakes he may ruturn to his destructive indulgence! Who then, that has common sense, would contract such a habit, or sell himself to an iniquity, which tends to such accumulated guilt and misery, and exposes a man every day to the danger of dying intoxicated and awaking in hell? Thus the Wisdom and Word of God warns men against this common but fatal vice: and He exhorts young persons to notice the admonitions of their parents to this effect: "Hearken," says he, "unto thy father, that begat thee, "and despise not thy mother when she is old." Their counsel is salutary, their authority from God, the child's obligations are great; and the guilt of those that despise their aged parents is exceedingly heinous. And it should be the aim and honest ambition of every young person to be the joy, comfort, and honour of his aged father and mother, in their declining years. But the Saviour himself addresses us as children, and says, "My son, give me thy "heart; and let thine eyes observe my ways:" and if we desire to be wise and happy, we should surrender them to him, and he will prepare them for himself, and make them a treasury of wisdom and grace, that from that abundance we may speak and do what is right and good. Thus his salvation is freely bestowed upon us: yet we must "buy "the truth," we must spare no cost or pains, and sacrifice every lust and interest, that we may purchase this inestimable prize. On the other hand, we must refuse to give up, or to act inconsistently with, our religious profession, or to relinquish the pursuit of wisdom; even if we could be tempted to it by the offer of all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them. And what part soever of our conduct we may at any time be sorry for, we shall not, when the end comes, repent of following this counsel, even though we should lose our lives, rather than deviate from it.

3 Through [d] wisdom is an house built; and by understanding [e] it is established:

4 And [f] by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches.

5 A [g] wise man *is* * strong; yea, a man of knowledge † increaseth strength.

6 For [h] by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war: [i] and in multitude of counsellors *there is* safety.

7 Wisdom *is* [k] too high for a fool: he [l] openeth not his mouth in the gate.

8 He [m] that deviseth to do evil shall be called a mischievous person.

9 The [n] thought of foolishness *is* sin; and [o] the scorner *is* an abomination to men.

10 *If* [p] thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength *is* ‡ small.

11 If [q] thou forbear to deliver *them that are* drawn unto death, and *those that are* ready to be slain;

12 If thou sayest, Behold, we know it not; [r] doth not he that pondereth the heart consider *it?* and he [s] that keepeth thy soul, doth *not* he know *it?* [t] and shall *not* he render to *every* man according to his works?

d ix. 1. xiv. 1. 1 Cor iii 9, 10. e 2 Sam. vii. 26. Jer. x. 12 Col. ii. 7. f xv. 6 xxi. 20. xxvii 23—27. 1 Kings iv. 22, &c. 1 Chr. xxvii. 25. &c xxix 2, &c. 2 Chr. iv. 18—22 xxvi. 4—11. Neh. x. 39. xiii. 5—13. Matt. xiii. 52. g viii 14 x. 29. xxi. 22 Ec. vii. 19 ix 14—18 * Heb. *in strength.* † Heb *strengtheneth might* Ps lxxxiv. 7. Is xl. 31 Col. i. 11. h xx 18. Luke xiv 31. 1 Cor. ix 25—27 Eph vi. 10, &c. 1 Tim. vi 11, 12 2 Tim. iv. 7. i xi. 14 xv. 22. k xiv 6. xv 24. xvii. 24 Ps. x. 5. xcii. 5. 6. 1 Cor ii 14.——l xxii. 22. xxxi 8, 9. Job xxix 7, &c. xxxi 21. Is xxix. 21 Am v. 10 12 15.——m 2. 9 vi. 4—18. xxiii. 7. 1 Kings ii. 44. Ps. xxi 11. Is x. 7—13. xxxii. 7. Ez. xxxviii. 10, 11. Nah i. 11 Rom. i. 30.

n 8. xxiii. 7. Gen. vi. 5. viii. 21. Ps. cxix. 113. Is lv. 7 Jer. iv. 14 Matt. ix. 4 xv. 19 Acts viii. 22. 2 Cor. x 5. o xxii. 10 xxix. 8 p 1 Sam xxvii. 1. Job iv. 5 Is. xl. 28—31. Jon. iv. 1. 8. 2 Cor. iv. 1. Eph. iii. 13. Heb. xii 3, 4. Rev. ii. 3, 13. t Heb. *narrow.* q 1 Sam. xxvi. 8, 9. Job xxix. 17. Ps. lxxxii 4. Is. lviii. 7 Luke x. 31, 32. xxiii. 23—25. Acts xviii. 17. xxi. 31, 32. xxiii. 10. 23, &c. 1 John iii. 16, 17. r v. 21. xxi. 2. 1 Sam xvi. 7. Ps vii. 9 xvii. 3. xliv. 21. Ec. v. 8. Jer. xvii. 10. Rom. ii. 16. 1 Cor. iv. 5. Heb. iv 12, 13. Rev. ii. 18. 23.——s 1 Sam. ii. 6. xxv. 29 Ps. lxvi 9. cxxi 3 8 Dan. v. 23. Acts xvii 28. Rev. i 18.——t Job xxxiv. 11. Ps lxii. 12. Jer. xxxii. 19. Matt. xvi. 27. Rom. ii. 6. 2 Cor. v. 10. Rev. xx. 12—15 xxii. 12.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIV. V. 1, 2. (*Notes*, 1. 10—19. iii. 31, 32. *Marg. Ref.*)

V. 3—6. Some render the first two of these verses thus: 'Let thy house be builded in wisdom, and let it be 'established with understanding; and the chambers will 'be filled by knowledge with all precious and pleasant 'riches.' The original is *future:* a counsel rather than an affirmation.—Dishonesty in many cases seems the readiest road to wealth; but prudence and piety lead the surest way to durable prosperity. A wise, upright, and pious person, is most likely to advance and establish himself and family, in a comfortable and respectable situation; and to obtain that plenty which conduces to the real enjoyment of life, and enables a man to do good; and his sober, discreet, and charitable use of it, renders it precious and pleasant. His wisdom also will prove a greater security to him, and give him a greater ascendency over others, than mere power and authority could do: by knowledge he increases his strength: and when such a wise man is placed upon the throne, he will so conduct himself, as to avoid contests if he can; and if he cannot, he will take such good counsel in waging war, that he will provide well for the safety of himself and of the state; even though he have to cope with an antagonist far more powerful than himself. (*Notes*, xi. 14. xv. 22. xx. 18.)

V. 7. (*Note*, xv. 24.) The careless, sensual, and selfish man, is *the fool* here spoken of. Wisdom is out of his reach; he is of too low and grovelling a disposition to raise his thoughts to so noble an object, or to bestow the pains which are requisite in order to obtain it. (*Note*, *Ps.* xcii. 6, 7.) He openeth not his mouth in the convention of the elders, to consult about public concerns: not because he is too modest to speak his thoughts; but because he hath nothing to say; and because he little cares how matters go with others, or even with his own soul, provided he may be unmolested in his worthless pursuits and gratifications! or, because he is rash and headstrong, he is not admitted to speak on such occasions.

V. 8, 9. 'He that deviseth new ways and arts of 'cheating, or doing mischief, shall be branded with the 'odious name of, "An inventor of evil things." (*Rom.* i. 30. *Bp. Patrick.*) He, who *deviseth* mischief, will be adjudged a mischievous man, even though he do not effect his purpose. The thought, intention, or desire, to commit any kind of vice, nay, the very harbouring the idea in the imagination, or admitting it without abhorrence, is *sin:* but he who not only devises evil, but scoffs at the precepts and warnings of God's word, ought to be abhorred, and will become abominable to men, as he is an abomination among them.

V. 10. 'Man has no trial of his strength, till he be in 'troubles.' When afflictions depress a man's spirits, and unfit him for present duty, and lead him to neglect it; it is manifest that his faith and grace are weak, and consequently he is wanting in vigour and courage.

V. 11, 12. If any man knows that his neighbour is in danger of losing his life, by false accusation, or a malicious prosecution, or in any other way; he is bound to do all in his power to deliver him. But if self-love, indolence, cowardice, or reluctancy to incur expense or inconvenience, induce him to remain quiet, he will be deemed an accessary to the crime: and it will be in vain for him to say that he was not fully acquainted with the matter, or aware of the danger, that it was none of his business, and he knew not how to prevent it; for the Lord seeth through, and will expose, such fallacious excuses. 'This chiefly 'belongs to magistrates, who ought not to be over-awed 'by great men, from undertaking the protection and relief 'of those who are unjustly oppressed.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) Many of the proverbs, no doubt, were particularly intended for the instruction and warning of rulers; who may be supposed likely to notice the maxims of a great king, more than those of inferior men: but there is generally an important meaning, in which each proverb is applicable to the case of every reader. 'The magistrate ought to be 'the guardian of innocent men's lives: and private per-'sons, in their places, ought to oppose, without sedition, 'unjust severity, as much as they are able. There are 'many examples of this in Scripture. Jonathan opposed 'his father, and helped to preserve David. Obadiah fed 'the prophets whom Jezebel designed to have killed. The 'eunuch pulled up Jeremiah out of the dungeon: and the 'midwives saved the Israelites' children; as Rahab

13 My son, [u] eat thou honey, because *it is* good; and the honey-comb, *which is* sweet * to thy taste:

14 So [x] *shall* the knowledge of wisdom *be* unto thy soul, [y] when thou hast found *it;* then [z] there shall be a reward, and thy expectation shall not be cut off.

15 [a] Lay not wait, O wicked *man,* against the dwelling of the righteous; [b] spoil not his resting-place.

16 For [c] a just *man* falleth seven times, and riseth up again: [d] but the wicked shall fall into mischief.

17 [e] Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth:

18 Lest the LORD see *it,* and it † displease him, [f] and he turn away his wrath from him.

19 ‡ Fret not thyself because of evil *men,* [g] neither be thou envious at the wicked;

20 For [h] there shall be no reward to the evil *man;* [i] the ◊ candle of the wicked shall be put out.

21 My son, [k] fear thou the LORD and

u xxv. 16. 27. Cant. v. 1. Is. vii. 15. Matt. iii. 4.
* Heb. *upon thy palate.*
x xxii. 18. Ps. xix. 10, 11. cxix. 103. 111. Jer. xv. 16.
y ii. 1—5 10. iii 13—18.
z xxiii 18. Matt. xix. 21. 29 Jam. i. 25.
a i. 11. Ps. x 8, 9. xxxvii. 32. lvi. 6. lix. 3. cxl. 5. 1 Sam. xix. 11. xxii 18, 19. xxiii. 20—23. Jer. xi. 19. Matt. xxvi. 4. Acts ix. 24 xxiii. 16. xxv. 3.
b xxiii. 23. Is. xxxii 18
c Job v. 19. Ps. xxxiv 19. xxxvii. 24. Mic. vii. 8—10. 2 Cor. i. 9—10. iv. 8—12. xi. 23—27.——d xiii. 17. xxviii. 14—18. 1 Sam. xxvi. 10. xxxi 4. Esth. vii. 10. Ps. vii. 16. lii. 5. Am. v. 2. viii. 14. Acts xii. 23. 1 Thes. v. 3. Rev. xviii. 20, 21.

e xvii. 5. Judg. xvi. 25. 2 Sam. xvi. 5. &c. Job xxxi. 29 Ps. xxxv. 15 19. xlii. 10. Ob. 12. 1 Cor. xiii. 6, 7.
† Heb. *be evil in his eyes.*
f Lam. iv. 21. 22. Zech. i. 15. 16.
‡ Or. *Keep not company with the wicked* xiii. 20. Num. xvi. 26 Ps. i. 1 xxvi 4. 5. cxix. 115 2 Cor vi. 17. Eph v. 11. 2 Tim iii 2—5. Heb. xviii 4.
g i xxiv 17 Ps. xxxvii 1.
h Ps ix 17 xi. 6. Is iii 11
i xiii. 9. xx. 20. Job xviii 5. 6. xxi. 17. Matt. viii 12. xxv. 8. Jude 13.——◊ Or, *lamp*——k Ex xiv. 31 1 Sam. xxiv. 6. Ec. viii. 2—5. Matt. xxii 21 Rom. xiii. 1—7. Tit. iii. 1. 1 Pet. ii 17.

'afterwards did the spies.' 'Examples to the contrary, 'are such as that of Doeg, who in compliance with Saul's 'fury, slew the innocent priests.' (*Melancthon.*) He might have included all the courtiers and officers of Saul, who allowed such an impious and unrighteous cruelty to be perpetrated without resistance, or even remonstrance, except that of the footmen or guards who bravely refused to obey the murderous orders of their Sovereign, choosing to obey God rather than man; and who set a noble example worthy of imitation by persons in similar circumstances, to the end of time.

V. 13, 14. Men eat the honey from the comb, because it is pleasant to the taste, at the same time that it is wholesome and nutrimental. So is the knowledge of divine wisdom to those who have begun to acquire it. Their relish for it will increase with their progress in it; their present pleasure is the earnest of their future and certain recompense. Does a man eat honey because it is pleasant and wholesome? Let him seek knowledge for the same reason, and he will find it far more pleasant and profitable. (*Note,* xxii. 17, 18.)

V. 15, 16. Let no wicked man presume, through the arrogance of prosperity, to plot secretly, or to attack openly, the mean and unprotected residence of the righteous; as this will only end in his own ruin. For though the righteous may fall into many calamities, yet he shall recover from them all; but the wicked will shortly fall into absolute misery, to rise no more. 'These words are 'commonly, not only in sermons, but in books, applied to 'falling into sin: and that men may the more securely 'indulge themselves in sin, and yet think themselves good 'men, they have cunningly added something to them. 'For they are commonly cited thus, "A just man falleth "seven times a day;" which last words are not in any 'translation, (much less in the original,) but only in some 'corrupt editions of the vulgar Latin. And therefore 'we must make use of other places, for the confuting the 'fancy of perfection in this life; and the comfort of those 'who are cast down by their lapses into sin: and take 'heed of reading the Holy Scripture so carelessly, as to 'turn our medicine into poison; which is the fault of 'those who, from such mistakes, give way to their evil 'affections, and let them carry them into sin.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) This is an important note: for nothing does more mischief, than applying texts of Scripture, merely by the sound of the words, to subjects with which they have no connexion. There are plain texts enough to prove every scriptural doctrine, and to answer every scriptural purpose: but pressing texts into any particular service, contrary to their plain meaning, (as in this case,) not only serves to deceive the inconsiderate; but likewise to rivet the prejudices, and strengthen the suspicions of opposers: just as bringing forward a number of suspected witnesses, in any important cause, after a sufficient number of creditable witnesses had been examined; would make the judge, and jury, and audience, suspect even the good witnesses, and would create a prejudice against the cause itself, which needed to be thus supported.

V. 17, 18. These verses are a caution, not only against outwardly exulting over the miseries of an enemy, (which is not generally creditable even in this evil world;) but also against being secretly pleased at them. To this our selfish nature is peculiarly prone: but it is totally contrary to the law of God. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as "thyself;" as every one feels when he is the insulted sufferer. Even the secret indulgence of such a malignant joy, being known to God, might induce him to turn away his wrath from the afflicted party, and lay it on him who rejoiced in the calamity. (*Note,* xvii. 5.) Such proverbs are perfectly coincident with the precepts of the New Testament; and all the passages in the psalms, or elsewhere, which *seem* to breathe a contrary spirit, must have a meaning consistent with them: even as the exultations of the martyrs, &c. in Revelation, over the destruction of their persecutors (*Rev.* xvii. 5—7. xviii. 20;) must be capable of an interpretation which accords to the precepts of our Saviour's sermon on the mount. But to rejoice in the triumphs of the cause of God and his church, of truth and holiness, over the desperate enemies of all good, is widely different from the spirit of revenge for personal injuries.

V. 19, 20. (*Note, Ps.* xxxvii. 1, 2.) "Be not angry "because of evil men," &c. The word translated *reward,* is generally rendered *latter end,* or *end,* (xxiii. 18.) "There shall be no end of plagues to the evil man; the "light of the wicked shall be put out." (*Old Translation.*) (*Marg. Ref.*)

the king: *and* [l] meddle not with them that are * given to change:

22 For [m] their calamity shall rise suddenly; and [n] who knoweth the ruin of them both?

23 These [o] *things* also *belong* to the wise. [p] *It is* not good to have respect to persons in judgment.

24 He [q] that saith unto the wicked, Thou *art* righteous; [r] him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him:

25 But to [s] them that rebuke *him* shall be delight, and † a good blessing shall come upon them.

26 *Every man* [t] shall kiss *his* lips, that ‡ giveth a right answer.

27 [u] Prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thyself in the field; and afterwards build thine house.

28 Be [x] not a witness against thy neighbour without cause; and [y] deceive *not* with thy lips.

29 [z] Say not, [a] I will do so to him as he hath done to me: I will render to the man according to his work.

30 ¶ I [b] went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man [c] void of understanding;

31 And, lo, [d] it was all grown over with thorns, *and* nettles had covered the face thereof, [e] and the stone-wall thereof was broken down.

32 Then I saw, *and* ♢ considered *it* well: [f] I looked upon *it, and* received instruction.

33 *Yet* [g] a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:

34 So shall [h] thy poverty come as *one* that travelleth: and thy want as ‖ an armed man.

l Num. xvi. 1–3. 1 Sam. viii. 5–7. xii. 12–19. 2 Sam. xv. 13, &c. 1 Kings xii. 16.
* Heb. *changers.*
m Num. xvi. 31–35. 1 Sam. xxxi. 1–7. 2 Sam. xviii. 7, 8. 2 Chr. xiii. 16, 17. Hos. v. 11. xiii. 10, 11.
n xvi. 14. xx. 2. Ps. xc. 11.
o Ps. cvii. 43. Ec. viii. 1–5. Hos. xiv. 9. Jam. iii. 17.
p xviii. 5. xxviii. 21. Lev. xix. 15. Deut. i. 17. xvi. 19. 2 Chr. xix. 7. Ps. lxxxii. 2–4. John vii. 24. 1 Tim. v. 20, 21. Jam. ii. 4–6. 1 Pet. i. 17.
q xvii. 15. Ex. xxiii. 6, 7. Is. v. 20, 23. Jer. vi. 13, 14. viii. 10, 12. Ez. xiii. 22.
r xi. 26. xxviii. 27. xxx. 10. Is. lxvi. 24.
s Lev. xix. 17. 1 Sam. iii. 13. 1 Kings xxi. 19. 26. Neh. v. 7–9. xiii. 8–11, 17, 25, 28. Job xxix. 16–18. Matt. xiv. 4. 1 Tim. v. 20. 2 Tim. iv. 2. Tit. i. 13. ii. 15.——† Heb. *a blessings of good.* xxviii. 23.——t xv. 23. xvi. 1. xxv. 11, 12. Gen. xlii. 38, &c. Dan. ii. 46–48. Mark xii. 17, 28, 32–34. ‡ Heb. *answereth right words.* Job vi. 25.——u 1 Kings v. 18. vi. 7. Luke xiv. 28–30.

x xiv. 5. xix. 5, 9. xxi. 28. Ex. xx. 16. xxiii. 1. 1 Sam. xxii. 9, 10. 1 Kings xxi. 9–13. Job ii. 3. Ps. xxxv. 7, 11. lii. *title.* Matt. xxvi. 59, 60. xxvii. 23. John xv. 25.
y Eph. iv. 25. Col. iii. 9. Rev. xxi. 8. xxii. 15.
z xx. 22. xxv. 21, 22. Matt. v. 39–44. Rom. xii. 17–21. 1 Thes. v. 15.
a Judg. xv. 11. 2 Sam. xiii. 22–28.
b vii. 6, &c. Job iv. 8. v. 27. xv. 17. Ps. xxxvii. 25. cvii. 42. Ec. iv. 1–8. vii. 15. viii. 9–11.
c x. 13. xii. 11.
d Gen. iii. 17–19. Job xxxix. 40. Jer. iv. 3. Matt. xiii. 7, 22. Heb. vi. 8.
e xix. 24. xx. 4. xxii. 13. xxiii. 21. Ec. x. 18.
♢ Heb. *set my heart.* Job vii. 17. Ps. iv. 4. Luke ii. 19, 51.
f Deut. xiii. 11. xxi. 21. xxxii. 29. 1 Cor. x. 6, 11. Jude 5–7.——g vi. 4–11. Rom. xiii. 11. Eph. v. 14. 1 Thes. v. 6–8.——h x. 4. xiii. 4.——‖ Heb. *a man of shield.*

V. 21, 22. 'Have nothing to do with those, who 'vary from all good laws and orders, and are affected to 'innovation and change, both of princes and government.' (*Bp. Hall.*) Kings and rulers must be reverenced and obeyed, in all things lawful, by all who fear God, and obey his commands. (*Marg. Ref.*) The late events, for a series of years in Europe, have abundantly shown, that Solomon's wisdom was far greater than that of modern philosophers, so called; or rather, that the wisdom of God is infinitely above the wisdom of man. The ruin of those who rebel against God, and of those who excite disturbances in the state, comes upon them in the most unsuspected manner, and is dreadful beyond conception. (*Note*, xvii. 11.)

V. 23. The following things should be peculiarly considered by all, that would act as wise men, especially in the capacity of rulers and magistrates. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 24, 25. The magistrate, who acquits a wicked man, or decides in his favour because of his wealth or power, will be generally and justly execrated: but they who restrain and punish evil-doers of every rank, will have the satisfaction of being generally favoured, and the advantage of having many prayers offered for them, and blessings pronounced on them. Those authors, or orators, who compose panegyrics on wicked men; those courtiers and dependents who flatter ungodly princes and nobles; and above all, those ministers who, through fear, sloth, ignorance, or love of filthy lucre, give that encouragement to wicked men which belongs only to the righteous, are by parity of reason included, and will be at length universally execrated: whilst they who act faithfully, will have the comfort and benefit of it.

V. 26. He who speaks honestly, faithfully, seasonably, and to the purpose, whether as a judge, a witness, a senator, a counsellor, a minister, or a private person, will meet with general respect and affection. At least this ought to be the case; and every one who experiences the benefit of the right answer, will be attached to him that gave it.

V. 27. The most needful and profitable work should be first attended to. Men ought to employ their labour and expense in cultivating the land, before they proceed to build and beautify their houses, or furnish them in an elegant style. For if the house be built, and the land be neglected, another man will be likely to possess both of them. Or the proverb may mean, that every thing should be done with deliberation, foresight, and contrivance: 'Get all ready, as 'well as count the cost, before you begin to build.'

V. 28. "Be not thou a witness against thy neighbour "without cause: for wilt thou deceive with thy lips?" (*Old Translation.*) The expression *without cause*, seems to imply not only the case of a man who bears *false* witness, but that of him who, from personal resentment, or any other corrupt motive, testifies the truth against his neighbour, when there is no sufficient reason why he should do it; when neither the glory of God, nor the benefit of man requires it.

V. 29. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'He showeth what is in the 'nature of the wicked; to revenge wrong for wrong.'

V. 30—34. (*Note*, vi. 6—11.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—20.

The strong propensity in human nature to malignant and selfish tempers renders repeated cautions against them necessary. But it must be as foolish as it is wicked, to "be envious against evil men, or to desire" a share in their unlawful gains; whilst "their heart studieth destruction, "and their lips talk of mischief:" or to fret or distress ourselves at their short-lived success, in "laying wait "against the dwelling of the righteous, and spoiling his "resting-place:" for unless they repent they will soon fall into mischief to rise no more; and their wasting candle

CHAP. XXV.

Of kings, and those who minister to them, 1—7. *Of avoiding contention, and receiving reproof,* 8—12. *Of faithful messengers, and vain boasters,* 13, 14. *Of forbearance, temperance, and prudent conduct towards neighbours,* 15—17. *Of false witnesses, unfaithful friends and unseasonable mirth,* 18—20. *Of kindness to enemies, frowning away backbiters, and domestic discord,* 21—24. *Of the righteous falling before the wicked; of vain glory and an ungoverned temper,* 25—28.

will expire in "the blackness of darkness for ever." But the righteous man, though repeatedly cast down into trouble, nay, should he be again and again overcome with strong temptations, shall rise superior to them all, and have an eternal dwelling and resting-place, which the wicked cannot approach. We may *foresee*, but we should not *desire*, the destruction of sinners: neither may we rejoice when our enemy falleth. Even when we are greatly injured, and sharply persecuted, we must not indulge such emotions of revenge: for the Lord will see it and be displeased; he will even suffer the haughty persecutor to proceed a little longer with impunity, rather than allow his people to harbour in any measure so malignant a spirit; and instead of punishing their persecutors, he will previously and sharply chastise them, to prepare them to meet deliverance in a more Christian manner. How displeasing then must that revenge be, which is generally excited by trivial or imaginary offences, and puts men upon evident crimes, in order to retaliate on the offender! We are here again reminded of the value of true wisdom; which alone can give a man establishment in that kind of reputation and prosperity that is precious and desirable: for it will suggest to him the most beneficent designs, and afford him the greatest advantages for accomplishing them; and it will do more than all other things to render him safe and useful. But this wisdom is far too high and arduous a thing for the giddy and heedless part of mankind, who waste their lives in low pursuits or childish amusements. They only obtain this invaluable good, who bestow pains to obtain it; who are taught so to prize it for the sake of its effects, that they would pursue it, if it were with present pain and uneasiness; and they find such sweetness in it, that they would feed upon it, as men do on the purest honey, even if there were no future advantage from it. But the recompense is sure to those who thus seek wisdom from the Lord; and its present usefulness is immense. Whilst foolish and wicked men either do not open their mouths in the gate; or, intruding into offices for which they are not qualified, only "darken counsel by "words without knowledge;" wisdom renders a man fit for his station in the community, whatever it be. So that should he even be called to fill a throne, he will conduct public affairs with discretion, and benefit by the multitude of counsellors: and he will repress, and be a terror to evil doers alone. He will count it his highest honour to promote the happiness of his people; he will engage in no war, but for their protection and true interest; and his prudent conduct will do far more to secure success, and to strengthen the nation, and procure a safe and lasting peace, than any of those heroical achievements, which are so highly celebrated in the world. We should never forget, that our heart-searching God will call us to account for the devices and thoughts of our heart. Instead therefore of inventing evil things with the mischievous person, or entertaining our minds with vain and sinful thoughts; we ought continually to be looking around us, to see what good we can do, or what mischief we can prevent: and we need not wait long for opportunities, if we be "zealous "of good works." For if our neighbour, or even our enemy, be in danger of being ruined, condemned, or deeply injured, through malice or mistake, we are bound to risk every personal consequence for his deliverance. In such things, however, the deceitfulness of the heart must be peculiarly guarded against. For self-love suggests many plausible excuses, and the conscience may be bribed to bring in a favourable verdict: but the Lord will order a rehearing of the cause; he will manifest the secrets of all hearts, and render unto every man according to his works: and if he find our excuses insufficient, and the effect of indolence, cowardice, self-indulgence, and unbelief, we shall be considered as chargeable with a share of that guilt which we might have successfully opposed; and as having concurred in causing that misery which we ought to have prevented. But the same feebleness of mind which causes many to faint in the day of adversity, induces numbers to shrink from such services, as cannot be performed without giving offence to powerful oppressors; or to those of lower rank, who will not relieve the urgent necessities of the poor themselves, and then take it as a reflection upon them if others supply their deficiencies. This timid indolent spirit is often mistaken for meekness: but it is in fact a natural disposition, which as much needs correcting by divine grace, as the impetuous violence of self-sufficient courage does. We should therefore pray continually for the courage of faith, and the meekness of humility, and the persevering, enduring activity of fervent love.

V. 21—34.

"These things belong unto the wise:" and "if any "man lack wisdom let him ask of God." But that wisdom which he bestows will never suffer a man to say, "I will do so to him, as he hath done to me, I will render "unto him according to his work." For in this spirit, the most exact evidence, which could be given even in a court of justice, would be criminal before God. On such occasions we should be afraid of officiousness, or of wrong motives, in being witness against our neighbour without a cause: but resentment generally warps the judgment, induces a man to make the worst of every circumstance, and thus leads him to deceive with his lips, and to become a slanderer and false accuser. In like manner, "the wisdom

a i. 1. x. 1. 1 Kings iv. 32. Ec. xii 9
b Is. i 1 xxxvi. 22. xxxvii 2. Hos i.1.Mic.i.1.
c Deu. xxix. 29. Job xi. 7, 8. xxxviii. 4, &c xxxix. &c. xl. 2. xlii 3. Rom. xi 33, 34
d 1 Kings iii. 9—28. iv 29-34. Ezra iv. 15. 19. v. 17. vi. 1. Job xxix. 16.———e Ps. ciii. 11. Is. vii. 11. lv. 9. Rom. viii. 39.

THESE *are* also [a] proverbs of Solomon, [b] which the men of Hezekiah, king of Judah, copied out.

2 *It is* [c] the glory of God to conceal a thing; but [d] the honour of kings *is* to search out a matter.

3 The [e] heaven for height, and the earth for depth, and the heart of kings * *is* unsearchable.

* Heb there is *no searching.* 1 Kings iv. 29.

4 Take [f] away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer.

f xvii 3. Is. i. 25—27 Mal. iii. 3. 2 Tim. ii. 20, 21. 1 Pet. i. 7.

5 Take [g] away the wicked *from* before the king, and [h] his throne shall be established in righteousness.

g xx. 8. 1 Kings ii. 33. 46 Esth. vii. 10. viii. 11, &c. Ps. ci 7, 8.
h xvi. 12 xix 12. xxix 14. Is. ix. 7. xvi. 5.

"which is from above," will effectually prevent the magistrate from "respecting persons in judgment;" and both the magistrate, and minister of religion, and every person, from saying "to the wicked, thou art righteous." When this is done by the magistrate, "the people will curse him, "nations will abhor him:" and though the minister, who flatters and deceives men's souls, may here be caressed and prospered, he will hereafter be more deeply and universally execrated than any other person in the world. But he who rebukes and reproves with affectionate faithfulness, whatever return he may have from men, shall have delight in the testimony of his conscience, in the good done by him, and in the favour of his God, and "a good blessing will "come upon him." In general, even here, he who studies to adapt his discourse to every case in which he is required to speak, will find a measure of respect and attention; for "every man will kiss his lips, who giveth a right an-"swer," and such as he derives good from. But sloth and self-indulgence are the bane of all good. Whilst we go past "the field of the slothful, and the vineyard of the "man void of understanding," and view them overgrown with thorns and nettles, and the fences all broken down: we see an emblem of the far more deplorable state of many souls. Every vile affection grows exceedingly in the hearts of vast multitudes, all their faculties are thrown open to the delusions or suggestions of the devil and his agents; nothing good has any root or growth there, and everlasting poverty is coming upon them as an armed man: yet they are saying, "a little sleep, a little slumber, a "little folding of the hands to sleep!" A wise man will consider and receive instruction from the ruinous misconduct of a fool: though the fool will not profit by the example or counsel of a wise man. Let us then show our wisdom, by taking the hint from the case of the sluggard, to redouble our diligence in every good thing, and to watch and pray more against the beginnings of so ruinous a vice. But many who are diligent in worldly business, are slothful about their eternal interests. They mind minute concerns, but neglect the momentous: they embellish the house, but neglect the estate! Let us then learn to begin at the right end; and to do every thing in season, and in order, and with prudence as well as diligence. And let us "study to be quiet, and to mind our own business," conscientiously and in the fear of God: let us honour and obey the king, and have nothing to do with those turbulent spirits who are given to change, and always aiming to raise disturbances and introduce innovations: thus we shall avoid the calamity, and the ruin which come suddenly upon those who rebel against God and the king; and shall so 'pass through things temporal, as finally to obtain 'the things which are eternal.'

NOTES.

CHAP. XXV. V. 1. *Men*, &c. 'The men whom 'Hezekiah appointed for that purpose.' 'The friends of 'Hezekiah.' (*Sept.*) It is probable that Solomon himself, or some others, by his order and under his inspection, had selected the proverbs contained in the preceding chapters, as most suited to general religious utility: but that all the rest of the three thousand were preserved by the kings of Israel, though not published for the use of the people; and that Hezekiah, with the concurrence, and under the superintendence, of Isaiah, and other contemporary prophets, employed some competent persons among his servants, to collect from the rest the proverbs contained in this and the following chapters.

V. 2, 3. It is the glory of God, that he knoweth all things most perfectly, and that he needeth no information or counsel; that he giveth no account of his matters, and concealeth his purposes from the most penetrating and intruding, except as he has unfolded some particulars of what he intended to do in future ages, to confirm his revelation of himself, and his truth and will, for men's encouragement and instruction in their duty. But earthly princes are in themselves as ignorant and fallible as their subjects: their honour therefore consists in investigating every matter with the utmost accuracy and attention. It behooves them to search out the revealed will of God; and to procure intelligence from every quarter, and information on every subject connected with their important duties; and to avail themselves of the wisdom of others, whom they advise with as counsellors: that their laws, decisions, and measures, may be the result of knowledge, equity, sound policy, and mature deliberation, and conducive to the true interests of their subjects; and not the dictates of pride, ambition, resentment, passion, or caprice. Yet a wise king will be upon the reserve, as to his determinations, till the event discovers them: and it will often be as impracticable for others to drive into his secret intentions, as to measure the height of the heaven, or the depth of the earth.—'Men cannot attain to the reason of all the secret doings 'of a king, even when he is upright and doeth his duty.'

V. 4, 5. As the artificer cannot make a beautiful cup or vessel without well refining his metal; so a king cannot establish his throne in righteousness, till he remove wicked men from places of public trust, and drive them from his counsel and from about his person. 'They should 'not keep so much as one ill man about them; who oft-'times corrupts the whole court, and disturbs the whole 'kingdom.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The modern maxim, that the private character of a minister of state should not be investigated, flatly contradicts the wisdom of Solomon and of God.

6 * Put not forth thyself [i] in the presence of the king, and stand not in the place of great *men;*

7 For better *it is* [k] that it be said unto thee, [l] Come up hither; [m] than that thou shouldst be put lower in the presence of the prince whom thine eyes have seen.

8 Go not forth [n] hastily to strive, lest *thou know not* [o] what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbour hath put thee to shame.

9 Debate thy cause [p] with thy neighbour *himself;* and discover not † a secret to another:

10 Lest he that heareth *it* put thee to shame, and [q] thine infamy turn not away.

11 A [r] word fitly ‡ spoken *is like* apples of gold in pictures of silver.

12 *As* [s] an ear-ring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, *so is* [t] a wise reprover upon an obedient ear.

13 As [u] the cold of snow in the time of harvest, *so is* a faithful messenger to them that send him: for he refresheth the soul of his masters.

14 Whoso [x] boasteth himself § of a false gift *is like* clouds and wind without rain.

15 By [y] long forbearing is a prince persuaded, and a soft tongue breaketh the bone.

* Heb. *Set not out thy glory.* 27. xxvii 2.
i xvi. 19. Ex. iii. 11 1 Sam ix 20—22. xv. 17. xviii. 18—23 2 Sam. vii. 8, &c. Ps cxxxi. 1. Jer. i. 6—10. Am. vii 12—15
k xvi. 19. Luke xiv. 8—10.
l Rev. iv 1.
m Luke xviii. 14. 1 Pet v 5
n xvii. 14 xviii. 6 xxx. 33. 2 Sam. ii. 14—16 26 2 Kings xiv. 8-12 Luke xiv 31, 32
o xiv. 12 Jer v 31. Matt. v. 25
p Matt xviii. 15—17.
† Or, *the secret of another.* xi. 13. xx. 19.
q Ps. cxix. 39.
r xv. 23 xxiv 26. Ec. xii. 10. 13. 1. 4.
‡ Heb. *spoken upon his wheels.*
s Job xlii. 11.
t ix. 8 xv. 5. 31. 32. xxvii. 5. 6. 1 Sam xxv 31—34. Ps. cxli. 5.
u 25. xiii. 17. xxvi. 6. Phil. ii. 25—30.
x xx. 6 1 Kings xxii. 11. Luke iv. 11. 2 Cor xi. 13—18. 31. 2 Pet ii. 15—19. Jude 12, 13. 16.
§ Heb. *in a gift of falsehood*
y xv 1. xvi 14. Gen xxxii. 4, &c. 1 Sam xxv. 14, &c Ec. x. 4.

V. 6, 7. (*Note, Luke* xiv. 7—11.) There can be no reasonable doubt but that our Lord referred to these verses, in his admonition to the ambitious guests at the Pharisee's table, and was understood to do so. While, therefore, this gives his sanction to the book of Proverbs, it also shows, that these maxims may fairly be applied to similar cases, and that we need not confine the interpretation exclusively to the subject which gave rise to the maxim. The ambitious competition of courtiers, the disgrace of being placed lower than a man's self sufficiency had arrogated to him, and the honour paid to modest worth by wise princes, gave our Lord the occasion of counselling the guests; and that admonition forms one of the standard rules by which he deals with those who profess themselves his disciples. "Before honour is humility, and a haughty spirit before a "fall." The last words, '*whom thine eyes have seen,*' are thought by some learned men *redundant;* and some add them to the next verse: but perhaps they may allude to the case of a person newly brought to court, getting a sight of the prince, flattering himself with the hopes of high favour and preferment, but giving disgust by a self-sufficient conduct, and so finally excluded from the king's presence. An apt emblem of many vain-glorious professors of Christianity!

V. 8—10. Precipitation, in commencing contention, can arise only from fierce passions, pride, and ignorance or forgetfulness of consequences. This is equally applicable to engaging in foreign wars, or in civil dissentions; and to entering on law-suits, controversies, or any other private contests. They who are most eager to contend, are generally least able to maintain their ground: consequently their boastings and menaces frequently end in their own disgrace; and they bring themselves into inextricable difficulties. To avoid this, men should previously consider what they are about to do: and if they have been materially injured, they should calmly expostulate with their offending neighbour, and state to him their earnest desire of agreement upon any reasonable terms; and thus endeavour, by compromise or reference, to render an open contest unnecessary. None should, however, in any case, divulge private transactions to others, or traduce a man's character out of resentment: for this will take away the prospect of an amicable settlement; and if words of this kind be reported to him, and he can show them to be in any measure false and slanderous, or overcharged, the disgrace will rebound upon the speaker, and perhaps become indelible. (*Matt.* xviii. 15—17.) This is precisely the instruction of the New Testament. (*Marg. Ref.*) Solomon, speaking by divine inspiration, gave the same instructions, which were afterwards authoritatively given by his illustrious antitype.

V. 11, 12. A word of counsel, encouragement, or reproof, when it is spoken with propriety, and is well-timed, and suited to the occasion, is conspicuously beautiful. As when apples of gold are painted, or presented to our view, in lattice-work of silver; where 'the fine fruit 'receives a new charm, by showing itself through the ele-'gant apertures of the basket.' (*Hervey.*) And when a wise reprover, and one that receives the reproof in good part, happen to meet, no jewels of gold can be so ornamental as this becoming behaviour.

V. 13. Liquor cooled with ice or snow, preserved or brought from the mountains for that purpose, according to the custom in hot countries, is very grateful in the heat of summer, especially to the husbandman when gathering in his harvest. Thus faithful ambassadors, or messengers, refresh the minds of those who employ them in business of great importance. (25.)

V. 14. 'He that makes bountiful promises of great 'gifts, which will never be performed, is like a cloud 'which makes a show of that rain, which it will not 'and cannot yield.' (*Bp. Hall.*) (*Notes, Hos.* vi. 4. *Jude* 12.)

V. 15. By submission, and patience under rebukes, and humble entreaties, even the prince, who has been greatly offended, may be pacified: whereas petulancy and passion would inflame his resentment, and prove of fatal consequence. Nay, soft persuasive language is generally the most effectual, to prevail over the obdurate mind and stubborn resolution, and to carry the point in the midst of great difficulties. The marrow cannot be obtained, "till "the bone be broken:" this is therefore an apt emblem of the advantages of gentle means; which, contrary to apparent probability, break the bone that violence would have rendered more obdurate.

16 [z] Hast thou found honey? eat so much as is sufficient for thee, [a] lest thou be filled therewith and vomit it.

17 * Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbour's house; lest he be † weary of thee, and *so* hate thee.

18 A man [b] that beareth false witness against his neighbour *is* a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow.

19 [c] Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble *is like* a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint.

20 *As* he [d] that taketh away a garment in cold weather, *and as* [e] vinegar upon nitre, [f] so *is* he that singeth songs to an heavy heart.

21 If [g] thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink:

22 For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and [h] the LORD shall reward thee.

23 The [i] north wind ‡ driveth away rain: [k] so *doth* an angry countenance a backbiting tongue.

24 *It is* [l] better to dwell in a corner of the house-top, than with a brawling woman, and in a wide house.

25 *As* [m] cold waters to a thirsty soul, [n] so *is* good news from a far country.

26 A [o] righteous man falling down before the wicked, *is as a* troubled fountain, and a corrupt spring.

27 *It is* [p] not good to eat much honey: [q] so *for men* to search their own glory *is not* glory.

z xxiv. 13, 14. Judg. xiv. 8, 9. 1 Sam. xiv. 29—27. Is. vii. 15. 22.
a 27. xxiii. 8. Luke xxi. 34. 1 Cor. ix. 25.
* Or, *Let thy foot be seldom in*, &c. Gen. xix. 2, 3. Judg. xix. 18—21.
† Heb. *full*. Rom. xv. 24.
b xii. 18. Ps. lii. 2. lv. 21. lvii. 4. cxx. 3, 4. cxl. 3. Jer. ix. 3, 8. Jam. iii. 6.
c 2 Chr. xxviii. 20, 21. Job vi. 14—20. Is. xxxi. 1—3. xxxvi. 6. Ez. xxix. 7. 2 Tim. iv. 16.
d Deut. xxiv. 12—17. Job xxiv. 7—10. Is. lviii. 7. Jam. ii. 15, 16.
e x. 26.
f Ps. cxxxvii. 3, 4. Ec. iii. 4. Dan. vi. 18. Rom. xii. 15. Jam. v. 13.
g xxiv. 17. Ex. xxiii. 4. Matt. v. 44. Luke x. 33—36. Rom. xii. 20, 21.
h Matt. x. 13. 1 Cor. xv. 58.
i Job xxxvii. 21.
‡ Or, *bringeth forth rain*; *so doth a backbiting tongue an angry countenance*.
k xxvi. 20. Ps. xv. 3. Pom. i. 30. 2 Cor. xii. 20.
l xix. 13. xxi. 9, 19. xxvii. 15, 16.
m Gen. xxi. 16—19. Ex. xvii. 2, 3. 6. Judg. xv. 18, 19. 2 Sam. xxiii. 15. Ps. xiii. 1, 2. lxiii. 1. Is. lv. 1. Jer. xviii. 14. John vii. 37. Rev. xxi. 6. xxii. 17.
n xv. 30. Is. lii. 7. Nah. i. 15. Luke ii. 10, 11. Rom. x. 15. 1 Tim. i. 15.
o Gen. iv. 8. 1 Sam. xxii. 14—18. 2 Chr. xxiv. 21, 22. Matt. xxiii. 35, 36. xxvi. 69—74. Acts vii. 52. 1 Thes. ii. 15. Rev. xvii. 6.
p 16.
q xxvii. 2. John v. 44. Phil. ii. 3.

V. 16. Honey is often an emblem of sensual pleasure: though it be wholesome when eaten in moderation, yet when taken to excess it will produce a surfeit. Those animal indulgences, which are lawful in themselves, and placed within our reach; (as if we had found honey and it were all our own,) should yet be used with great moderation, or they will lead us into guilt and trouble.

V. 17. Our intercourse with neighbours cannot be conducted in comfort and cordiality, without discretion, as well as sincerity. Unseasonable, tedious, and too frequent visits, without any invitation, or upon such as is general and slight, and indulging too freely at the expense of others, will create disgust. Such behaviour leaves an unfavourable opinion of a man's character on the mind of his neighbour: and it not only appears selfish, but it presses too hard upon the other's selfishness, and on both accounts may probably terminate in weariness or even in enmity.

V. 18. *A maul*, &c. Or a club, by which a man is beaten down to the ground: a "dasher in pieces." (*Nah.* ii. 1. *original.*)

V. 19. 'As a broken tooth, or a leg out of joint, not 'only fails a man when he comes to use it, but likewise 'puts him in pain: so doth a faithless person serve them 'that depend on him, when they have the greatest need of 'his help. (*Marg. Ref.*) And such also is the confidence 'that the faithless person himself places in riches, or craft, 'or great friends: which some time or other will disap-'point him to his great grief, when he expects the most from 'them.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 20. It would be an inhumanity peculiarly unseasonable to take away a poor man's raiment, or the covering of his bed, in the depth of winter; and it is observed that when vinegar is poured on nitre, their contrariety produces a violent effervescence: so incongruous and disquieting are the expressions of excessive mirth, in company with one who is greatly troubled in his mind. Nitre, in this place, does not signify the salt now commonly so called, or saltpetre: but probably a fixed alkali called *nitrum* by the Romans: and certainly some alkaline composition, which was used instead of soap by the Jews. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 21, 22. The apostle hath quoted these verses from the Septuagint, *verbatim*, (except the last clause,) in his most beautiful exhortations to Christians, enforced by the consideration of the mercies of God to them. (*Note, Rom.* xii. 20, 21.) Such a quotation is the strongest testimony to the divine authority of the book whence it is made; and clearly evinces that the same rule of duty is contained in both testaments: however ancient scribes and pharisees, and modern writers in general, may have overlooked it. The law of love is not expounded more spiritually, in any single precept either of Christ or his apostles, than in this exhortation. Seize the moment of distress to show kindness to him that *hates* thee. This will resemble the effort of the refiner with a piece of metal, untractable by ordinary means: he surrounds it with coals intensely heated, and thus either melts or consumes it: and however the plan may succeed with him, who thus labours to overcome evil with good, "verily he shall in no wise lose his reward."

V. 23. The meaning of this verse in our translation is obvious and instructive: yet the original seems to convey another meaning. "As the north wind produces rain," (which it doth in some countries,) "so a back-biting tongue "*produceth* an angry countenance." Either interpretation shows how hateful back-biters are, and how they should be frowned upon.

V. 24. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 25. (*Note*, 13. *Marg. Ref.*)

V. 26. A troubled fountain or corrupt spring sends forth pollutted streams, to the disappointment and annoyance of the neighbourhood. Thus, when a righteous man falls into any evident sin, in the presence of the wicked; or when he pays unseemly homage to them, from fear or interest; or when he falls under their oppressive power; in different ways these events tend to prejudice and embolden the minds of sinners, and are a grief, a snare, or a discouragement to the servants of God.

V. 27. To supply a negative, in order to explain a maxim of wisdom, as in this verse, seems indefensible: and yet, of the various interpretations which have been

xvi. 32. xxii. 24. 1 Sam. xx. 30. xxv. 17.

28 He [r] that *hath* no rule over his own spirit, *is like* a city *that is* broken down, *and* without walls.

proposed, in order to avoid this difficulty, none gives satisfaction, at least to me. Might not the latter clause be read interrogatively: "To eat honey to excess is not good: and "is it glory for men to seek their own glory?" A moderate regard to reputation is proper; as it is to eat honey moderately: but does not the vain-glorious man run into pernicious excess, by rioting on what he delights in, as much as the man who eats honey, till he surfeits with it? (*Note*, 16.)

V. 28. The man who has no command over his passions, especially over his anger, lies open to the assault of every invader: any one may exasperate and torment him, and rob him of his comfort, his peace, and his reason at pleasure: every temptation seduces him into sin, and the most trifling concerns involve him in the most serious contests.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—15.

We ought carefully to collect, and readily to communicate, the instructive lessons which wise and good men have left behind them: but selection is in this case of vast importance. The whole of what even Solomon wrote was not thought proper to be published. And to communicate to the public indiscriminately, all that eminent men have left in manuscript, is not only an injustice to their characters, but a detriment to mankind: by these means the effusions of an unguarded hour are sent forth into the world under the sanction of a great name; and, alas! men's follies and mistakes are more likely to meet a favourable reception, than the result of their sober judgment and mature deliberation. This is therefore always an injudicious, and often an *infamous*, because a *mercenary*, practice. It is not for us presumptuously to search into the deep things of God, whose glory it is to conceal his decrees in impenetrable secrecy: but let us diligently learn his revealed will, that we may believe and do it, and humbly bound our inquiries where he bounds his information. For how should we be able to know any thing of his unrevealed purposes; when we cannot discover the intentions of our earthly governors with any certainty, unless they inform us of them? The honour of kings does not consist in external magnificence, numerous attendants, powerful armies, or splendid achievements: much less in domineering over their subjects, and in indulging their lusts and passions. But it consists in diligently learning and attending to the duties of their high station; and in rendering their whole administration equitable, salutary, and conducive to the peace and happiness of mankind; and in copying His example, who "putteth "away the ungodly as dross," that "their thrones may "be established in righteousness." For the reformation of the court, and the good example of those who possess authority or favour with the prince, will produce a salutary effect through the subordinate ranks of the community. This indeed is an arduous attempt, and requires both resolution and address: a frowning countenance, and severe reproofs, and decisive measures must be used; and men's characters must be inquired into, and made trial of, as the finer discriminates between the gold and the dross. But the advantages will abundantly compensate the trouble, to those who are enabled to go through with such a reform. The vain-glorious men, who boast themselves of those talents and endowments which they possess not, and excite expectations which they are sure to disappoint; being like clouds and wind without rain; and who assume the chief places, and claim the precedency wherever they go, are not fit to be employed in services of this kind. Indeed, whether such persons are found in palaces or churches, they are to be suspected and kept down. He who is fit to stand in the presence of the king, does not at first sight, or upon the first intimations of favour, aspire to the chief places, or want to thrust out his seniors and superiors: but is diffident, and reluctant to engage in such arduous affairs; and it will be needful to invite him to "come up hither;" and not to put him lower in the presence of the prince, than he hath placed himself. And, in like manner, he who is qualified to be the minister of the Lord of hosts, and hath seen his glory in the face of Jesus Christ, will be proportionably sensible of his own unworthiness and insufficiency. He may be induced by zeal and love, and a sense of duty, to desire this good work, but he will not rush upon it with an inconsiderate forwardness; nor be disposed to thrust himself into the most conspicuous places, but be satisfied in an obscure sphere, until he be evidently called up higher. Thus in every thing modesty and humility attend real excellency, and precede durable honour: but pride and ostentation are evidences of a worthless character, and lead to contempt and disgrace. The love of peace, and that gentle and circumspect behaviour which best secures it, spring from humility. He who considers the fatal effects of contention in public and in private life, will use every means to avoid all occasions of it. He will meditate seriously upon the causes and consequences of any contest, before he will venture upon it: he will practise equity, sincerity, candour, and long forbearance; and will study that softness of speech that breaketh the bone, and disarmeth the resentment of the powerful, or the haughty, and winneth to reason and justice those who are infringing on the rights of others. He will not disclose to another person the injuries that he hath received, till he hath debated the matter with the injurious party: much less will he propagate a distorted and aggravated report, as is too common in such cases. Thus he will be generally enabled to avoid litigations: whilst precipitation, unguarded language, and partial and *public* statements of facts to the injury of men's reputations, lead to irreconcileable discords; and often terminate in irretrievable detriment to the circumstances and character of the offender. And let it be observed, that the hasty entrance upon *religious* controversy is as perilous to a man's *spirit*, as engaging in a duel is to his *life;* and is often as fatal to the welfare of the church, as needless wars are to the community. It is well worth our while to study acceptable words fitted to take effect; and to know how both to give seasonable counsel, and to yield an obedient ear to salutary reproof; which is very becoming a man professing godliness, and peculiarly conducive to his advantage and usefulness. Indeed prudence, modesty, and faithfulness, will render a man valuable in every situation, from that of an ambassador to a powerful monarch, to that of an ordinary messenger to a man of low condition; and will conduce greatly to the comfort of those who employ him.

CHAP. XXVI.

Divers maxims, concerning fools, sluggards, intermeddlers with strife, those who do mischief in sport, tale-bearers, dissemblers, liars, and flatterers, 1—28.

a 1 Sam. xii. 17, 18. b 8 xxviii 16. Judg. ix. 7. 20. 56, 57. Esth iii 1, &c. iv. 6—9. Ps. xii 8. xv. 4. lii. *title.* 1—4. Ec. x. 5—7.

AS snow [a] in summer, and as rain in harvest, [b] so honour is not seemly for a fool.

2 As the bird by wandering, as the swallow by flying, [c] so the curse causeless shall not come

3 A [d] whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back.

4 Answer [e] not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him.

5 Answer [f] a fool according to his folly, [g] lest he be wise in his own * conceit.

c Num xxiii. 8. Deut xxiii. 4, 5. 1 Sam xiv. 28, 29. xvii 43. 2 Sam. xvi. 12. Neh xiii. 2. Ps. cix. 28.
d x 13. xvii. 10. xix. 25 xxvii. 22. Judg. viii. 5—7. 16. Ps. xxxii. 9 1 Cor. iv. 21. 2 Cor. x. 6 xiii. 2.
e xvii 14. Judg. xii 1—6. 2 Sam. xix. 41—43. 1 Kings xii 14. 16 2 Kings xiv. 8—10. 1 Pet ii. 21—23. iii. 9. Jude 9.——f 1 Kings xxii. 24—28. Jer xxxvi 17, 18. Matt xv. 1—3. xvi. 1—4 xxi 23—27 xxii. 15—32. Luke xii. 13—21. xiii 23—30 John viii 7. ix. 26—33. Tit. i. 13.——g 12. xxviii. 11. Rom. xi. 25.——* Heb *eyes.* Is. v 21. Rom xii 16.

V. 16—28.

In public as well as in private life, misplaced confidence must induce uneasiness, disappointment, and disasters: and if a monarch rely on a mercenary and unfaithful minister of state, he can have no security that he will not betray him in the critical conjuncture, like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint, and thus involve him in the deepest distress. And what fidelity to his prince can be expected from him who is a daring rebel against God, and who sacrifices every relative and domestic duty to the indulgence of his avarice or his lust? But a minister who feareth God and worketh righteousness, and whose integrity and prudence are approved, relieves him of his cares and solicitude, and excites the confidence that good news will be heard, from time to time, out of those distant countries with which he is connected, which will be grateful as the cold water to the thirsty traveller. How welcome then should the faithful messengers of God be to us, who are approved by their Lord for declaring the truth as it is! and who bring good news from heaven, that far country, from which we sinners had great reason to expect heavy tidings! May he furnish and send forth such into all the nations of the earth! In order to live in peace, and to be prepared to resist temptation, nothing is more important than habitual self-government: for "he that hath no rule over his own "spirit, is like a city that is broken down, and without "walls." In this case a man lies open to the incursion of every enemy: and if he listen, (as it is most likely he will,) to false witnesses and slanderers, his life must be one continued scene of contention and vexation, of sin and misery. Indeed, we ought not only to avoid these hateful and mischievous vices ourselves, but to frown every calumniator from our presence: and a frown will generally suffice, for they seldom persevere in coming where they are not made welcome. But self-government must be exercised over all our passions and appetites, even in respect of things lawful; that, while many ruin themselves and others by criminal gratifications, and some are useless, troublesome, and uncomfortable through inexpedient indulgence; we may know how to use the good gifts of Providence with thankful moderation, to take what is conducive to health and comfort, and to avoid all excess. It is also incumbent upon us to conduct our social intercourse with our neighbours in a prudent manner, without encroaching, or giving umbrage to them: at the same time we may be thankful, that we never can come to the Lord unseasonably, or too frequently; and that he will never be weary of us, or displeased with us, for asking too much of him: and we should make *his love*, and not *man's selfishness*, the pattern of our conduct toward others, though not of our expectations from them. We should also learn to sympathize with the afflicted; and we ought no more to wound their feelings by impertinent levity, than to injure the poor by cruelty and oppression: and we ought steadily and constantly to be aiming to overcome evil with good; and to watch for an opportunity, when an enemy is in want or trouble, to show our good-will to him by a seasonable relief. This may melt him into kindness: or if, contrary to our intention, it should only increase his guilt, yet it will conduce to our own good, and the Lord will reward us. We should moreover keep a peculiar watch over our tempers and our words, whilst in the company of ungodly men: and we ought by no means to pay undue respect to them for any secular ends: lest our example should produce a prejudicial effect on others, and leave an unfavourable impression concerning our religion on their minds. If we see the righteous cast down by oppression before the wicked, we should desire to possess our souls in faith and patience, and to keep silence in so evil a time. And though we may not seek our own glory, yet the honour of our profession should be very near our hearts; and we ought to be willing rather to suffer death, than to live to the disgrace of the doctrine of God our Saviour.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXVI. V. 1. Snow in summer and rain in harvest are unseasonable, and often prejudicial, in every country: but in the land of Canaan they were unusual, and denoted the divine displeasure. Thus the advancement of ignorant and wicked men to dignity and authority, especially in Israel, was ominous, and foreboded the pouring out of divine judgments upon the nation. 'The blending together of summer and winter, would not cause a greater 'disorder in the natural world, than the disposal of honour 'to bad men does in the moral world.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 2. The birds which fly over our heads cannot hurt us, and they will soon return to their nests from which they wandered. In like manner, unmerited anathemas, imprecations, and calumnies, will not eventually harm us; but will alight on those who uttered them.

V. 3. The whip and the bridle are needful for the proper management of the horse or the ass, and every creature must be dealt with according to its nature: but the nature of careless and profligate sinners is such, that they will not be ruled by reason and persuasion, and therefore severe treatment must be their portion.

6 He that [h] sendeth a message by the hand of a fool cutteth off the feet, *and* drinketh † damage.

7 The legs of the lame are ‡ not equal: [i] so *is* a parable in the mouth of fools.

8 As he that § bindeth a stone in a sling, [k] so *is* he that giveth honour to a fool.

9 *As* [l] a thorn goeth up into the hand of a drunkard, so *is* a parable in the mouth of fools.

10 The great *God*, that formed all *things*, ‖ [m] both rewardeth the fool, and rewardeth transgressors.

11 As [n] a dog returneth to his vomit, *so* a fool * returneth to his folly.

12 [o] Seest thou [p] a man wise in his own conceit? *there is* more hope of a fool than of him.

13 ¶ The [q] slothful *man* saith, *there is* a lion in the way; a lion *is* in the streets.

14 *As* [r] the door turneth upon his hinges, so *doth* the slothful upon his bed.

h x. 26. xiii. 17. xxv. 13. Num. xiii. 31.
† Or, *violence.*
‡ Heb *lifted up*
i 6. xvii. 7. Ps i. 16—21. lxiv. 8. Matt vii 4, 5. Luke iv 23.
§ Heb. *putteth a precious stone in a heap of stones.*
k 1. xix. 10. xxx. 22.
l xxiii. 35.
‖ Or, *A great man grieveth all; and he hireth the fool, he hireth also the transgressor.*
m xi 31 Rom ii.6. n Ex. viii. 15. Matt. xii. 45. 2 Pet. ii. 22
* Heb. *iterateth.*
o xxii 29 xxix. 20 Luke vii. 44.
p 5, 6 xxviii 11. xxix. 20. Matt. xxi 31. Luke xviii 11 Rom. 12. 16. 1 Cor iii. 18, 19 viii. 1, 2. Rev. iii. 17.
q xv. 19. xix. 15 xxii 13.
r vi. 9, 10. xii. 24 27. xxiv 33. Heb vi. 12.

V. 4, 5. 'Consent not to his doings.' 'Reprove him 'as the matter requireth.' It is highly improper to answer a fool, in his own *foolish manner;* to meet him on his own ground; to retort on him his scurrilous, abusive, impertinent language; to enter on disputes with him, and answer his vain cavils or objections; or to treat his folly and impiety, as if it were worthy of notice or refutation. This would be doing him an honour, to which he is not entitled; and by thus descending to his level, his opponent would insensibly get into his trifling, contentious, railing spirit, and become like unto him. But it is important to consider the character and intentions of men; and to level an answer against a foolish and impertinent railer and caviller, with such poignancy, and force of argument, as may admit of no reply: and so to adapt the remarks to the man, and address them to his conscience, as may best expose his ignorance or malice, stop his mouth, and end the debate at once. A notorious profligate, scoffer, or infidel, has no just claim to that respectful treatment, to which a more modest and decent inquirer is entitled: for this would feed his vanity and augment his self-importance. But a decided and pointed answer to his captious queries, that manifests the ignorance and wickedness which dictated them, forms the proper method of dealing with him. So that we should not answer a foolish man in a foolish manner: but we should answer him in a way suited to expose his folly, to mortify his pride, and to prevent others from being deluded by him. Of this we have very many beautiful examples in the history of Jesus Christ. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 6. He who employs an ignorant and worthless man in any important business, as it were, cuts off his own feet, puts himself to much pain, disables himself, and retards his affairs; and he can expect nothing but disappointment, vexation, and damage in abundance, as the recompense of his folly. The princes of this world sometimes employ such envoys: but the Lord never sends those as his messengers who do not understand, or are not able to deliver their message, or whose foolish and wicked conduct is an habitual disgrace to him; though many such wear the garb, and appear in the character, of his messengers.

V. 7. 'Lift ye up the legs of the lame, what doth it 'help him?' The clause is generally understood, of a lame man's affectation of agility; though indeed he never moves so ungracefully as when he affects to be nimble: and thus a foolish man never appears to so great a disadvantage, as when he pretends to wisdom. He either shows his ignorance and folly, by speaking things false and inapplicable to the occasion: or the wise remarks, which he hath picked up, are so contrary to his own general conduct and converse, that they render him the more contemptible. (*Note*, xvii. 7.)

V. 8. He, who fixes a stone in a sling, probably prepares mischief for somebody, perhaps for himself: so does he who confers authority on a foolish and wicked man, or helps to advance his reputation. It is like putting a sword or a loaded pistol into a madman's hand.

V. 9. A drunken man will heedlessly lay hold on thorns, or other sharp things, which run into his hand; and perhaps be insensible to it, till he becomes sober, and the wound begins to rankle. Thus a parable, or wise observation, is so ill managed by a fool, that it wounds himself by exposing his wickedness, and increasing his condemnation: and though he may not be sensible of it at present, yet he will be, when he shall be condemned out of his own mouth, and by his own doctrine.

V. 10. This proverb may either declare how the Lord, the Creator of all men, will deal with sinners, according to the degrees and aggravations of their guilt; whether they be ignorant, careless, or presumptuous: or how the *great* and *powerful* among men, who do so much towards forming the manners of all others, *ought to act.* Instead of honouring and employing worthless and wicked men, they ought to disgrace and punish them according to their deserts. The margin reads it; *A great man grieveth all, and he hireth the fool, he hireth also the transgressors.* But the sense may thus be more clearly expressed, 'when 'he hireth the fool, and hireth the transgressors.'

V. 11. This greedy animal, which alone is observed to act in the manner described, is the loathsome emblem of those sinners, who return to their vices, after they have in various ways smarted for them, and been made conscious of their folly in them: they seem to be weary of their sins, and to repent of them; but they soon shake off the conviction, and return to them with more greediness than ever. Do any feel disgusted at the allusion? Let them remember, that the emblem is far less filthy than the thing denoted by it: and that the whole race of animals does not afford any thing so debasing, as not to be far out-done by the excesses of libertines, and drunkards, and gluttons. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 12. If the sottish person above described, 'be not 'altogether insensible of his folly, nor refuse admonition; 'there is more hope of his amendment, than of his, who 'takes himself to be so wise and virtuous, that he despises 'his betters, and thinks himself above instruction.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 13—16. (*Notes*, xix. 24. xxii. 13.) 'He who 'hath no mind to labour, never wants pretences for his

s xix. 24.
* Or, *he is weary.*

15 The [s] slothful hideth his hand in *his* bosom; * it grieveth him to bring it again to his mouth.

t 12. xii. 15. 1 Pet. iii. 15.

16 The sluggard *is* [t] wiser in his own conceit, than seven men that can render a reason.

u xvii 11. xviii. 6, 7. xx 3. Luke xii. 14 2 Tim ii. 23, 24.
† *is enraged.*

17 ¶ He that [u] passeth by, *and* † meddleth with strife *belonging* not to him, *is like* one that taketh a dog by the ears.

‡ Heb. *flames*, or *sparks.*

18 As a mad *man*, who casteth ‡ firebrands, arrows, and death;

19 So *is* the man *that* deceiveth his neighbour, [x] and saith, Am not I in sport?

x x. 23. xiv. 9. xv. 21 2 Pet. ii. 13.
§ Heb. *Without wood.*

20 § Where no wood is, *there* the fire goeth out: [y] so where *there is* no ‖ talebearer, the strife * ceaseth.

y 22. xvi. 28 xxii. 10. Jam. iii. 6.
‖ Or, *whisperer.*
* Heb. *is silent.*

21 *As* [z] coals *are* to burning coals, and wood to fire; so *is* a contentious man to kindle strife.

z x. 12. xv. 13. xxix. 28. xxx. 33. 2 Sam xx. 1. 1 Kings xii. 2, 3. 20. Ps. cxx. 4.

22 The [a] words of a tale-bearer *are* as wounds, and they go down into the † innermost parts of the belly.

a xviii. 8. xx. 19. Ez xxii. 9.
† Heb *chambers.*

23 [b] Burning lips and a wicked heart *are like* a potsherd covered with silver dross.

b x. 18. 2 Sam. xx 9, 10. Ez. xxxiii. 31. Luke xxii. 47, 48.

24 He that hateth ‡ dissembleth with his lips, and layeth up deceit within him;

‡ Or, *is known.*

25 When [c] he § speaketh fair, [d] believe him not: for *there are* [e] seven abominations in his heart.

c Ps. xii. 2. xxviii. 3. Jer. ix. 2—8. Mic. vii. 5.
§ Heb. *maketh his voice gracious.*
d Jer. xii. 6. Matt. xxiv. 23.
e vi. 16 - 19.

26 ‖ *Whose* hatred is covered by deceit, his wickedness shall be shewed before the *whole* congregation.

‖ Or, *Hatred is covered in secret* Gen iv. 8. 1 Sam xviii. 17, 21. 2 Sam iii. 27, &c xiii. 22—28 Ps. lv. 21—23

27 Whoso [f] diggeth a pit shall fall therein: and he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him.

f xxviii. 10. Esth. vii. 10 Ps vii. 15, 16 ix. 15. x. 2 lvii. 6. Ec. x. 8.

28 A [g] lying tongue hateth *those that are* afflicted by it; and [h] a flattering mouth worketh ruin.

g John viii. 40. 44—49 x 32, 33. xv. 22—24.
h vi. 24 vii. 5. 21—23 xxix. 5. Luke xx 20, 21.

'idleness.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) Two words are used here, both of which are translated *lion*: but the former is generally supposed to signify a *most fierce and large lion.* Lions, however, are seldom to be met with in the streets: and are generally in their dens, when man is required to attend to his work. As the door moves *on*, but not *from*, its hinges; so the slothful move on, but not from, their beds: or, at best, they make no progress in any employment. The most needful exertion is grievous to them: ease is their chief good, the preservation of it for the present, is their chief wisdom: and whilst they sacrifice to this base end the interests of time and eternity, they foolishly deem themselves wiser than all those who render a reason why they should bestir themselves, and attend to their business and duty.

V. 17. To take a part in quarrels, in which men have no concern; or even zealously to interfere to settle disputes and litigations, where neither party is disposed to take their advice, is a great imprudence, and is sure to lead them into many difficulties. It is as if a man should seize a fierce dog by the ears as he passed him, by which he could expect no other than to be bitten: and it is hard to say, whether it would be safest to try to hold him, or to let him go.

V. 18, 19. A madman, without intentional malice, may do immense mischief in a very little time, by firing houses, or murdering those whom he meets; and it may be an entertainment for him. But he who, without the excuse of madness, diverts himself with imposing upon his neighbour, and leading him into errors, contentions, and trouble, merely that he may laugh at his distresses, is a man of a most mischievous disposition, and worthy of the severest punishment, or the closest confinement. The word rendered madman, seems to mean *one who feigns himself mad;* and then the propriety of the similitude would lie in the false pretences under which each of the persons did the mischief. One pretends to be mad; the other to be in jest; but this makes no amends to the injured party.

V. 20, 21. 'Look on him as an incendiary, that carries 'tales, and whispers false stories; and expel him from the 'family:—for as the fire will go out, if you take away the 'wood that feeds it; so will quarrels and contentions cease, 'when it is thrust out of doors that blows up the flame.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) (*Note*, xxii. 10.)

V. 22. (*Note*, xviii. 8.)

V. 23. A potsherd, when lacquered over with silver dross instead of lead, may appear valuable to ignorant people; but it is as worthless as ever, and more fitted for the purposes of imposition. Thus when men gloss over their malicious and selfish intentions with warm professions of affection, they become the more dangerous deceivers.—Some indeed interpret *burning lips*, to mean passionate and malicious language: but in that case, the potsherd appears without disguise.

V. 24—27. These verses seem to be connected together, and likewise with the preceding verse. 'He that 'harbours enmity in his heart, pretends friendship with 'his lips,' (or 'shall be discovered by his lips.') Do not credulously listen to his flatteries and professions of regard and esteem; (in which he will often overact his part;) for he conceals many base designs within. But wait a while, without committing thyself; and if his hatred be covered with deceit; his wickedness will ere long be publicly exposed: He will fall into the pit he hath bestowed pains to dig for thee, and be crushed by the stone which he meant to roll upon thee. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 28. Calumny is the offspring of malice, and an open declaration of enmity: and the slanderer, instead of pitying the man whom he hath wounded by his lies, becomes more inveterate in his hatred of him, through fear of being exposed, or feeling the weight of his vengeance. Yet the flatterer is the more dangerous character: his poison is more insinuating and unsuspected; and it tends to increase pride and to inflame the passions, and to prompt a man to

CHAP. XXVII.

Maxims against procrastination or carnal security, vain-glory, wrath, and envy, 1—4. Concerning reproof, contentment, steadiness, friendship, and prudence, 5—12. Against suretyship,

those undertakings, for which he is not qualified, and which prove ruinous to him.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—16.

When ungodly and unqualified men are advanced to authority, we are called on to prepare for correction, and to repent of our sins. But if our ways please God, we need not fear either the oppressor's iron rod, or the persecutor's impious anathema, or the enraged imprecations of those who delight in cursing. In such cases, let us hold our peace, keep on our way, and trust in the Lord; and then we shall be blessed in him, let who will menace, curse, or revile. The great God, that formed all things, will recompense such men, in due time, according to their folly and wickedness: and if the kings of the earth, instead of copying his example, and treating infidels and profligates with marked disapprobation, will caress and honour them, they will be sure to prove a hinderance and a detriment to all their undertakings: and what mischief they will do to others cannot be ascertained; for "as he that bindeth a "stone in a sling, so is he that giveth honour to a fool." It behooves every one to take warning, and not be "like "unto the horse, or mule, that have no understanding;" for then, severe discipline will be requisite, and great plagues remain for those that are obstinate in impiety. But whilst we follow after Wisdom ourselves, we shall constantly need her counsels how to behave towards foolish and impious men. In language which the superficial reader may perhaps deem contradictory, the divine Instructor marks out that line of conduct to us, which afterwards in human nature he most perfectly observed. The disciple of Christ, keeping his example in view, will never answer the impertinence, the boasts, the scoffs, or the blasphemies of fools, in such a manner as to become like unto them: but, keeping at a distance from wrath and railing, from levity and ostentation, and from a boisterous disdainful style or manner, he will know how to answer their folly with brevity and decision, so as to silence them and put them to shame, when they expect to triumph and be applauded; that they may neither be wise in their own conceit, nor deceive the ignorant by their empty but confident pretensions. But he that would attain to this useful endowment, must begin by practising what he has learned: otherwise the wisest and most pointed observations, will be as the unequal legs of the lame, or as a parable in the mouth of a fool: they will give those, against whom they are directed, an opportunity to retort, "Physician, heal thyself," and to call the attention of the hearers to the inconsistency of this or the other part of his conduct, with their own doctrine: thus they will only expose and wound himself; nay, it will turn to his condemnation, that he has not profited by his own preaching. Nor must this practice be a mere partial, or external matter: for until the love of sinful pleasures and advantages be mortified, and the love of God and holiness implanted in our hearts; we shall still be numbered amongst the foolish: and, notwithstanding convictions and partial reformations, shall be ready, when tempted, to return to folly, as the dog to his vomit. Pride also must be peculiarly guarded against: for it is evidenced by facts, that no careless, profligate, or ignorant unbeliever, is so hopeless as the man who is wise in his own conceit. Thus self-sufficient professors of evangelical doctrines, and pharisaical formalists, and philosophical infidels, are, of all other descriptions of men, the least likely to repent and obey the Gospel: and the instances of conversion are more unfrequent among them than among publicans and harlots; because they are more wise in their own conceit; and, thinking that they see, they are at rest in their ten-fold darkness. Nor are any persons more likely to be taken in this snare, than those who are slothful in the concerns of their souls. They take the most important matters upon trust, or are satisfied with a superficial inquiry: their sloth retains them in ignorance and error, and their ignorance fosters their self-conceit. Nay, they think themselves extremely wise, in having hit upon a method of quieting their consciences, without renouncing their ease, interest, or indulgence; and they ignorantly flatter themselves, that they know how to serve God and mammon, and to get to heaven without self-denial, striving, or labour. Some of this stamp exclaim, 'All this is *legal*, we must be saved by grace alone: 'why tell you us of diligence, obedience, and good works?' Others rest in a formal profession: they deny not that such and such things should be done; but there is always some lion in the way at the present. They cannot be quite at rest in their negligence: but they can no more find in their hearts to renounce it, than the sluggard can to leave his bed. They have a scanty round of outward observances, in which they move as the door on the hinges, but they get no further: they are ingenious at devising excuses for neglecting every duty which would cost them any thing; nay, they pride themselves in this ingenuity: they starve their souls, because they will not bestow pains to feed them, though the Bread of life is set before them: and yet though their conduct be so irrational and ruinous, they will deem themselves wiser than all that would teach them better; and will be offended with every one who refuses to flatter them in this fond conceit of themselves.

V. 17—28.

True wisdom is always attended with humility and diligence: and it will direct a man in the most difficult circumstances. He who truly seeks this gift from God, by fervent prayers, will know when to attempt the blessed work of a peace-maker, and when to stand aloof from contentions which do not belong to him. He will be far from deceiving or injuring any one, and then saying, "am I not in sport?" For it is diabolical to delight in mischief: it is the part of a mad-man to cast about fire-brands, arrows, and death: and they, who tell lies to

lavish commendations, and domestic discord, 13—16. *Concerning industry, the conformity of one man's heart to another's; insatiable desires, the effects of praise, and the obstinacy of fools,* 17—22. *And recommending diligence, good management, and rural plenty,* 23—27.

a Ps. xcv. 7. Is. lvi. 12. Luke xii 19, 20. 2 Cor. vi. 2. Jam. iv. 13—16.
* Heb. *to-morrow day.*
b 1 Sam. xxviii. 19.

BOAST not thyself of * to-morrow; b for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.

2 Let c another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips.

3 A stone *is* † heavy, and the sand weighty: d but a fool's wrath *is* heavier than them both.

4 Wrath *is* ‡ cruel, and anger *is* outrageous; e but who *is* able to stand before ϕ envy?

5 Open f rebuke *is* better than secret love.

c xxv. 27. 2 Cor. x. 12. 18. xii. 11.
† Heb. *heaviness.*
d xvii. 12. Gen. xxxiv. 25, 26. xlix. 7. 1 Sam. xxii. 18, 19. Esth. iii. 5, 6. Dan. iii. 19. 1 John iii. 12.
‡ Heb. *cruelty and anger, an overflowing.* Jam. i. 19, 21.
e xiv. 30. Gen. xxvi. 14. xxxvii. 11. Job v. 2. Matt. xxvii. 18. Acts v. 17. *Marg.* vii. 9. xvii. 5. Rom. i. 29. Jam. iii. 14—16. iv. 5, 6.
ϕ Or, *jealousy.* vi. 34. Cant. viii. 6.
f xxviii. 23. Lev. xix. 17. Matt. xviii. 15. Gal. ii. 14. 1 Tim. v. 20.

make themselves merry, will easily be tempted to tell lies to make themselves *rich:* so that he who regards the word of God, will abhor all falsehood; but that most which is most mischievous. The lies of the tale-bearer will appear to him peculiarly aggravated: for little bickerings in families and neighbourhoods, would generally cease in a short time, did not these officious incendiaries, from direct love to contention, bring wood and coals, to kindle and keep up the fire. Thus their words are irreparably mischievous, and their characters completely odious. The Christian, no doubt, desires to hope the best of every one, as far as facts will admit of it: but his *candour* is not *folly;* he must judge of men by the general tenour of their conduct; and if they are evidently selfish, envious, or malicious, he cannot value their fulsome professions of affection, and the crafty dissimulation by which they cover over their wickedness, the deceit which is harboured within, and their purposes of hatred and malice. Indeed whatever is excessive is suspicious: and though Christians should be harmless as doves, they need to be wise as serpents; that they may not, by believing fair words, sanction or receive detriment from such, as have seven abominations in their hearts. For whilst the open calumniator is a bitter and cruel enemy, the insidious flatterer is still more to be dreaded and shunned; for he will stab a man as Joab did Amasa, whilst he salutes him, and betray him as Judas did Jesus, with a kiss. But let such men remember, that he whose hatred is covered with deceit, his wickedness will be showed before the assembled world: and they who devise mischief for others, will themselves be overwhelmed by it, and sink into it for ever.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXVII. V. 1. 'Be not so confident of thy 'present power, riches, or any thing else, as to grow pre-'sumptuous, and brag what thou wilt do or enjoy here-'after: for thou canst not be secure of this very day,—'which may produce something, for any thing thou know-'est, that shall spoil all thy designs, and frustrate all thy 'expectations, which thou hast for to-morrow.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) 'Delay not the time, but take the occasion when 'it is offered.' (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 2. (*Note,* xxv. 27.) 'Be not so blinded by self-love 'as to praise thyself: but take care to do praise-worthy 'things, which will force commendation even from stran-'gers and foreigners.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 3. 'What is heavier than lead? and what is the 'name of it but a fool? Sand and salt, and a mass of iron, 'is easier to bear, than a man without understanding.' (*Ecclesiasticus.*) (*Note,* xxix. 9.) The effects of a foolish and wicked man's ungoverned rage are more intolerable than the heaviest burden, or the hardest labour.

V. 4. Violent passion and deep resentment are often very cruel and outrageous, and produce dreadful effects; yet the one is soon over; and the other may be mollified by prudent concessions and repeated favours: but envy is excited, (not by affronts or misconduct, but,) by the too conspicuous talents or performances of one who is considered as a competitor; by the praises bestowed on him, and the favour shown him; and the more wisely and well the envied person behaves, the more will envy increase in the breast of his jealous rival. There is therefore little to be done to abate its force, and there is no standing against it, when the envious person is in authority: and it is often best to retire out of the reach of its effects, as David did from the envy of Saul. The original word for *envy* is often rendered *jealousy:* and the passion is the same, though the object or occasion be different. It is a spirit of rivalship, or competition, either for the favour of an individual, or for public applause, or some other object; mingled with haughty indignation, malignity, and enmity, at being supplanted, undervalued, and eclipsed; or envenomed suspicions that this is the case, or fears that it will soon become so. When the word is used concerning God, it denotes his holy *zeal* for the honour of his own name, and determination to punish those who give his glory to another. It is therefore often translated *zeal,* and then it is either a fervent regard for the glory of God, shown in a holy manner consistent with love to all men; or a proud and eager desire of a man's own honour or that of his party, manifested with bitterness, adopting unhallowed means of securing success, and thus degenerating into envy of the worst kind; even such as instigated the crucifiers of Christ, and the antichristian persecutors of his church in subsequent ages; and as excites fierce controversies, base slanders, and deep-rooted malice, between bigots and zealots of different descriptions.

V. 5. Plain and faithful rebukes, prudently given, are better effects of friendship, than that excessive tenderness and respect, which connives at a man's faults, for fear of paining or offending him: so that open rebuke is not only preferable to secret enmity; but even to secret love, which in this respect is of no real service to the beloved person.

V. 6. The skilful and faithful surgeon wounds, in order to preserve life, or recover the patient. He pains by

6 Faithful *are* [g] the wounds of a friend; but [h] the kisses of an enemy *are* * deceitful.

7 The [i] full soul † loatheth an honeycomb; but [k] to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet.

8 As [l] a bird that wandereth from her nest, so *is* a [m] man that wandereth from his place.

9 [n] Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: [o] so *doth* the sweetness of a man's friend by ‡ hearty counsel.

10 Thine [p] own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not; [q] neither go into thy brother's house in the day of thy calamity: *for* [r] better *is* a neighbour *that is* near, than a brother far off.

11 My son, [s] be wise, and make my heart glad, [t] that I may answer him that reproacheth me.

12 A [u] prudent *man* foreseeth the evil, *and* hideth himself: *but* the simple pass on, *and* are punished.

13 ¶ Take [x] his garment that is surety for a stranger, and take a pledge of him for a strange woman.

g 2 Sam xii. 7, &c. Job v 7, 18 Ps. cxli 5 Heb xii. 10. Re. iii. 19.
h x. 18. xxvi 23—26 2 Sam. xx. 9. Matt xxvi. 48—50.
* Or *earnest*, or *frequent*.
i Num xi. 4—9. 18—20 xxi. 5.
† Heb *treadeth underfoot*.
k Job vi 7 Luke xv. 16, 17 John vi. 9.
l Job xxxix 14—16. Is. xvi. 2.
m xxi 16 Gen. iv. 16 xvi. 6—8.
n 1 Sam. xxii. 5. xxvii. 1, &c. 1 Kings xix. 9. Neh vi 11—13. Jon . 3. 10—17. 1 Cor. vii 20. Jude 13 ——— n vii 17. Judg. ix. 9 Ps xlv. 7, 8. civ. 15. cxxxiii. 2 Cant. i 3. iii 6. iv 10 John xii 3. 2 Cor. ii 15, 16. ——— o xv 23. xvi. 21. 23, 24. Ex. xviii. 17—24 1 Sam. xxiii 16, 17 Ezra x. 2—4. Acts xxviii. 15. ——— ‡ Heb. *from the counsel of the soul*
p 2 Sam. xix. 24. 28. xxi. 7 1 Kings xii. 6—8. 2 Chr xxiv. 22. Is. xli. 8—10. Jer. ii. 5.
q xix. 7. Job vi. 21—23. Ob. 12—14.
r xvii. 17. xviii 24. Luke x. 30—37. Acts xxiii. 12. 23, &c.
s x. 1. xv. 20. xxiii. 15, 16 24, 25. Ec. ii. 18—21. Philem. 7. 19, 20 3 John 4.
t Ps. cxix. 42. cxxvii. 4, 5.
u xviii. 10 xxii. 3. Ex. ix 20. 21. Is. xxvi 20, 21. Mat. iii 7 Heb. vi. 18 xi. 7. 2 Pet. iii 7. 10 14.
x vi 1—4. xx. 16. xxii 26, 27. Ex. xxii. 26.

cutting; but he never cuts wider or deeper than he judges necessary. Such is the conduct of the faithful, affectionate, and discreet reprover: such are the corrections of our heavenly Friend. But the flatterer and false friend, who cloaks his malice under the language and demeanor of excessive love, only aims to deceive and ruin us. The latter clause is variously rendered. 'The kisses of him that 'hates are *frequent*.' They "are *to be deprecated*." 'We 'had need to pray him to forbear, and pray God to pre-'serve us from being too credulous.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) 'They are *pleasant*.' (*Old Translation.*) Expressions of kindness, though excessive, are so agreeable, that most men prefer them to plain-dealing: so that the fulsome flatterer is generally caressed as a friend, and the faithful reprover shunned as an enemy; to the unspeakable detriment of mankind.

V. 7. Abundance and excess spoil the appetite, and prevent the luxurious from relishing any of their delicacies. But he who labours hard, and fares meanly, and eats not till he is hungry, relishes the most unsavoury morsel; which gives poverty an advantage, as to real enjoyment, almost sufficient to counter-balance all its disadvantages.—In like manner the proud and self-sufficient disdain the provisions of the Gospel; but "the poor in spirit," and "they who hunger and thirst after righteousness," can find much comfort from every part of the word of God, and from the meanest book, or sermon, which accords to it.

V. 8. The bird that forsakes its nest, leaves the place where it had found repose, warmth, and shelter, and thus is exposed to various hardships and dangers. Thus every man has his proper place in society, in which he may be safe and comfortable: but when, out of levity, discontent, avarice, or ambition, he rashly quits it, he generally changes imaginary for real disquietudes. In like manner, they who are never easy at home, and in their own families and employments, seldom prosper, or are happy any where: and they who affect to appear like their superiors, generally bring themselves into difficulties. There may be cases, in which it is a man's duty and prudence to change his situation, or employment, but then he will do it upon good grounds, and with deliberation. Every man hath calls from home; but a prudent man will be glad to return, when the end of his absence is effected. But an unsettled, roving, dissatisfied spirit; a turn for scheming and shifting from one place or undertaking to another; an aversion to a man's own situation or business, are extremely dangerous and sinful.

V. 9. The affectionate and faithful counsel of a cordial friend is more refreshing to a man in trouble, than any ointment or perfumes could be to his senses. The verse, however, has been rendered, perhaps more literally, "As "ointment and perfume gladden the heart; so the sweet-"ness of a friend, *does every one*, more than hearty coun-"sel." An affectionate manner, though of less intrinsic value, is so generally more acceptable than the most prudent and sincere good advice, given rudely, that in order to do good, *the sweetness of the manner*, as well as *the integrity and faithfulness of the intention*, and *the wisdom of the counsel*, should be carefully attended to.

V. 10. It is generally most advisable to cultivate the friendship of those who have shown themselves attached to a man by inclination and esteem; and of those who have been the friends of his father and family. Such are generally more to be depended on in trying circumstances, than the nearest relations. And indeed, prudent, pious, and honest men may expect to obtain friends in the neighbourhood where they live; who are nearer at hand, and more ready to assist than relations, who perhaps are as far off in affection as in their places of abode. 'As a man that 'is closely joined to us in affection, is better than one of our 'nearest kindred, whose heart is not knit to us: so a neigh-'bour near at hand, is better than either friend or brother, 'who is so far off that we may perish before he come to our 'assistance.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) "God is a present Help in "time of trouble:" but saints and angels, to whom numbers pray, must as to most of them, be, at best, the friend or brother that is far off.

V. 11. This may be intended as the address of an affectionate parent to his son; whose prudent conduct would both gladden his heart, and furnish him with an answer to those who reproached him as negligent of the duties of that relation. But "Wisdom also is justified of her children," from the reproaches of her enemies: and the good conduct of professed Christians supplies the most effectual answer to those who reproach the Gospel as tending to licentiousness.

V. 12. (*Note*, xxii. 3.)

V. 13. (*Note*, xx. 16.)

V. 14. Excessive commendations, and professions of gratitude and friendship, are always to be suspected as insincere and selfish. They are also of bad consequence:

14 He [y] that blesseth his friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, it shall be counted a curse to him.

15 A [z] continual dropping in a very rainy day, and a contentious woman, are alike.

16 Whosoever hideth her hideth the wind, and [a] the ointment of his right hand, *which* bewrayeth *itself*.

17 [b] Iron sharpeneth iron; [c] so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.

18 Whoso [d] keepeth the fig-tree shall eat the fruit thereof: [e] so he that waiteth on his master [f] shall be honoured.

19 As [g] in water face *answereth* to face; so the heart of man to man.

20 [i] Hell and destruction are * never full; [k] so the eyes of man are never satisfied.

y 2 Sam. xv. 2–7. xvi 16–19. xvii. 7–13. 1 Kings xxii. 6. 13, 14. Jer. xxviii. 2–4. Acts xii. 22, 23.
z xix 13. xxi. 9. 19. xxv. 24. Job xiv. 19.
a John xii. 3.
b 1 Sam. xiii. 20, 21.
c 9. Josh. i. 18. ii. 24. 1 Sam. xi. 9, 10. xxiii. 16. 2 Sam. x. 11, 12. Job iv. 2, 4. Is xxxv 3, 4 1 Thes iii. 3, 4. 2 Tim. i. 8. 12 ii. 3. 9–13. Heb. x. 24. Jam. i 2. 1 Pet. iv. 12, 13.
d Cant. viii. 12. 1 Cor ix. 7
e xvii. 2 xxii 29. Gen. xxiv. 2, 3. xxxix. 2–5 22, 23. Ex. xxiv. 13. 2 Kings iii. 11. v. 2, 3 25. 27 Acts x. 7
f 1 Sam ii. 30. Ps. cxxiii. 2. Matt xxiv. 45, 46. xxv. 21, 22. Luke xii. 37. 43, 44. John xii 26.
g Jam. i. 22–25.
h Gen. vi. 5. Ps. xxxiii. 15. Mark vii. 21
i xxx. 15, 16. Hab. ii. 5.——* Heb *not*.——k xxiii. 5. Ec i. 8. ii 10, 11. v. 10, 11. vi. 7. Jer. xxii. 17. 1 John ii. 16.

they put a man off his guard, and tend to give force to his passions; and they excite envy, and set men to hunt after his faults, that they may blacken that character which is enhanced so much above their level. So that he who makes it his great business, (as if he rose early in the morning for that single purpose,) to lavish praises on any one whom he calls his friend or benefactor; and who bestows pains to proclaim his excellencies and bounty to every body, will not be looked upon by a wise man much more favourably than if he had traduced or cursed him: nay, he will think the friendship of so injudicious or designing a man, a disgrace rather than an honour to him.—Some interpret the clause, "rising early in the morning," of too great haste in lavishly commending. 'There is 'nothing more dangerous than to cry up men too soon, 'before they be sufficiently tried: for this, instead of 'doing them service, many times proves their ruin.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 15, 16. (xix. 13.) Litigious neighbours sometimes excite contentions, which resemble a hasty shower that is soon over: but a contentious wife is as the constant dropping through a decayed roof in a very rainy day: so that a man can neither keep himself dry out of doors nor in the house. The utmost meekness and prudence will be found, in such a case, insufficient to conceal her unseemly behaviour: however a man might be disposed to connive at, or hide, her faults, her own unruly temper will betray them, and render their disagreements the common topic of conversation: even as it is impossible to conceal the boisterous wind; and as the fragrancy of the ointment would make him known, who had anointed his hands with it, whatever pains he took to hide it. 'The best way for a man to avoid the 'trouble of a bad wife is, not to choose one for his consort, 'because she is rich, or because she is beautiful only; but 'because she is like him in humour, inclination, and condition,' &c. (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 17. Iron is often most effectually used to sharpen iron: and thus friends or correspondent dispositions whet each other's ingenuity; suggest useful hints and good counsels; encourage one another against despondency, and excite such as grow slack: and thus they help one another forward in every useful attempt. (*Marg. Ref.*) The advantages of society and conversation are thus emphatically shown. Indeed it has been observed, that the most useful inventions have originated from the collision of men's thoughts, when earnestly engaged in conversation.

V. 18. The labour of planting and pruning the fig-tree, is recompensed by the sweet fruit that it yields: thus menial servants may obtain solid reputation and advantage, by attending diligently to the duties of their situation, though obscure and laborious. 'He that faithfully defends 'his master's person or reputation, and takes care his estate is not wasted, shall in due time be largely rewarded.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 19. The reflection from the clear water or mirror corresponds to the face of him that looks in it: thus do the hearts of men to each other. The judgments, dispositions, desires, and imaginations of sinners, are much the same; or only varied by constitution, habit, education, and rank in life. Godly people are very much of the same judgment and disposition, as to the main things, in proportion to their degree of grace and information. The opposition between conscience and inclination is much the same in one wicked man as in another; except as some are more ignorant, or more hardened than others. The conflict betwixt corrupt nature and grace is similar in all believers; and their varying joys, sorrows, hopes, fears, and other experiences, have a surprising coincidence: so that he who well knows and watches his own heart, will not greatly be a stranger to those of other men; but will often so speak to their secret thoughts and purposes, that he will appear to have received some special information about them. In order then to know human nature, we should first study our own hearts, in all the variety of situations in which we are successively placed. This proverb, however, is variously interpreted: 'As a man may know what kind of face he 'hath, if he will look into the water: so he may know what 'kind of man he is, if he will examine his conscience.' (*Castalio.*) This is an important instruction: but it does not seem the sense of the maxim. 'A man may see himself, while he looks upon other men, as well as know 'other men by considering his own inclination.' (*Lord Bacon's interpretation stated by Bp. Patrick.*) Indeed this seems the true interpretation, provided another idea be suggested. 'There is no difference between man and 'man by nature; but only the grace of God maketh the 'difference.'

V. 20. The grave still yawns to receive the bodies of men, though it has devoured innumerable millions; and the place of separate spirits for their souls: nay, the pit of destruction is still open to receive the wicked. Thus insatiable are the senses, appetites, and hearts of men: curiosity, thirst for novelty, variety, and ornament; covetousness, ambition, sensuality, even blood-thirstiness, are all insatiable, and grow more craving by indulgence: they still devour, and demand more and more. (xxx. 15, 16.)

xvii. 3 Ps xii. 6. lxvi. 10 Zech. xiii. 9 Mal. iii. 3. 1 Pet. i 7. iv 12. m 1 Sam. xviii. 7, 8. 15, 16. 30. 2 Sam xiv. 25. xv. 6, &c. n xxiii 35. Ex xii. 30. xiv 5. xv. 9. 2 Chr xxviii. 22, 23. Is i 5. Jer. v. 3. xliv. 15, 16. Rev. xvi. 10, 11. o Gen. xxxi. 38—40. xxxiii. 13. 1 Sam. xvii. 28. 1 Chr. xxvii 29—31. 2 Chr xxvi. 10. Ez xxxiv. 22—24. 31. John xxi. 15—17. 1 Pet v. 2.

21 *As* [i] the fining pot for silver, and the furnace for gold; [m] so *is* a man to his praise.

22 Though [n] thou shouldest bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, *yet* will not his foolishness depart from him.

23 ¶ Be thou [o] diligent to know the state of thy flocks, *and* * look well to thy herds.

24 [p] For † riches *are* not for ever: and [q] doth the crown *endure* to every ‡ generation?

25 The [r] hay appeareth, and the tender grass sheweth itself, and herbs of the mountains are gathered.

26 The [s] lambs *are* for thy clothing, and the goats *are* the price of the field:

27 And *thou shalt have* goat's milk [t] enough for thy food, for the food of thy household, and *for* the § maintenance for thy maidens.

* Heb. *set thy heart.* xxiv. 32 *Marg.* Ex. vii. 23. Deut. xxxii. 46——p xxiii. 5. Zeph i. 18. 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18.——r Heb. *strength*

q 2 Sam. vii. 16. Ps. lxxxix. 36. Is ix. 7. ‡ Heb. *generation and generation.* r x. 5. Ps. civ. 14. s Job xxxi. 20. t xxx. 8, 9. Matt. vi 33 § Heb. *life.*

V. 21. The characters of men may be in some measure known, by considering what sort of persons most commend them: but more decidedly by observing the effects which praise produces on them. If a man, when greatly applauded, grow insolent and assuming; if he affect state, and become negligent or above his work; and be disappointed and peevish when not commended; and if this be *habitual* to him, it proves him to be dross, which will not endure the furnace. But if applause render a man more circumspect in his walk, and diligent in his duty: if he remain contented in his former situation, and easy in performing obscure services: if he continue modest in his deportment, and affable to men of low estate; and if this appear unaffected and habitual, it marks him gold: and he who can endure this furnace, and grow purer in it, will not be injured by any other. There are many degrees between the two extremes; and a man's character must rise or fall, in the judgment of wise men, according as he approaches to one or the other of them.

V. 22. The straw and chaff may be separated from the wheat by threshing and winnowing; nay, the husks may be beaten off, by braying it in a mortar: but no afflictions, or punishments, however severe, will cure a hardened and impious profligate of his folly and wickedness. His heart and life are all of a piece, and no human power can make any separation. They who argue that the miseries of hell will mend the disposition of impenitent sinners, and prepare them for a release, should consider this proverb carefully: and they should remember, that the new-creating power of God's grace is alone effectual to produce this change; and that the torments of hell are never mentioned among the appointed means of grace.

V. 23—27. These verses recommend the advantages of private life; and show that diligence in rural employments, and the plenty which is obtained by it, are more conducive to true happiness, than the unstable and uneasy, though splendid, possessions of wealth and authority. Riches are very precarious, and kingdoms are often transferred from one family to another. But he who hath an estate, or farm, in the country, and diligently attends to it, will see his provisions springing out of the earth to repay his toil, and sensibly coming from the hand of God. He will have suitable and sufficient food and raiment, for himself, and his family, and domestics: and though it be homely and frugal, it will be wholesome and comfortable; and attended with little care, risk, or temptation. And he who is thus provided for, and has a contented mind, needs not, and will not, envy the king on his throne, being far safer and happier than he.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—12.

In this uncertain world we "know not what a day may "bring forth." We may be deprived of our limbs, senses, faculties, or lives, or experience the most distressing changes in our circumstances and connexions, before another day be gone. We should never then presume upon to-morrow; or boast what we will be, or do, hereafter; or postpone any needful work to a future time. Numbers have perished through procrastination; numbers, with declining faculties, and drawing near the close of life, have lamented their lost opportunities of usefulness. Whilst "the simple pass on, and are punished" for their neglect of the one thing needful; every prudent man will foresee these and similar evils, and take proper measures to avoid them. And as life is so short and fleeting; and our present conduct has so intimate a connexion with our eternal condition, it is inconsistent with true wisdom to spend our time and thoughts in devising needless changes in our outward condition; or to wander from our proper place and business, in pursuit of imaginary advantages. Rather let us seek to the Lord to give us a contented mind, in the situation which he hath assigned us, and a heart to delight in our present duty: that, having chosen him for our Portion, and being humbly sensible how much our comforts exceed our deservings: and applying ourselves diligently to the business of our station, we may be able to get rid of all roving desires. In order to this, counsel, and even rebuke, is often necessary: (even as medicines and surgical operations, though nauseous and painful, are for our bodies;) and they should be considered as the most disinterested and valuable friends, who venture our displeasure, by faithfully seeking our highest and most durable good. Indeed no wise and cordial friends will "suffer sin upon us," by neglecting this needful proof of love: in their better judgment they know it to be salutary; and though it wounds, and pains, yet "faithful "are the wounds of a friend;" and *afterwards at least*, all sound characters will be better pleased with it, than with the reserved and less cordial affections of those who would have left them to go on in their errors and sins. They who have such friends as these (and the pious children of pious parents will generally be so favoured,) should be very careful not to forsake or lose them: and it is much wiser to endeavour, by good behaviour, to attach those who may be ready to help us in trouble from genuine affection, than to apply to rich relations, in whom the tie of blood is seldom so powerful as regard to interest. In every case

CHAP. XXVIII.

Maxims, concerning faith, piety, integrity, charity, humility, industry, and fidelity; against oppression, usury, iniquity, hypocrisy, pride, violence, covetousness, bribery, flattery, robbery of parents, and self-confidence, 1—28.

we should endeavour to win upon the esteem of all around us; and to shun envy, as much as we can consistently with our duty. It is very easy to create ourselves enemies, and to exasperate them; but it is more difficult to pacify their wrath, which is often cruel and outrageous in its effects. We ought not indeed to desire the friendship of foolish and wicked men: yet we should be very careful not to provoke them; for, not being to be mollified by concessions, or convinced by arguments, their wrath will be found more heavy than the sand, or the ponderous rock, and will bear down all before it. But envy is still more malignant, being rendered more vehement by that very wisdom and goodness, which tend to disarm every other species of resentment. We must not, however, cease to act wisely, or to do good, in order to avoid even envy: but we should shun ostentation and competition: and whilst we study to behave in such a manner, that strangers, and all impartial persons, may be constrained to applaud our good works; we should not only not praise ourselves, but not even needlessly mention our services, or fish for commendation. But, alas! high commendations and warm professions of affection, though nothing is done to prove them sincere, are almost universally more welcome than plain-dealing, even when attended by the most indisputable proofs of genuine and cordial friendship. The ointment and perfume, the sweetness of the manner, even in a flatterer, and one not credited as sincere, outweighs in the scales of human intercourse, the solid bullion of cordial friendship in an uncouth garb, and hearty counsel not gracefully imparted. In like manner, who almost is able to rise above the fascinating impositions of the world? Who can help estimating men's happiness by their wealth and prosperity? Yet the single indisputable fact, that "the full soul loatheth the honey-comb; but to "the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet," is sufficient, even as to present enjoyment, to subvert that whole system, and to make the sated epicure envy the neighbouring indigent but healthy cottager.

V. 13—27.

It becomes a Christian to shun all indiscreet connexions and engagements; and especially to stand aloof from those who run themselves into difficulties by extravagant expenses and vicious indulgences. Indeed, few are more lavish in praising their imprudent benefactors, or rather the dupes of their artifices, than these unhappy men are; so long as further supplies are hoped for: but none more severe in their sarcasms and calumnies, when the patience of their friends is exhausted, and they can no longer be imposed on. But, in all cases, we should be very shy of those friends, real or pretended, who are very loud and lavish in their commendations and professions; remembering that the kisses of an enemy are deceitful. And if they do not mean ill, their excessive praise is disgraceful to us, if we show ourselves pleased with it and with them; and exposes us to envy and hatred. But here a distinction will appear, between the man possessed of superficial endowments, and him who has attained unto solid wisdom and piety. The former, when commendations are bestowed, will grasp for more, and often vainly think of extorting them by his exorbitant demands: and he will aspire after the highest places, and become overbearing, in proportion to his popularity or reputation. But the humble Christian will not crowd sail on such a treacherous gale of favour; he will fear, and provide against a storm: he will be more careful to deserve, than to receive commendation: he will yield to those who appear disposed to vie with him, and recede from every pretension which may excite envy or give umbrage. Indeed he will desire to behave in such a manner, as to be a credit and comfort to his friends and family; and to adorn the Gospel, and "by well-doing to "put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:" but he will not be a zealous candidate for reputation of any kind. It is enough to pass through life quietly and usefully: we should therefore watch against those malignant passions in ourselves, as well as against their effects in others. We should pray that we may be, and feel thankful if we are, preserved from the grief and disgrace of domestic contests: and we should seek for patience to bear every affliction which the Lord may lay upon us, in a proper manner. Whatever our trials may be, by waiting on our great and gracious Master, we shall find solace and support; and in due time we shall be honoured. In this frame of mind, he who diligently tends his flocks and herds; or takes care of the fig-tree or olive-yard; or is faithful as a servant or labourer, and abides in his calling, because it is the will of God, will be accepted of him in all he does: he will be a useful and respectable member of the community; his real wants will be supplied, and incentives to pride, luxury, and excess will be mercifully withheld; and he will escape manifold snares and temptations to which his superiors are exposed. Nor is it an empty boast, that such a man has a more solid and stable enjoyment of life, than the king upon his throne, or the richest of his subjects: for he hath less uncertainty and anxiety; and fewer fears, cares, and enemies than they. So very vain are earthly possessions, except as they are employed to do good with! The friendship and esteem also, which men in private stations obtain by good behaviour, are far more desirable, than the encomiums and professions that accompany wealth and power. Piety, integrity, and prudence produce reciprocal and sincere affection. Friends, thus united, sharpen one another in every good work; they are cordial, pleasant, and experimental counsellors to each other; they share each other's comforts, and soften each other's sorrows, by tender sympathy. But we might as reasonably expect to fill hell and destruction, till they could hold no more, as to satisfy the heart of man with created good, when nothing but the enjoyment of God himself for ever can fill the capacities and desires of our rational nature. Happy then are they, and only they, who trust in him and love him. But there always have been numbers, who receive no benefit from the greatest mercies, or from afflictions, however sharp and tedious; and who continue the plague and scandal of all

THE [a] wicked flee when no man pursueth: but [b] the righteous are bold as a lion.

2 For [c] the transgression of a land many *are* the princes thereof: [d] but * by a man of understanding *and* knowledge the state *thereof* shall be prolonged.

3 A [e] poor man that oppresseth the poor, *is like* a sweeping rain † which leaveth no food.

4 They [f] that forsake the law praise the wicked; [g] but such as keep the law contend with them.

5 [h] Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the LORD understand all *things*.

a Lev. xxvi. 17 36. Deu. xxviii. 7. 25. 2 Kings vii 6, 7. 15 Ps. liii. 5 Is. vii. 2. Jer xx. 4.
b Ex xi. 8 Ps. xxvii. 1, 2 xlvi 2, 3 cxii. 7 Is. xxvi. 3, 4. Dan. iii. 16—18. vi. 10, 11. Acts iv. 13. xiv. 3. 1 Thes ii. 2.
c 1 Kings xv. 25. 28. xvi. 8—29. 2 Kings xv 8—31. 2 Chr xxxvi. 1—12. Is iii. 1—7. Hos xiii. 11.——d Gen. xlv. 5—8. 2 Chr. xxxii. 20—26 Job xxii 28—30. Ec ix 15. Is. lviii 12 Dan iv. 27 ——* Or. *by men of understanding* and *wisdom shall they likewise be prolonged*.——e Matt xviii 28- 30

† Heb. *without food.*
f 1 Sam. xxiii. 19—21. Ps x. 5. xlix. 18. Jer. i. 30, 31. Mal. iii. 15. Acts xii 22. xxiv 2—4 Rom. i. 32. 1 John iv. 5.
g 1 Sam. xv. 14—24. xxii. 14, 15. 1 Kings xviii. 18. xx 41, 42. xxi. 19, 20. xxii. 19—28 2 Kings iii. 13, 14 Neh. v. 7. &c xiii. 8—11 17—20. 23—26. 28. Matt. iii. 7. xiv. 4. Acts xv. 2. xix. 9 Gal. ii. 3—6. Eph. v. 11. 1 Thes. ii 2 Jude 3.——h xv 24 xxiv 7. Ps xxv 14. xcii. 6. Ter. iv. 22. Mark iv. 10—13. John vii. 17 1 Cor. ii. 14. 15. Jam. i 5. 1 John ii 20 27.

related to them, till they are driven away in their wickedness. As our hearts, by nature, answer to their's exactly, we have the more cause to be thankful, if the Lord hath made us to differ by his grace; and we should pity and pray for those who are yet left to themselves. Finally, let us apply ourselves to the instructive study of human nature; by carefully watching our own hearts; and comparing them with the word of God, and the state of the world and the church around us. Thus we shall learn how to answer every one, and behave to every one, as his character and circumstances require.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXVIII. V. 1. Wicked men often appear very courageous: and when they are heated with wine, or excited by resentment, ambition, or other vehement passions, they face danger with great intrepidity: nay, they may have an habitual mechanical courage, so long as reflection is excluded, and the conscience is stupified through ignorance, error, inattention, or excess. Yet when any thing arouses the consciousness of guilt, and the thoughts of a future reckoning, their courage fails, and they become exceedingly timorous: and many of them experience those terrors which they would be ashamed to acknowledge; especially when they are sick, or in solitude. But the upright Christian, whose sins are pardoned, and whose conscience is at peace, is most bold when most cool and reflecting: a sudden alarm may discompose him exceedingly; but let him have time for recollection, faith, and prayer, and his courage gathers strength; and the feeblest true believer will not be *finally* terrified from his duty, by the frown of a tyrant, or the menace of a fiery furnace, as the examples of the martyrs abundantly show.

V. 2. 'The state of the commonwealth is oftentimes 'changed.' Either many rival princes, whose discordant claims desolate the land by civil wars; or many in quick succession, being cut off by traitors and usurpers, one after another, or removed before any thing can be brought to an establishment. Compare the history of Israel, after the revolt of the ten tribes, with that of Judah under the princes of David's line: and read the history of Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jotham, Hezekiah, and Josiah, as the best comment on the latter part of the verse.

V. 3. Extravagant spendthrifts, who have reduced themselves to poverty, and involved themselves in debt, often make interest to get into places of trust and authority; and then their oppression, (the result of poverty, rapacity, and profusion,) resembles an inundation, which entirely desolates the country, and leaves the wretched inhabitants not the least subsistence. In various ways indigent persons obtain opportunities of oppressing the poor; and their extortion is more absolute and unfeeling than that of a richer man, who would not think such petty gains worthy his notice, as the needy oppressor stoops to. A succession of indigent governors and officers in remote provinces, who know that their time will be short, and are determined to make the most of it; and who deem themselves secure from justice, by the distance of the place, and the power of bribing high, which they purchase by extortion, often give a melancholy comment on this proverb, and a wretched demonstration of the impolicy and iniquity of preferring such men. The ancients expressed the sense of this proverb under the fable of two horse-leeches, one full, and the other hungry. And by two sponges, one wet and the other dry. 'The 'parable comprehends in it a profitable instruction, both 'to princes and people: to princes, that they commit not 'the government of provinces, or places of charge, to in-'digent and indebted persons; and to the people, that they 'suffer not their kings to struggle with too much want.' (*Lord Bacon.*)

V. 4. Wicked men excuse one another's faults, and extol one another's supposed virtues, in order to keep themselves in countenance, and their own consciences in peace. But upright men, who want no such apologies, will not make them for others. They would candidly allow of what is good, and make the best of what is dubious: but they cannot call scandalous vices by soft names, nor give those a good character who are evidently wicked; nay, they deem themselves bound to protest against iniquity, and to use all their power to check its progress.

V. 5. Men's unbridled passions and wicked actions pervert their judgments and cloud their understandings, till they "call evil good and good evil:" so that they are not able to know right from wrong, when their own conduct or interest is concerned. But he who seeks the favour, and desires to do the will, of God, will be led into the knowledge of all useful truth. 'They that are true-hearted 'to God, and conscionable in their ways, have so much 'light from God's Spirit, that they know both what they 'should do, and how they should perform it. (*Bp. Hall.*) (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 6. (*Note*, xix. 1.) 'A poor man, walking in truth, 'is better than the rich man of a lie,' or, 'a rich liar.' (*Septuagint.*)

V. 7. The young man who obeys God, by obeying his parents in all things lawful, shows his wisdom: but he that spends his time and money in *feeding gluttons*, or *feasting epicures*, and in riotous living, does what he can to disgrace his father, as well as to show his own folly, and reduce himself to abject misery. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 8. (*Notes*, xiii. 22, 23. *Job* xxvii. 13—23.) Under the terms *usury and increase*, or unjust gain, all exactions and oppressions are meant. (*Note*, *Ex.* xxii. 25.)

6 [i] Better *is* the poor that walketh in his uprightness, than *he that is* perverse *in his* ways, though he *be* rich.

7 Whoso [k] keepeth the law *is* a wise son: [l] but he that * is a companion of riotous *men* shameth his father.

8 He [m] that by usury and † unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will [n] pity the poor.

9 He that [o] turneth away his ear from hearing the law, [p] even his prayer *shall be* abomination.

10 Whoso [q] causeth the righteous to go astray in an evil way, [r] he shall fall himself into his own pit: [s] but the upright shall have good *things* in possession.

11 The [t] rich man *is* wise in ‡ his own conceit; but [u] the poor that hath understanding searcheth him out.

12 When [x] righteous *men* do rejoice *there is* great glory: [y] but when the wicked rise a man is ◊ hidden.

13 He [z] that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but [a] whoso confesseth [b] and forsaketh *them* shall have mercy.

14 [c] Happy *is* the man that feareth alway: [d] but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief.

15 *As* [e] a roaring lion, [f] and a ranging bear; [g] *so is* a wicked ruler over the poor people.

16 The [h] prince that wanteth understanding *is* also a great oppressor: *but* [i] he that hateth covetousness shall prolong *his* days.

i 18. xvi 8. xix. 1 22 Luke xvi 19 29 Acts xxv. 24 27
k ii. 1 xc iii 1, &c
l 24 xix 26 xxiii 19—22 xxix 3. 15. Luke xv. 12. 30. 1 Pet iv 3, 4.
* Or *feedeth glutons.*
m xiii 22. Job xxvii 16, 17. Ec. ii 26.
† Heb *by increase.* Lev. xxv. 36. 37. Ez. xviii. 8. 13 17.
n xix. 17. 2 Sam. xii. 6.
o xxi 13. Is i.15, 16 lviii. 7—11. Zech. vii. 11—13. 2 Sam. iv 3, 4.
p xv. 8. Ps. lxvi. 18. cix. 7. Luke xiii. 25—27.
q Num xxxi. 15, 16. 1 Sam. xxvi. 19. Acts xiii. 8—10. Rom. xvi. 17, 18. 2 Cor xi. 3, 4. 13—15. Gal. i. 8, 9. ii 4. iii. 1—4. 2 Pet. ii 18—20
r Rev. ii 14.——r xxvi. 27. Ps. vii. 15, 16. ix 15 Ec. x. 8.——s x. 3. xv. 6. xxi 20. Deut vii 12—14. Ps xxxvii. 11 25, 26 Matt. vi. 33.——t xviii 11. xxiii. 4. Is. x. 13, 14 Ez. xxviii 3—5 Luke xvi. 13, 14. 1 Cor iii. 17, 18. 1 Tim vi. 17.——‡ *his eyes.* xxvi. 16. *Marg.* Is. v. 21. Rom. xi. 15. xii. 16.
u xviii. 17 xix 1 Job xxxii. 9 Ec ix 15—17
x 28 xi. 10. xxix. 2 1 Chr xv. 25—28 xvi. 7, &c xxix 20—22 2 Chr. vii 10. xxx. 22—27 Esth viii 15—17 Job xxix 11—20. Luke xix 37, 38.
y 1 Sam. xxiv. 11. 1 Kings xvii. 3, &c. xviii. 13, xix 3. Ec. x 9. Jer xxxvi. 26. Heb xi. 37. 38.
◊ Heb. *sought for.* Jer. v. 1
z x 12. xvii 9. Gen iii. 12, 13. iv. 9. 1 Sam. xv. 13. 24. Job xxxi. 33 Ps. xxxii. 3—5 Jer. ii. 22, 23. Matt. xxiii 25—28.
a Lev. xxvi 40—42. 1 Kings viii. 47—49. Job xxxiii. 27 Ps. li. 1—5. 10 Jer. iii 12. 13. Dan. ix. 20—23 Luke xv. 18—24 1 John i. 8—10.
b Ex. x. 16, 17 1 Sam. xv 30 Mat. iii 6—10. xxvii. 4, 5. Acts xxvi 20.——c xxiii 17. Ps. ii. 11. cxii. 1. Is lxvi 2 Jer. xxxii 40. Rom. xi 20. Heb. iv. 1 1 Pet i. 17.
d xxix. 1. Ex. vii 22, 23. xiv. 23, &c. Job ix 4 Rom. ii. 4, 5.——e xx 2 Hos v. 14. 1 Pet. v. 8——f xvii 12. 2 Kings ii. 24. Hos. xiii 8——g Ex. i. 14—16 22. 1 Sam. xxii. 17—19. 2 Kings xv. 16. xxi 16. Esth. iii. 6—10 Mat. ii. 16——h 1 Kings xii. 10, 11 14. Neh v. 15. Ec. iv. 1. Is. iii 12. Am. iv. 1.——i Ex. xviii. 21 Is xxxiii. 15, 16. Jer. xxii. 15—17.

V. 9. 'He that refuses to hearken unto God and obey 'his law, deceives himself, if he thinks by his prayers to 'please him, or to make amends for his crimes: for 'God will be so far from hearkening to him, that he will 'abominate such prayers, as tend to nothing but to make 'God a partner with him in his sins.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) Such prayer is not of faith: for that is grounded on God's word or law, which the wicked contemn. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 10. Ungodly men are often very zealous in enticing such as profess religion into sin or error. Thus they aim to keep themselves in countenance; they show their enmity to the truth, and find an occasion of treating it with ridicule and contempt; and in short, they are the factors of Satan, and inspired with his disposition. But their success is their misery, and will ensure their more aggravated condemnation: while such as are *upright in heart* will either withstand their temptations, or be recovered from the snare; and so *inherit good*, even eternal good.

V. 11. Rich men are so much complimented and flattered, and are so accustomed to have every thing their own way, that they are very apt to conceit themselves as much superior to others in understanding as in affluence: and this is especially the case with such as have risen from low stations to great riches; who are far most prone to be purse-proud. But wise and pious men readily discern their true character, through this external glare; and they will not make them their idols, oracles, or examples.

V. 12. When wise and righteous men are countenanced and preferred, it is greatly to the honour of the prince, and presages glorious times. But when wicked men rise to authority, the lives, estates, and liberties of men are endangered; and good men especially seek safety in obscurity and retirement. (28.)

V. 13. The man who denies, justifies, or excuses his crimes, through pride, impenitence, or hypocrisy, will continue under condemnation, and cannot possess any durable prosperity. But he, who condemns himself, and humbly confesses his sins, in true repentance and faith, and does works meet for repentance, shall find mercy from God, however aggravated his transgressions have been. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 14. (*Note*, 1.) Strength of faith and grace gives the zealous Christian deliverance, both from the dread of final misery, and from the fear of his fellow-creatures. But in proportion as he rises, in these respects, superior to enfeebling, distressing, and tormenting terrors; he learns more and more to reverence the majesty and glory of God; to fear even his fatherly rebukes and chastisements; to distrust his own heart; to watch against sin and temptation; to fear the effects of his own sinful passions; to walk circumspectly, as in a perilous way; and to dread, as the greatest of evils, whatever would dishonour God, and disgrace the Gospel. In these things "happy is he, that feareth "alway:" this will render his dependence simple, his prayers fervent, his conscience tender, his peace stable, his hope lively, and his conduct consistent. But the man, who is presumptuous and self-confident, and who hardens his heart against fears of every kind, shall fall into mischief.

V. 15, 16. A prince, who is intoxicated with power, and a slave to rapacity, resentment, ambition, or sensual lusts; and who uses his power to oppress the poor, whom he ought especially to protect, shows himself to be as impolitic and foolish as he is wicked. He becomes terrible to his defenceless subjects, as a roaring lion and ranging bear to the helpless cattle. He uses his reason merely to devise mischief; and in other respects he degrades himself to the level of those ravenous beasts, which act as impelled by instinct or appetite. And he will generally be hated as a common enemy, and slain without hesitation when opportunity offers. Whereas an upright and prudent prince, who is superior to covetousness, and other selfish passions, may hope to reign long and happily, having his throne erected in the affections of his subjects. The original word for *ranging* is translated *empty*, (*Is.* xxix. 8;) and is supposed here to mean *hungry*; as indeed wild beasts seldom range abroad, but when hungry; and the Septuagint trans-

17 A [k] man that doeth violence to the blood of *any* person, shall flee to the pit; let no man stay him.

18 Whoso [l] walketh uprightly shall be saved: [m] but *he that is* perverse *in his* ways shall fall at once.

19 He [n] that tilleth his land shall have plenty of bread: [o] but he that followeth after vain *persons* shall have poverty enough.

20 A [p] faithful man shall abound with blessings: [q] but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be * innocent.

k Gen. ix. 6. Ex. xxi 14 Num. xxxv 14. 1 Kings xxi. 19. 23. 2 Kings ix 26. 2 Chr xxiv. 21 — 25. Matt. xxvii. 4, 5. Acts xxviii. 4.
l x. 9 25 xi. 3—6. Ps. xxv. 21. xxvi 11 lxxxiv. 11 Gal. ii. 14.
m 6. Num. xxii. 32. Ps. lxxiii 18 —20. cxxv. 5. 1 Thes. v. 3. 2 Pet ii. 1—3. Rev. iii 3.
n xii. 11. xiv. 4. xxvii. 23—27
o xiii. 20. xxiii. 20, 21. Judg ix. 4. Luke xv. 12 —17.
p xx 6. 1 Sam xxii 14 Neh. vii. 2 Ps. ci. 6. cxii. 4—9. Luke xii. 42. xvi. 1. 10—12. 1 Cor. iv. 2—5. Rev ii. 10. 13.——q 22. xiii. 11. xx. 21. xxiii. 4. 2 Kings v. 26—27. 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10.
* Or, *unpunished.* xvii. 5. *Marg.*

21 To have [r] respect of persons *is* not good: for, [s] for a piece of bread *that* man will transgress.

22 He [t] that † hasteth to be rich *hath* [u] an evil eye, [x] and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him.

23 He [y] that rebuketh a man, afterwards shall find more favour, than he that flattereth with the tongue.

24 Whoso [z] robbeth his father or his mother, and saith, *It is* no transgression; [a] the same *is* the companion of ‡ a destroyer.

r xviii. 5. xxiv. 23. Ex. xxiii. 2. 8.
s Ez. xiii 19 Hos. iv 18 Mic iii. 5 vii 3. Rom. xvi. 18. 2 Pet. ii 3.
t 20.
† Heb. *hath an evil eye, hasteth to be rich.*
u xxiii 6. Matt. xx. 15 Mark vii. 22.
x Gen xiii. 10—13 xix. 17 Job xx 18 — 22. xxvii. 16, 17.
y xxvii. 5, 6. 2 Sam xii. 7. 1 Kings i. 28. 32 —40 Ps. cxli. 5. Matt. xviii. 15. Gal. ii. 11. 2 Pet iii 15, 16.
z xix. 26. Judg xvii. 2. Matt. xv. 4—6.——a 7. xiii. 20. xviii. 9 ——‡ Heb. *a man destroying.*

lates the word, rendered *understanding, revenues.* On these grounds, therefore, some interpret the latter verse of *needy princes* being great oppressors. But the original cannot bear this construction, without a needless conjectural amendment. 'A prince that wants understanding, 'and is a great oppressor, *shall shorten his days:* but he 'that hates covetousness shall prolong his days.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 17. He that wilfully takes away the life of man, may flee whither he will, but he cannot escape the vengeance of God, nor even the horrors of his accusing conscience.—No one ought to conceal him, or attempt to rescue him from punishment: his life is forfeited; and if he elude the justice of man, he will only the more surely rush into the pit of destruction. The original word for *doeth violence,* is generally rendered *an oppressor:* and this proverb may very properly be connected with the preceding. 'If a prince, in his exactions on the poor people, proceed to shed innocent blood, (as Ahab oppressed and murdered Naboth;) though he may seem out of the reach of human laws, he shall perish miserably by the judgment of God, and none shall attempt or be able to prevent it.' (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 18. (*Notes, Ps.* cxxv. 5.) 'There is no such way 'to be safe as to be honest and sincere:—for he that endeavours to preserve himself by fraud and deceit; though 'he can wind and turn, and hath several shifts, he thinks, 'to save himself by, yet in one or other of them he shall 'perish.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)—The last clause may be rendered, "he shall fall in one of them."

V. 19. (*Note,* xii. 11.) 'He that tilleth his land shall 'be satisfied with bread; and he that followeth after vain '*persons,* shall be satisfied with poverty.' The one shall have bread enough; and the other poverty enough. The word is the same in both clauses of the verse.

V. 20. 'He that is true to his word, and just in his 'dealings, shall have abundance of blessings from God, 'and be well spoken of by men: but he whose eager 'desires make him heap up wealth by right or wrong, 'brings such guilt on himself, as makes him execrable 'unto both.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) Faithfulness may also include the due improvement of a man's talents: and the good wishes and fervent prayers of those, whom he thus benefits, may be numbered among his many blessings. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 21. 'All persons do not give bribes: but there is 'hardly any cause, wherein somewhat may not be found 'to incline the mind of a judge, if respect of persons 'lead him. For one man shall be respected as his coun-'tryman, another as an ill-tongued man, another as a rich 'man, another as a favourite, another as commended by a 'friend. To conclude, all is full of iniquity where respect 'of persons bears sway, and for a very slight matter, as it 'were for a bit of bread, judgment is perverted.' (*Lord Bacon.*) The same is at least equally true and important in the case of ministers. If, instead of the glory of God and the salvation of souls, they are influenced by respect of persons, desire of favour and popularity, or love of filthy lucre; they will be drawn aside from the line of duty by numberless considerations: and none can say to what meanness and baseness they may at length stoop.

V. 22. The avaricious man covets all he sees, grudges all that goes beside him, and all that he expends, and envies every one that is more prosperous than himself. He is not aware how precarious his ill-gotten possessions are; or how soon poverty may come upon him, and he may need help from others, though now so unwilling to bestow it on them. (*Note,* 20.)

V. 23. We are so prone to self-love and pride, that the most prudent and needful rebukes are apt to create a transient displeasure. Yet upon reflection most men will have a better opinion of a faithful reprover, than of a soothing flatterer, and will show him more favour. They who have the most frequently made the trial, will have the fullest experimental evidence of the truth of this maxim.

V. 24. Young people often consider themselves as, in some sense, owners of their parents' substance, and scruple not to appropriate whatever they can lay hands on. Thus they "rob their parents, and say, it is no transgression;" whereas it is a robbery that adds ingratitude, disrespect, and disobedience to injustice, and which initiates numbers into those expensive courses, by which they at length are led to join the more infamous depredators and murderers, and so they rush forward to destruction, temporal and eternal.

V. 25. The words rendered *a proud heart,* signify *large in mind;* and the ambitious, who are actuated by vast desires and expectations of power, honour, and pre-eminence, and who are the great disturbers of mankind in public and private life, seem especially intended. 'A man of a proud 'and insolent spirit, of ambitious and vast desires, is never 'quiet. He lives in perpetual quarrels, suits, and con-

b x 12. xiii. 10. xv. 18. xxi. 24. xxii. 10. xxix. 22, 23.
c Ps. lxxxiv. 12. Jer. xvii. 7, 8. 1 Tim. vi. 6.
d xi. 25 xiii. 4 xv. 30. Is. lviii. 11.
e iii. 5. 2 Kings viii. 13. Jer. xvii. 9. Mark vii. 21—23. xiv. 27—31. Rom. viii. 7.——f Job xxviii. 28. 2 Tim. iii. 15. Jam. i. 5. iii. 15—18.

25 He [b] that is of a proud heart, stirreth up strife: but [c] he that putteth his trust in the LORD shall be [d] made fat.

26 He [e] that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: [f] but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered.

g xix. 17. xxii. 9. Deut. xv. 10 Ps. xli. 1—3. cxii. 5—9. 2 Cor ix. 6—11. Heb. xiii. 16.
h Is. i. 15.
i xi. 26. xxiv 24.
k 12. xxix 2.
l Job xxiv 4
m Esth. viii. 17 Acts xii 23, 24.

27 He [g] that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that [h] hideth his eyes [i] shall have many a curse.

28 When [k] the wicked rise, men [l] hide themselves: but when [m] they perish, the righteous increase.

'tentions. But he, who, confiding in the Almighty, hath 'a humble and contented mind, lives peaceably and com-'fortably; nay, thrives many times, and abounds in plenty 'of all good things.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) This *largeness of mind*, or vastness of desires, differs widely from Solomon's *largeness of heart*, or vast capacity: even as a humble contented mind differs from a weak capacity, or a base and grovelling spirit.

V. 26. When a man has that confidence in his own good understanding, intentions, and dispositions, that he fears no deception; and is fully satisfied that he shall act up to the purposes which he hath formed under conviction, or in sickness and danger; he proves himself to be very ignorant and foolish. He does not consider how differently he will be affected, when in health and safety, and under temptations, from what he was in contrary circumstances; he trusts the worst of all deceivers, which hath cheated him a thousand times; and he might as well expect that the sea would be always calm, the water always frozen, or the wind always west, because they are sometimes so. But he who walks wisely or circumspectly, distrusts himself, trusts in the Lord, shuns temptation, and prays continually to be upheld by the grace of God: and thus he will be delivered from those snares in which the other is entangled. A man's confidence in his own capacity and ability, for success in any undertaking, is implied in the general expression of trusting his own heart: but the inspired writer's strong and decided language, no doubt was intended to convey a more general and spiritual instruction.

V. 27. (*Marg. Ref.*) The selfish man not only refuses to look out for objects of compassion, but he turns away from those that force themselves on his attention. But he thus exposes himself to the ill wishes of great numbers, and brings himself under the curse of God, in every thing he does or possesses.

V. 28. (*Note*, 12.) 'In the places of the impious, the 'righteous groan: but by their destruction the righteous 'are multiplied.' (*Sept.*) 'Some are imprisoned, and sent 'into obscurity, by the unjust prosecution of the wicked; 'and others obscure themselves, and groan under those 'oppressions, till there be a turn of affairs, by the fall of 'these wretched persons and the preferment of better: 'which invites virtuous men to appear again, and by the 'countenance they then receive, to propagate piety among 'the people. There is no blessing we should pray for so 'earnestly as this, especially when the days are evil.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—17.

Wicked men are often hypocrites in courage, and conceal an aching trembling heart under the affectation of great composure. But if at sometimes they are ready to tremble at the shaking of a leaf, and "to flee when no man "pursueth," how will their hands be strong, or their hearts endure, when the almighty Judge shall pursue them with his dreadful vengeance? This terror will be unspeakably more insupportable, than the dread of them has been to their inferiors and vassals. And yet some of them, who have risen to authority, have been more cruel and terrible than the most savage beasts; and to their own subjects especially, as if ambitious to let all the world know that they wanted understanding, as much as equity! Many of them have been inhuman oppressors and sanguinary persecutors, who have cut off by cruel deaths numbers of their people, and driven the wisest and best of them into exile, or obscurity; constraining them to hide themselves, that they might escape with their lives, and not do violence to their consciences; and employing their scanty ingenuity to render others miserable, and themselves odious and execrated. When nations provoke the Lord by their transgressions, he sends them many such tyrants, as competitors or successors to each other, who, by their fierce contests and implacable resentments, their bloody executions and greedy extortions, are more fatal than earthquakes, pestilences, or the beasts of the field; and who themselves seem to be made only to be taken and destroyed, as nuisances to society. But when the Lord hath blessings in store for any people, he raises up a man of understanding, who loves justice and hates covetousness to rule over them; and thus he both prolongs his own days, and the peaceful estate of the land. Under a ruler of this character, the righteous rejoice and increase, and great honour and prosperity may be expected. For such rulers then we ought to pray: and having obtained our request we cannot be too thankful: and every one, according to the duties of his station, should endeavour to check the progress of impiety, and promote national reformation, that we may not forfeit these valuable blessings. But the rich are not the only, nor the most grievous, oppressors: in various ways the poor are more hateful and intolerable. Necessitous and unprincipled men often intrude into the magistracy, or into offices connected with the collection, or expenditure, of the public treasure; and when it comes in their way they squeeze the poor without mercy or shame. It is, however, evident, that numbers are not at all aware of their guilt and danger; but are either insensible through ignorance, or presumptuous through a form of godliness. Though they turn away their ears from hearing the law; yet they contend for the doctrines of the Gospel: they hope to be saved from hell by grace and faith, though they are not saved from sin, and this present evil world. They also attend on ordinances, and make many and long prayers, though they neglect justice, truth, and mercy: but such prayers are an abomination to the Lord; for they never heartily pray to be delivered from hypocrisy, covetousness, and the love of the world, or to have the law of God written in their hearts. Yet, alas! there are such numbers who agree in

CHAP. XXIX.

Miscellaneous maxims, concerning a man being hardened against reproof; and of good government, wisdom, and righteousness; against flattery, profligacy, injustice, scornfulness, loquacity, rashness, indulging children, improperly treating servants, pride, and the fear of man; and of the goodness and sovereignty of the Lord, 1—27.

forsaking the law, and in excusing and commending each other; and they meet with so many teachers of their own stamp, that they keep themselves and one another in heart and countenance: and they verily conclude, that all else in religion is needlessly strict and scrupulous. So that when such as regard the whole word of God (and conscientiously keep the commandments, and walk uprightly, as well as believe the promises, and trust the mercy of God through Christ for salvation,) attempt to contend with them, and argue, that "without holiness no man shall see the "Lord;" they treat all their warnings with supercilious contempt, as the result of ignorance, bigotry, and a narrow mind. Especially they who are rich, or grow rich in this course, become wise in their own conceits; so that "there is more hope of a fool than of them." And they despise the poor, especially when these being men of understanding, search them out, and detect their hypocrisy and delusion. For "evil men understand not judgment:" their lusts blind them, and God gives them up to strong delusions, to believe a lie: so that they mistake hardness of heart, vain confidence, and carnal security, for gracious assurance and holy boldness. Whilst the established believer, trusting in the Lord, and walking in the path of duty, fears no enemy or danger: but fears always lest he should be deceived by his own heart, to dishonour God and commit iniquity; these self-deceivers treat all tenderness of conscience and all jealousy of themselves, as want or weakness of faith, or remains of a self-righteous spirit; and thus they harden their hearts against fear of every kind, till they fall into mischief. But true piety begins and proceeds in deep humility. The poor in spirit do not palliate or cover their sins: but they humbly confess and forsake them, hoping thus to find mercy. They are not wise in their own conceits: but seek to the Lord to be their Teacher, and are glad to be set right by the poorest man who can point out any mistake, into which they have fallen; and this proves their best security against delusion, and the best method of obtaining well-grounded assurance. They neither refuse to learn and obey the commands of God; nor yet trust in their imperfect services. They do not live in conscious iniquity, and then cloak it with a form of godliness. They aim to walk uprightly; yet they dare not trust in their own deceitful hearts, but continually seek to the Lord to uphold them, and to preserve them from, or to render them victorious over, temptation. They may be seduced by plausible deceivers, to go astray in an evil way; and even their diffidence of themselves, and their unsuspecting candour, will sometimes thus expose them: but on reflection and examination, they recover themselves from the snare. They learn to beware of covetousness, and prefer poverty with uprightness to being rich and perverse: being aware that they who by injury and unjust gain, increase their substance, have no other advantage but the toil, and anxiety of gathering wealth, for the use of those, "that "will pity the poor." Yet by the blessing of God they know no want, but are often able to assist their relatives and friends; while such as affect to despise them, are the disgrace and ruin of those whom they are most bound to comfort, and become themselves, even in this world, abject and miserable: nay, some of this character, both in high and low life, pursuing their ambitious, rapacious, and debauched courses, are led to do violence to the lives of their neighbours, and so hasten their deserved, ignominious, and almost unpitied destruction.

V. 18—28.

In every rank and state of life, upright conduct is immensely the most safe and advantageous: though the crafty and designing are sanguine in promising themselves and each other, the most brilliant successes. But the upright not only shun injustice and violence: they also learn faithfulness; and "a faithful man shall abound with blessings." They have mercy on the poor, according to the Lord's mercy to them: and, giving to them without grudging, they shall not lack, but shall have good things in possession. For instead of following after vain persons, and growing poor by profuseness; they are frugal, and industrious in tilling the land, or in other honest labour; and thus have plenty of bread, and are therewith content. When young persons enter upon such a pious and prudent medium, they become the credit and comfort of their parents. But, alas! many prefer being the companions of vicious men, to their shame and grief: their excesses tempt them to rob their parents and waste their substance; then they often associate with robbers and destroyers; they spend their lives in fear and horror, and sometimes end them in ignominy. Nor should it pass unnoticed, how frequently we are cautioned against covetousness. "He that hasteth to be rich shall not "be innocent." Some, as magistrates, having respect of persons, often become so mean, as to sell their iniquitous services, and commit the most atrocious crimes, at the lowest price. Others, as ministers, for the sake of filthy lucre, betray their trust, show respect of persons, forsake the law, praise the wicked, flatter with their tongues, cause the righteous to go astray in an evil way, and murder the souls of men. In every situation, the avaricious is sure to have an evil eye, to envy such as are more prosperous, to grudge what goes beside him; to use unjust or unmerciful ways of increasing his substance; and instead of giving liberally to the poor, (the best security against want;) to hide his eyes and harden his heart, that their misery and complaints may not prevail with him to lessen his idolized hoard. But what will be the end of these covetous practices, and of these "children of a curse, "who go astray in the way of Balaam, loving the wages of "unrighteousness?" Alas! they know not what poverty will come upon them here; and eternal poverty, without one drop of water to cool the tongue, will be their portion, if they die impenitent: while they will have many a curse for their unmercifulness and rapacity. Others growing

* Heb. *a man of reproofs.*
a i. 24—27. 1 Sam. ii 25. 1 Kings xvii. 1. xviii 18. xx. 42 xxi. 29—23. xxii. 20—23. 28. 34—37. 2 Chr xxv 16. xxxii. 10. xxxvi. 15—17 Jer xxv. 3—5. xxvi. 3—5 xxxv 13—16 Zech. i 3—6. Matt. xxvi 21—25. John vi 70. 71 xiii. 10, 11. 18. 26. Acts . 18 25
b 2 Chr. xxx. 8. *Marg* xxxvi 13. Neh ix. 29. Is xlviii. 4 Jer xvii 23.——c vi 15. xxviii. 18. Is. xxx. 13, 14. Zech. vii. 11—14. 1 Thes. v. 3.
d xi. 10. xxviii. 12. 28. Esth. viii 15 Ps. lxxii. 1—7. Is. xxxii 1, 2 Jer xxxii. 5, 6. Rev. xi. 15 ——† Heb. Or, *increased* ——e Esth. iii. 15. Ec. x. 5 Matt ii 3. 16.
f x. 1. xv. 20 xxiii. 15. 24, 25 xxvii. 11. Luke i. 13—17.——g v 8—10. vi 26. xxi. 17. 20. xxviii. 7 19 Luke xv. 30.

*HE, [a] that being often reproved, [b] hardeneth *his* neck, [c] shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

2 When [d] the righteous are † in authority, the people rejoice: but [e] when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn.

3 Whoso [f] loveth wisdom rejoceth his father: but [g] he that keepeth company with harlots, spendeth *his* substance.

4 The [h] king by judgment establisheth the land: but ‡ he that receiveth gifts overthroweth it.

5 A man [i] that flattereth his neighbour, [k] spreadeth a net for his feet.

6 In [l] the transgression of an evil man *there is* a snare: [m] but the righteous doth sing and rejoice.

7 The righteous [n] considereth the cause of the poor: [o] *but* the wicked regardeth not to know *it.*

h 1 Sam xiii 13. 2 Sam viii. 15 1 Kings ii 12 Ps lxxxix 14 xcix 4. Is ix 7 xlix. 8
i Heb *a man of oblations* 2 Kings xv 16—20 Jer. xxii. 13—17. Dan xi 20. Mic vii 3.
i vii. 5. 21. xx 19. xxvi. 24, 25. 28 2 Sam. xiv. 17, &c. Job xvii. 5. Ps v 9. xii. 2. 1 Thes. ii. 5.
k i. 17 Lam. i. 13. Hos. v. 1. Luke xx 20, 21. Rom xvi 18
l v 22 xi. 5. 6. xii 13. Job xviii. 7—10. Ps xi. 6 Is. viii. 14. 15. 2 Tim. ii 26.
m Ps xcvii 11. cxviii. 15 cxxxii 16 Rom v 2. 3. Jam. i. 2 1 Pet i. 8. 1 John i 4.
n Job xxix. 16. xxxi. 13—21 Ps. xxxi 7. xli 1. Gal. vi. 1.——o xxi. 13 1 Sam. xxv. 9—11. Jer. v. 28 xxii. 15—17. Ez. xxii. 7. 25—31. Mic. iii 1—4.

"proud in heart, and ambitious of distinctions even in the "church," stir up strifes, and become fierce disputers about forms and notions. Instead of walking circumspectly in a path bestrewed with snares, and beset with enemies; they confide in the traitor in their own bosom, and walk on heedlessly, till they fall at once, and there is no remedy. From these snares may the Lord deliver us! Let us watch and pray against temptation: let us not be high-minded, but fear: let us examine ourselves, and beg of God to examine us; and to teach us so to seek him, that we may understand all things pertaining to our hope and our walk. Let us learn to value the faithful reprover, and encourage and imitate his faithfulness; and to shun the fascinating poison of the flatterer, determined neither to listen to his words, nor to learn his ways. And may the Lord give us and ours a believing upright heart, and a peaceful conscience; that we may have confidence in him, and be bold as a lion through the trials of life, at the approach of death, and in the prospect of the day of judgment: and let us never forget to pray, that the nation, and all nations, may be governed by such rulers, as encourage every honest attempt to increase the number of the righteous.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIX. V. 1. "The man of reproofs," (whom men have often warned and counselled, and whom God has repeatedly corrected, but without producing any abiding amendment;) who still continues obstinate and rebellious, as the oxen that will not submit to the yoke, but stiffen their necks against it; will unexpectedly be overtaken by divine judgments, from which there can be no escape or deliverance. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 2. This is 'a tacit admonition unto princes to be 'good, by describing the happiness which a nation then 'enjoys.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) (*Notes*, xi. 10. xxviii. 12. 28.)

V. 3. (*Marg. Ref. Notes*, xxiii. 24, 25. xxviii. 7. 19.) "Feedeth harlots." (*Old Trans.*)

V. 4. (*Marg. Ref.*) "A man of oblations." (*Marg.*) 'The word always signifies, throughout the whole Bible, 'the heave-offerings which were offered to God; which 'would make one think, that here it signified a prince 'that is sacrilegious. Or, if we do not take it in that 'strict sense, it denotes one that will suffer himself to be 'pacified by gifts, and bribed to wink at the most enor'mous crimes:——or, that is so unjust as to find fault 'perhaps with the most innocent persons, on purpose that 'they may appease him by offering a part of their estate to 'save all the rest.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) May not *the man of oblations* be a prince, who acts as if he were a deity or had no superior, but possessed power to dispense even with the divine laws, and pardon the crimes which God required him to punish; provided the criminals would make atonement to him by large oblations?

V. 5. Flatterers often aim to inveigle men, by their deceitful commendations, to consent to some proposal which entangles them in difficulties, or to seduce them into sinful compliances. But if they have no such intentions, their encomiums and professions tend to put men off their guard, and to betray them into some foolish and prejudicial conduct, which brings them into great trouble and distress, if they be not finally ruined by it.

V. 6. The designing villain is often ensnared by his own transgression, and ruined by the consequences of his own iniquitous conduct; which causes the righteous to rejoice, in praising and adoring the just judgments of God; as well as in giving thanks for their own preservation, and for having been led in the paths of peace and safety.

V. 7. This has a special reference to the conduct of righteous magistrates, who bestow pains to examine into the causes of the poor, as being most exposed to oppression, and least able to redress themselves; whilst wicked and selfish magistrates disregard those by whom nothing is to be gained. 'They are bound in conscience to search 'into the truth of things; not to be sparing of their pains, '—to find out the bottom of a business; which he that 'refuses to do, nay, perhaps rejects the complaint of the 'poor, or beats them off with big words; or out of the 'hardness of his heart, or the love of ease, or fear of great 'men, or any other respect, will not give them audience, 'or not consider and redress their grievance; Solomon pro'nounces a wicked person.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) But the maxim is equally applicable to the compassionate attention of pious men to the distresses of the poor: and the unfeeling disregard to them which is often shown by the wicked, nay, sometimes by such as would be thought religious.

V. 8. 'Men of scorn,' (*Hebrew*) 'signifies such as 'mock at religion, and at all things that are serious.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) Persons of this description, more than any other kind of wicked or foolish men, seem framed for the ruin of nations; especially when they possess influence or authority: for they lead the people further and further into wickedness and impiety, and ripen communities for divine judgments; and then by their selfish, rash, or infatuated schemes, they help to bring those judgments upon them;

8 [p] Scornful men * bring a city into a snare: but [q] wise *men* turn away wrath.

9 *If* [r] a wise man contendeth with a foolish man, whether he rage or laugh, *there is* no rest.

10 † The [s] blood-thirsty hate the upright: [t] but the just seek his soul.

11 A [u] fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise *man* keepeth it in till afterwards.

12 If [x] a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants *are* wicked.

p xi. 11. Is. xxviii. 14—22. Matt. xxvii. 39—43. John ix. 40, 41. xi. 47—50. 1 Thes. ii. 15, 16.
* Or, *set a city on fire* Jam. iii. 5, 6.
q Ex. xxxii. 10—14. Num. xvi. 48 xxv. 11 Deut. ix. 18—20. 2 Sam xxiv. 16, 17. Jer. xv. 1. Ez. xxii 30. Am. vii. 2—6. Jam. v. 15—18.
r xxvi. 4 Ec. x. 13. Matt. vii. 6. xi 17—19.
† Heb. *men of blood.*——s Gen. iv 5—8. 1 Sam xx. 31—33 xxii 11, &c. 1 Kings xxi. 20. xxii. 8. Mark vi. 18, 19. 24—27 John xv. 18, 19. 1 John iii. 12.——t 1 Sam. xv. 11 Jer. xiii 15—17. xviii. 20. xl. 14—16 Luke xxiii. 34. John v. 34. Acts vii. 60. Rom. x. 1.
u xii. 16. 23. xiv. 33. Judg. xvi. 17. Am v. 13. Mic. vii. 5.——x xx. 8. xxv. 23. 1 Sam. xxii. 8, &c. xxiii 19—23. 2 Sam. iii. 7—11. iv. 5—12. 1 Kings xxi. 11—13. 2 Kings x. 6, 7. Ps. lii 2—4. ci. 5—7.

13 The poor and ‡ the deceitful man [y] meet together: the [z] LORD lighteneth both their eyes.

14 The [a] king that faithfully judgeth the poor, [b] his throne shall be established for ever.

15 The [c] rod and reproof give wisdom: but [d] a child left *to himself* bringeth his mother to shame.

16 When [e] the wicked are multiplied, transgression increaseth: [f] but the righteous shall see their fall.

‡ Or, *the usurer.*
y xxii 2. Ex xxii. 25, 26 Lev xxv. 35—37. Neh. v. 5—7.
z Ps. xciii. 3. Matt. v. 45.
a 4 xvi. 12. xx. 28. xxv. 5. xxviii. 16 Job xxix. 11—18 Ps. lxxii. 2—4. 12, 13. lxxii 2, 2. Is. i 17. xi. 4 Jer. v. 28. xxii. 16. Dan. iv. 27.
b Is ix 6, 7. Luke i. 32, 33. Heb. i. 8, 9.
c 17. 21. xxii. 6. 15. xxiii. 13, 14. Heb. xii 10, 11.
d x. 1. 5. xvii. 21. 25. 1 Kings i. 6.
e 2. *Marg.*——f Ps. xxxvii. 34. 36. lviii. 10. xci. 8. xcii. 9. 11. cxii. 8. Rev. xv. 4. xviii 22.

except as the wise and pious avert the wrath of God, by their prayers and zealous endeavours to promote religion; and to counteract the tendency of such pernicious measures.

V. 9. If a wise man inadvertently engage in any sort of contest or dispute with a conceited and empty wrangler; he will be sure to be treated, either with furious anger or with ridicule, in return for his most conclusive arguments. And whether the fool rage or deride, it will be equally uneasy to his opponent; who will find it very difficult to extricate himself with credit and comfort.

V. 10. Men of blood hate those upright rulers who are a terror to them; and they hate the image of God in his servants (as Cain hated, envied, and slew his brother, and as the Jews hated and crucified Christ.) But the righteous seek and pray for the salvation even of those who thirst for their blood: or the righteous seek to defend the lives of their persecuted brethren, and of their upright rulers, against the machinations of the blood-thirsty.

V. 11. The word translated *mind*, has different meanings, according to which different interpretations are given of the proverb. 'A fool shows all his anger immediately: 'but a wise man keeps it in till he has a fitting opportu-'nity to express it most to the purpose.' 'A fool blurts 'out every thing that comes into his head: but a wise man 'speaks only as much as is necessary.' 'A fool utters all 'he knows: but a wise man conceals many things.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The heat and vehemence of spirit, with which inconsiderate and rash men dispute and conduct affairs; as contrasted with the calmness, discretion, and caution of those who are eminently wise, seems especially meant. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 12. When flatterers, slanderers, and false teachers are encouraged by the prince, good men either retire, or are driven from employment under him; so that all affairs come into the management of the most unprincipled and mercenary wretches in the nation, to the irreparable disgrace and detriment of both prince and people.

V. 13. (*Note*, xxii. 22.) The debtor and the usurer; the poor and those who defraud and oppress them, live together in the world, and the Lord preserves the lives of them both: he gives them the light of the sun, and the blessings of providence: he affords them the light of his word; and he sometimes calls a rich Zaccheus, as well as a poor Lazarus, to be enlightened with the light of life.

V. 14. The king who, in truth and righteousness, uses his authority in defending the poor and needy from oppression and wrong, takes the best method of establishing his throne during his own life, and of perpetuating the regal authority in his family to future generations. This is especially selected as the character of a good king; because in this he most resembles and imitates the King of kings and Lord of lords. (*Marg. Ref. Note*, xx. 28.)

V. 15. *The mother*, &c. The *mother* is supposed to have the immediate care of the child, during those tender years in which correction is most seasonable and salutary. But mothers are apt to be over-indulgent; and when children are left to themselves to contract bad habits, and to grow obstinate in vice, they become a disgrace to them. (*Notes*, x. 1. xiii. 24. xxii. 15. xxiii. 13, 14.)

V. 16. When wicked men live together in great numbers, they corrupt and embolden each other in wickedness; they whet each other's ingenuity, and grow more shameless or artful in their crimes. Hence it is that populous cities are almost always more full of daring impiety and iniquity, than country villages. 'When the wicked grow numerous 'by growing great, wickedness increases by having au-'thority on its side: but let not the righteous hereby be 'discouraged; for the wickeder men are the shorter is 'their reign; and they that preserve their virtue shall have 'the pleasure to behold their downfal.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 17. (*Note*, 15.) The love of ease, and fear of being discomposed or put out of temper, induce many to neglect the correction of their children: but this little interruption of their *rest*, if submitted to as a self-denying duty, and in dependence on the aid and blessing of God, generally prevents a more durable and distressing disquietude, even that of witnessing or hearing of their evil courses when grown up; and makes way for much peace and comfort, when the correction is the blessed means of their becoming worthy and useful persons. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 18. Where the light of Revelation has not reached, the people live in ignorance and ungodliness, and perish in their sins. The Bible and faithful teachers are therefore great mercies: yet men should not deceive themselves, by being hearers only, without being also doers of the word; for "he that keepeth the law, happy is he." At the same time this maxim points out those who have no scriptural instruction, as the objects of deep compassion; and inculcates the duty of sending missions, forwarding every design for the instruction of the ignorant, and praying for an

17 [g] Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul.

18 Where [h] *there is* no vision, the people * perish: [i] but he that keepeth the law, happy *is* he.

19 A [k] servant will not be corrected by words: for [l] though he understand he will not answer.

20 [m] Seest thou a man *that is* hasty in his † words? *there is* [n] more hope of a fool than of him.

21 He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a child, shall have him become *his* son at the length.

22 An [o] angry man stirreth up strife, and [p] a furious man aboundeth in transgression.

23 A [q] man's pride shall bring him low: but [r] honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.

24 Whoso is [s] partner with a thief [t] hateth his own soul: [u] he heareth cursing, and betrayeth it not.

25 The [x] fear of man bringeth a snare: but [y] whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be ‡ safe.

26 Many [z] seek the § ruler's favour; [a] but *every* man's judgment *cometh* from the LORD.

g 15. xiii. 24. xix. 18. xxiii. 13, 14.
h 1 Sam. iii. 1. Hos. iv. 6. Am. viii. 11, 12. Mat. ix. 36. Rom. x. 13—15.
* Or, *is made naked.* 2 Chr. xxviii. 19.
i xix. 16. Ps. xix. 11. Luke xi. 28. John xiii. 17. xiv. 21—23. Jam. i. 25. Rev. xxii. 14.
k xxvi. 3. xxx. 22.
l Job xix. 16.
m 11. Ec. v. 2. Jam. i. 19.
† Or, *matters.* xiv. 29. xxi. 5.
n xxvi. 12.
o x. 12. xv. 18. xvii. 19. xxvi. 21. xxx. 33.
p xvii. 19. xxii. 24. Jam. iii. 16.
q xviii. 12. 2 Chr. xxxii. 25, 26. xxxiii. 10—12. 23, 24. Job xl. 12. Is. ii. 11, 12. 17. Dan. iv. 30—37. Luke xiv. 11. xviii. 14. Acts xii. 23. Jam. iv. 6—10. 1 Pet. v. 5.
r xv. 33. Deut. viii. 2, 3. 16. Is. lvii. 15. lxvi. 2. Mat. v. 3. xviii. 4. xxiii. 12.
s i. 11—19. Ps. l. 18—22. Is. i. 23. Mark xi. 17.
t vi. 32. viii. 30. xv. 32. xx. 2.
u Lev. v. 1. Judg. xvii. 2.
x Gen. xii. 11—13. xx. 2. 13. xxvi. 7. Ex. xxxii. 22—24. 1 Sam. xv. 24. xxvii. 1. 11. 1 Kings xix. 3. Is. lvii. 11. Matt. x. 28. xv. 12. xxvi. 69—74. John iii. 2. ix. 22. xii. 42, 43. xix. 12, 13. Gal. ii. 11—13. 2 Tim. iv. 16, 17.
y xvi. 20. xviii. 10. xxx. 5. 1 Chr. v. 20. Ps. cxviii. 8. cxxv. 1. Dan. iii. 28. vi. 23. 1 Pet. i. 21.
‡ Heb. *set on high.* Ps. lxix. 29. xci. 14.
z xix. 6.
§ Heb. *face of a ruler.*
a xvi. 7. xix. 21. xxi. 1. Gen. xliii. 14. Ezra vii. 27, 28. Neh. i. 11. Esth. iv. 16. Ps. xx. 9. Is. xlvi. 9—11. Dan. iv. 35.

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increase of faithful labourers, in every part of the vineyard and of the world.

V. 19. 'A wicked servant.' (*Sept.*) 'He that is of a 'servile and rebellious nature.' The servants were generally in those days the property of their masters, who had, under certain restrictions, the power of correcting them: and many would be found, who could not be governed by lenient measures, but would grow more perverse, negligent, sullen, and refractory, under reproofs: so that, in *some cases*, the most humane master might be constrained to use more rigorous methods, and be justified in using them, as far as he kept within the limits of the law of God.

V. 20. (*Note*, xxvi. 22.) When a man is so full of self-conceit and presumption, that he will neither take counsel nor warning; but will rashly speak whatever pride, vanity, or passion may suggest: when he is forward to speak before his superiors, or before he has taken time to consider the subject: when he is rash and dogmatical, and disputatious upon the deepest mysteries without due reverence or reflection; there is more hope of the most ignorant and profligate than of him.

V. 21. When a servant, born in a man's house, was treated with indulgent fondness, and not inured to labour or obedience, because he happened to be a comely or witty child, it would tend to make him unfit for service, and negligent in his business: thus he would become useless and uncomfortable, insolent and ungovernable, and expect to be treated like a child of the family. Good usage, as a servant, does not imply that indulgence which would ruin a child.

V. 22. (*Notes*, xv. 18. xvii. 19.)

V. 23. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 24. The man, who is a partner in any fraud or theft, or receiveth stolen goods, is not only as bad as the thief; but, being likely to be called upon as a witness, and to be put upon his oath to declare all he knows, he will probably perjure himself rather than discover his accomplices; and so bring wrath upon his soul on another account. When the Israelites were put upon their oath, the judge adjured them in the name and presence of God to declare the truth, as they would escape his awful curse. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 25, 26. (*Marg. Ref.*) The fear of man, in a variety of ways, proves an ensnaring temptation. Numbers, fearing reproach, are ashamed of Christ and his cause. In persecution many, through fear of man, apostatize; and others neglect their bounden duties, and forsake the ordinances of God. Some, having committed one crime, from the fear of man add others to conceal it. Even Christians, from fear of their brethren, who differ from them, are tempted to dissemble, and draw others into dissimulation: and ministers, from the fear of censure, or unpopularity, too often consult the inclinations of the people, and of some leading men, or powerful friend, more than the sacred oracles. They shun to declare the whole counsel of God, take to themselves the merit of being prudent, and censure their more faithful brethren. Nay, masters of families are often so afraid even of their servants and children, that having long neglected family-worship, they dare not set about it, even when convinced that it is their duty. But no enumeration can reach the tenth of the cases, in which the fear of man, proving stronger than the fear of God, draws in persons of almost every character, to commit sin, or neglect duty: yet confidence in God preserves the established believer from this temptation, or enables him to overcome it, and secures him in every situation. The marginal references point out a few instances, from that of Abraham denying his wife, to that of Peter dissembling at Antioch. But this temptation would in many cases lose much of its force, were it well considered, that while many seek the ruler's favour, "every man's judg-"ment is of the LORD." 'What God hath appointed that 'shall come to him.'

V. 27. There is not only a contrariety of character, but a mutual antipathy, betwixt the righteous and the wicked, proportioned to the degree of their holiness or wickedness. They are *an abomination* to each other. But whilst the wicked hate the persons, as well as the characters and company, of the righteous; the righteous abhor the conduct, yet pity and pray for the persons, of the wicked.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14.

It is an unspeakable advantage to any people, when the righteous are invested with authority, and for it we all are

b xxiv. 9. Ps. cxix. 115. cxxxix 21. Zech. xi. 8. John vii. 7. xv. 17–19. 23. 1 John iii 13.

27 An [b] unjust man *is* an abomination to the just: and *he that is* upright in the way, *is* abomination to the wicked.

bound to pray, or to bless the Lord: but the advancement of the wicked, however eminent for genius, capacity, and splendid achievements, should be deprecated or deplored, as a public calamity, as one of the heaviest judgments inflicted on nations by an offended God. The magistrate, whether the king as supreme, or one in authority under him, if he rule in judgment, establishes the land: but rulers, who are influenced by bribes, or by lies, ruin the state, and corrupt the mass of the people, by their pestilential influence, example, and the fatal effects of their own misconduct. We cannot but be aware, that scornful men, whose hearts are hardened in profane mockery of God and religion, will despise remarks of this kind; yet, let them look well to it; for while they bring cities and nations into a snare, "the devil takes them captive at his "will." They will, no doubt, not only despise the words of God's ministers; but secretly hate and perhaps ridicule those princes who faithfully judge and protect the poor. But the king of Zion, whose "throne is established for "ever," will protect and bless those who copy his example, and frown into destruction all those who are enemies to them and to Him. Indeed the upright Christian, in every situation, must expect to be hated by the blood-thirsty, the fraudulent, and such as perjure themselves for gain: but they have the affectionate prayers of the righteous in their behalf, who seek the preservation of their lives and the salvation of their souls. But whilst various means are used to repress iniquity, and wicked men are warned and corrected that they may be reclaimed; there are still vast numbers, who, having been often reproved, so harden themselves in obstinate wickedness, and in contemptuous or stubborn defiance of all authority, that they must be cut off by condign punishment, for an example to others. The word of God likewise warns us all to flee from the wrath to come, to the hope set before us in Jesus Christ. Yet many, who are thus repeatedly reproved and invited, sin against the light, and against their own consciences, and grow more daring and impudent in wickedness; till they suddenly perish, and that *without remedy*. For in the transgression of the wicked there is a snare, as birds are caught in a net; and when the snare is drawn, they can by no means disentangle themselves. The flatterer also, as Satan's coadjutor, spreads his net for our feet. The pride of our hearts first disposes us to flatter ourselves, and to admire our own fancied excellencies, and to excuse our crimes as foibles: but being sometimes hard put to it, to keep up this good opinion of ourselves when we are conscious of so much evil, we are apt to look out for other witnesses to confirm us in it; and we are prepared to pay them in kind, or in some other way, for this favourable testimony. This disposition of the heart prepares us for flattery: and some will persuade men to conclude their state good, though they have no scriptural evidence of it. Some magnify the merits of a man's generous virtues and noble mind, and represent heaven as his just reward; and extenuate the evil of the grossest crimes, as mere trifles, for which none but uncharitable fanatics can suppose that God will condemn them to everlasting punishment. Thus men are caught in the net, and live upon tolerable terms with their consciences, and grow secure in presumptuous wickedness: till too late, they find that there is a hell, and that there is no getting out of it. These, and such like flatterers often spread their nets from pulpits: they speak smooth things, and prophesy deceit; and the people love to have it so, especially the rich and great: the sermon is very comfortable, the hearers are well pleased with themselves and with the preacher; they flatter him in return, and spread a net for his feet, and reward him with more substantial emoluments, till Satan takes the whole company in his snare. Even when flattery does not proceed so far, it feeds a man's vanity, makes him venture on employments for which he is unqualified; leads him into temptations, exposes him to reproofs and corrections, and precludes his progress and improvement. "He that loveth wisdom, "while he rejoiceth his father," if living; not only shuns the company and intimacy of profligate men and women: but he takes care, not to engage in any contest with foolish and unprincipled persons; knowing, that whatever means are used, or however their profane scorn or indignant rage may predominate, there can be no comfort in such litigations, and no credit in victory, though much disgrace if baffled in them. Whilst the fool uttereth all his mind, however it may injure or exasperate others, or expose himself, the wise man will keep it in till afterwards, and will be careful not to be rash and hasty in his words; especially not to decide presumptuously of the deep things of God, which is an arrogance of the most provoking nature. The true believer also will seek the salvation of those who hate him, or even thirst for his blood: and he will not only be kind to the poor, but bear with the deceitful, as his heavenly Father causes his sun to shine and his rain to descend upon them. Far from being induced by avarice to associate with thieves and cheats; he will be indifferent about worldly interests, and take pleasure in considering the cause of the poor, and in relieving their distress which the wicked disregard and increase. Thus in one view we may perceive, that when rulers are wicked, and hearken to flattery and lies, all their servants are wicked also: then the ungodly are multiplied, and transgression increaseth; and the righteous are had in abomination, whilst they grieve over and abhor the iniquity they witness but cannot heal. But whilst scorners thus bring the city into a snare, the despised remnant of the righteous often turn away the wrath of God, and prevent national judgments. For, however men may deceive themselves, the wise and righteous alone have present satisfaction, and they alone shall have everlasting honour and felicity.

V. 15—27.

Fallen man is so prone to do evil, that from the earliest youth there will be very many things in his conduct to be blamed; and as the faculties unfold, his sinful propensities gather strength, and produce their effects more and more. Our aim therefore should be, by every proper means, to counteract this tendency of corrupt nature: and thus it may be said with propriety, that "the rod and reproof give "wisdom." For, rebukes and corrections, properly admi-

CHAP. XXX.

The title, 1. *Agur's confession of sin and ignorance; his inquiry after God, and his caution about the word of God; and his prayer to be delivered from vanity and lies, and from the temptations of wealth and poverty,* 2—9. *A caution against accusing servants, and concerning four sorts of wicked persons,* 10—14. *Four things insatiable,* 15, 16. *The punishment of those who mock their parents,* 17. *Four things wonderful, and not to be traced out,* 18—20. *Four things exceedingly troublesome,* 21—23. *Four things small, but wise,* 24—28.

nistered, check the luxuriant growth of evil dispositions, and inure the will and passions to subjection. But when a child is left to himself, and humoured in his wayward inclinations, he grows more self-willed and untractable daily, and his passions demand still further gratifications; till keeping company with harlots, or running into other excesses, he both wastes the substance of his parents, and brings a reproach upon them for improperly educating him. If we then would have our children yield satisfaction to our hearts, we must give them proper correction and instruction. Indulgence as well as severity is indeed an extreme, which must be avoided. Whilst servants and inferiors should be treated with great humanity and equity; it is a real injury to them to bring them up delicately, to disuse them from labour, and to habituate them to a mode of living unsuitable to their station: for this tends to render them wretched, when constrained to return to their former occupations, or to tempt them sinfully to desert them. So that an over-fondness should not be indulged towards any individual; at least unless the person means to provide for him, according to that way of living to which he is thus accustomed. Nay, this counteracts its own end, and instead of rendering those, who are thus peculiarly favoured, more attentive and obliging; it naturally serves to make them imperious, assuming, and untractable; and thus uneasy to those who have spoiled them, and unfit for every other person. Indeed such perverseness is in man, that it is found impossible to persist in that gentleness which is in itself desirable. There are too many, who grow heedless and indolent, when only spoken to with mildness; and sullen and refractory, when reproved with sharpness; so that though they understand, they will not answer, but will do every thing contrary to what is desired! This same perverseness carried to a greater excess, renders prisons and other punishments necessary, because numbers cannot otherwise be dealt with. Both masters and servants, however, may be thankful, that the one is delivered from the trouble and the temptation, and the other from the oppression, which results from the power of punishment being intrusted to private persons: and in our circumstances, we *may* so behave to our servants, that discharging them from our families may be a sufficient punishment for ordinary misdemeanors; and in grosser offences, the civil magistrate may be applied to. While we should be thankful, that we inhabit "the valley of vision," and have abundant means of instruction; and while we pity, and pray for, and try to help, as we are able, such as are not so highly favoured: let us not forget, that if we neglect the great salvation of the Gospel, or pretend to value it, when we refuse to obey any of God's commandments, we shall perish with deeper aggravation, than even the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. We have, therefore, greater reason to watch against the treachery of our hearts: and especially against every kind of pride and self-sufficiency. For this, above all things, tends to bring a man low: but honour, and He who is the true Fountain of honour, upholds the humble in spirit. Again, as the fear of man bringeth a snare; we should be instant in prayer, that we be not thus entangled. This we shall easily be, if we forget that every man's judgment, and the determination of his lot, cometh of the Lord: and therefore many seek the ruler's favour, and fear his frown, instead of humbly trusting in God, who has all hearts in his hand; nay, we are prone to dread the reproach or contempt of the poor and mean: so that many dare not profess what they believe to be true, nor seek truth where they sometimes think it might be found; nor perform their known duty, and relinquish the vanities of the world; nor act up to their own judgment and consciences; for fear of being talked about, pointed at, derided, reviled, hated, or persecuted, or of losing the favour of this or the other friend: thus they are ashamed to own Christ now, and if they persist in this course, he will be ashamed of them at the day of judgment. But he, who trusteth in the Lord will be saved. Depending on his mercy, grace, and providence, he will boldly keep his commandments, and in so doing find true happiness, and a sure refuge. We must also remember, that "the friendship of the world is enmity with God;" and that the wicked abhor the righteous: we should lay our account with the enmity of the ungodly, and never court their friendship: yet, we should seek to do them all the good we can; and while angry men stir up strife and abound in transgression, we should persist in "following after peace:" "and holiness, without which no man shall see the "Lord."

NOTES.

CHAP. XXX. V. 1. These last two chapters form an appendix to the book of Proverbs, it is probable, annexed to it by the men of Hezekiah. It may be supposed that the names of Agur and Jakeh his father were well known in Israel at that time. The expression, "The "prophecy," or the burden, seems to imply, that these instructions were communicated to the church as a divine revelation; and their claim has been very long allowed of. Agur "spake unto Ithiel, and unto Ucal." The word Ithiel signifies, "God with me," and Ucal, "a mighty "one!" (literally *I shall be able;*) and some have thought that they referred more to the subject of Agur's prophecy, than to the persons whom he addressed. But it is the more common opinion, that they were Agur's disciples or pupils; who had proposed some questions to him, which he answered as follows:—The notion that Solomon was meant under the name Agur, though held by some of the fathers, is now generally given up.

Four things comely in going, 29—31. A counsel for men to check themselves when conscious of being wrong, and to avoid forcing wrath and strife, 32, 33.

a xxxi. 1. 2 Pet. i. 19—21.
b Job xlii. 3—6. Ps. lxxiii. 22. Is. vi. 5. Rom. xi. 25. 1 Cor. iii. 18. viii. 2. Jam. i. 5.
c v. 12. Ps. xcii. 6. Jer. x. 14. 2 Pet. ii. 12—16.
d Am. vii. 14, 15. Matt. xvi. 17.
e Job xi. 7—9. Matt. xi. 27. John xvii. 3. Rom. xi. 33. Eph iii. 18, 19.
* Heb *know.*
f Is. vi. 3 xxx. 11. lvii. 15. Rev. iii. 7. iv. 8.

THE words of Agur the son of Jakeh, [a] *even* the prophecy: the man spake unto Ithiel, even unto Ithiel and Ucal,

2 Surely [b] I *am* more [c] brutish than *any* man, and have not the understanding of a man.

3 I [d] neither learned wisdom, [e] nor * have the knowledge of [f] the holy.

4 [g] Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? [h] who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? [i] what *is* his name, [k] and what *is* his son's name, if thou canst tell?

5 Every [l] word of God *is* † pure: he *is* a [m] Shield unto them that put their trust in him.

6 [n] Add thou not unto his words lest he reprove thee, [o] and thou be found a liar.

g Deut. xxx. 12. John iii. 13. Rom. x. 6. Eph. iv. 9, 10.
h Job xxxviii. 4, &c. Ps. civ. 2, &c. Is. xl. 12, &c.
i Ex. iii. 13—15. vi. 3. xxxiv. 5—7. Deut. xxviii. 58.
k Gen. xxxii. 29. Judg. xiii. 18. Ps. ii. 7. Is vii. 14. ix. 6. Jer. xxiii. 6. Mat. i. 21—23. xi 27. Luke x. 22.
l Ps. xii. 6. xviii. 30. xix 8. cxix. 140. Rom vii. 12 Jam iii. 17.
† Heb. *purified.*
m Gen. xv. 1. Ps. lxxxiv 11. xci. 2. cxv. 9—11. cxliv. 2
n Deut. iv. 2. xii. 32. Rev. xxii. 18, 19.——o Job xiii. 7—9. 1 Cor. xv. 15.

V. 2, 3. Agur, though consulted by others, was far from deeming himself competent to instruct them: nay, his acquaintance with his own heart, his conflict with his evil propensities, and his frequent deep thoughts upon the mysteries of religion, which he could not properly explore or apprehend, made him ready to think that "surely he "was more brutish than any man, and had not the under-"standing of a man." He had learned a little of his own ignorance; but he could not pretend to any proficiency in wisdom, in the knowledge of the Holy One, and of those holy things which relate to him. The last clause may be rendered interrogatively, "Shall I know the knowledge of "holy things?" Perhaps he meant, that neither his natural endowments, nor any advantages of his education, tended to qualify him for a teacher. If then he was enabled to communicate any useful instruction, the whole honour of it belonged to God alone. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 4. This may refer to the preceding verses. Man's study and investigation cannot find out God; nor can he comprehend him in his narrow mind. No one hath ascended into heaven to obtain information on these mysterious subjects: nor hath any one descended from heaven to bring intelligence concerning them. None could emulate, or even comprehend, the works of Him, "who hath "gathered the wind in his fists," &c. If there were or ever had been such a person, who was he? and who could claim his descent from him? Thus the inquiry is generally interpreted. Yet it seems to me a prophetical intimation of Him, who came down from heaven to be our instructor and Saviour, and then ascended into heaven to be our Advocate; who as One with the Father, created and upholds all things; who was known in some measure to the ancient church, as JEHOVAH, I AM, and as the only begotten Son of God, (*Psalm* ii. 7;) and from whom alone the knowledge of God can be obtained. The name of the great Creator, as manifested through his Son, seems to be inquired after: and who is that wise and happy man that has obtained this knowledge? (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 5, 6. (*Note, Psalm* xii. 6.) The understanding of divine truth is not to be obtained by curious speculations, but by regarding the word of God, which is "sure and "maketh wise the simple:" and nothing must be added to it under pretence of infallibility, authority of fathers and councils, traditions of the elders, reasonings of philosophers, or dreams of enthusiasts. In this manner heresies and false religions of various kinds, are introduced and supported. But they, who palm their own inventions upon mankind, as of equal authority with the word of God, will be found liars of the worst kind, both deceivers and deceived; and may expect to be severely punished for their temerity or presumption. This caution is worthy of their notice, who are continually wanting to alter and *amend*, (as they call it,) the text of the Scriptures by conjectural criticism; which generally adds a new clause to God's word, instead of the old one that is expunged, either as unintelligible, or as inconsistent with the critic's favourite system. Paraphrasts should also be cautious what words they insert to make out the meaning of difficult passages, and to render them consistent with their favourite schemes. And great humility and modesty are requisite, in order to explain and apply the Scriptures, especially the more mysterious and controverted passages; lest we should *seem* to add any thing to the words of God, as of equal authority with them: and so be found guilty of forging scripture, and counterfeiting the name of God; saying, "Thus saith the LORD; "although he hath not spoken." (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 7—9. Agur's mind was fixed upon the Lord, though he did not immediately mention him. He especially desired two things to be granted him *before*, or *until*, his death, as the context seems to imply: the one relates directly to spiritual blessings; "Remove far from me "vanity, and lies;" that is "Deliver me entirely from 'guilt and sin; from idolatry, error, delusion, and temp-'tation, and from having the vanities of the world for my 'portion.' The other relates to temporal things, yet in subserviency to heavenly. Agur prayed against both poverty and riches, not so much because of the hardships of the one and the anxious encumbrances of the other, as because of the temptations to which they would severally expose him. If he lived in great affluence, he feared lest he should grow self-indulgent and forgetful of God; and so at length be induced to deny his over-ruling providence, his authority, or even his existence, saying, like Pharaoh, "Who is the LORD?" If he were reduced to extreme poverty, he feared lest he should be tempted to dishonesty, and then to perjury, in order to prevent detection and punishment; or, as some interpret it, to murmur against God, and through impatience to speak impious words of him. He therefore wisely prayed for a mediocrity, that he might be kept at a distance from these temptations: he asked food convenient for him; "daily bread," suited to his station, his family, and his real good. There is a remarkable coincidence betwixt this prayer and several clauses of the Lord's prayer.

7 Two *things* [p] have I required of thee; * deny me *them* not before I die:
8 [q] Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; [r] feed me with food † convenient for me.
9 Lest [s] I be full and ‡ deny *thee*, and say, [t] Who *is* the LORD? [u] or lest I be poor, and steal, [x] and take the name of my God *in vain*.
10 ¶ § Accuse [y] not a servant unto his master, [z] lest he curse thee, and thou be found guilty.

p 1 Kings iii.5—9. 2 Kings ii. 9 Ps. xxvii. 4. Luke x. 42.
* Heb. *with-hold not from me.* Ps. xxi 2.
q xxii. 6. xxii. 8. xxiii. 5. Ps. lxii. 9. 10. cxix. 29. 37. Ec. i. 2. Is. v. 18. lix 4. Jon. ii. 8. Acts xiv. 15.
r Gen. xxviii. 20. xlviii. 15, 16. Ex. xvi. 15 18. 21, 22. 29. 35. Matt. vi. 11. 33. Luke xi. 3. 1 Tim. vi. 6—8.
† Heb. *of my allowance.* 2 Kings xxv. 30. Jer. xxxvii. 21 lii. 34.
s Deut. vi 10—12. viii. 10—14. 17. xxxi. 20. xxxii 15 Neh. ix 25, 26. Job xxxii 24—28. Jer. ii. 31. Ez. xvi.14, 15. 49, 50. Dan iv. 17. 30 Hos. xiii. 6. Acts xii 22, 23.
‡ Heb. *belie* thee.——t Ex. v. 2. 2 Chr. xxxii. 15—17.——u vi. 30, 31 Ps cxxv. 3
x xxix. 24. Ex. xx. 7. Lev. v. 1 Matt. xxvi 72. 74.——§ Heb. *Hurt not with thy tongue.*——y xxiv. 28. Deut xxiii 15. 1 Sam. xxii 8, 9. xxiv. 9 xxvi. 19. xxx. 15. 2 Sam. xvi. 1—4. xix 26, 27. Dan. iii. 8, &c. vi. 13 24. Rom xiv. 4.——z xi. 26. xxiv. 24. xxviii. 27. Deut xv 9. 2 Chr xxiv. 22—24.

11 *There is* [a] a generation [b] *that* curseth their father, and [c] doth not bless their mother.
12 *There is* a generation [d] *that are* pure in their own eyes, and *yet* is [e] not washed from their filthiness.
13 *There is* a generation, [f] O how lofty are their eyes! and their eye-lids are lifted up.
14 *There is* a generation [g] whose teeth *are as* swords, and their jaw-teeth *as* knives, [h] to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from *among* men.

a 12, 13, 14. Matt iii 7 1 Pet. ii.9.
b 17. xx 20. Lev. xx. 9. Deu. xxi. 20, 21. xxvii 16. Matt xv. 4—6. Mark vii.10—13.
c 1 Tim. v. 4. 8.
d xxi. 2. Judg. xvii.5 13. 1 Sam. xv. 13, 14 Job xxxiii. 9. Ps. xxxvi. 2. Is.lxv. 5. Jer. ii 22—24. 35. Luke xi. 39, 40. xvi 15. xviii. 11. 2 Tim. iii. 5. Tit. i. 15, 16. 1 John i 8—10
e Ps li 2 7. Is i. 16 Jer iv. 14. Ez. xxxvi 25. Zech. xiii. 1. 1 Cor. vi. 11. Tit. iii. 5. 1 John i. 7. Rev. i. 5.
f vi. 17 xxi. 4. Ps ci. 5. cxxxi. 1. Is. ii. 11. iii. 16. Ez. xxviii. 2—5 9. Dan. xi. 36, 37. Hab. ii. 4. 2 Thes ii. 3, 4.——g Job xxix. 17. Ps. iii 7. lvii. 4 lviii. 6. Dan. vii. 5—7 Rev. ix. 8.——h xxii. 16. xxviii. 3 Ps. x 8. 9. xii. 5 xiv. 4. Ec. iv. 1. Is. xxxii. 7. Am. ii. 7. iv. 1. viii. 4. Mic. ii. 1, 2. iii. 1—5. Hab. iii. 14. Zeph. iii. 3. Matt. xxiii. 14. Jam. v. 1—4.

V. 10. "Hurt not a servant to his master with thy 'tongue. Do not abuse any poor slave, whose condition 'is wretched enough. Rather excuse than aggravate his 'fault to his master, who perhaps is too rigorous: and be 'sure never to load him with unjust accusations; lest 'being wronged by thee, and not knowing how to right 'himself, he appeal to the Lord, and pray him to punish 'thee, and thou, being found guilty, feel the heavy effects 'of his vengeance.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) By accusing a servant to his master, (even without direct slander,) in an officious manner, and a trivial concern, great injustice may be done to his character and future comfort, and a strong temptation thrown in his way to commit sin, by yielding to anger, and uttering grievous imprecations. This is, no doubt, peculiarly the case in respect of *slaves;* but not exclusively: and if a man have not a substantial reason for speaking disadvantageously of another, especially of an inferior to his superior, he has always a good reason for being silent. The lenient side is generally best: and intermeddling in other men's family concerns, especially to make mischief, is always odious and contemptible. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 11—14. Some commentators suppose all the several parts of this chapter to be the answers of Agur to the questions of Ithiel and Ucal; and that these verses especially point out four odious, but too common characters, whom he cautioned them to stand aloof from. These are called *generations*, because they are found through successive ages, as if descended from those predecessors whom they resemble; or because they associate together, as if they belonged to the same family. They are branded as hateful and dangerous persons, whose crimes must be shunned, and of whom all should beware. In every age there are monsters of ingratitude, who, instead of requiting and praying for their parents, curse them, wish them dead, or otherwise abuse them; either from resentment of rebukes, contempt of authority, impatience of restraint, or avidity of their substance. There are also from age to age a multitude of people, who, by one pretence or other, persuade themselves that they are holy persons, the favourites of God, and the heirs of heaven; whose hearts are yet full of the prevailing pollution of iniquity, and who practise much secret wickedness, and so are filthy in the sight of their heart-searching Judge.—Another company is found in every age, who are full of self-importance; whose haughtiness and arrogance are conspicuous in their looks, who are purse-proud, or vain of their birth, rank, accomplishments, or decorations; and who in a stately manner show their supercilious contempt of all around them. There have also been in every age a number of rapacious and cruel extortioners, who devour the poor and needy, to increase their wealth, or to support the expense of their riotous living. These being worse than any savage beasts that are known of, must be described as monsters, that may be imagined, but never yet were seen; "whose teeth are swords, and their jaw-teeth knives."—The expression, (12) "washed from their filthiness," is peculiarly emphatical; and strongly implies, that there is a loathsome filthiness in human nature; and that none are pure in the sight of God, but those who are washed from it, "by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of "the Holy Ghost:" for, depravity of nature and heart, rather than crimes actually committed, seems intended; though both may be implied. (*Note*, 1 *Cor.* vi. 9—11.)

V. 15, 16. The horse-leech, or blood-sucker, gorges blood, and having emptied itself, craves more: and sometimes even sucks till it bursts. 'The leech hath two forks 'in her tongue, which here he calleth her daughters; 'whereby she sucketh blood and is never satiate; even so 'are the covetous extortioners insatiable.' The two daughters of the horse-leech, however, may mean, the insatiable love of money, and the insatiable love of those pleasures that money purchases: or *covetousness*, whether to hoard or spend; and *blood-thirstiness* which powerful and cruel oppressors and rapacious warriors exercise, who are not satisfied, but thirst for more, after all they have shed. Or they may denote in general the insatiable nature of man's sinful propensities, which always grow more craving by indulgence. (*Marg. Ref.*) The same kind of expression is used in several places: and the emblems, though striking, need no comment.

V. 17. The man who derideth his parents, because of the infirmities of old age, and despiseth their authority, will expose himself to the severest judgments of God. Many of this vile character have come to an untimely end; and have been gibbeted, or left unburied, till the

15 The [i] horse-leech hath two daughters, *crying*, [k] Give, give. [l] There are three *things that* are never satisfied, *yea*, four *things* say not, * *It is* enough.

16 [m] The grave; and the barren womb; the earth *that* is not filled with water; and the fire *that* saith not, *It is* enough.

17 The [n] eye that mocketh at *his* father, and despiseth to obey *his* mother, [o] the ravens of the † valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.

18 There be three *things which* are [p] too wonderful for me: yea, four which I know not;

19 The [q] way of an eagle in the air; the way of a serpent upon a rock; the way of a ship in the ‡ midst of the sea; [r] and the way of a man with a maid.

20 Such *is* [s] the way of an adulterous woman; she eateth, and wipeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickedness.

21 ¶ For three *things* the earth is disquieted, and for four *which* it cannot bear.

22 For [t] a servant when he reigneth; and [u] a fool when he is filled with meat;

23 For [x] an odious *woman* when she is married; and [y] an hand-maid that is heir to her mistress.

24 ¶ There be four *things which are* [z] little upon the earth, but they *are* § exceeding wise:

i Is. lvii 3, 4 Ez. xvi. 44 — 46. Matt. xxiii. 32. John viii. 39. 44
k Is lvi. 11, 12. Hos iv.18. Mic. vii 3. Rom. xvi. 18. 2 Pet. ii. 3 13—15. Jude 11, 12
l 21 24 29. vi.16. Am. i. 3 6. 9. 11. 13. ii 1. 4
* Heb. *wealth.*
m xxvii 20. Hab. ii. 5.
n 11 xx.20. xxiii. 22 Gen ix. 21—27. Lev. xx 9. Deut. xxi. 18—21. 2 Sam xviii. 9, 10. 14—17.
o 1 Sam. xvi 41. 46. 2 Sam. xxi. 10.
† Or, *brook.*
p Job xlii 3. Ps. cxxxix. 6.
q Job xxxix. 27. Is. xl. 31.
r Ex. xxii. 16.
s vii 13—23. Num. v. 11—31.
t xix. 10 xxviii 3. Ec x. 7. Is iii. 4, 5.
u 1 Sam. xxv. 3. 10, 11. 25. 36—38. xxx. 16
x xix. 13 xxi. 9. 19. xxvii. 15.
y xxix. 21.
z Job xii. 7.
‡ Heb. *heart.*
§ Heb. *wise made wise.*

ravens or eagles have picked out their eyes, or devoured their flesh; and all of the same description may expect a similar doom.

V. 18—20. The path of the eagle through the air, that of the serpent on the rock, and that of the ship through the sea, cannot be traced, nor doth any one exactly follow another in the same course. So, artful men insinuate themselves into the affections of young women, and seduce them to their ruin, by an almost infinity of stratagems which can never be all unravelled. Thus also the adulterous wife uses much ingenuity to impose on her husband, to shun detection, and to escape shame and punishment, by schemes and devices which cannot all be enumerated. Every new crime intended, or committed, gives rise to some new artifice; as the ship, in some degree, deviates every time from the course which it steered before. The object of the seducer is to prevail over his prey, and that of the adulteress, to conceal her guilt: and the whole extent of their subtlety and ingenuity is employed to effect those purposes.

V. 21—23. The following events create much disturbance in the world, and should therefore be avoided or prevented as much as possible. When men of low extraction and base spirit obtain authority, they are apt to be imperious, tyrannical, rapacious, and cruel; they grow intoxicated by their sudden elevation, jealous of every one as if harbouring designs against them, impatient of control, fierce in their resentments, and exorbitant in their exactions: and thus nations are disquieted, embroiled in wars, burdened with excessive taxes, or shocked with bloody executions. When foolish and violent men eat and drink to excess, their impertinence, scurrility, impiety, contentiousness, or obscenity, render them a vexation and an insupportable burden, to every company into which they find admission. When a woman of a contentious disposition, and prone to odious vices, is married, her folly and wickedness will be the disquietude of her husband and his family; and he will probably repent of his improper choice, even if he had a large dowry with her. And when a female servant succeeds to the substance of her mistress, or rather supplants her in the affections of her husband, and influences him to divorce his wife, and then to marry her: When this has been the case, or even if she succeeds a deceased mistress, as married to her husband, she will frequently disquiet the family by her insolence or rapacity, by appropriating all that she can to herself and those belonging to her; to the injury of those to whom it more properly belongs.

V. 24—28. The instinctive wisdom of these four animals is mentioned as a lesson to the reader, who should learn to estimate men, not by their external greatness or magnificence, but by their wisdom. The ants are wise in diligently providing against the winter; the conies, (or mountain-mice, as some think,) in forming refuges to themselves against the weather and from their pursuers; the locusts in their regular and unanimous movements, as if they did every thing by consent and for the common good; and the spider, in her ingenuity and assiduity in forming her webs against the walls, as if she took hold of them with hands; in renewing her work, when repeatedly destroyed; and in seeking and waiting for her prey with patient attention, wherever it is to be found; for which purpose she even enters into king's palaces, whose greatness and delicacy cannot exclude so mean and unwelcome a guest. 'From all these four, some have noted, that an abridgment 'may be made of all that is necessary for the conservation 'of a kingdom in good estate: where first, care must be 'taken for provision of food; then for secure and com-'modious dwelling; then that there be concord and 'agreement; and lastly, that industry and ingenious arts 'be encouraged.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 29—31. 'There are also three, or rather four things, 'whose motion is majestic, and which go after a goodly man-'ner.' (*Bp. Patrick.*) The four are remarkable for the comeliness or propriety of their going. The lion, conscious of his strength and courage, marches on, and does not alter his pace, or quit his path, for those that meet or pursue him. The greyhound, (some think the *war-horse* was meant,) is ready for his course, and performs it with great celerity and activity. The he-goat goes before the flock, as one careful about them, attentive to their safety: and the king who adverts to the dignity of his own character, and represses with vigour such as venture to rise up against him.

a vi. 6—8.

25 The [a] ants *are* a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer;

b Lev. xi. 5. Ps. civ. 18.

26 The [b] conies *are but* a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks;

c Ex. x. 4—6. 13—15. Ps. cv. 34. Joel i. 4. 6, 7. ii 7—11. 25. Rev. ix. 3—11.

27 The [c] locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them * by bands:

* Heb. *gathered together.*

28 The spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings' palaces.

29 ¶ There be three *things* which go well, yea, four are comely in going:

d Num. xxiii 24. Judg. xiv 18

30 A lion, [d] *which is* strongest among beasts, and turneth not away for any;

† Or, *horse.* Heb. *girt in the loins.*

31 A † greyhound; an he-goat also; and a king, [e] against whom *there is* no rising up.

e xvi. 14. xx. 2. Dan. iii. 15—18.

f xxvi. 12. Ec viii 3.

32 If [f] thou hast done foolishly in lifting up thyself, or if thou hast thought evil, [g] *lay* thine hand upon thy mouth.

g xvii 28. Job xxi. 5 xl. 4. Ec. viii 4. Mic. vii. 16, 17. Rom. iii. 19.

33 Surely the churning of milk bringeth forth butter, and the wringing of the nose bringeth forth blood: [h] so the forcing of wrath bringeth forth strife.

h xv. 18. xvi 28. xvii. 14 xxvi. 21 xxviii. 25. xxix. 22.

V. 32, 33. The mention of the king, against whom there is no rising up, seems to have suggested this concluding caution. If any one had foolishly taken too much on himself in the presence of the king, or had entertained thoughts of insurrection, or had harboured resentment or given offence, his wisest course would be to keep silence from all rash or provoking words, and even from excuses, and from charging the blame on others; and to appear sorry and humbled for what had passed. For, as in common affairs, causes produce their known effects, and the churning of the milk or cream is observed to produce butter, and the violent wringing of the nose to bring forth blood: so, it hath always been observed, that the forcing of wrath by contemptuous or virulent words or actions, occasions the most mischievous and implacable contentions.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

In proportion as we become acquainted with God and ourselves, with his will and our own hearts and actions, we shall be sensible of our sinfulness, ignorance, and weakness. And the experienced and considerate believer, knowing more of himself than he does of others, can sometimes scarcely suppose it possible, that there should be such evils in *their* hearts as he finds in his own; or that *they* should be so insensible, forgetful, or unteachable, as *he* is. On these occasions he will readily say, "Surely I "am more brutish than any man, and have not the under-"standing of a man." The wisdom or knowledge of fallen man is not his own; he hath not learned it of himself, but hath received it of God; and by increasing knowledge, men attain deeper convictions of the immense disproportion which there is betwixt the little which they do understand, and that boundless extent of being with which they have no acquaintance. They perceive also the indistinctness and inaccuracy of their knowledge: they are continually detecting themselves in mistakes; and even the errors of others, who were on many accounts their superiors, tend to convince them, that "Here they see through a glass "darkly," and "have not learned wisdom, and have not "attained to the knowledge of the Holy." The sublimity and immensity of such subjects, compared with man's capacities, his present confined opportunities, his short space for making observations and gaining experience, convince the humble Christian "that such knowledge is too "high for him, he cannot attain unto it." So that ignorance and want of thought are the true causes of men's dogmatical self-confidence and conceit of their own knowledge. For who hath explored, or comprehended the works of Him, "that hath established all the ends of the earth?" Who can fathom the deep mysteries of the divine nature, or find out the Almighty to perfection? Who can "know the "Son, but the Father, or the Father but the Son, and he "to whom the Son will reveal him?" He indeed came down from heaven to declare to men the name and character of JEHOVAH: and now, ascended into heaven, he hath opened the way of acceptance and access to all believers. Happy then is he who "counts all but loss for "the excellency of the knowledge of Christ," and of the Father through the Son. This knowledge is communicated by his word, which is pure and infallible, in which there is no dross, no error, no deficiency, no redundancy. May we believe his testimony, embrace his invitations, plead his promises, observe his directions, and keep his commandments; and then we shall be wise unto salvation, and at length "know even as we are known:" and in the mean time, we shall trust in him, and he will be a Shield unto us from all our enemies round about. But let us not want to be wise above what is written, or to add man's vain reasonings and presumptuous inventions to the truths of God; lest he reprove us, and we be found liars and deceivers. For the desire of knowledge is as capable of exorbitance as any other inclination of our fallen nature, and is productive of the most dreadful effects; whilst men, proud of their own wisdom, prefer their own conjectures to the infallible testimony of God, and "speak perverse "things to draw away disciples after them," who "will "utterly perish in their own delusions." Against such perils faith in the promises of God, and fervent prayer, form our only security. In coming to his mercy-seat, we should always consider the near approach of death, and its eternal consequences. Then the time of prayer will be over; and we should therefore be the more earnest to obtain our requests before we die, and to be preserved from sin and temptation till we die. We should be particular, as well as urgent in our supplications: yet all the variety of them may be reduced to two heads, 'Things 'needful for the soul, and things needful for this present 'life.' But the former should have the decided preference; and the latter should be sought in entire subserviency. If we be far removed from vanity and lies, if we be interested in the pardoning love of God, and have him as our Portion; if we be preserved from delusions and overwhelming temptations; if we walk with God, and live in communion with him, and can commit our souls into his hands at death, and have an entrance into "the everlasting kingdom

CHAP. XXXI.

King Lemuel instructed by his mother to avoid whoredom and drunkenness; and to use his wealth and authority for the relief and protection of the poor and oppressed, 1—9. And concerning

"of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ:" then we shall have all that we can ask or think, in all our varied prayers and supplications, as far as they relate to ourselves. It does not indeed behoove us to be so explicit in respect of temporal things: but if we suppose one situation to be more exempt from temptation than another, we may properly pray for it. Should the Lord please to prove us with deep poverty, we ought not to murmur, and we may expect grace sufficient to resist the powerful temptations of such a condition. But if we know the deceitfulness of our own hearts, and consider what it would be to suffer hunger, cold, and the want of all things; we shall perceive, that temptations to dishonesty would have a mighty force in them; and we cannot tell, but we might be led from smaller to greater transgressions, till we arrived at such degrees of guilt as we now shudder to think of. We may, in this view, therefore, in humble submission, pray to be preserved from poverty, and to be fed with food convenient for us. On the other hand, when we consider how affluence tends to pride, indolence, self-indulgence, and a worldly mind; how they, who are fed to the full and surrounded by abundance, are prone to abuse the gift and forget the Giver, and refuse obedience to him: we cannot pray to be made rich without contradicting the petition which our Lord himself hath taught us, "Lead us not into temptation." We are indeed commonly apt to think that we should be able to behave properly, and to do much good, if we were made richer; but this only proves the pride and folly of our hearts. For it is the hardest thing in the world to act wisely in great prosperity: and the greatest triumph of grace seems to be the conversion of very rich people; and the preserving of them humble, spiritual, dead to the world, devoted to God, and good stewards of the unrighteous mammon, in the midst of all their incentives to the contrary vices. So that it will ever be found a wise prayer, though but seldom offered. "Give me not riches, lest I "be full and deny thee, and say, Who is the LORD?" The more advanced Christian will sincerely and frequently present it: every true believer can fervently pray, 'LORD, 'let me never have more riches, than thou shalt enable me 'to use to thy glory.' And we all ought to be, and doubtless many of us are, thankful, if we enjoy that mediocrity, which we are here taught by the Holy Spirit to consider as the safest and happiest condition in life. But how contrary is this to the almost universal eagerness of men after riches! In fact, the wisdom of God and the wisdom of the world are diametrically opposite; and, alas! there is but a scanty measure of divine wisdom even amongst the majority of Christians.

V. 10—33.

It is no small attainment in heavenly wisdom, habitually and diligently to attend on the duties of our own station; and never to intermeddle with other men's concerns, unless to do them good. It is base to create any one needless uneasiness: but it is peculiarly cruel wantonly to increase the sufferings of the needy, the helpless, or the oppressed; and thus also to tempt them to sin, and to imprecate divine vengeance on their calumniators. We need not, however, *wonder*, that we see around us numbers living in the grossest iniquities; as there always has been a generation of such, the seed of the serpent and the children of the wicked one. But we should mourn over them, pray for them, and protest against them. Doubtless they who curse, and deride, and despise their parents, will bring upon themselves both temporal and eternal destruction, except they repent of this their most aggravated wickedness: nor will Pharisaical or Antinomian self-deceivers, who are pure in their own eyes, but are not cleansed from their filthiness: or the proud and haughty, who exalt themselves, and look down with contempt on their neighbours; or cruel extortioners and oppressors, escape the vengeance of God. Let the generation of God's children manifest a contrary spirit, in every respect. Let such as have parents and superior relations, behave with submission and respect to them, continually blessing and praying for them: yea, let us all be subject one to another, in the several relations of life, and be clothed with humility. In the consciousness of our remaining defilement, let us seek daily to be more and more cleansed from our filthiness, and yet to be more abased in our own eyes, and more gentle, affable, and lowly in our deportment among men: and instead of devouring the poor and needy, let us study to protect, relieve, and comfort them, to the extent of our ability. In order to this, we must beware of covetousness and profuseness, which, like the two daughters of the horse-leech, evermore cry, Give, give, but never have any thing to spare: and we must learn to habituate every one of our inclinations to brook denial; otherwise no emblem in nature will adequately illustrate their insatiable cravings. —Whilst we behold, with grief and wonder, the subtlety and wicked ingenuity with which the ungodly seduce, debauch, deceive, and ruin one another and themselves; let us guard against their snares; and consider the capacities of our minds as given us, that we may employ all our contrivances and sagacity in devising how to do good. But let the ingenious and successful workers of iniquity, who manage to escape the detection of man, remember that they cannot elude the all-seeing eye, or escape the dreadful judgment of God. The miseries of the world arise in a great measure from the ill behaviour of men, in those stations to which they are called. This, however, is often owing to the wickedness and folly of those concerned, who advance mean and worthless upstarts to authority, and put it in their power to be the plague of whole nations. The erroneous choice also and treatment of companions, and the wrong motives which influence men in marrying, or in disposing of their property, fill society and domestic life with great disquietude. But let every one mortify in himself those odious dispositions, and avoid that evil conduct, which in many cases almost render life insupportable: for who would choose to be a curse to society, and to all connected with him? Let us also look around, and avail ourselves of every hint suggested to us even by the animal tribes. We may learn foresight, industry, and perseverance from the ant; from the conies to provide security against approach-

the character and value of the virtuous woman, 10—31.

a xxx. 1. b i. 8 vi 20. 2 Tim. i. 5. iii. 15.

THE words of king Lemuel, [a] the prophecy that [b] his mother taught him.

2 What, my son? and what, [c] the son of my womb? and what, [d] the son of my vows?

c Is. xlix. 15. d 1 Sam. i. 11. 28.

3 Give not [e] thy strength unto women, nor thy ways [f] to that which destroyeth kings.

e v. 9—11. vii. 26, 27. f Deut. xvii. 17. Neh. xiii. 26.

ing dangers; from the locusts to be contented in our proper station, and to do all things in harmony and peace; and from the spider to employ our ingenuity and patient assiduity wherever we are, not in useless trifles, but in those things which pertain to our sustenance and well-being. And the sermons of these despicable insects will condemn numbers for their improvidence and sloth, their sin and folly. The Christian may also learn from the lion to be bold in the path of duty, and not to turn aside for any man; from the grey-hound or horse, to be ever ready and active, and cheerful in running the race set before him; from the he-goat, to be the guide, overseer, and example of his family, and to take proper care of them; and from the king not to act inconsistently with the dignity of his character, not to suffer any of his passions to rebel and prevail against him. But, alas, how often have we risen up against God our King! We have done foolishly, in thus lifting up ourselves and in thinking evil against him. Let us then lay our hands upon our mouths, and abase ourselves before him; and not further provoke his wrath, by our impenitent and persevering wickedness. Having found peace with him, let us follow peace with all men: and let us always remember the connexion between the means and the end. For, as in the ordinary concerns of life, some means generally produce desirable effects, whilst others terminate in pain and trouble: so, no spiritual blessings can be obtained by those who neglect the appointed means; nor are they ever sincerely used in vain: and if men will waste their time in those books, diversions, and vanities, which are the means of lulling the conscience and hardening the heart, *surely* the end will be answered, and the wrath of God will be the dreadful consequence.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXI. V. 1. Some think that Solomon was meant under the name of Lemuel, and that Bathsheba called him by this name. But others, with greater probability, suppose Lemuel to have been some neighbouring prince, whose mother perhaps was a pious Israelite. Indeed the use of Chaldean words, in this chapter, and in no other part of the book, affords a cogent argument that it was written by another hand, and probably at a later period than the proverbs of Solomon: but whether it was added to this book, by the men of Hezekiah, or after the captivity, is not certain. However, Lemuel retained the early instructions of his mother, and published them for the benefit of others: and as they were allowed to be a *prophecy*, or given by inspiration of God, they were at length inserted at the close of this book.

V. 2. Perhaps Lemuel's mother observed in his conduct some indications of a propensity to those evils, against which she warned him; and this excited her grief and surprise, and caused her thus to expostulate with him: as if she had said, 'What, my son, shall I have no other 'recompense for my pain and sorrow, and my care of thy 'education, no other answer to my prayers and vows, 'than to see thee enslaved to ruinous lusts, and become a 'scourge to thy people?' Or the verse may be considered as an animated call to him to attend to her instructions, which sprang from the tenderness of maternal affection, 'What shall I say, my son, the most effectually to im'press thy mind? Shall I plead with thee the anguish I 'have endured for thee; or my early dedication of thee to 'the Lord, with vows and prayers; or my tender solicitude 'about thy future welfare?'

V. 3. The company of licentious women tends to enfeeble both body and mind, and to unfit men for the duties of their station. If then Lemuel should yield to this temptation, he would be disqualified for the duties of a king. His time and thoughts, which ought to be otherwise employed, would be thus engrossed; and he would gradually be drawn aside into those ways of indolence, indulgence, and negligence; and led to make those sacrifices of the interests of his kingdom and the affections of his people, to please some favourite concubine, which have in unnumbered instances proved destructive to princes, who otherwise had the prospect of reigning happily.

V. 4—7. "It is not for kings, O Lemuel, to drink "wine: or for rulers to desire strong drink." Kings and magistrates should be more scrupulously temperate than other men, in proportion to the importance of their offices: for if they cloud their understanding with wine, they will be apt to forget or mistake the statutes by which they should judge, or be induced by designing men to commit injustice. This is the more aggravated, because the poor and afflicted are chiefly injured! their cause may be deemed worthy of little notice; nay, perhaps decided against them, and even their lives sacrificed to oblige some powerful oppressor, who is the companion of the ruler in his revels. On the contrary, strong drink should be administered as a cordial to those who are ready to faint through weakness or weariness, and to cheer the spirits of the dejected, that they may be raised above the depressing sense of their poverty and misery. Some think, that by "him that is "ready to perish," the condemned criminals are meant, to whom it was customary to give a draught of wine, or other strong drink, when led to execution.

V. 8, 9. Magistrates ought to be the counsellors and protectors of the oppressed, and of all who are unable or afraid to plead their own cause. They should quash malicious prosecutions, decide in favour of the injured party, and detect and expose the oppressors; and thus deliver the poor and needy who were appointed to destruction, and judge righteously without respect of persons.—'If thou seest a man in danger to lose his right, because he 'is not able to make it out; and through fear, or igno'rance, or want of elocution, cannot speak for himself, 'keep not silence, but undertake his defence; especially

4 *It is* not [g] for kings, O Lemuel, *it is* not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink;

5 Lest they drink, and forget the law, and * pervert the judgment of † any of the afflicted.

6 Give [h] strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be ‡ of heavy hearts.

7 Let him [i] drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more.

8 [k] Open thy mouth for the dumb, in the cause of all § such as are appointed to destruction.

9 Open thy mouth, [l] judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy.

10 ¶ Who [m] can find a virtuous woman? for [n] her price *is* far above rubies.

11 The [o] heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.

12 She [p] will do him good, and not evil all the days of her life.

g Lev. x. 9, 10. 1 Kings xx. 12. 16—20 Esth. iii. 15. Ec. x. 17. Is. xxviii. 7, 8. Dan. v. 2—4. Hos. iv. 11, 12. vii 5. Hab. ii. 5. Mark vi. 21—28.
* Heb. *alter*
† Heb. *all the sons of affliction.*
h Ps. civ 15. 1 Tim. v. 23.
‡ Heb. *bitter of soul.* 1 Sam. i. 10. xxx. 6. 2 Kings iv. 27. *marg.*
i Eph v. 18.
k xxiv. 7. 11, 12. 1 Sam. xix. 4—7. xx. 32. xxii. 14, 15. Esth. iv. 13—16. Job xxix. 9—17. Ps lxxxii. 3, 4. Jer xxvi. 16—19. 24. xxxviii. 7—10. John vii. 51.

§ Heb. *the sons of destruction.* Ps. lxxix. 11. *marg.*
l xvi. 12. xx. 8. Lev. xix. 15. Deut. i. 16. xvi. 18—20. 2 Sam. viii. 15. Ps lviii. 1, 2. lxxii. 1, 2. Is. i. 17 23. xi. 4. xxxii 1, 2. Jer. v. 28. xxii. 3. 15, 16. xxiii. 5. Dan. iv. 27. Am. v. 11, 12. Zech. vii. 9. ix. 9 John vii. 24. Heb. i. 9. Rev. xix 11
m xii. 4. xviii. 22. xix. 14 Ruth iii. 11. Ec. vii. 28. Cant. vi. 8, 9 Eph. v. 25—33.
n iii 15. viii. 11. xx. 15.
o 2 Kings iv. 9, 10. 22, 23. 1 Pet. iii. 1—7 ——— p 1 Sam. xxv. 14, &c. 26, 27

'if it be the cause of strangers, who understand not the 'laws; and perhaps are in danger to suffer some great 'damage in their bodies, credits, or estates.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 10. This description of a virtuous woman forms a kind of poem, containing twenty-two verses, of which each in succession begins with a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet. It seems to have been composed by the mother of Lemuel, and might be intended to direct him in the choice of a wife: but it contains many important lessons to various descriptions of persons in every age. The interrogation implies both the scarceness of such virtuous women, and the happiness of him who had found one for his wife; (*Note*, xviii. 22.) The word rendered *virtuous*, may imply both health and mental endowments, as well as the good dispositions and conduct of the person described. 'The word signifies both *strength*, (or rather '*courage*,) and *riches*, and *virtue*. Jethro uses it, *Ex.* 'xviii. 21. which we translate *able men;* and then follows 'more particularly wherein their ability should consist, "Such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness:" 'I take therefore the word to include a great fear of God '(mentioned afterwards, 30,) which is so powerful, as to 'endue one with courage to do well, when piety is con-'temned, nay, laughed at and abused. (*Bp. Patrick.*) The same word is used when Boaz says to Ruth, "All the city "of my people do know that thou art a virtuous woman." (*Ruth* iii. 11:) where the context seems to fix the meaning: for, her unblemished character, her piety and virtue, must be especially intended. The character is drawn with reference to the usages of those days; but the general outlines are equally suitable to every age and nation. Perhaps it was no more than an ideal picture of feminine excellence; and living characters were to be estimated according to the degree in which they resembled it.

V. 11. The husband of such a wife, would so entirely confide in her conjugal fidelity and in her prudent management, that he could have no jealousy of her, but would trust all his domestic concerns to her without reserve. And every thing being conducted with economy, he would not be tempted to unjust methods of getting gain; as they often are whose affairs are deranged, and whose substance is wasted, by an extravagant woman.

V. 12. 'She will endeavour to please him in every 'thing; and by avoiding whatever is ungrateful,' (or dis-'agreeable,) to him, nay, by deserving well of him, and 'studying to promote the interests of him and his family, 'to maintain his honour and reputation; and that not only 'by fits and starts, and when in a good humour, but all the 'days of her life; even after he is dead, if she survive 'him.' (*Bp. Patrick.*)

V. 13—29. Though we are led to conceive of this *virtuous woman*, as of one in a superior station, and such a wife as Lemuel would be happy in finding; yet she is described as peculiarly industrious, and as taking pleasure in manual labour; rising early to superintend her household, that all might have their provisions in due time, in order to their attendance on their several employments. Her wool, flax, spindle, and distaff, are mentioned to her honour; whilst the delicacy and ornaments of the daughters of Zion, are by the prophet recorded to their shame. (*Is.* iii. 16—26.) By her diligence and good management. this virtuous woman is represented as able to provide every thing in abundance, of the best quality, and at the best market; and thus, like the merchants' ships, bringing her food from far. The gains of her industry enable her to purchase fields and plant vineyards: and thus also she manages her affairs with prudence and consideration. She does not shrink from labour, but as exercise gives her strength, so she readily exerts it in any profitable employment. She takes care that all she has to dispose of be completed in the best manner; and that all which she buys be good of the kind: and though she arose early, yet *tasting* the pleasure and profit of industry, she is not in haste to retire to rest, but spends the evening after it is dark in useful occupations: nay, the whole, or a great part of the night, when the case requires it. Yet her diligence springs not from covetousness: but she desires to have enough and to spare for the poor; and her charity is maintained by her industry and frugality. Her family are prepared for the inclemency of the winter, by having *double garments*, or changes of raiment; clothes in plenty, and suitable to their stations: her own clothing is good, and becoming her rank, but of her own manufacturing: and her husband is known amongst the assembled elders, by his decent and respectable appearance, and by his cheerful aspect: and besides all this plenty, she disposes of many valuable articles to the merchants. Thus her health and vigour of mind are preserved, and her reputation established: and her life is spent in so useful a manner, that she will be enabled in time to come to reflect upon it with comfort. Her conversation also is prudent and pious,

13 She seeketh wool and flax, and
[q] worketh willingly with her hands.
14 She [r] is like the merchants' ships,
she bringeth her food from afar.
15 She [s] riseth also while it is yet
night, [t] and giveth meat to her house-
hold, and a portion to her maidens.
16 She [u] considereth a field, and
* buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands
she planteth a vineyard.
17 She [x] girdeth her loins with
strength, and [y] strengtheneth her arms.
18 She † perceiveth that her merchan-
dise *is* good: [z] her candle goeth not
out by night.
19 She [a] layeth her hands to the
spindle, and her hands hold the distaff.
20 [b] She ‡ stretcheth out her hand to
the poor; yea, [c] she reacheth forth her
hands to the needy.
21 She is not [d] afraid of the snow for
her household: for all her household *are*
clothed with § scarlet.
22 She maketh herself [e] coverings of
tapestry; her [f] clothing *is* silk and purple.
23 Her [g] husband is known [h] in the
gates, when he sitteth among the elders
of the land.
24 She [i] maketh fine linen, and sel-
leth *it*; and delivereth girdles unto the
merchant.
25 [k] Strength and honour *are* her
clothing; [l] and she shall rejoice in time
to come.
26 She [m] openeth her mouth with
wisdom: and [n] in her tongue *is* the law
of kindness.
27 She [o] looketh well to the ways of
her household, and eateth not the bread
of idleness.
28 Her [p] children arise up and call
her blessed; [q] her husband *also*, and he
praiseth her.
29 Many daughters have ‖ done vir-
tuously, but [r] thou excellest them all.
30 [s] Favour *is* deceitful, and beauty
is vain: *but* [t] a woman *that* feareth the
LORD, [u] she shall be praised.
31 Give her [x] of the fruit of her hands;
[y] and let her own works praise her in the
gates.

q Gen. xviii. 6—8. xxiv 13, 14. 18—20. xxix. 9, 10. Ex. ii 16. Ruth ii. 2, 3. 23. Is. iii. 16—24. xxxii 9—11. Acts ix. 39, 40. 1 Thes. iv. 11. 2 Thes iii 10—12. 1 Tim v 10. 14. Tit ii. 5.
r 24. 1 Kings ix. 26—28. 2 Chr. ix. 10. 21. Ez. xxvii. 3, &c.
s Josh. iii. 1. 2 Chr xxxvi 15. Ps cxix. 147, 148. Ec. ix. 10. Mark i. 35. Rom. xii. 11.
t Matt. xxiv 45 Luke xii. 42.
u Josh. xv. 18. Cant. viii 12. Matt xiii. 44.
* Heb *taketh*.
x 1 Kings xviii. 46. 2 Kings iv. 29. Job xxxviii. 3. Luke xii. 35. Eph. vi. 10, 14. 1 Pet i. 13.
y Gen. xlix. 24. Is xliv. 12. Hos. vii. 15.
† Heb. *tasteth*
z Gen. xxxi. 40. Ps. cxxvii. 2. Matt. xxv. 3—10. 1 Thes. ii. 9. 2 Thes. iii. 7—9.
a Ex. xxxv. 25, 26.
b i. 24. Rom x. 21.
‡ Heb. *spreadeth*.
c xix. 17 xxii. 9. Job xxxi 16—20. Ps. xli. 1. cxii. 9. Ec xi. 1, 2. Mark xiv. 7. Acts ix 39—41. xx. 34, 35. Eph iv 28 Heb xiii. 16.——d xxv. 20——§ Or, *double garments*. Gen. xlv. 22——e vii. 16.——f Gen. xli. 42 *Marg* Esth v. 1. viii 15. Ps. xlv. 13, 14. Ez xvi. 10—13. 1 Pet. iii. 4.——g xii. 4.——h xxiv. 7. Deut. xvi. 18 xxi. 19 Ruth iv. 1, 2. Job xxix 7.

i 13. 19. 1 Kings x. 28. Ez. xxvii. 16. Luke xvi. 19.
k Job xxix. 14 xl. 10. Ps. cxxxii. 9. 16. Is. lxi 10. Rom. xiii. 14. Eph. iv. 24. 1 Tim ii. 10. 1 Pet. v. 5, 6.
l Ps xcvii. 11, 12. Is. lxv 13, 14. Matt xxv 20, 21.
m 8, 9. Judg. xiii. 23. 1 Sam. xxv. 24—31. 2 Sam. xx. 16—22. 2 Kings xxii. 15—20. Esth. iv. 4. v. 8. vii. 3—6. viii 3—6. Luke i. 1—38. 42—56. Acts xviii. 26. Eph iv. 29. Col. iv 5, 6.
n xii. 18. xvi. 24. xxv. 15 Gen. xxiv. 18—20. Cant ii. 14. iv. 11. Mal. ii. 6. Acts xvi 15. 1 Pet. iii 1. 5, 6. 8, 9.
o xiv 1. 1 Thes. iv. 11. 2 Thes. iii. 6—12. 1 Tim. v. 10, 13, 14. Tit. ii 4, 5.
p 1 1 Kings ii. 19. Ps. cxvi. 16. 2 Tim. i. 5. iii. 15—17.
q Cant. vii. 1—9. Is lxii. 4, 5.
Marg.
‖ Or *gotten riches*.
r Cant. iv. 8, 9. Eph. v. 27.
s vi. 25 xi 22. 2 Sam. xiv. 25. Esth i. 11, 12. Ez xvi. 15. Jam. i. 11. 1 Pet. i. 24.——t i. 7. viii. 13. Ex. i. 17. 21. Ps cxlvii. 11. Luke i. 6. 46—50. 1 Pet iii. 4, 5.——u Rom. ii. 29 1 Cor. iv. 5 1 Pet. i. 7. iii. 4.——x 16. xi. 30. Ps cxxviii 2. Rom vi. 21, 22. Phil. iv 17.——y Mark xiv. 7—9. Acts ix. 39. Rom. xvi. 1—4 6. 12. 1 Tim. v. 25. Heb. vi. 10. Rev. xiv. 13.

cheerful and friendly: kindness dictates and wisdom directs all that she says: or she speaks according to the divine law, which requires love and gentleness: and she neither wastes her own time in idleness, nor allows any of her household to do so; nor yet to want any thing that is good for them. Her children, well educated and provided for, grow up to be a credit to her; and repay her attention by their commendations of and prayers for her; and her husband, with heartfelt satisfaction, expatiates in her praise, *saying* with gladness of heart, "Many daughters of Adam and Abra-"ham have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all." The word *virtuously* is the same as is used above.

V. 30, 31. The favour shown to young women, on account of external embellishments or polite accomplishments, or of their wit, gayety, rank, or wealth; with all the flattering compliments and professions of love made to them, are deceitful, and will soon turn into neglect or disgust, if they do not possess more solid excellences. And beauty, though so much admired and extolled, is a mere fading vanity; it adds nothing to present happiness: it often covers and augments the deformity of a worthless mind; it exposes the possessor to numberless snares, and proves a dangerous temptation to others: and it soon fades, and leaves nothing but the pride and folly which it fostered, without any foundation for esteem and durable affection: and they who marry a worthless woman *on this account*, will surely experience how *vain* it is. But a woman who fears God, and conscientiously attends to the duties of her station, will grow into the esteem and affection of her husband, and acquire merited and durable respect and commendation. Every one ought to behave to her according to the good effects of her conduct to her relations and the community; and she is worthy to be noticed with commendation in the public assemblies of the state, as one whose good works render her peculiarly an useful member of society: and should every tongue be silent, her own conduct will sufficiently manifest her worth, and establish her reputation with all competent judges. 'Thus is shut up 'this looking-glass for ladies, which they are desired to 'open, and dress themselves by: and if they do so, "their "adorning will be found to praise, and honour, and glory, "at the appearing of Jesus Christ." (*Henry.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

The affectionate instructions and counsels of prudent and pious mothers may be as useful to the minds of their children, as the tender care of them is to their bodies. And when we consider that they who occupy the most important stations in the community, often receive the first impressions from their mothers, which are generally very durable: we shall perceive how much the interest of mankind is connected with the due performance of the maternal duty; and of what importance it is that women be so educated, as to be qualified for such a charge. Those children who are early devoted unto God, in baptism, and by fervent prayers, and who have been educated accordingly, may be exhorted and persuaded *upon that ground*, in accession to their obligations to the affection and authority of a tender parent; and it behooves them to consider, what re-

turn they will make to such kind friends, and what use of their salutary admonitions. They, who have the prospect of succeeding to high authority, should be educated and cautioned with the greater care: because their conduct will have so extensive an effect upon others; and they should especially be warned against those vices to which they will certainly be most tempted. Such noble and royal youths are sure to have abundance of flatterers; who will persuade them that *their* rank authorizes them to indulge their passions, and that *they* are not to be restricted like their inferiors. It is therefore well for them to have affectionate and prudent monitors to inculcate other lessons. For such princes, as have "given their strength to wo-"men," and wine; and as have inflamed their passions, vitiated their judgments, and enfeebled both body and mind by excesses, have not only forgotten the law, perverted judgment, and become tyrants and oppressors; but they have gone into those ways, which have terminated in their ruin: and history abounds with instances of this kind, which are set up as beacons to warn others to shun the rocks on which they split. On the other hand, they who have studied the welfare of their people, and have used their authority to protect the innocent and to defend the oppressed; have best secured their own interest, establishment, and reputation. But if exact temperance and impartial rectitude become kings and judges, they are equally requisite for the ministers of religion: for if they forget the law of God, or pervert his truth, the consequences will be still more dreadful to themselves and others. The many awful instances there have been of promising men, who have been disgraced and ruined by women and wine, should warn every one, who bears the sacred character, to avoid all approaches to, and appearances of, these evils. Every creature of God is good; and strong drink, though wretchedly abused, has yet its use; but instead of wasting it in excess, they who can afford it, should dispense it to the diseased and the wretched, that by the moderate use of it, they may be refreshed and relieved: "let them drink "and forget their poverty, and remember their misery no "more." By the same rule, commendation and consolatory topics should be used as cordials to the dejected and tempted. But when they are administered to the confident and self-sufficient, they operate as wine on those who are already intoxicated. And by parity of reason, as magistrates should plead for such as cannot plead for themselves; so we should all use the gifts we possess, for the benefit of others, to supply their deficiences, and to preserve them from oppression or destruction.

V. 10—31.

As we have repeatedly in this book been warned against the seductions of bad women; there is a peculiar propriety, in its concluding with the character and commendations of the virtuous woman for the confutation of such as indiscriminately censure the sex, and speak against marriage, though it is God's own institution. In the fallen state of human nature, it is no wonder that but few, either men or women, are in any good measure what they ought to be; and various causes concur in rendering women what they ought not to be. But it is of vast importance, that a standard should be fixed, by which all who regard the word of God, may estimate the intrinsic value of the female character. Some there are to be found, who in a good degree answer to this description: yea, many daughters have done virtuously; every one of them is far more valuable than rubies, and happy is he, to whom the Lord gives such a prize. Whilst his heart safely trusts in her, she will do him good, in every sense, as long as she liveth; and conduce to his comfort, interest, credit, and safety from snares and temptations. But when we carefully consider this standard of feminine excellency, in which conjugal fidelity, economy, industry, cheerful attention to household affairs, and to the good government of servants and education of children, with a regard to the interests of her husband, are united with charity, piety, wisdom, and the fear of God; in which avarice and extravagance are equally avoided, and the due distance is preserved betwixt penuriousness and waste, betwixt ostentation and slovenly neglect; and in which no mention is made of time spent in those vain amusements and decorations, which seem the only business of multitudes; but the whole life is employed, and the thoughts and conversation occupied about, the duties to be performed to God and man: I say, when this character is well considered, and contrasted with the admired and accomplished females around us; the mind must be impressed with surprise, and led to many interesting inquiries. Numbers in the different ranks of life may be found, any where, except in their own families, or in the house of God: they are adorned with every thing, except wisdom and grace: they affect to know many things, but would not even be thought to understand those which are the proper duties of their station. Nay, they leave even their own offspring to the care of *mercenaries*, that they may be totally disengaged, and at liberty for vanity and dissipation! But which of the two characters is most amiable, rational, or useful? Which is the best fitted for the important duties of a wife and mother? Indeed, the matter admits not of a question. At first glance we perceive how much ancient simplicity excelled modern refinement: and how far the wisdom of God's word surpasses the devices of men! We cannot but lament, that the modern education of females is such, as seems intended to form them useless triflers, fit only to be gazed upon, or made subservient to amusement and pleasure. And how can they, who spend the night in dissipation, the morning in sleep, and the evening in dressing, "rejoice in time to come," when they review a life so wretchedly wasted? When they grow old, it cannot be expected that the children, whom they neglected for the sake of the most trivial pursuits, will rise up and call them blessed: and in general the hearts of their husbands can by no means trust in them; they are a grief and trouble to them all their days; and they are frequently the only persons from whom they receive no commendation. And what the end of a life thus spent will be, if also thus ended, needs not be told: then at least it will be found, that "favour was deceitful, and beauty vain." But "a "woman that feareth the LORD," will then receive due commendation, and according to the fruit of her hands it will be given her; and her own works will praise her in the gates. Of this honour, which cometh from God, every one ought to be ambitious: and according to this standard we all ought to regulate our judgments. With this before their eyes, let pious parents educate their children, especially their daughters; and let godly men make choice of such wives, and value them accordingly: and this description let all women daily study, who desire to be durably beloved and respected, and to fill up their station in the community in a useful and honourable manner.

END OF VOL. II.